

**Transformative Singing Engagement:
A Study of Cross-Cultural Leadership and
Pedagogical Implications for
Choral Music Education**

by

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Abstract

Pedagogical practices in singing need to be responsive to the challenges and leverage the affordances of engaging young singers, growing up in today's fluid and fast-changing digital age, in deep, meaningful, and enduring learning of western music and singing traditions. Little is known about the extent to which singing engagement fosters transformative experiences and very little empirical research has examined potential factors leading to engagement in transformative singing experiences. This research draws on transformative music engagement (TME) as a perspective for understanding and developing transformative pedagogical approaches in choral music education. Theory and practice are interrelated and examined in relation to the transformative paradigm through (1) case study interviews with choral singing leaders from four countries (Cuba, Kenya, Ukraine, Denmark) using ethnographic encounters and narrative inquiry to identify key attributes of transformative singing leadership (TSL), and (2) an action research study involving an interrelated 16-week program development component and study using an innovative retrospective assessment procedure to examine 50 secondary school students' perceptions of transformative singing engagement (TSE) involving two singing capacities (embodied physicality and communicative expression) and three learning capacities (engaged agency, connectivity, and values/self-beliefs).

In the case studies involving ethnographic encounters, four main attributes of singing leadership emerged: (1) developing skill and expression, (2) fostering resiliency, (3) forming cultural singing identities and intersectionalities, and (4) promoting social innovation. Findings from the TSE study with secondary school students showed positive conceptual shifts in students' perceptions across all comparison variables. The findings also suggest the importance of integrating across singing and learning capacities for TSE to enable students to engage in personal meaning making in and through singing. This research identifies key affordances of transformative singing leadership and transformative singing engagement, which can assist both learners and leaders of singing in creating deep, meaningful, and enduring learning opportunities.

Keywords: singing engagement; transformative learning; transformative music engagement; reflective practice; cross-cultural leadership; choral music education

I dedicate this thesis to

my parents, Bill and Marilyn, who have modeled an enduring love and inspired life-long
learning;

my clan: Brandon, Ashley, Melissa, Madeline, Sophie, and Kira, for their kindness,
support and encouragement;

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and to all who through oppression, violence, joy, and hope . . . respond with singing
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Table of Contents

Approval.....	ii
Partial Copyright Licence	iii
Ethics Statement.....	iv
Abstract.....	v
Dedication	vii
Acknowledgements.....	viii
Table of Contents.....	xi
List of Tables.....	xv
List of Figures.....	xvi
List of Acronyms.....	xvii
Glossary	xviii
Preface.....	xix

Chapter 1. Introduction	1
1.1. Overview	1
1.2. Research Context.....	3
1.2.1. Cultural Translation and Ethnographic Encounters	3
1.2.2. Music Education in Today's Public Schools in Canada	5
1.2.3. Music Learning and the Large Ensemble	7
1.2.4. Music Learning: Individual Versus Group Learning	8
1.2.5. Out-dated Models of Music Learning? An Insider View	9
1.2.6. The Langley Fine Arts School (LFAS) and the LFAS 'Senior Choir'	11
1.2.7. Action Research Context	12
1.2.8. Researcher, Educator, Conductor Roles: Context and Assumptions	13
1.2.9. The 'Tipping Point'	15
1.3. Research Themes.....	16
1.3.1. Transformative Singing Leadership (TSL)	16
1.3.2. Transformative Singing Engagement (TSE)	17
1.3.3. Research Questions	19
1.4. Structure of the Thesis	19

Chapter 2. Literature Review	20
2.1. Overview	20
Part One: The Transformative Perspective.....	21
2.2. The Transformative Paradigm.....	21
2.2.1. Transformative Learning	21
2.2.2. Transformative Pedagogy	23
Part Two: Transformative Music Engagement (TME)	25
2.3. Introduction to TME	25
2.3.1. TME: Change in Music Education.....	25
2.3.2. TME Potentials.....	26
2.3.3. Conceptual Framework of TME	27
2.3.4. Key Principles of TME.....	28
2.3.5. Interrelated Concepts to the Approach of TME	29

2.3.6.	Conclusion	36
2.4.	The Phenomenon of Singing	37
2.4.1.	Choral Singing Pedagogy	37
2.4.2.	Research on Choral Conducting/Leadership	38
2.4.3.	Transformative Leadership in Music Education – <i>Early Examples</i>	39
2.4.4.	Transformative Leadership	40
2.5.	Transformative Singing Leadership (TSL).....	41
2.5.1.	Power Sharing Through Empowerment.....	41
2.5.2.	Developing Communicative Musicality (CM).....	42
2.5.3.	Developing Cultural Identities and Intersectionalities.....	46
2.5.4.	Resilience	46
2.5.5.	Social Innovation.....	47
2.6.	Transformative Singing Engagement (TSE).....	47
2.6.1.	Context.....	47
2.6.2.	Background to the Approach of TSE	48
2.6.3.	Key Influences of TSE	49
2.6.4.	Key Concepts of TSE.....	50
2.6.5.	Summary of TSE.....	53
2.7.	Conclusion and Research Questions	54
 Chapter 3. Transformative Singing Leadership (TSL).....		55
3.1.	Study Aims	55
3.2.	Cultural Translations and Ethnographic Encounters	56
3.3.	TSL Study Questions	58
3.4.	Methodology.....	59
3.4.1.	Self as Researcher	59
3.4.2.	Case Study: Rationale and Procedure.....	60
3.4.3.	Data Collection: Interview and Observational Methods	61
3.4.4.	Data Analysis	62
3.5.	Participants	62
3.6.	Thematic Attributes of Transformative Singing Leaders	63
3.7.	Kenya Case Study	64
3.7.1.	Inter-tribal Understanding (Pan-African) as a Model for Global Socio-cultural Understanding.....	64
3.7.2.	Mentorship (Resiliency) and Empowerment	66
3.7.3.	Developing Capacities of Intrinsic Pulse, Embodiment, and Singing Purpose.....	67
3.7.4.	Summary.....	68
3.8.	Cuba Case Study	69
3.8.1.	National <i>Braiding</i> of Cultural Song-styles with Songs as Stories, and Singers as Storytellers	69
3.8.2.	International Validation: Vienna	71
3.8.3.	Further International Validation: Sweden.....	72
3.8.4.	Developing the Capacity of <i>Singing Connectedness</i>	73
3.8.5.	Summary.....	74
3.9.	Denmark Case Study	75
3.9.1.	National/Regional Singing Communication Through ‘Expertise’.....	75
3.9.2.	Context of Helle Höyer	76

3.9.3.	Developing the Capacity of <i>Expertise</i>	77
3.9.4.	Summary	78
3.10.	Ukraine Case Study	78
3.10.1.	National Story-Teller Using Communicative Musicality as a Means to Political and Social Innovation.	79
3.10.2.	Purveyor, Protector, and <i>Incubator</i> of Cultural Singing.....	80
3.10.3.	Developing Capacities: Expertise and Communication through the <i>Timbral Palate</i>	82
3.10.4.	Summary.....	83
3.11.	Exploring Transformative Singing Leadership Capacities.....	84
3.11.1.	Capacities within <i>Communicative Musicality</i>	85
3.11.2.	Intrinsic Motive pulse	85
3.11.3.	Qualities: Skill/Expressiveness	88
3.11.4.	Narrative	89
3.11.5.	Summary of CM	90
3.12.	Cultural identity and Intersectionalities: Braided, Blended, and Blurred.....	90
3.13.	Developing Resiliency	93
3.14.	Social Innovation.....	95
3.14.1.	Self-Reflective Practice	95
3.14.2.	Self-Challenging/Rule Breakers.....	96
3.15.	Conclusion of TSL Study.....	98
 Chapter 4. Study Two: Transformative Singing Engagement.....		100
4.1.	Study Aims	100
4.2.	TSE Program and Pedagogy	102
4.2.1.	Emergent Curriculum	103
4.2.2.	Transformative Pedagogy	104
4.2.3.	Reflective Practice	105
4.2.4.	Deliberate Practice.....	107
4.2.5.	Leadership Team	109
4.2.6.	TSE Program Implementation.....	110
4.2.7.	TSE Emergent Curriculum	111
4.2.8.	TSE 'Naturalistic' Pedagogy (Lived Experience).....	115
4.2.9.	Youth Leadership Opportunities	116
4.2.10.	TSE Learning Progression	117
4.3.	TSE Study Method	118
4.3.1.	Participants	119
4.3.2.	Post-Pre Measure	124
4.3.3.	Participants' Written Reflections	129
4.3.4.	TSE Study Procedure	130
4.3.5.	Results: TSE Retrospective Assessment.....	130
4.3.6.	Summary of the Retrospective Assessment	146
4.4.	Qualitative Inquiry Results: Senior Students' Dilemma with the Study: the Numbers Don't 'Represent'	147
4.4.1.	Themed Reflections	147
4.5.	Conclusion of TSE Study	154

Chapter 5. Summary and Conclusions	157
5.1. Introduction	157
5.2. Summary of Study 1: Transformative Singing Leadership (TSL)	158
5.2.1. Skill and Expression: Developing <i>Communicative Musicality</i>	158
5.2.2. Distinct Cultural Identities and Intersectionalities	160
5.2.3. Resiliency.....	161
5.2.4. Social Innovation.....	162
5.3. Summary of Study 2: Transformative Singing Engagement (TSE)	164
5.4. Limitations of the Research.....	166
5.5. Implications for Pedagogy from TLE and TSE	168
5.5.1. Reflective Practice	168
5.5.2. Critical Pedagogy	169
5.5.3. Building Capacities	170
5.6. Directions for Future Research Toward Collective Singing Education.....	171
5.6.1. Ongoing Case Studies	171
5.6.2. Neuroscience and Singing	172
5.7. Conclusion	174
References	176
Appendix. Retrospective Assessment Questionnaires (PA and CA)	190
Embodied Physicality	190
Communicative Expression.....	194

List of Tables

Table 1.	TSE 16-Week Program Overview	113
Table 2.	Sample Items in the Post-Pre Measure	129
Table 3.	Means and Standard Deviations for EP and CE According to Gender.....	140
Table 4.	Means and Standard Deviations for EP and CE According to Age	141
Table 5.	Means and Standard Deviations for EP and CE According to Grade.....	141
Table 6.	Means and Standard Deviations for EP and CE According to Music Major	142
Table 7.	Means and Standard Deviations for EP and CE According to Parents' Educations.....	142
Table 8.	Means and Standard Deviations for EP and CE According to Years at LFAS	143
Table 9.	Means and Standard Deviations for EP and CE According to Voice Lessons	144
Table 10.	Means and Standard Deviations for EP and CE According to Years in Organized Choirs	144

List of Figures

Figure 1.	Key Constructs in the Conceptualization of Transformative Singing Engagement	51
Figure 2.	Cognitive Challenge of Communicative and Physical Capacities	112
Figure 3.	TSE Learning Progression	118
Figure 4.	Age Range of Participants	119
Figure 5.	Grades of Participants	120
Figure 6.	Arts Majors of Participants.....	121
Figure 7.	Number of Years Attending LFAS	122
Figure 8.	Number of Years Singing in Organized Choirs.....	123
Figure 9.	Means Scores for Post-Pre Measure: Embodied Physicality Items 1-15.....	134
Figure 10.	Means Scores for Post-Pre Measure: Embodied Physicality Items 16-32	135
Figure 11.	Means Scores for Post-Pre Measure: Communicative Expression Items 1-15.....	136
Figure 12.	Means Scores for Post-Pre Measure: Embodied Physicality Items 16-32	137
Figure 13.	Top Ten Means Scores for Post-Pre Measure: Embodied Physicality.....	138
Figure 14.	Top Ten Means Scores for Post-Pre Measure: Communicative Expression.....	139

List of Acronyms

ARC	Aarhus Pigakor Choir, from Aarhus, Denmark
CAS	Communicative Aspects of Singing
CM	Communicative Musicality
DP	Deliberate Practice
IFCM	International Federation of Choral Music
IMP	Intrinsic Motive Pulse
KBC	Kenyan Boys Choir
KSOC	Kiev Symphony Orchestra and Chorus
LFAS	Langley Fine Arts School
MODAL	Multimodal Opportunities, Diversity and Artistic Learning
PAR	Participatory Action Research
PAS	Physical Aspects of Singing
PKSS	Project Kenya Sister Schools
RYME	Research in Youth, Music and Education
SATB	Soprano, Alto, Tenor, Bass
SPSS	Statistical Package for the Social Sciences
TMA	Timbral Meaning Associations (term by Anatoliy Avdievsky)
TME	Transformative Music Engagement
TSE	Transformative Singing Engagement
TSL	Transformative Singing Leadership
TWU	Trinity Western University
VSO	Vancouver Symphony Orchestra
YPAR	Youth Action Participatory Research
ZPD	Zones of Proximal Development

Glossary

Holodomor	Ukrainian genocide, translation means 'Killing by Hunger'
Intrinsic Motive Pulse	A locomotive, succession of 'behavioural events' in vocal and/or gestural time that is coordinated by two or more people (Trevarthen, 1999)
Musicking	Process of music making (Small, 1998b)
Mzungu	Bantu language term referring to person of European descent
Narrativity	Quality of presenting a narrative (OD)
Pamoja	Swahili word for 'oneness' or 'together'
Synesthesia	A neurological phenomenon in which one sensory field transfers to another (Abrams, 1996)
Timbral Quality	Modulated contours of expression (Malloch & Trevarthen 2009)
Wageni	Swahili term for 'guest'

Preface

. . . it's all about resonance.

John Trepp (1941-2014)

Chapter 1.

Introduction

1.1. Overview

The aim of this research is to explore transformative music engagement (TME) as a perspective for understanding and developing transformative pedagogical approaches in choral singing education. Theory and practice are interrelated and examined in relation to the transformative paradigm through (1) case study interviews with expert choral conductors from four countries (Cuba, Kenya, Ukraine, Denmark) using ethnographic encounters (Jordan, 2002) and narrativity (Maykut & Morehouse, 1994) to identify key attributes of transformative singing leadership (TSL)¹, and (2) an interrelated program development component and action research (McKernan, 1991) study of 50 secondary school students' perceptions of transformative singing engagement (TSE) involving two singing capacities (embodied physicality and communicative expression) and three learning capacities (engaged agency, connectivity, and values/self-beliefs) following a 16-week program focused on developing each of these five capacities and using an innovative retrospective assessment procedure (Hiebert, Domene, & Buchanan, 2011). The TSE program was developed using both theoretical conceptualizations of TME and insights gained through the case study interviews to respond to the challenges of engaging students growing up in today's fluid and fast-changing digital age in deep, meaningful, and enduring learning of western music and singing traditions. The TSE program also seeks ways of negotiating students'

¹ In this thesis the terms 'singing leader,' 'choral conductor,' and 'choral director' are used to distinguish and reflect leadership in different cultural contexts. In many parts of the world, there is no literal use of 'conductor' or even 'singing.' At times I will use the terms interchangeably and at other times there is a particular meaning implied (i.e., a more traditional and less culture sensitive meaning). The meaning of the terms should be clear from the context they are used in.

diverse learning styles, maintaining and developing the 'doing' of music, and enhancing cultural awareness within music learning. Jackson (1986) describes transformative teaching as that which accomplishes "a qualitative change often of dramatic proportion" (p. 120) or what Cossentino (2004) describes as "a holistic view of learning, one that encompasses cognitive and emotional metamorphoses" (p. 64). Each of these priorities is recognized in transformative pedagogical perspectives, such as critical pedagogy (Freire, 1970) and reflective practice (Brookfield, 1995; Schön, 1983).

While affording students with vast new learning possibilities, the digital age presents enormous challenges to long-term teaching strategies, particularly in music education. As a music educator with three decades of teaching experience in elementary, secondary, university, and community contexts, I have witnessed many experienced teachers describe a dramatic shift in the nature of student learning during the past two to three years. There have been persistent calls for more than a decade from an increasing number of music education researchers for a shift away from traditional practices such as 'skill and drill' (e.g., Green, 2001, O'Neill, 2012a; Reynolds & Beitler, 2007). Theoretical discoveries in excellence research, such as Anders Ericsson's (2008) *deliberate practice* (DP) foster more pedagogical horsepower through re-balancing and re-apportioning teacher interventions to enable learning to be intrinsically dynamic and relevant. For example, the concept of *refinement* in Ericsson's DP involves aspects of meaning making that must be sourced from the student, not simply the teacher. No longer can teachers perpetuate a pedagogical framework that Lev Vygotsky described as machinery for the transmission of knowledge from generation to generation, from parents and teachers to students (as cited in Wells, 2000). Instead, the learning environments in our classrooms, music studios, and rehearsing and performing spaces require present day learners of all ages to be relationally engaged in the learning process, which involves more than the transmission of knowledge. According to Schulman (1987) teachers "also strive to balance [our] goals of fostering individual excellence with more general ends involving equality of opportunity and equity among students of different backgrounds and cultures" (p. 15).

In the face of dramatic change in educational environments, the transformative paradigm holds the potential to address the challenges outlined above through filling the

gap between traditional practices in music learning and student engagement in contemporary music classrooms, as well as forging new ground toward relevant strategies to connect music learning with everyday experience. The focus of this research is on the particular context of choral singing education and the transformative pedagogical practices that are capable of bringing about deep, meaningful, and enduring learning of western music and singing traditions. The two studies are separate and yet they inform each other in important ways relating to transformations in singing leadership and learning. The first study, involving interviews with expert choral conductors, began with the observation that all four conductors appeared to be engaged in a continual process of bringing about learning transformations among the members of their choirs. Drawing on Jordan's (2002) notion of "ethnographic encounters," where "experiential learning about self and other gets done, where meanings are tried out, where experience slowly becomes understanding" (p. 96), the aim was to explore each conductors' sense of this transformative process in ways that "attempt to translate field experiences and findings (usually) into text for people who were *not* there" (p. 96; original emphasis). At the same time, the intent was to inform my own practice as a choral educator through a process that aims to bridge "as reflexively as possible the gaps between presence and absence, between languages, understandings of the world, behaviours and beliefs" (p. 96). This process involved a synthesis between research and practice as I engaged in action research, critical pedagogy, and reflective practice (McKernan, 1991). According to McKernan, this form of "action inquiry" is "the lever for increasing teacher autonomy and control over the curriculum" (p. 53). This involves the teacher-as-researcher with the aim of not only empowering the educator; it also aims to "empower students so that they are emancipated as learners" (p. 53).

1.2. Research Context

1.2.1. Cultural Translation and Ethnographic Encounters

Cultural translation is a "thick" concept, which Jordan (2002) describes as in need of "terminological exfoliation" (p. 97) to provide any kind of working definition. She describes cultural translation as "a holistic process of provisional sense making" (p. 101).

This definition also recognizes that it is a deliberate attempt to try “to render accessible and comprehensible, first to the self and then to others, one’s experience of aspects of ways of life – either one’s own life made strange, or lives which are different from one’s own” (p. 101). Jordan also points out that this is “fundamentally, how we communicate” and that “no darkly suspicious project of appropriation need lie behind this” (p. 101). According to Jordan “it need not involve entrapping the other in our own webs of meaning, or being ourselves entrapped in theirs, but consciously, deliberately, weaving something fresh together” in what Homi Bhabha (1995) refers to as the “Third Space” (p. 101). Jordan suggests that cultural translation “is translation with the whole person,” which takes place through ethnographic encounters that help practitioners seek the following nine conceptual and methodological attributes: 1) heuristic, extended and multi-level; 2) does not involve translating a given text, but creating that text and progressively translating as one goes along; 3) uncovers the processes of meaning-making within the ‘Third Space’; 4) dramatizes conflicts, tensions and resolutions; 5) shows translation getting done; 6) does not present a translation without a self-reflexive infrastructure; 7) may have inspirational flashes but is not uniformly smooth and polished; 8) is porous, fragmentary, ragged and open-ended; 9) is aware of the history, politics, and power dynamics within which it is taking place (Jordan, 2002, p. 103).

With the above attributes in mind, this research seeks to offer insights into transformative learning and engagement in choral singing education according to expert choral conductors from four different cultural contexts (Cuba, Kenya, Ukraine, Denmark), before turning our attention to the Canadian context. Through these ethnographic ‘encounters’ (Jordan, 2002), I attempted to strike a balanced approach of listening to my own experiential voice yet being ‘in the moment.’ As Maykut and Morehouse (1994) state:

The qualitative researcher’s perspective is perhaps a paradoxical one: it is to be acutely tuned-in to the experiences and meaning systems of others—to indwell—and at the same time to be aware of how one’s own biases and preconceptions may be influencing what one is trying to understand. (p. 123)

In keeping with Jordan's (2002) conceptualization of cultural translations through ethnographic encounters, the aim is not to provide an exhaustive account of each of these contexts, nor is the aim to compare one cultural context with another. Rather, the aim is to explore the diversity of attributes of active, enduring singing engagement that exist within these different socio-cultural contexts, including my own, a Fine Arts School in Canada.

1.2.2. Music Education in Today's Public Schools in Canada

In the face of rapid world change in economies, technologies, and sociocultural demographics, educational communities grapple with providing young people with relevant learning environments. In the many discussions I have had with parents, teachers, counselors, administrators, and school board officials, there appears to be a spectrum of concerns, including keeping kids off the street, to university entrance, to health and wellbeing, to skill development, to creativity and innovation. And yet, my sense is that common concerns with present day learning conditions center primarily around issues of engagement, specifically sustained engagement whereby learners are challenged and guided in a supportive environment with curricula that fosters sustained involvement toward a progression of deep, meaningful, and enduring learning experiences. Indeed, there appears to be little disagreement about what we want for our learners, colleagues, and audiences in today's digital age: deep level engagement in the process of making art and conveying meaningful messages in personally authentic ways that are capable of transforming lives. Many recognize that the dry curriculum of music replication in 'high stakes' competitive programs is not fostering the above-mentioned goals for our learners (O'Neill, 2012a). One might therefore ask the question: How is this method working for us with today's music learners?

O'Neill (2012a) describes music learners as "dramatically different" (p. 169) from music learners a generation ago: there exists a vast array of music resources and choice, learners have more autonomy in their learning, and learners are immersed in technology in music learning in ever increasing ways. These changes have presented enormous challenges for music educators, particularly those who have been immersed in traditional music practices. As a result, researchers, teachers, and students can feel

alienated to each other due to the “increasing sense that our knowledge and values differ between generations and between cultural groups” (p. 170).

Music learning opportunities in public schools in the last decade have dropped significantly. In a bilingual study conducted in 2010 for the Coalition for Music Education in Canada², which surveyed principals from 1,204 schools across Canada, the top three reasons respondents reported for this decline were lack of funding (26%), lack of time (timetable pressures) (24%), and lack of teacher expertise (16%). Interestingly, 38% of elementary music teachers reported having no background in music at all (Hill Strategies Research, 2010). This last statistic raises the question, how music learning in present day educational environments can even exist? Given the seemingly ever-widening gap that exists between past music learning supports and current practice, there is a strong case for new paradigms, research, and approaches for relevant music learning in today’s contexts, particularly in singing.

In choral music education, choral festival participation has decreased to such an extent that even Canada’s national festival classes for public schools are in jeopardy³. There are many reasons for the decline: lack of funding in public schools to run choral and singing classes, lack of teacher expertise among pre-service teachers coming from universities that lack singing and choral programs. My specific focus in this inquiry explores how teachers of singing and choral directors/leaders of singing can make singing more accessible, relevant, and transformative to learners, and what pedagogical practices are effective in engaging singing learners in ways that are transformative through deep-level connections between skills, relationship building, engaged agency, and positive values in singing. Before going any further, I wish to outline a view of the current context of music education in public schools with respect to ‘the big three,’ which are especially prominent features: the band, the orchestra, and the choir.

² See *A Delicate Balance: Music Education in Canadian Schools*, prepared for the Coalition for Music Education in Canada by Hill Strategies Research Inc.
<http://www.hillstrategies.com/content/delicate-balance-music-education-canadian-schools>

³ Although no national study exists, Diane Johnstone and Pam Allen, executive directors of the *Federation of Canadian Music Festivals*, have voiced their concern with the shrinking numbers of participant choirs in both the regional festival choral classes for schools, and the national classes.

1.2.3. Music Learning and the Large Ensemble

The antecedents of large ensemble programs in schools, the military (band), the music academy (orchestra), and the church (choir), all appear to be in decline in the western world⁴. Although the socio-historical and socio-cultural underpinnings of large music ensembles have shifted values compared to past decades, the implications for music learning within large ‘catch-all’ ensembles begs critical reflection on the question: *Is the baby tossed out with the bath water?* In the face of shifted values in educational priorities is there a place for large ensembles in today’s school music education?

The solution may lie in *how* learning occurs within present day communities of learners. The proliferation of other social and cultural participatory forms of music engagement have placed *listening* to music as the number one choice of public activity in the world; yet, music *participation* in these genres is at an all time low. For example, nearly 15 years ago, O’Neill, North and Hargreaves (2000) found that only 17% of students from a large sample in the UK reported playing an instrument compared to 100% of participants reporting listening to music for an average of 2.45 hours per day. This finding was in spite of the fact that music was part of the national curriculum in England at the time of the study, and all young people aged 5-16 years were required (to meet curriculum objectives) to engage in active music making in all public schools. Perhaps even more concerning is that these figures are likely to be similar today and seem to resonate with reports on the declining music education landscape in Canada (Hill Strategies Research, 2010).

For most students involved in music at school, the large ensembles tend to characterize their main music learning experience. Music ensembles reach large numbers of learners. Although there are particular instrument needs and preferences to ‘flush out’ integral components of instrumental ensembles, large ensembles can include over 100 participants in a variety of flexible configurations accounting for gender, age,

⁴ In an interview with former president of the Coalition for Music Education in Canada, Dr. Dennis Tupman, points out that societal influences and pressures on the longevity of music learning in large ensembles are of great concern to long-term educators who have witnessed and continue to ‘live through’ the shift. A long-term ‘critical reflective practitioner’ himself, Dennis reminds us of the context of the mainstays of music education in Canada.

and timetables. A variety of musical styles are available for large ensembles from the music publishing industry and collections within school music libraries. Although instruments are expensive, most public school music teachers and administrators have found means to provide opportunities for all students to participate. Large ensemble learning is relatively low cost per student due to the usual high numbers of participants per teacher. However, as the Coalition for Music Education study previously mentioned points out, the problems of funding, time allocation, and teacher expertise present challenges for maintaining these ensembles.

1.2.4. Music Learning: Individual Versus Group Learning

For the most part, formal music learning in western contexts takes place in individual and group learning contexts with private music lessons on the one hand and music ensembles on the other. These separate approaches to music learning perpetuate an often-held view among teachers that ‘studio’ learners lack an awareness of key elements in music collaboration and ‘ensemble’ students lack musical independence. The BC Education Plan⁵ describes *personalized learning* as “student-centered learning that’s focused on the needs, strengths and aspirations of each individual young person.” In my view, the implementation of ‘personalized’ learning over the past decade has compromised the potentials for group music learning where learner-centered approaches can flourish. Indeed, many students in the school system continue to be excluded from group music learning due to perceived ‘disabilities’ in music aptitude, remedial supports, or disruptive behavior. This perpetuates a tragic legacy of music education, particularly with singing, which is premised on the notion that music talent exists for only some of the population. Indeed, music learning in a group has been thwarted by ‘individualized instruction’ where there is little opportunity for group interaction, dialogue, and shared purpose in music making. As I have seen through countless examples in my experience, the group-learning environment can support the individual to access the benefits of *relational* learning in a community. It is through the TME principles of *shared experience*, *critical reflection*, *dialogue*, and *empowerment* (O’Neill, 2012a) that an educator can cultivate a learner-centered approach within a

⁵ see <http://www.bcedplan.ca/actions/pl.php>

group-learning environment. My teaching philosophy represents this view, with a particular emphasis on the notion that capacities for music expression exist in all people and the challenge for music pedagogy is to find the best ways to access and nurture these capacities.

Multiple ways of meeting the needs of young people with diverse learning styles may be mitigated through the vigorous use of metaphor, gesture, and multimodal ways of engaging learners. Metaphor has widely been accepted as a language tool for educators (de Guerre, 2002); gesture has been closely related to language and thought beginning in infancy (Kendon 1986; McNeill, 1985; Trevarthen, 1986) and increasingly we are attuned to messages through multi-modality (Kress, 2010; O'Neill & Senyshyn, 2012, p. 1). These 'muscles' for engaging learners need to be exercised by the reflective practitioner and supported through the development of effective strategies for music learning in today's rapidly changing socio-cultural contexts. An example of this form of reflective music pedagogy is highlighted through the music learning practices of the Kenyan Boys Choir (KBC) (see Chapter 3). For example, KBC director, Joseph Muyale Inzai, recognized over a period of time, that he had been looking the boys straight in the eye when singing with them and attributed this to a developed a sense of trust as the practice spread throughout the ensemble. By looking within and outside our borders through the present research, I hope we might acquire a deeper understanding of the power of music to transform lives and how we might leverage the affordances of transformative singing engagement to enhance choral education programs.

1.2.5. Out-dated Models of Music Learning? An Insider View

The account of this next section arises out of my experience and focuses a critical reflective lens on experiences of adjudicating and presenting workshops at music festivals. The pressing need for seeking new approaches to music learning can be revealed through examining critically the learning environment of the formal community competitive 'music festival.' For most music programs in schools in the last number of decades, the hallmark outcome of learning in the school year is the community 'music festival.' Educational music festivals, most often supported and sponsored by local community organizations, have provided performance spaces, adjudication, and

workshop opportunities, and spaces for music learners to hear other music ensembles. Despite well-intentioned efforts, the placement of choirs and singing repertoires into categories and classifications in festivals has not promoted singing – it has thwarted it. Current music festivals with classification systems and compulsory repertoire classes struggle annually to maintain participants. Regional, provincial, and national festivals that I have in the past and continue to adjudicate perpetuate out-dated models of music competition that are proving to be unsustainable. To be sure, well-intentioned volunteers who care deeply about music participation run these festivals. However, in my view the ‘talented’ selected few are rewarded at the expense of celebrating, widely and inclusively, cultural meanings through singing.

This disconnect between the western cultural institution of the music festival and real world music experiences of young people was highlighted for me a few years ago when I was adjudicating at a festival in Toronto, Canada. One of the participating choirs was from an inner city school in what was considered to be ‘ground-zero’ for immigration in Canada, a school with wide socio-cultural diversity including many youth from Latin American countries. I recall anticipating an interesting program as the young singers brought out drums, claves, and shakers. As the choir was about to start, one boy came out with a pair of claves and at that moment the festival MC interrupted the program, came up to the adjudication table and whispered, “there are to be no instruments in this festival class other than the piano”. I promptly replied quizzically, “the class is an age category, upper elementary school, two contrasting selections. I see no restriction. And further, they are about to sing a calypso piece with a clave. Are you telling me that the element that holds this cultural artifact together, cannot be permitted?” The festival MC relented and the performance went ahead. This occurrence, a common one in competitive music festivals in my experience, highlights the disconnection between the purveyors and curators of fixed models of achievement standards in artistic activities and the potential opportunities of encouraging ‘real world’ music and singing spaces. Although well intentioned, is the kind of example that highlights the need for new research and approaches that empower learners.

1.2.6. The Langley Fine Arts School (LFAS) and the LFAS ‘Senior Choir’

In this research, the study of transformative singing engagement (TSE) takes place at a public fine arts school in the village center of Fort Langley, British Columbia. The school was formed in 1988 by the Langley School District to build opportunities for learning through the arts in a ‘one building school’ from grades one to twelve. Focusing on the areas of music, art, drama, and dance for primary, intermediate and secondary students, the learning plan follows the prescribed academic program of BC schools along with increased time in each of the arts areas. An element of choice is introduced in grade six with students choosing two of the four arts areas, which increases their access to learning in these areas. Students choose one area of specialty from grade nine through twelve gaining deeper levels of learning with the increased time and experience. Many arts electives complement the students’ area of focus and exploration. Recently, a research component has been introduced into the school through interdisciplinary learner-based programs that have been offered by faculty and researchers from Simon Fraser University.

For over 25 years, the Langley Fine Arts Senior Choir has been a recognized singing community. I have been the director for 17 of those years. Youth singers between the ages of 15 and 18 years from across the school community are invited to join this choir regardless of their singing experience. Many styles of choral repertoire are explored; music from five centuries of choral music, including collaborative major works with the school orchestra such as Mozart’s *Requiem*, Carl Orff’s *Carmina Burana*, Vivaldi’s *Gloria*, and Barber’s *Agnus Dei* have been featured in the past few years. The LFAS singing program has been project-based, featuring thematic groupings of classical, gospel, folk, and popular music that are introduced, rehearsed, and shared. Conceptual boundaries of the term *choir* are challenged through new forms of singing communities. Many of the singers are also in vocal ensembles and chamber groups with mixed forms of instrumental and vocal, a cappella style pop, and traditional forms. Rock music projects have been undertaken, accessing students’ knowledge in current and classic rock genres. One such event was a concert with the rock group *Mariana’s Trench* at the Pacific Coliseum where the LFAS Chamber Choir joined the Vancouver portion of the ‘Face the Music Tour’ for two songs on stage. The LFAS choir has

recorded several CDs, sung for CBC radio, performed at national festivals, and toured in the United States and Cuba. The tradition, support, and legacy of the Langley Fine Arts program has empowered students to dedicate their learning to community-based projects outside of the school community. The community garden concerts, the environmental awareness initiative, and *Project Kenya Sister Schools*⁶ (recently titled *Pamoja*) are just a few examples where learning in the arts, particularly singing, have had active outreach to validate learning.

1.2.7. Action Research Context

My research methodology with students at the Langley Fine Arts School is rooted in *action research*, which calls for a reflective approach from the researcher coupled with purposeful and informed pedagogical action (McNiff, Lomax, & Whitehead, 1996). ‘Critical’ action research (Mills, 2003) leads the researcher toward a shared purpose in seeking knowledge and understanding, a departure from systemic and bureaucratic ‘agenda-driven’ reforms in education (Carr & Kemmis, 1986). As the purpose of this study involved gathering ‘insider knowledge’ of meaning making through singing, a shared participatory action research (PAR) (McIntyre, 2008) model seemed a good fit. According to McIntyre, PAR research is “achieved through a cyclical process of exploration, knowledge construction, and action at different moments throughout the research process” (p. 1).

There are four tenets that form the basis for PAR research: (1) a collaborative agreement to explore an issue, (2) a willingness to participate in both self and group reflection in order to obtain clarity on the inquiry, (3) a common commitment to collective action toward solutions for the benefit of those involved in the research, and (4) forging connections between researchers and participants regarding the dissemination and reporting of the findings. PAR projects support and validate the primacy of field research and the individual researcher’s claim to know her own educational development (Whitehead, 2009, p. 176).

⁶ See: projectkenyasisterschools.com for the vision, scope, and cultural exchange development that has occurred over the past seven years since the project was initiated.

As mentioned previously, McKernan (1991) describes *action inquiry* as a way of empowering both the educator and the students as learners. Elliott (1991) describes the transformative possibility for changing the culture of teaching and learning or what he refers to as *cultural innovation* through action research. McKernan refers to Elliott's vision as "a creative response of resistance to the enforced technical rationality underpinning present government education policy" (p. 54). In the context of this research, we might think of the action research methodology as a process for enacting change at a "time of great upheaval and concern for professional development in classrooms and schools" (p. 58). According to McKernan, "new knowledge is discovered not by rigidly holding on to past belief but by questioning the status quo. When faced with pressing problems the teacher should not hand over research to others, but press ahead with a commitment to seeking out a solution" (p. 40).

My role in this research is threefold: as *researcher*, as the participants' *teacher*, and as *conductor* of the choir. As the participants were my own students, it has therefore been integral to this inquiry to acknowledge *self as researcher* (Willingham, 2001) and to be aware of the 'trappings' of assumptions in pedagogical and observational interpretations in order to address (and avoid) potential issues of power relations such as students wanting to 'please.' Freire's (1970, 1973, 1985) ideas of conscientization, critical reflection, and dialectic unity of theory and practice, combined with the close observation of participants' feelings, thoughts, and actions using the *constant comparative* method of qualitative analysis (Maykut & Morehouse, 1994), support the role of the researcher as the interpreter of meaning. For this reason it is helpful to provide my background and experience as it has both informed the rationale for conducting the research and my approach to the analysis of the data.

1.2.8. Researcher, Educator, Conductor Roles: Context and Assumptions

After observing the 'full bodied' engaged singing in my research on transformative singing leadership (TSL) (see Chapter 3) with the singing leaders in international singing contexts, and having seen (and struggled with) relatively 'disembodied' disengaged singing at festivals, workshops in Canada, and with my own

students, I wanted to design a study involving collaborative leadership with students and colleagues to explore singing engagement from 'the inside out' as a model for research and pedagogy in choral education. I offer next a brief summary of my own background and experience that informed my interest in this research.

I grew up in a world that fostered the belief that you either had an 'aptitude' for music, or you didn't. It wasn't even a question of degree. Music classes were for those who were 'good' at music. Of four brothers, early on, some perceived me as the 'musically talented one'. As I grew up, I was surrounded with other likeminded young musicians who were 'gifted.' I always felt somewhat cheated with this term; that somehow the one to two hours per day at the piano were discounted as an 'add-on' to what made me a young musician. The prevailing view was that music learning belonged to those who were like me, 'talented.' Being at odds with this view, I entered the teaching profession with a desire to help all children access music learning. If talent is a necessary ingredient in music learning, how is it that in over 30 years of teaching experience in elementary, secondary, university and community contexts, as both a generalist and specialist music educator, I have always witnessed eventually *all* learners feeling the pulse and matching the pitch?

As a choral conductor and collaborative music teacher at the Langley Fine Arts School, young singers have informed my interest in research into investigations of how empathy, compassion, and embodiment through singing offer affordances for youth engagement and positive learning outcomes. In the capacity of teaching singing with young people, I have found the traditional practice of singing in many western cultural institutions has tended to provide limited opportunities to some students. Many adults and youth have experienced singing as constrained and restricted to those who are considered 'talented.' Further, little is known about the pedagogical frameworks of singing leadership, specifically that of singing engagement. Singing pedagogy is, for the most part, devoid of language used to describe purposeful, engaged singing. Current pedagogical practices in singing may not provide the resiliency and sustenance of singing in today's globalized and technological world (O'Neill, 2012a). These approaches have actually increased the focus on performance achievement outcomes as indicators of learning, and perpetuated the simplistic notion that if we discover the

optimal conditions of learning through rigorous, systematic performance, we will become better music (singing) learners, or by implication, better teachers. It seemed to me that more understanding is needed about how singing engagement fosters transformative experiences and yet I could find no empirical research in this area. These concerns prompted the present research with aim of employing an action-based research design based on an interrelated program development component and study of transformative singing engagement to contribute to a better understanding of TSE in ways that might help address some of the challenges facing choral music education today.

1.2.9. The ‘Tipping Point’

Tolerance, inter-cultural dialogue and respect for diversity are more essential than ever in a world where peoples are becoming more and more closely interconnected. We look to governments, in particular, for political will and resolute action. On this international day for the elimination of racial discrimination, let us all be inspired anew by the fundamental principle, enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations and in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, of the equality of all human beings (Kofi Annan, 2004).

Having worked with a number of international choirs in countries where there are participatory cultures of singing, my curiosity of what lies between skill and expression in singing prompted further investigation in January 2008 after I had received an invitation to visit and work with the Mungaano National Choir and the Kenyan National Boys Choir in Nairobi on behalf of the Canadian Choral Federation. Also included in this trip was a visit to the schools involved in Project Kenya Sister Schools (PKSS) – a cultural exchange program established in 2005 by myself, primatologist Dr. Gillian LaPrairie, and the CEO of OI Pejeta Conservancy. This program enables Kenyan Children to go to schools in the Laikipia District in Central Province. During this time Kenya was in the grip of post-election violence and threatening civil war. But the singing response to the events of that time, particularly with the national choirs, was the significant ‘tipping point’ that initiated my inquiry to investigate cross-cultural expression in singing and singing engagement.

One particular afternoon during my time in a rehearsal with the National Boys Choir, my eyes focused on two young men roughly 20 years of age who were holding

hands during the singing of a song for peace, *Kenya, My Country*. I was informed from the leader/conductor, Joseph Muyale Inzai, that these boys were from opposing tribes who had been killing each other days before. At that very moment, three blocks away in the Serena Hotel, former UN secretary Kofi Annan, along with the president and opposition leader, were attempting to broker a deal to end the violence that was splitting the nation. The deal never came that day; however, the Boys Choir of Kenya was achieving a sense of unity through singing.

1.3. Research Themes

1.3.1. Transformative Singing Leadership (TSL)

To broaden my inquiry I began with four investigations and subsequent case studies with choirs and singing leaders in Cuba, Kenya, Ukraine and Denmark to look at the co-existence of singing skill and expression. Each case study involved an ethnographic encounters approach to cultural translation (Jordan, 2002) utilizing purposeful data collection in film footage, audio recordings, field notes, and still photography. My purpose with this data was to build a rich, descriptive account of the complexity of culturally diverse forms of singing within the context of singing performances and rehearsals. Further, my aim was to provide pedagogical perspectives from recognized singing leaders from different cultural contexts and to investigate what affordances singing offers when singing cultures are brought together with western perspectives and how we might best use these affordances to create learning opportunities for increasing cultural awareness, interconnectedness, and communication for singing learners. I refer to this as a form of transformative singing leadership (TSL).

Transformative leadership is a form of empowered leadership, which is fostered through an inter-dependence that schools have been slow to adopt. Present day learning environments face a critical necessity for youth empowerment (Sarason, 1990), as youth learners are currently more “alienated, resistant, and discouraged than ever before” (Zyngier, 2004, p. 2). Transformative leadership calls for a re-visioning and ‘breaking-out’ of past systemic frameworks in education in order to provide learning opportunities where the ideas of youth learners are “free to flow” (Bauman, 2000, p. 14).

The breaking down of power structures may enable young people to ‘act’ on their beliefs (Romansh, 1991). Research focused on organization leadership recognizes that transformational leadership is an effective way of generating *innovative behaviour* (Basu & Green, 1997). According to Nederveen Pieterse and her colleagues (2009), transformational leadership is defined as “a style of leadership that transforms followers to rise above their self-interest by altering morale, ideals, interests, and values, motivating them to perform better than initially expected” (p. 2). It is described as a form of “inspirational motivation” that requires the leader to express an “energizing vision” (p. 2). This encourages followers to “question the status quo” (p. 3), which fosters greater personal growth and development. Pieterse et al. refer to this as “psychological empowerment” (p. 3) or having the ability to act on the inspiration of transformative leadership.

The case studies that I present in Chapter 3 explore the experiences of leaders who have developed a rigorous, dynamic, and collaborative learning approach involving observation, modeling, sharing, leading that generates independence, empowerment, and empathy through transformative singing leadership.

1.3.2. Transformative Singing Engagement (TSE)

The overarching *transformative paradigm* led by social constructivists such as Habermas (1987), Vygotsky (1978), and critical theorist, Freire (1975) include approaches such as *transformative learning* (Clark, 1993; Mezirow, 1997; Taylor, 2007); and *transformative pedagogy* (Kincheloe, 1993). These approaches inform the *transformative music engagement* (TME) perspective first proposed by O’Neill (2012a) as a framework for conceptualizing how we might engage young people in music in purposeful and meaningful ways by nurturing their capacities for learning and expressing music through connective hubs or an “intricate sociocultural web” (O’Neill, 2012a, p. 166). Transformative music engagement is a learner-centered approach that generates independent, empowered learners (O’Neill, 2012a). Merging emotional engagement and connectivity (Furrer & Skinner, 2003) with a capacity for reflective self-awareness (Ridley, 1991), learners’ involvement in musical activities are infused with critical

reflections on self beliefs and values, and designed with new ways of bringing about transformed lives for themselves, others, and the community (O'Neill, 2014a).

This investigation seeks to build on and extend O'Neill's (2012a) transformative music engagement (TME) perspective, which draws on social constructivist theories, such as Vygotsky (1978), and critical pedagogy approaches, such as Freire (1970), and focus more specifically on singing, or what I refer to as transformative singing engagement (TSE). When we look into the processes and structures of music education today and in the past decades, music experiences in school seem disconnected from the real world music experiences of many young music learners. Many singing practitioners who wish to provide relevant learning experiences toward a present day learning 'authenticity' (Green, 2005) struggle to find models and pedagogical frameworks that provide the 'reach' and depth to engage their students. Transformative singing engagement (TSE) is an approach to choral singing education that aims to open up new possibilities for theory and practice. TSE moves us beyond merely solving problems and providing adequate opportunities for learners to acquire the basic skills and knowledge necessary for singing. Instead, TSE aims to provide opportunities for learners to experience perspective transformations, engaged agency in singing, and a sense of value and contribution to a community through singing.

In addition to O'Neill's (2012a) transformative music engagement, TSE draws on the phenomenological approach of *communicative musicality* (Malloch & Trevarthen, 2009). This broad concept has its origins in studies of mother and infant communication with a focus on the capacities of pulse, quality (timbre), and narrative. The theory of *communicative musicality* (Malloch, 1999) has since been characterized as the rhythmic sense of time that is felt communally through shared energy and common purpose. This idea of 'shared energy' and 'common purpose' both in and through music provides a lens through which we might come to understand how to foster *meaning making*, the very core of the human connection to music, through the use of TSE as a meaningful learner-centered pedagogical approach to choral singing education. The study into TSE investigates two main aspects of singing: physicality (skill) and communication (expression). This inquiry examines the separate and related features of physical and

communicative aspects through the subjective views of the learners engaged in a choral education program designed to foster transformative singing engagement.

1.3.3. Research Questions

The relationship between the two themes of this research and the main research questions will be discussed further in Chapters 3 and 4, where the rationale, methods, and findings for each of the two studies will be presented. The general questions this research aims to address are:

Theme One: Transformative Singing Leadership (TSL):

What are the main attributes of transformative pedagogical approaches used by singing leaders?

Theme Two: Transformative Singing Engagement (TSE):

How might a choral singing education program foster transformative singing engagement?

What are students' perceptions of their own transformative singing engagement?

1.4. Structure of the Thesis

In Chapter 2, I present a literature review of the transformative perspective as it relates to both singing leadership and singing engagement. This is followed by a presentation of the two studies: transformative singing leadership (TSL) in Chapter 3 and transformative singing engagement (TSE) in Chapter 4. Chapter 5 concludes by gathering the main threads of the studies and their implications together and suggesting next steps for research, musicianship, and pedagogy, as well as new potentials for these roles for extending music and singing engagement in choral singing education.

Chapter 2.

Literature Review

2.1. Overview

This chapter outlines the transformative paradigm and introduces the *transformative music engagement* (TME) perspective for understanding the approaches used in the following two studies of *transformative singing leadership* (TSL) and *transformative singing engagement* (TSE) respectively.

Although learning brings about change, change is not necessarily transformative. Thomas Kuhn (1970), in *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, characterizes transformative change as occurring when “one conceptual world-view is replaced by another” (p. 10). The focus on this inquiry with singers and singing leaders centers on the nature of what makes music, singing, and singing leadership *transformative*. In this review, part one explores the transformative perspective and key antecedents of transformative music engagement: the transformative paradigm, transformative learning, and transformative pedagogy. Part two outlines the dominant threads of TME more specifically that connect to the approaches of TSL (discussed in part four) and TSE (discussed in part five).

Part One: The Transformative Perspective

2.2. The Transformative Paradigm

The origins of transformative education lie in social and critical theory within what might be referred to as a transformative paradigm. Simply put, the transformative paradigm is about becoming empowered to take an active role in bringing about change (O'Neill, in press-a). Habermas (1987) argued for the necessity of critical reflection to avoid oppressive practices and hegemonic assumptions; Vygotsky (1978) advocated that learning was socially embedded through relations with others (1997); and Freire called for the education of emancipation, as follows:

Education makes sense because women and men learn that through learning they can make and remake themselves, because women and men are able to take responsibility for themselves as beings capable of knowing –knowing that they know and knowing that knowing that they don't. (Freire, 2004, p. 15)

According to Jackson (1986), traditional education practices provide “mimetic” learning in which the *teacher* is the creator/artist at the center; transformative education practices foster “unintended consequences” where the *learner* is at the center (p. 128). Giroux (2009) attributes this learner-centered view as representing “both a struggle for meaning and a struggle over power relations” (p. 439). Meaning making, which lies at the heart of transformative practices, is found internally rather than in external forms (p. xiv). Based in constructivist assumptions, personal and social transformations bring about perspective change to ‘see things differently’ or what Cossentino (2004) describes as encompassing “cognitive and emotional metamorphoses” (p. 64) to bring about change.

2.2.1. Transformative Learning

The theory of transformative learning (Mezirow, 1996; Taylor, 2007) combines values and experiences (personal) with new knowledge in an intricate process that is dialogic, action-oriented, and reflection-oriented. Learners collaborate and bring about

meaning that may lead to *perspective transformations*. According to Mezirow, a transformation in perspective occurs when learners and leaders engaged in critical reflection on their learning experience in order to change the ‘meaning schemes’ that are previously experienced in learning (Mezirow, 1991). These processes can infuse learning spaces with *critical dialogue* on ways of interpreting texts, and provide ways and means of building knowledge and understandings that can be learner-centered yet socially-based.

In *Innovations for Transformational Learning*, Fisher-Yoshida, Geller, and Schapiro (2009) describe the practices in transformative education as “the intentional use of educational experiences to bring about deep transformations in human consciousness and behavior” (p. 3). However, Taylor (2012) points out that “some teaching practices may have more potential for transformative learning than others” (p. 15). He reminds us that critical reflective practice, “is first and foremost about educating from a particular educational philosophy, with its own assumptions about the purpose of education, the role of the educator, and the nature of knowledge” (p. 15).

Mälkki and Green (2014) argue that transformative learning research has received criticism (Newman, 2012) for lacking the “conceptual tools to discuss the in-between microprocesses that are implicated in transformative learning” (p. 7). They also point out that transformative learning has been reduced by some to simple binary categories of “transformed or not transformed” (p. 7), which fail to take into account the disorienting dilemmas that act as catalysts or triggers to the necessary critical reflection or “existential challenges and the experiences involved in the process of change” (p. 7). Although the majority of theory and research on transformative learning is focused on adult learning (Taylor, 2008), there is a growing psychodevelopmental or lifespan view of transformative learning that views it as “reflecting continuous, incremental, and progressive growth (p. 7). This offers potential for helping younger learners adopt a different vision or let go of old habits in favour of “a vision of a different, more satisfying future” (Mälkki & Green, 2014, p. 18) with the same implications for the “teacher, instructor, or mentor who is accompanying the transforming person” (p. 18).

2.2.2. Transformative Pedagogy

Transformative pedagogy inspires the type of change in teaching through which learners “learn how to learn and develop a zest for learning that will last them a lifetime” (Goldenberg, 2001, p. 15). Concepts such as *Zone of Proximal Development* (ZPD) begun by Vygotsky early in the 20th century encourage this type of learning by opening the classroom doors for learners’ subjective understandings such as ethics, values, and beliefs. The pedagogical concept of the *reflective practitioner* (Schön, 1983) offers “an approach to an epistemology of practice based on close examination of what some practitioners ... actually do” (p. viii). As well, Schulman (1987) proposed that teachers “... strive to balance [our] goals of fostering individual excellence with more general ends involving equality of opportunity and equity among students of different backgrounds and cultures” (p. 15). These concepts of subjectivity, reflective practice, and equity and opportunity underlie the changes that may stimulate positive learning environments for all learners.

Kincheloe (1993) outlines four additional concepts of transformative pedagogy that are rooted in social constructivist theory: (1) the awareness of power relations that transcend aspects of education, (2) exposing deep “structures that shape education and society” (p. 197), (3) unveiling the implications of media on learning and pedagogy, and (4) mitigating systemic oppressive elements with community-oriented action. These four concepts involve a transformative pedagogical understanding of the learner context, which Anna Stetsenko (2004) describes as “viewing the self as being embedded within socio-cultural contexts and intrinsically interwoven with them” (p. 475). Kincheloe (2008) adds that:

Critical educators place great emphasis on the notion of context and the act of contextualization in every aspect of their work. When problems arise, they stand ready to connect the difficulty to a wider frame of reference with a wide array of possible causes. (p.32)

Together these concepts of transformative pedagogy seek to encourage critical capacities in learning spaces along with creating webs of connection between students, families, communities, and the world (McCaleb, 1997, p. 1).

However, educational paradigms under the yoke of the 'banking concept of education' (Freire, 2008) still persist with inherent power dynamics of exclusion and authoritative decision-making. As an alternative to these views and practices, transformative pedagogy draws on the notion of positive youth development through *youth empowerment*, particularly empowering *the silent voice* (Freire, 1998), *appreciative* models in youth and adult learning where positive learning effects can "guide attention toward peak experiences and strengths" (Cooperrider & Barrett, 2002, p. 236), and *voicing* (Ellsworth, 1989), where multiple voices are heard as expressions of diverse understandings.

Taken together, the conceptual frameworks of transformation, transformative learning, and transformative pedagogy have three basic concepts in common: experience, critical reflection, and dialogue (Taylor, 2007). More recently, Susan O'Neill (2012a, 2012b) has articulated a view of these transformational learning and pedagogy concepts in terms of young people's music engagement in present day music learning environments.

Part Two: Transformative Music Engagement (TME)

Youth are increasingly braiding, blending and blurring learning spaces, modes, structures and practices. They are transforming their music engagement in ways that are increasingly autonomous and self-directed. These are key features of the dynamic, interactive and transformative approach to music learning that I refer to as transformative music engagement (O'Neill, in press-c, p. 20).

2.3. Introduction to TME

Many practitioners wish to gain deeper understandings of what it means to be a music learner today and in particular, how we might best engage a broad group of music learners. Through challenging the existing uni-dimensional perspectives on knowledge and learning in today's music education environments, the vision of transformative music engagement favours multiple perspectives on learning (Gates, 1993) that lend new ways of navigating the new waters of music learning that exist in today's world. One such vision is O'Neill's (2012a) perspective on transformative music engagement (TME). The main principles of TME are presented in the following sections.

2.3.1. TME: Change in Music Education

TME acts as a catalyst for change in how we think about music learners and music learning with key principles to shift the pedagogical views of music practitioners. TME shifts the focus from viewing music learners from within a 'deficit versus talent/expertise' framework to one that presents the idea that all music learners in all contexts of development have musical strengths and competencies (O'Neill, 2006). These necessary shifts in thinking about what it means to be a music learner and music leader in present-day education communities can be aligned with claims for coherence between theory, research, and practice (Colwell & Webster, 2011 p. 163). Building coherent pedagogical approaches in the face of such rapid change in learners' contexts presents enormous challenges for long-term educators and requires shifts in long-held pedagogical paradigms.

2.3.2. TME Potentials

The TME perspective does not ignore pedagogical models of current and past ‘talent based’ approaches; rather, it suggests a stance for music education that generates the potential for a wider reach of music education for young people through necessary shifts in pedagogical approaches that might cultivate *musical and human flourishing* (Ansdell & DeNora, 2012). The nurturing of *musical and human flourishing* involves developing “musical knowledge and skills to understand ourselves and others and the world around us better...to become who we are and find a sense of place in our musical and cultural worlds” (O’Neill, in press-a, p. 2). TME is then situated as an approach that aligns with an expansive view of cultural representations through music, which are intimately connected and inseparable from the place in which it occurs (Abrams, 1996; Davis, 2009; Rasmussen, 1999;).

Characterized as a braiding of psycho-developmental or lifelong learning perspectives on transformational learning theory (Mezirow, 1990; Taylor, 2007) and transformative pedagogy (Kincheloe, 2008; McCaleb, 1997), O’Neill has gathered evidence from her previous studies (O’Neill, 2001, 2002, 2005, 2006, 2010, 2011a,b,c,d) about what constitutes the notion of *becoming a music learner*. TME derives from broad perspectives of music learning such as the study of 22,000 music learners in eight countries (McPherson & O’Neill, 2010), which explored the values and beliefs of music in their lives. The findings of these and other studies have broken and shaped the trail for transformative music engagement to provide a framework for a new expansive view of fostering the potential of music learners through a focus on four key areas:

- 1) Learner knowledge through making meaningful connections between the sources of music learning and the learner. The learner is never in a fixed state, but always in what Carl Rogers (1961) describes as the *process of becoming*;
- 2) Learner activity engagement in ways that develop skills, knowledge, reflection, and voice by *asking learners’ views on their own learning*;
- 3) Learning-teaching as a collaborative and mutually interdependent process that fosters a “sense of relevance, purpose and fulfillment” among learners (O’Neill, 2006, as cited in O’Neill, 2012a, p. 265);
- 4) Learning-teaching as both socio-cultural and socio-political transformative processes (O’Neill, 2012a).

O'Neill presses for a shift in research and pedagogy toward TME by contending that those in positions of guiding music learning must catch up to the music learners' transformation in their learning and learning relationships (O'Neill, 2009). As an example, today's technological contexts with digital immigrants (teacher) and digital natives (learner), both appear as 'aliens in the classroom' to each other (Green & Bigum, 1993). This apparent disconnect requires the educator to make a pedagogical shift toward understanding learner contexts and the conceptual views of their musical and non-musical worlds.

Since no single theory is sufficient for examining the complexities of transformative engagement, the TME framework draws on a number of interrelated theories in such a way that new conceptual frameworks might emerge, inform, and be informed by critical educational practice. The most salient theories are drawn from work on dialogical (Bohm, 1996; Wells, 2000), multimodal (Kress, 2010), and transformative learning (Mezirow, 2000).

2.3.3. Conceptual Framework of TME

The conceptual framework for TME derives from three main sources: a psychological-philosophical braiding of the nuanced, contextualized, and fluid nature of social meaning making (Bauman 2000), the intricate webs of connection that take place within learning ecologies that are capable of bringing about learners' *perspective transformations* (Mezirow, 2000), and a sense of engaged agency in an activity where learners derive a sense of value and contribution (Stetsenko, 2010).

With the technological options available today, young people are finding their own ways of music learning (Gardner & Davis, 2013). In participatory cultures of young people, knowing, learning, and understanding are made meaningful through developing identities that represent the active project of forming and carrying out purposeful actions that contribute to social practices and a vision for the future. Aspects of music learning such as meaning-making, symbols, social interaction, values, and actions are viewed as dynamic, relational, and experiential, and in relation to their temporal and spatial

contexts. As such, TME responds to two fundamental questions of music curriculum pedagogy and music education research:

- 1) How can we create music learning opportunities that engage learners and expand their understanding of music, themselves, others, and the world around them?
- 2) How can we move beyond a focus on *motivating to learn* toward *motivation during music learning* (engagement)?

Although there is no one approach to bring about transformative engagement in music learning, there are several theoretical principles that can act as guideposts for educators, researchers, and learners who are seeking a responsive approach to music education in today's world. This context-based learning approach looks at all learning explorations, including early in life, to derive the following eight interrelated principles.

2.3.4. Key Principles of TME

The eight key principles of TME are as follows:

1) *Enculturation*: Musical enculturation may be explained as a process of music learning that is culture-specific and experienced in everyday life, both as unique systems such as scales and rhythmic elements, and as universals such as common auditory experiences (Fritz et al., 1989; Hannon & Trainor, 2007). In *The Musical Mind*, John Sloboda (1985) characterizes *musical enculturation* as a shared inheritance of processes and motivations in which “the learning that takes place as a result of our exposure to the normal musical products of our culture in childhood” (p. 6).

2) *Connectedness*: Through a process of reflection, dialogue, inquiry, and action (O'Neill, 2012a), real life experiences are connected with learning (Aoki, 1993).

3) *Communicative Expression*: Through recalling lived experiences in order to interpret texts and musical ideas, the music learner emits precise expressive aspects of “musical authenticity” (Green, 2005).

4) *Embodied Physicality*: A deep learning experience that has the music learner and music leader “all in,” awakening a kinesthetic intelligence (Gardner, 1991).

5) *Agency*: The initiative and capacity to act purposefully and intentionally, which strengthens engagement toward powerful learning transformations that enable expansive learning opportunities (Engeström & Sannino, 2010).

6) *Affordances*: The learner's circumstance, relationships, and opportunities that enable/foster learning (Gladwell, 2008).

7) *Empowerment*: A process whereby people come to believe in their ability "to act" and this belief "is tied to capable action" (Romanish, 1991, p. 4). A means to empowerment is the development of a learner-centered approach that enables learners to *find their voice*.

8) *Experiential Learning*: The main features involve negotiating contradictions and developing resiliency, seeking affordances and overcoming constraints, constructing meanings and identities, pursuing multiple pathways, and negotiating back and forth exchanges with the world.

As may be understood by the above-mentioned eight key principles, the approach of TME alters *agenda-based* learning paradigms focused on motivation before the activity and focuses instead on *learner-centered* paradigms involving engagement while 'doing' the activity.

2.3.5. Interrelated Concepts to the Approach of TME

TME is a holistic approach to youth music learning that I conceptualize in five interrelated ways: (1) inclusivity, (2) differentiating, (3) permeable and critically reflective, (4) socially connective, and (5) engaged agency whereby music learners have a sense of value and purposeful engagement.

1) Inclusivity

Who is involved? Who is invited? The TME approach has the potential to access all music learners in developing capacities and building knowledge and to "fostering the empowerment and resiliency necessary for sustaining music engagement and overcoming negative constraints on learning" (O'Neill, in press-a, p. 7; see also O'Neill,

2011). Empowerment and resiliency are capacities that are yet still untapped in many formal music and singing classes with young learners. However, situated in this positive framework of youth development, capacities and potentials for music engagement are viewed as existing in all learners through enabling environments that are welcoming and challenging.

A starting point for TME features an inclusive, participatory space in a positive, safe and supportive learning environment (Jennings et al., 2006; Jenkins, 2009; O'Neill, 2012a). As singing is such a personal endeavour with internal processes of perceiving time and motion, generating sound through our bodies, and making meaning through texts, shared environments must be perceived as inviting, non-threatening spaces that reward vulnerability and establish trust. Safe environments promote participatory cultures in music where the music/singing learning process is embedded with unfolding openness and dynamic potential (Fromm, 1976). The approach of TME invites and includes multi-modal ways of music learning that are integrated into the lived experience of youth music learners. The social semiotic theory of Gunther Kress moves us beyond language as the dominant meaning-making mode to include other sensory modalities, adding sound to language grounding music learning that can be “emergent, creative, and agentic” (Kress, 2010).

Not customarily associated with supporting new pedagogical forms, pop culture phenomenon such as the television series, *Glee*, has generated support for singing programs that promote safe, inclusive environments. Conversations with choral teachers have highlighted ‘the Glee phenomenon’ and the affordances that writers, producers, and actors have provided by stepping in front of racism, homophobia, and bullying and by including youth-aged singers as the messengers. Paradoxically, the mode of representation, the ‘non-participatory’ television show, perpetuates the myth that you must be bestowed the title of ‘singer’ to be one (Kress, 2010, O'Neill & Senyshyn, 2012). These environments are inclusive, open, and dialogic through which participatory cultures are increasing the participation rates of community choirs and meeting the needs of learners within wider contexts as these participatory cultures expand to include online cultures. Many choirs, singers, and singing ensembles are promoting their work on YouTube channels promoting YouTube choir cultures. New

emerging vocal ensembles with iconic world recognized ensembles such as the Finnish group, *Rajaton*, and the Swedish group, *The Real Group*, meet through online live music situations involving workshops and YouTube demonstrations.

Participatory cultures require us to understand and value the experiential context of our learners and to ask their views/perspectives on their own learning as we encourage and support their own artistic expressions. Previous domains of the conductor and singer roles are challenged within the framework of TME; the boundaries of these roles are blurred as we invite our singers into leadership roles of communicating the sung texts.

In addition, this inclusive model challenges traditional music ensemble learning identities through which music identities are formed as 'belonging to' and 'being in.' Students will say "I play in the concert band" or "I'm in choir." These singular conceptual views of *self as belonging* empower some learners yet limit others from reaching their full music learning potential. Richard Sennett (1996) warns of the trappings of these approaches in which "the 'we' feeling, which expresses the desire to be similar, is a way [for men] to avoid the necessity of looking deeper into each other" (p.36). These 'belonging' paradigms, the mainstays of music education communities in Canada can 'swallow up' the potential for individual voices to be heard and to contribute to a dynamic learning environment. On the other hand, participatory cultures that exist in safe, inclusive environments promote engagement in music activity where individual voices are 'seen', 'heard,' and 'respected' (Bohm, 2004).

2) Differentiating: the context of the learner

In my view, music education, in its quest for measured achievement standards such as those found in sequenced, prescribed learning outcomes, has de-contextualized and separated the learner from environments connected to the origin of the music. A frequent example of this can be seen and heard with the published renderings of songs from different global regions. Arrangers, editors, and publishing companies have effectively 'strip-mined' the ethnicity out of traditional forms and replaced them with simple rhythmic structures and simplified accompaniments, which in effect remove possibilities for developing the capacities necessary for experiencing, understanding,

empathizing, and valuing context and in particular *difference*. Transformative music learning rejects oversimplified inclusivity, which Bauman (2000) describes as “the denial, stifling or smothering out of differences” and instead, strives for “ a unity put together through negotiation and reconciliation” (p. 178). The music learners in our midst are in need of what Carolyn Sheilds (2013) describes as “critically reflective educators to help students understand that their world is made up of multiple and often conflicting perspectives . . . and contextually determined truths” (p. 8).

TME draws on aspects of transformative pedagogy (Kincheloe, 2008) that acknowledges difference and the context of the learner. This acknowledgement requires the educator to shift from a conceptual lens of a *production mode* of learning to a *contextual and relational mode* where ‘zones of complexity’ account for difference and interpretations are appreciated for the contexts and ‘lived experience’ of the learner. Rather than an isolationist approach that ignores or attempts to remove outside influences on the learner, “teachers can breathe life into lessons and elevate learner engagement by integrating individual, neighbourhood, regional, and world circumstances that can make the content areas *feel real* . . . learner-teacher relationships must attend to the social cultural, and political contexts in which that learning occurs” (O’Neill, 2014a).

This approach to music learning was rare in my experience as a music learner, which for me, as I stated earlier, has prominent and salient associations with competitive music festivals. I recall an event from a particular ‘romantic music’ piano class when I was age 15 in which a very accomplished student and friend from previous festivals and workshops was participating. My friend played a clean, beautifully passionate performance and I recall thinking he had easily won the class. The adjudicator gave his customary summative comments at the end, telling my friend that “he had no right” playing Chopin until he was “over 40 years of age” when he would have experienced life, love, and beauty. I recall this experience as unfair and it stuck with me as it appeared outside my formative view of music experience. Clearly the adjudicator was reflecting a model of music development that refused to acknowledge the ‘lived experience’ of the early music learner.

In contrast to this example of a segmented view of music learning, TME involves a view that we are always in a continuous process of becoming music learners, while our memories simultaneously connect us to our past “lived experiences” (e.g., Althusser, 2001; see also Barrett & Stauffer, 2009; Wingstedt, 2005; Younker & Hickey, 2007). Music learning is then seen as a complex array of affordances and opportunities that exist for some individuals, yet others are constrained by external provisional circumstances, such as the external constraints articulated by Gladwell (2008). Too often systemic power dynamics and assumptions made by some educators overshadow progressive pedagogical strategies by others aimed at developing a curiosity about and mindfulness of the context of individual learners. In the face of political gridlocks between government, school board, administration, and teacher power structures, new frameworks are needed to shift educators away from categorizing, classifying, and de-contextualizing learners. O’Neill brings forward the critical theorist Paulo Freire (1998) to describe the context imperative of TME:

Our relationship with the learners demands that we respect them and demands equally that we be aware of the concrete conditions of their world, the conditions that shape them. To try to know the reality that our students live is a task that the educational practice imposes on us: Without this, we have no access to the way they think, so only with great difficulty can we perceive what and how they know. (p. 58)

Investigations that are rooted in relational and social contexts, such as the studies of this thesis, probe the nature of what Lucy Green describes as “music learning authenticity” (Green, 2005). In this sense, ‘authenticity’ is found in the experience, inseparable from the context of the learner. Singer and music learners are able to ‘find their voice’ when the context and culture that surrounds them is appreciated, understood, and valued.

3) Permeable and critically reflective

Those who authentically commit themselves to the people must re-examine themselves constantly (Freire, 1970, p. 60).

Often cited in intercultural education research, Paulo Freire has linked social and personal transformation with critical reflection as a means to redistribute power (Freire, 1970, p. 36). TME involves a transparent dialogic approach to access youth music

learners' views of their own learning and combines a sense of connectedness and emotional engagement (Furrer & Skinner, 2003) with a capacity for critical reflective or reflexive self-awareness (Ridley, 1991). Drawn from dialogue reflection (Mezirow, 1990; Reynolds & Beitler, 2007), O'Neill (2012a) suggests that the learning spaces may involve dialogues of seemingly opposing views that come together in 'contact zones' (Hermans, 2001), which include voices with divergent points of view (Kincheloe, 2008).

TME focuses in on the ideas of *dialogic inquiry* in education (Wells, 2000) where the uniqueness of each activity involves particular settings, with particular artifacts (repertoire) even though it may involve the same individuals:

any activity is situated in place and time; although there may be common features across activities and settings, each activity is unique, since it involves the coming together of particular individuals in a particular setting with particular artifacts, all of which have their own histories which, in turn, affect the way in which the activity is actually played out (p. 59).

Dialogic inquiry recognizes the highly contextual nature of music learning found in the capacity of critical reflection, perhaps the most pervasive aspect of TME, as it may permeate all aspects of teaching and learning.

The principle of *experiential learning* is also found through transformative pedagogy (McCaleb, 1997), which aims to develop learners' "critical explorations of their own knowledge of music through representations that involve artistic, media, and cultural ecologies" (O'Neill, 2012a, p. 177). These *learner-centered* approaches based on early ideas such as Vygotsky's "zones of proximal development" (Vygotsky, 1986; Wells, 1999) provide models that we, as educators, only now seem to be able to contemplate. These approaches can only be viewed through a critically reflective lens that is trained on the relevance of music pedagogy with present day learners. With this view, O'Neill advocates for *expansive music learning opportunities* that are focused beyond "high-stakes" competitive, performance based learning models to give way to providing for involving young people in a reflective process about issues that matter to them (Engeström & Sannino, 2009).

4) Social connectivity

Why would the process of learning music be anything but a social enterprise? Music never exists in a vacuum. Music is shared, even from within a solitary environment, someone or something is always involved in listening. Stetsenko (2009) points out in her arguments that draw heavily on the ideas of Vygotsky (1986), “persons are agentive beings who develop through embeddedness in socio-cultural contexts and within relations to others” (p. 3). However, social connectivity is not necessarily about conforming or reaching consensus; it is also about connecting with and across differences to deepen and enrich our experiences and sense of who we are as music learners. O’Neill (2012a) encourages educators to consider alternatives to a fixed notion of music learning within ‘communities of practice’ (Lave & Wenger, 1991) with imbedded ‘inclusive agendas’ in favour of approaches that empower learners’ ability “to compare and contrast differences that act as a vehicle and a catalyst for growth and change, identity constructions, creative processes, and artistic expressions” (p. 167).

5) Engaged Agency

A fifth and final characteristic of TME, *engaged agency*, refers to the capacity of individuals to engage in music learning in meaningful ways that make a difference in their lives and communities (O’Neill, 2012b). Agency “refers to the capacity of individuals to act independently and to make their own decisions based on an awareness of their situation and the range of responses open to them” (Hammond & Wellington, 2013, p. 7). Garfinkel (1963) argued that most people are complacent and view the world without questioning taken for granted meanings and predictable behaviours provided that they lead to sought after or satisfactory outcomes. By creating awareness and “changing the ‘rules of the game’ other possibilities for action open up” (p. 8). This type of action-oriented music learning offers the music learner a vitality, a way of being ‘all in’ and experiencing a combined sense of challenge and freedom that Charles Taylor (1989) qualifies as kind of reversal of disengagement:

Rather than disengaging, we throw ourselves more fully into the experience, as it were. There is a kind of search which involves “being all there”, being more attentively ‘in’ our experience. (p.163)

Inherent in agency is the concept of ‘becoming’ that Stetsenko (2012) describes as “ the sense of ontological existence as a path of a continuous, ceaseless, and

dynamic moment-to-moment transformation in one's standing and relations vis-à-vis the social world" (p.1). A key aspect in *engaged agency* is the feeling of empowerment and autonomy in the individual for building "music learning authenticity" (Green, 2005).

Rather than focus on agency directed towards musical activities that reproduce existing structures and practices, agentic musical lives are focused intentionally and intensely on the process of musical creation, experimentation and innovation that "open up" possibilities for obtaining personal musical goals.

2.3.6. Conclusion

Through the five inter-related constructs found in *transformative music engagement*: (1) inclusivity, (2) differentiating, (3) permeable and critically reflective, (4) socially connective, and (5) engaged agency whereby music learners have a sense of value and purposeful engagement, the notion of *motivating the learner to learn* is replaced with *engaging the learner during learning*. Through empowerment (Toshalis & Nakkula, 2012, p. 29) and engaged agency (O'Neill, 2012b; Stetsenko, 2012;), music learners/singers 'own' their own learning and direction through a learner-centered approach where personalized learning experiences (around interests) "reside in notions of respect, reciprocity, engagement, autonomy, empowerment, community, democracy and dialogue" (Flutter, 2010). The TME approach fosters the development of interrelated capacities where individuals are brought together in fluid, non-compromising yet connective ways of music learning. The key concepts and descriptions outlined in TME provide the bedrock for two derivative approaches: transformative singing leadership (TSL) and transformative singing engagement (TSE). The case studies of singing leaders (TSL) and the action research study of TSE provide examples of singing pedagogies that feature the deeply-rooted interrelated concepts found in O'Neill's (2012a) TME perspective.

2.4. The Phenomenon of Singing

Vocal sound is one of the defining features of humanity (Graham Welch, 2005).

Singing is a highly complex phenomenon involving processes with both biological and cultural roots of origin (Brown et al, 2004; Cross & Morley, 2008; Mithen, 2005; Mithen & Parsons, 2008). Welch (2005) describes vocal utterances of speech and singing as “two constellations” that may overlap. Speech and language centers are brought together and “generated from the same anatomical and physiological structures and initiated/interpreted by dedicated neuropsychobiological networks whose development and function are shaped by cultural experience” (p. 239). Welch surmises that due to its presence everywhere and *bipotentiality* for speech and singing, the vocal instrument occupies “central components in many of the world’s diverse performing arts.” In part, Study 1 aims to investigate meaning systems that emerge from cultural experiences in singing. Part 2 of this review seeks to pick up the dominant and relevant threads of TME to extend toward the approaches of *transformative singing leadership* (TSL) and *transformative singing engagement* (TSE)

2.4.1. Choral Singing Pedagogy

Many youth and adults have experienced singing learning as constrained and restricted to those who are considered ‘talented.’ Further, little is known about the pedagogical frameworks of singing engagement, and specifically singing leadership. Singing pedagogy is for the most part devoid of language used to describe purposeful, engaged singing. In a review of key philosophical positions on choral singing pedagogy Cohen (2000) highlights Christopher Small’s (1998b) concept of ‘musicking’ as contrasting the common view of singing pedagogy within choral music education contexts in which the choral experience is typically characterized as “an interaction between a singer and a piece of music within a group setting under the guidance of a conductor (Robinson & Winold, 1976, p. 3). According to Don L. Collins (1993), it is ‘the piece of music’ that generates a ‘peak experience’ and that “to have an aesthetic experience one must be involved with an art ‘object’ [emphasis added]” (p. 60). In

reviewing other 'object driven' choral education philosophies such as Kenneth H. Phillips (2003), Cohen describes the absence of "a systematic or fundamental way how choral singing itself may build relationships and foster identity formation among choir members" (p. 24). From this absence, Cohen places emphasis on Small's 'relational' view of choral singing pedagogy⁷, who calls for two imperatives of music experience: (1) the relationship of vocal sounds and (2) the relationships of those in the community taking part (p. 23). Both of these imperatives are included in two recent studies occurring in Canada: one conducted by Lee Willingham (2002), *A Community of Voices*, which provides a 'foot in the door' into meaning systems from the perspectives of *singers* in community choirs, and another from the conductor perspective from Marta McCarthy (2006), *Sound into Gesture: A Study of Conductors' Experience*. My research formally aims to extend the relational imperatives of Small, the value and meaning investigations of Willingham, and the conductors' experience of McCarthy through the transformative lens.

2.4.2. Research on Choral Conducting/Leadership

Much has been written on choral music leadership to build understanding in choral techniques (Davids & LaTour, 2012; Hasseman & Jordan, 1991; Nesheim & Noble, 1995), choral conducting (Durrant, 2003; Ehmann, 1968; Ehret, 1959; Ericson, Ohlin, & Spånberg, 1976) and choral music approaches (de Quadros, 2012; Pohjola, 1993). Within these and many other sources, approaches are offered from the perspective of the conductor as *initiator* and *source* of all singing activity. Yet some approaches offer hints toward transformative practice in singing leadership. Durrant (2003) suggests that we need to shift the frame of reference of the choral conductor away from the 'dictatorial male figure' to revitalize other paradigms of singing leadership. James Jordan (2011) in *The Musician's Breath: the Role of Breathing in Human Expression* offers an approach that connects body, mind and spirit. However, in all of these approaches, methods, and conducting techniques, I have found no literature that examines transformative leadership of choral conductors and further, no source that

⁷ Cohen's investigated Christopher Small's choral pedagogy in prison contexts.

offers a conceptual development of transformative singing leadership. Drawing on transformative music engagement my research into TSL and TSE aims to fill this gap.

2.4.3. Transformative Leadership in Music Education – *Early Examples*

To be an artist is not the privilege of the few; it is the necessity of us all. *Robert Shaw*

As mentioned in the previous section, there is an absence of literature on transformative leadership in music education. However, I would like to draw attention to two examples of choral conductors in my experience whose leadership philosophies resonate with the principles of the transformative paradigm. In *Dear People*, a biography of Robert Shaw, Joseph Musselmann (1979) reveals the life and work of the preeminent American choral conductor through critical reflections within his letters to the singers of the Robert Shaw Chorale following their rehearsals. Describing his legacy, Musselmann points to, “that incredible vitality which convinces ordinary people who perform under his direction that they themselves possess the capacity to realize an essential life-force through music” (p. ix). In a career that spanned five decades as a choral leader through the mid and latter half of the 20th century and in an era that had not yet contemplated *transformative leadership*, Shaw’s sourced “the potential relationships between art and life” and attempted to attain “cultural diplomacy” in choral leadership (preface, x). I met Robert Shaw in 1990 with my late colleague, choral educator John Trepp at a choral music conference in Pheonix Arizona, in which Shaw was the keynote speaker. Arriving late from a plane delay, a 75-year old Shaw ran on stage, hushed the delegates, and began a tirade against “the electronic church.” His speech challenged choral leaders to engage their singers in making music without the aid of microphones and acoustical deadening and to revitalize a cappella singing as a builder and sustainer of vibrant communities. In foreshadowing the ideas within transformative singing leadership, Musselmann’s portrayal of Shaw’s example resonates with Taylor’s (1989) notion of being ‘all in,’ and his referral to Plato’s “darkness to the brightness of true being” (p. 123). Willingham (1997) refers to Robert Shaw’s prevailing view of protector or curator of the good in art: “Robert Shaw, the great American conductor, often refers to the creative arts as the conservative arts. This obvious play upon language suggests,

“that the arts conserve or preserve that which is noblest in human history” (p.115). This prevailing view will be seen in the conceptual view of singing leadership with Anatoliy Avdievsky in Chapter 3.

A decade later in Finland, we can find another singing leader, Erkki Pohjola, who embodied some of the principles of the transformative paradigm in his music education system called the Tapiola Sound. In a chapter entitled, the *Joy of Singing*, Pohjola alludes to meaning making through singing through a “desire to bring it out expressively [as] you delve into the inner meanings of the text” (p.102). Stressing the starting point as creating an environment where “it feels safe to sing” (p. 98), he strives for “a sense of belonging, a repertoire that [people] can feel at home with . . . moving towards a demanding end with their own voices” (p. 91). Pohjola suggests that the leader’s choice of text must resonate with the lives of the singers if it is to bring the audience and choir together (p. 94). Given that for nearly thirty years, the Tapiola Choir was considered an unparalleled model of choral innovation in the world, and that Erkki Pohjola offers the principles of inclusivity, empowerment, connectivity to lived experience as central to his work, perhaps his practice in Finland may suggest possible precursors to transformative singing engagement.

2.4.4. Transformative Leadership

Carolyn Sheilds (2013) describes the “uncontrollable change” (p. 5) that occurs in lives, the impact of change on the education system and its “desired outcomes” (p. 5) through standardized tests placing educators in dilemmas. As a response, she positions *transformative education* as a “way of taking into account the material realities, disparities and unfulfilled promises of the world in which our students live and of working to ensure more equitable and inclusive opportunities for all” (p. 5). According to Sheilds, critically reflective educators assist learners in understanding the multiple and, at times, conflicting perspectives, cultural interpretations... and “contextually determined truths” (p. 8). Transformative leaders integrate intellectual and social development with a focus on social justice as surpassing the “good” of effective leaders, to the “transformative” (p. 14). They combine an awareness of genuine leadership characteristics, with processes that are dialogic and collaborative in order to serve “the goals of individual intellectual

development . . . collective sustainability, social justice, and mutually beneficial civil society” (p. 24). Stephen Brookfield (1995) takes aim at the trappings of teaching without critical reflection and describes ‘hunting assumptions’ as central to critical reflection in teaching. Building an awareness of our “implicit assumptions that frame how we think and act is one of the most puzzling intellectual challenges we face in our lives” (p. 1). Brookfield points out that without a critical lens on our own assumptions we run the risk of creating “ideas and practices of hegemony [that] become part and parcel of everyday life – the stock opinions, conventional wisdoms or commonsense ways of seeing and ordering the world that people take for granted” (p. 30). Instead, building a practice of critical reflection opens up the teaching practice to become trustworthy. Applying Brookfield’s view of the critically reflective teacher to music and singing leadership, ‘hunting assumptions’ demands an attunement to what is ‘really happening’ in the sound, the engagement, and to question whether the sense of pleasure that exists in the leader is matched by the learner.

2.5. Transformative Singing Leadership (TSL)

The approach of TSL builds on transformative pedagogical perspectives such as *critical pedagogy* (Freire, 1970), *reflective practice* (Brookfield, 1995; Schön, 1983) and *transformative pedagogy* (Kincheloe, 1993) to provide five main principles within an approach of singing leadership: (1) re-apportioning power relations, (2) building enduring singing capacities of pulse, quality of skill and expression, and narratives, (3) developing cultural identities and intersectionalities, (4) generating resiliency, and (5) promoting social innovation.

2.5.1. Power Sharing Through Empowerment

A key idea for transformative singing leadership is the recognition of the power relation in the process of meaning-making and for the singing leader in particular, to recognize and reflect on the power relations in the form of sung texts and the procedures for power sharing in cultivating collective meaning making from those sung texts (Freire, 2004). Empowerment is generated from these procedures and leads to personal growth and development (Baus & Green, 1997; Pietrrese *et al.*, 2009). Here, the role of the

conductor/director shifts from the polarized, control-based singer/conductor dependency model, to an 'empowered singer' model through which the leader mentors and fosters *empowerment* by re-apportioning power in leadership aspects from the conductor/director to the individuals in the ensemble. Wilhelm Ehmann (1967) championed this approach five decades ago in his book *Choral Directing*, advocated for 'letting go' of conducting in order to inspire empathy and trust in the singers: more empowerment, more ownership, and more engagement in the activity. Analogous to the electric car, it seems that the infrastructure of music leadership has not been ready for this approach. Yet as Martha McCarthy (2006) suggests, current conducting approaches can benefit from conceptualizing conducting as *energy*, a conduit transferring energy to the singer (p.92). O'Neill (2014c; in press-a) highlights the principle of power sharing as a means of empowerment in a rapidly changing world with shifting and dissolving boundaries (Barnett, 2012). However capacities of empowerment lie as 'latent potentialities' unless the systemic structures of are shifted and re-balanced toward a power-sharing model. As can be seen in the TSL case study with the inter-tribal singing of the Kenyan Boys Choir (KBC) (Chapter 3), the singing leadership approach of director Joseph Muyale of Ehmann's idea of 'getting out of the way' and facilitating inter-tribal communication through which one entity does not dominate important aspects of the cultural tradition or 'authenticity.' The principle of power sharing the conducting role can be seen in new forms of singing ensembles that challenge our traditional understanding of choirs and choral music in general. Large non-conducted ensembles such as *Musica Intima* from Vancouver, 'take on' the absent role through inter-singer communication patterns through visual-gestural and sensory means. Inherent in an empowerment approach is an underlying belief and trust in the innate musical capacities of young people. A broad approach (theory?) that underpins innate and cultural capacities for music learning is *communicative musicality*.

2.5.2. Developing Communicative Musicality (CM)

Originating with the co-operative and co-dependent communicative interactions between mother and infant, Malloch (1999) observes this phenomenon as, "an innate sense of motivated time", and an innate source of impulsive expression in which there is a demonstrated "attitude, facial display, locomotion, voice, and gesture" which is

multimodal in nature (p. 7). This musical pulse, the *intrinsic motive pulse* (IMP), appears in forms of felt motion: elation, sadness, vitality, and repose (Trevarthen, 1999). 'Musicality' redefined, encompasses the experience of time in movement by the individual or collective body. Malloch (1999) has drawn from the work of Stern *et al.* (1985) to formulate the characteristics of *pulse*, *quality*, and *narrative* within *communicative musicality*. Stern *et al.* (1985) provides the term, *vitality effects*, to describe a form of human experience that takes shape in qualities of infant/parent musicality described as: surging, fading, fleeting, explosive, crescendo, decrescendo, bursting, and drawn out (p .54). These qualities are "sensible to infants" and are experienced on a daily, if not hourly basis (p. 54). *Communicative musicality* is key principle that I suggest within transformative singing leadership that develops three capacities for music learning: (1) intrinsic pulse, (2) qualities of skill and expression, and (3) narratives of *content* and *ways of being*.

1) Intrinsic Pulse

Intrinsic pulse is a locomotive, succession of 'behavioural events' in vocal and/or gestural time that is coordinated by two or more people. These episodes convey a sense anticipation and expectation as to what and when an event will occur. The source of that instinct has been termed intrinsic motive pulse (IMP) (Trevarthen, 1999). Merker (1999) describes pulse in two forms: (i) an evenly paced repetition of pulse/beat and (ii) as unmeasured form featuring elements of *accelerando*, and *rubato* that ebb and flow (p 59), The approach of communicative musicality draws on natural phenomenon such as the sound and behaviour of water on a beach is basic to the intrinsic musical sense of pulse. Of course, walking and running are the common locomotive movements among humans and dance is perhaps the most locomotive expression of human collective movement.

2) Qualities of Skill and Expression

a. *Embodied Physicality* (measured in the study of TSE, Chapter 4)

Gestural communication with physical motion employs a *kinesthetic intelligence* (Gardner, 1991). Somatic knowledge, according to Gardner " . . . allows us to judge the

timing, force, and extent of our movements and to make necessary adjustments in the wake of this information” (p. 210). This key concept in singing leadership is an honouring of "body, mind and spirit relationships; they are trans-disciplinary in their own creation, presentation and embodied content" (Willingham, 1997, p..118). For singing embodiment, the work is in accessing an inside/outside representation of sensory development. The notion of *feeling* the personal association of past encounters with an emotion represented in the text is what Antonio Damasio (1995) puts emphatically, “most importantly, the changes occur in *both* brain and body proper” (p. 224). The enormous influence of *Cartesian duality* on singing pedagogy ignores the idea that the entire organism interacts with the environment/stimulus rather than just the body alone. Yet by employing our senses, ‘the body proper *and* brain participate in the interaction with the environment’ (p. 224). Marta McCarthy (2006) found that when investigating holistic conducting practices of choral directors, conducting gestures were transformative in the following ways: (1) as gesture is pre-verbal, drawing on our reptilian brain, gesture can transcend language, generations and cultures, and (2) physical gesture can act as a conduit for music expression (p. 313). As such, McCarthy suggests that singing leaders should provide for “ a sensitive educating of the body in order to support personal transformation” (p. 313).

b. *Timbral Quality*

Timbral quality is described as “modulated contours of expression” (Malloch & Trevarthen, 2009, p. 4) that can occur multi-modally with vocal expressions and/or body movements expressing volume, pitch and timbre that have meaning associations (Malloch & Trevarthen, 2009; Stern, 1985). *Quality* is described as “modulated contours of expression” (Malloch & Trevarthen, 2009, p. 4) that can occur multi-modally with vocal expressions and/or body movements expressing volume, pitch and timbre (Malloch & Trevarthen, 2009; Stern, 1985). Pitch is measured in ‘pitch-plots’, a measurement tool to outline the sound frequency of melodic contours during a mother-infant interaction. Timbre is measured by the Tristimulus Method (Pollard & Jansen, 1982)⁸. The two

⁸ The Tristimulus graph shows the relative amplitude of the middle harmonics (harmonics 2-4) on the horizontal axis and the vertical axis indicates the amplitude of the upper harmonics (harmonics 5-n) indicating volume and resonance.

attributes of *pulse* and *quality* combine to form the foundation on which the *narrative* of the interaction is supported. Timbral qualities are developed and used intentionally by singing leaders as a means for precision in expressive singing communication. This aspect within communicative musicality and TSL in general is features in the work of Anatoliy Avdievsky outlined in the case studies (Chapter 3).

3) Narrative:

Malloch and Trevarthen (2009) describe the *narrative* of the mother-infant interaction as being made up of the shared innate motives that the mother and infant initiate through joint partnership. The musical narrative generated through the companionship of two musical authors provides intentional expression and “a sense of sympathy and situated meaning” (p. 4). TSL aligns the narrative, cultural content of the song with the ‘story’ and the singers’ *way of being* as the ‘story-teller’ (Davis, 2009, p. 205). Therefore, the ways in which the singing leader generates empowerment, inclusivity, relationality, collaboration work in tandem with the *story* aspect of narrative.

The TSL study (Chapter 3) features both *narrative a*, (the story) and *narrative b* (*the storytellers*) as interrelated in singing communication.

Summary of communicative musicality:

An important consideration in the capacities of *pulse*, *quality*, and *narrative* within CM is the recognition of the interdependent ways these forms are mutually definable to each other. For example, we *feel* the rich resonant timbre in an expressive vocal sound simultaneously with *seeing* the facial expression emoting the same expression as we *hear* the text of the narrative. Found within the concept of *synesthesia* (Abrams, 1996), these previously described components work together in dynamic relationship as the source and impetus of action and motion. In Western cultural modes of perception we tend to think in between hearing and feeling. Thinking can place a barrier between the immediacy of hearing and feeling (Damasio, 1995; Merleau-Ponty, 1967). Awakening potentials through nurturing the capacities of *pulse*, *quality*, *narrative* parameters outlined in CM, particularly in the suggestion of synesthesia (Abrams, 1996) may inform singing practice and pedagogy in fresh new ways of learning.

2.5.3. Developing Cultural Identities and Intersectionalities

I have borrowed O'Neill's *braided*, *blended*, and *blurred* (2014b) in the transformative practice of researchers to conceive of how TSL develops cultural identities and how the intersectionalities of those cultures take form in the 'participatory cultures' of choirs and singing ensembles. My treatment of the term 'culture' is not restricted to fixed, representative forms (braided), nor a the continuum of what Susan Rasmussen (1999) describes as "a fluid, unfinished, and emergent process" (blurred) (p. 401). As the ethnographer/historian Wade Davis (2009) tells us in *The Wayfinders: Why Ancient Wisdom Matters in the Modern World*, the term culture is elusive even as it describes hundreds of them (p. 32). However in line with a holistic view of culture (Schafer, 1996), Davis provides a broad encompassing description:

the acknowledgement that each is unique and ever changing we recognize the observation and study of its language, decorative arts, stories, myths, ritual practices and beliefs, and a host of other adaptive traits and characteristics . . . just as landscape defines character, culture springs from the spirit of place. (p. 33)

For TSL, an important consideration in describing the development of cultural identity and intersectionality is context: the dialectic between the individual agentic self and the social dimensions surrounding the self. Anna Stetsenko's (2004) extension to Vygotsky's cultural historical activity theory (CHAT) framework describes the "collective practice of material production, the social interaction among people... and the self such that the agentic role of both the individual and social dimensions in human development is revealed and ascertained" (p. 498). Transformative leaders foster singing that represents distinct cultural identities or in the examples of the case studies of my research, the intersections of distinct boundaries in ways that are braided, blended or blurred.

2.5.4. Resilience

Stories of struggle and adversity feature strongly in the ways in which the singing leaders negotiate their agentic roles within their surrounding socio-political environments; these roles are modeled to the learners. Giroux (2009) describes the

struggles within these roles as “both a struggle for meaning and a struggle over power relations” (p. 439).

In describing the development of purpose, meaning, and agency, Damon, Menon, and Bronk (2003) present the example of author and Nazi concentration camp survivor Victor Frankl to explain that value and belief systems are central to the formation of purpose and meaning in our lives. Through Frankl’s perspective, ‘forged in the flames of Nazi cruelty,’ we may understand that development of purpose can be promoted through ways in which “high level belief systems can enable people to endure life’s hardships . . . the sheltering fortress in a world of constant threat” (p. 119).

2.5.5. Social Innovation

As suggested in the previous section on the key principle of resilience in TSL, struggle may initiate ‘innovative behaviour’ which in turn, can lead to personal growth and development (Baus & Green, 1997; Pieterse *et al.*, 2009). Within the field of visual art, John-Steiner (2000) describes, “the innovative techniques once initiated by one of the partners was quickly incorporated into the work of the other” (p. 3). Inspiring ‘work of the other’ can be seen in the innovative techniques of singing leaders around the world that are witnessed at international singing festivals. At *Festival 500* in Newfoundland, *Laulupidu* in Estonia, *Norbusang* in Scandinavia, and at countless gatherings around the world, “important processes of innovation and learning are increasingly taking place in collaborative constellations and networks of multiple activity systems” (Engestrom & Sannino, 2010, p. 12). Through concerts, workshops and informal gatherings, festivals such as Kathaumieux in Powell River, Canada, (the origin of this inquiry), singing leaders such as Helle Hoyer and other leaders share their innovative practices.

2.6. Transformative Singing Engagement (TSE)

2.6.1. Context

Relatively little research exists about the affordances singing offers when singing cultures are brought together and how we might best use these affordances to develop

the learning capacities for increasing skill, cultural awareness, interconnectedness, and communication. Unfortunately for singing learning, little is known about the degree to which singing engagement fosters transformative experiences and very little empirical research has examined potential factors leading to engagement in transformative music and singing experiences. As a result, music learning in trained western communities is lacking in a pedagogical framework for facilitating music and singing engagement. An over-emphasis on assessing performance outcomes in music education has overshadowed possible measures that are capable of providing important indicators about the impact of singing pedagogy on how learners think and feel about themselves as learners, how they perceive their capacity and engagement in the learning process, their energy for learning, their developing conceptual understanding of the physical and communicative aspects of singing, and the benefits they derive from learning to sing. O'Neill (2012a) asserts that changes in individual belief systems and behaviours, as well as critical attributes such as quality of engagement and resiliency are often better predictors of both student learning outcomes and future engagement (Skinner & Pitzer, 2012). In singing, I refer to learners' perceptions of these context-dependent features that are embedded within interrelated personal, social, and systemic cultural ecologies as *transformative singing engagement*.

2.6.2. Background to the Approach of TSE

Transformative Singing Engagement provides a framework for an expansive singing pedagogy toward reflective, experiential and action-oriented learning opportunities and the evaluating of the students' sense of agency, connection and values. Conceived as an extension of transformative music engagement (O'Neill, 2012a), TSE is a broad holistic approach that attempts to honour the complex and phenomenological aspects. Two decades ago, anthropologist and ethnographer, John Blacking (1995) encouraged this expansive view of the essence of the response to music:

The human response to music is deep, primeval, and at least partly genetic: it is neither reducible to, nor an epiphenomenon of anything, except the very nature of humanity itself (p. 1).

In wrestling with the complexity of singing through over 30 years of teaching singing, and observing the power of singing to transform lives in North America and abroad, what I needed was a theory and method that draws on learners' knowledge and understanding of their experience with singing. Rooted in the social constructivist theories of Vygotsky (1986) and Freire (1998), TSE offers new approaches in singing learning where meaning making, symbols, social interaction, values and action are viewed through: *relational, experiential, temporal, and spatial* dimensions. TSE alters the 'talent-expertise' framework and reaches *beyond* providing adequate opportunities for learners to acquire the basic skills and knowledge necessary for singing toward an inclusive view that all singing learners have musical strengths and competencies.

Transformational Singing Engagement draws on a psychological-philosophical braiding of meaning making that acknowledges nuance, cultural-contexts, and intricate webs of connection that occur within learning ecologies. I am investigating a 'youth version' of *learners' perspective transformations* (Mezirow, 2000), where learners gain a sense of value and contribution toward purposeful singing through the means of participation, reflection and dialogue (Bohm, 1996). These 'means' also include other sensory modalities such as vocal sound timbre and gesture within the singing experience.

Moving beyond merely solving problems and providing adequate opportunities for learners to acquire the basic skills and knowledge necessary for singing, this is an investigation with youth singers of what Jack Mezirow terms in adult learners as *perspective transformations* (Mezirow, 2000). Interactive and interconnected aspects of singing that matter to young people and contribute to positive change in their communities is what lies at the heart of TSE.

2.6.3. Key Influences of TSE

The development of TSE has been informed from many several studies. Some of these have been the results of Research in Youth Participatory Action Research YPAR, Research in Youth Music Education (RYME), and most recently Multimodal Opportunities, Diversity and Artistic Learning (MODAL Research).

1) Positive youth musical development (O'Neill, 2006) and transformative music engagement, which provide a framework for creating reflection, experiential and action oriented learning opportunities and evaluating students' sense of agency, connection and values, aimed at:

shifting the focus from viewing music learners from within a deficit versus talent/expertise framework. It focuses instead on the idea that all music learners in all contexts of development have musical strengths and competencies. (O'Neill, 2012a, p. 166)

2) A study of meaning making and measurement of student music engagement, which identified:

an apparent inherent complexity and fluidity in students' music engagement and a progression of intricate webs of music, media and social contexts involving meaning making and interconnections to other people, cultures, and perspective transformations, such as '[Music] helps me to connect and think differently about things. (O'Neill & Senyshyn, 2012, p. 1)

3) A study of young people's engagement in a transformative pedagogical approach designed to deepen their conceptualization of artistic learning, whereby students reported experiencing "a significant increase across time in their thinking and conceptual understanding of artistic learning and its value for feeling connected to students in other arts areas as well as understanding their own arts activity better" (Sparks & O'Neill, 2013, paragraph 8).

2.6.4. Key Concepts of TSE

Transformative Singing Engagement (TSE) offers new approaches in singing learning where meaning making, symbols, social interaction, values and action are viewed as: dynamic, relational, experiential, temporal, and spatial.

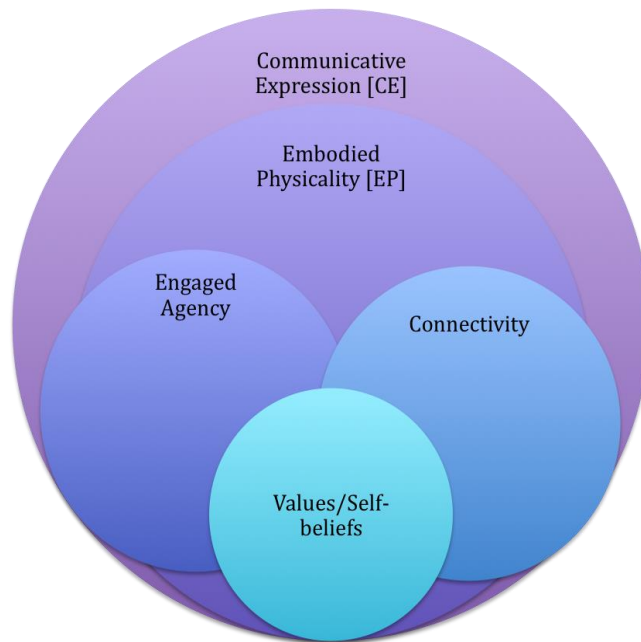


Figure 1. Key Constructs in the Conceptualization of Transformative Singing Engagement

The study into Transformative Singing Engagement focuses on the following five key concepts as a holistic framework. As such, each area is distinct yet there is also a degree of overlap and interrelatedness among the five key capacities of embodied physicality, communicative expression, engaged agency, connectivity, and values/self-beliefs. The following provides a brief characterization of each concept.

1) Embodied Physicality:

The singer connects breath energy with physical motion and resonance in the body that employs a kinesthetic intelligence (Gardner, 1991). There is a double recognition in the feeling and hearing of sound to the singer for reinforcing and supporting both. The singer is initially mindful of how the body is supporting the breath and progresses to unconsciously feeling without thinking. This key concept is an honouring of "body, mind and spirit relationships; they are trans-disciplinary in their own creation, presentation and embodied content" (Willingham, 1997, p. 118). Boundaries of textual meanings, sensory receptors, and self – identities are blurred and contribute to a way of being which involves "being all there," being more attentively 'in' our experience (Taylor, 1989, p. 163). Vancouver singer and vocal teacher, Fabiana Katz says,

“technical skills require a somatic knowledge.”⁹ For singing embodiment, the work is in accessing an inside/outside representation of sensory development.

2) Communicative Expression:

The singer is aware of consciously and ultimately unconsciously emitting precise expressive aspects of his or her own “musical authenticity” to an audience (Green, 2005). TSE and TSL rely on processes of recalling lived experiences to interpret texts and musical ideas that inspire associations and connections within the listener. These processes are dialogic in nature and progress towards the singer adopting the identity of ‘storyteller’ and the music serving as the ‘story.’ Stories, real and/or imagined bring the texts alive to the singer’s narrative accounts of past-lived experience such that through their authenticity, these ‘sonic accounts’ connect the singer to her audience (listener) by bringing forward those similar past lived experiences in the listener, developing a communicative capacity for meaning connections even in the listener (audience). The capacity of communicative expression has its roots in the broad based theory of *communicative musicality*, mentioned previously. Communicative expression in singing involves the role of the imagination as a means to experience empathy through divergent views. Green, (1995) suggests that imagination brings forward “a new way of decentering ourselves, of breaking out of the confinements of privatism and self-regard into a space where we can come face to face with others...” (p. 31). The role of ‘storyteller’ who relays the ‘story’ through song, is highlighted in the case study of Cuban singing leader, Alina Orraca, which is described in Study 2 (Chapter 4).

3) Engaged Agency

The singer has a sense of empowerment or “voice” that make sense or meaning making possible in relation to purposeful engagement in singing (O’Neill, 2012b). Originating from Vygotsky’s ideas, Stetsenko (2012) reminds us that our sense of *engaged agency* derives from “ . . . the first moments of life . . . in unbreakable intricate relations with the world” (p. 148). Our involvement matches the significance it has for

⁹ Fabi is a collaborator in the leadership of the TSE singing program implementation. Her practice includes linking body-mind connectedness through the development of somatic knowledge. From an interview to set up the implementation: 08/20/2013.

us, how it connects to what matters to us and our community, and that we see it as 'good' (Stetsenko, 2009).

4) Connectivity and Perspective Transformation

The singer engages in self-reflection and actions (dialogue and inquiry) that connect texts, music, self and others with past "lived experiences" (Althusser, 2001; Mezirow, 2000). A key implication for TSE is that each singing ensemble comprises singers with different 'lived experiences' and as they derive interpretations through dialogue, each choir will be differentiated year to year. In this sense, TSE fosters a break from the traditional fixed expected models of how we define 'choirs' toward context dependent participatory cultures with an ever-changing 'curriculum' with those who are 'in the room.' Perspective transformations about the students views of their own learning can be rooted in changes that sometimes appear to be 'under the radar' of their own reflective analysis of their own learning. In this respect, TSE extends the ideas of Mezirow (2000) to include the notions of 'implicit memory' (Taylor, 2001) and 'thinking without thinking' (Gladwell, 2009) where past experiences that are sometimes accessed in split-second associations under the 'cognitive radar'. These meaning associations are open and available to singers and audiences through multimodal means (Kress, 2010) such as gesture and vocal timbre that also contribute to how learning is transformed through singing.

5) Values and Self-beliefs

The activity of singing contributes to a sense of self-identity and intrinsic value that fulfills personal needs, confirms central aspects of one's self-schema, and affirms and/or elicits personal values (Eccles, O'Neill, & Wigfield, 2005). Both the research aspects and the pedagogical aspects are dialectic for TSE and TSL - the 'doing' and the 'measuring of the doing' is inseparable.

2.6.5. Summary of TSE

Drawing on the approach of TME, the influences of previous youth participatory action research studies, and the study involving ethnographic encounters of

transformative singing leaders, a model has emerged for enduring singing learning that features five interrelated capacities: embodied physicality, communicative expression, engaged agency, connectivity, and values/self-beliefs.

2.7. Conclusion and Research Questions

Transformative Singing Engagement and Transformative Singing Leadership are holistic models in scope and offer pedagogical approaches for inquiry that are emergent and organic models featuring both assumed and expected outcomes from an emergent curriculum (DeNora, 2000) and critical reflective practice (Freire, 1970; Schon, 1983).

The emerging curriculum builds on the knowledge and understandings of a singing pedagogy that is not necessarily assumed and expected due to the fluid and ever-changing nature of the collaborative teacher-learner approach.

The questions this research aims to address are:

Theme One: Transformative Singing Leadership (TSL):

What are the main attributes of transformative pedagogical approaches used by singing leaders?

Theme Two: Transformative Singing Engagement (TSE):

How might a choral singing education program foster transformative singing engagement?

What are students' perceptions of their own transformative singing engagement?

Chapter 3.

Transformative Singing Leadership (TSL)

3.1. Study Aims

There is an emerging need for active research into educational practices that contribute to learning cultural forms of expression. Educational practice has tended to focus on sharing narratives and stories as a way of helping learners express their own sense of culture and make sense of those who differ from themselves. Bruner (1996) explains, “we frame the accounts of our cultural origins and our most cherished beliefs in story form” (p. 40). And, according to Gay (2010), stories “capture our attention on a very personal level, and entice us to see, know, desire, imagine, construct and become more than what we currently are” (p. 3). Far less attention has been focused on singing as a form of cultural expression, and yet as Welch (2005) argues, meaningful interpersonal connections are made in people’s lives through singing. How might we best engage students’ in developing an awareness and understanding of singing as a “transformational activity culturally” (p. 254), which “can also be used as an agent in the communication of cultural change” (p. 254)? What is particularly lacking is research about the pedagogical approaches used by choral singing leaders who are capable of engaging learners in ways that might be described as *transformational*. Indeed, singing pedagogy is for the most part devoid of language associated with bringing about purposeful, engaged, and transformative singing. Also lacking are theoretical frameworks for understanding the practices of choral conductors or singing leaders who seem to bring about transformative singing engagement among members of their singing community. These communities are often located in rapidly changing social and cultural environments in today’s technological and globalized age. It is likely that singing leaders in trained western traditions and choral communities may glean important

insights through an understanding of the pedagogical frameworks that foster transformative singing engagement in other cultural contexts.

This study aims to address these issues through an exploration of the pedagogical perspectives of recognized international singing leaders from four different cultural contexts: Cuba, Kenya, Ukraine, and Denmark. Drawing on a rich data set of observations and interviews from these four case studies that took place in 2011, the study has two overarching aims:

1) to gain a perspective of what engaged singing looks, sounds, and feels like from the perspective of these expert singing leaders to identify key features and approaches that might best foster communicative, purposeful, and transformative singing engagement.

2) to synthesize knowledge gained from recognized singing leaders towards building an empirically-based framework for understanding empowered and transformative singing leadership that is sensitive to the rich particularities and interconnectedness of each singer leader's life and work.

3.2. Cultural Translations and Ethnographic Encounters

As stated in Chapter 1, in keeping with Jordan's (2002) conceptualization of cultural translations through ethnographic encounters, the aim of this study is not to provide an exhaustive account of each of the four case study cultural contexts, nor is the aim to compare one cultural context with another. Rather, the aim is to explore the diversity of attributes of active, enduring singing engagement that exist within these different socio-cultural contexts. Each case study involved an ethnographic naturalistic approach utilizing purposeful data collection in film footage, audio recordings, field notes and still photography. My purpose with this data was to build a rich, descriptive account of the complexity of culturally diverse forms of singing within the context of singing performances and rehearsals. Further, my aim was to provide pedagogical perspectives from recognized singing leaders from different cultural contexts and to investigate what affordances singing offers when singing cultures are brought together with western

perspectives and how we might best use these affordances to create learning opportunities for increasing cultural awareness, interconnectedness, and communication for singing learners.

This study begins with the perception that all four singing leaders are engaged in a constant act of bringing about learning transformations among the members of their singing communities. Drawing on Jordan's (2002) notion of "ethnographic encounters," where "experiential learning about self and other gets done, where meanings are tried out, where experience slowly becomes understanding" (p. 96), the purpose was to investigate each conductors' awareness of this transformative process in ways that "attempt to translate field experiences and findings (usually) into text for people who were *not* there" (p. 96; original emphasis). Simultaneously, the aim was to inform my own practice as a choral educator through a process that aims to bridge "as reflexively as possible the gaps between presence and absence, between languages, understandings of the world, behaviours and beliefs" (p. 96). This process involved a blending of research and practice as I engaged in action research, reflective practice and critical pedagogy (McKernan, 1991). This form of "action inquiry," according to McKernan, is "the lever for increasing teacher autonomy and control over the curriculum" (p. 53). The aim of this teacher-as-research model is to not only empower the educator; it also acts to "empower students so that they are emancipated as learners" (p. 53).

As described in Chapter 1, cultural translation is a "thick" concept, which Jordan (2002) terms as in need of "terminological exfoliation" (p. 97) to provide any kind of practical definition. She outlines cultural translation as "a holistic process of provisional sense making" (p. 101). It is also a deliberate attempt to try "to render accessible and comprehensible, first to the self and then to others, one's experience of aspects of ways of life – either one's own life made strange, or lives which are different from one's own" (p. 101). Jordan also points out that cultural translation is "fundamentally, how we communicate" and that "no darkly suspicious project of appropriation need lie behind this" (p. 101). Jordan suggests "it need not involve entrapping the other in our own webs of meaning, or being ourselves entrapped in theirs, but consciously, deliberately, weaving something fresh together" in what Homi Bhabha (1995) refers to as the "Third

Space” (p. 101). Jordan points out that cultural translation “is translation with the whole person”, which occurs through ethnographic encounters that assist practitioners toward the following nine conceptual and methodological attributes: 1) heuristic, extended and multi-level; 2) does not involve translating a given text, but creating that text and progressively translating as one goes along; 3) uncovers the processes of meaning-making within the ‘Third Space’; 4) dramatizes conflicts, tensions and resolutions; 5) shows translation getting done; 6) does not present a translation without a self-reflexive infrastructure; 7) may have inspirational flashes but is not uniformly smooth and polished; 8) is porous, fragmentary, ragged and open-ended; 9) is aware of the history, politics, and power dynamics within which it is taking place (Jordan, 2002, p. 103).

3.3. TSL Study Questions

With the above attributes in mind, this research seeks to offer insights into transformative learning and engagement in choral singing education according to recognized singing leaders/choral conductors from four different cultural contexts (Cuba, Kenya, Ukraine, Denmark). The study aims to address the following research questions in relation to singing leadership with the aim of identifying transformative attributes of different pedagogical approaches within different socio-cultural contexts:

- 1) How do leaders of singing facilitate the relationship between skill and expression?
- 2) Are aspects of singing identities/intersectionalities apparent in the leadership discourse?
- 3) Are there discernable qualities of expressive singing and empowered leadership in the accounts of singing leaders?
- 4) What value do singing leaders place on qualities of expressive singing and empowered leadership within the context of a particular cultural tradition?
- 5) What capacities are developed and employed by singing leaders toward purposeful, engaged singing?
- 6) How do singing leaders view the role of traditional songs and the relationship between skill and expression, and how do these factors inform our understanding of relational perspectives in transformative pedagogy?

3.4. Methodology

The study uses a qualitative, emergent design (Cresswell, 1998; McKernan, 1991) to build on and extend our understanding of existing theory and practice focused on the interdependent relations between qualities and characteristics of *Transformative Singing Leadership* (TSL) in choral singing across different cultural traditions.

3.4.1. Self as Researcher

As Gunther Kress (2010) tells us in *Multimodality: a Social Semiotic Approach to Communication*, as researcher, “[my] *interest* is shaped by my history, by [my] experiences over time in a set of communities or cultures” (p. 51). This notion of situatedness as a research or “situating knowledges” (Rose, 1997) is taken up by feminist scholars and qualitative researchers alike (Ritchie, Lewis, McNaughton Nicholls, & Ormston, 2013). They emphasize that the researcher is an integral part of the sense that is made and that any “findings” are mediated through the researcher. As Maykut and Morehouse (1994) point out:

The qualitative researcher’s perspective is perhaps a paradoxical one: it is to be acutely tuned-in to the experiences and meaning systems of others—to indwell—and at the same time to be aware of how one’s own biases and preconceptions may be influencing what one is trying to understand. (p. 123)

I was keenly aware of my position as outsider (*Mazungu/Wageni*/visitor) and also mindful of ‘the observer effect’ in ethnographic encounters (Fisher & Monahan, 2010), both as a potential barrier for this inquiry and as an affordance. As Fisher and Monahan (2010) state, “the informants’ performances – however staged for or influenced by the observer – often reveal profound truths about social and/or cultural phenomena” (p. 357). It has been integral to this inquiry to acknowledge *self as researcher* (Willingham, 2001) and to be aware of the ‘trappings’ of assumptions in observational interpretations. This awareness has proven to be both a challenging precaution and a joyous reward, particularly due to my role of observer and three-part role of researcher/singing leader/participant as ‘insider’ yet ‘outside’ the culture. This dichotomy is challenged by Sonja Dwyer and Jennifer Buckle (Dwyer & Buckle, 2009) with the notion of ‘the space in

between' the insider and outsider in qualitative research. Recalling Aoki's work (1996), Dwyer & Buckle (2009) present this as not one or the other but "a third space" and a "dwelling place ... of in betweens" (p. 60). They posit "holding a membership in a group does not denote complete sameness within that group. Likewise, not being member of that group does not denote complete difference" (p. 60).

Two of the case studies explored here are situated in parts of the world that have been on (and over) the precipice of civil war both during and following my research in the respective countries of Kenya and Ukraine. These powerful socio-cultural contexts and personal relationships I formed with leaders and singers through these case studies have imprinted enduring significant connections to my life and work as a singing leader and conductor; my own conceptual views and resulting pedagogical practices continually resonate from past and ongoing connections to these case studies.

3.4.2. Case Study: Rationale and Procedure

Yin (2003) describes case study research as "the preferred strategy when 'how' or 'why' questions are being posed, when the investigator has little control over events, and when the focus is on contemporary phenomenon within some real-life context (p. 1). Yin describes the case study as "an all-encompassing method" or a "comprehensive research strategy" (p. 14) that includes all parts of the research process from design and data collection through to the choice of data analysis. My rationale for choosing the four particular case studies in this research is threefold:

1) I had contact and prior association with each singing leader, which provided flexibility in interview and observation methods. For each case study, I had received invitations to conduct research and work with each of the conductor/directors. The conductors, singers and members of each of the four case study communities have been and continue to be generous beyond any expectation and each is a willing collaborator in this on-going research.

2) The singing is culturally diverse in each of the case studies.

3) I could explore maximum diversity among participants across professional, amateur, adult, youth and children's choirs, and with all-male, all-female and mixed choirs.

3.4.3. Data Collection: Interview and Observational Methods

The aim of the data collection in these case studies was to build a rich, descriptive account documenting the complexity of culturally diverse forms of singing leadership within the context of specific vocal rehearsals and performances in order to derive patterns and constructs that underlie their individual work in each of these social contexts. In-depth data collection included: field notes of observation and interviews, video footage of public singing performances/rehearsals and interviews of conductors and singers through translation, audio recordings of singing performances and rehearsals, and documentation contextualizing the collected data (Barrett & Stauffer, 2009). The choice to use multiple forms of data collection is consistent with the complexity inherent in case study methodology, requiring "multiple methods or analytic tools, one to supplement the other's strength and compensate for its shortcomings" (Featherman, 2006. xviii). Informed consent was ascertained before the data was collected. All interviews and observations were designed from a *naturalistic approach*, occurring in the natural environment and schedule of the singing leaders' work. Rather than seeking to report out "this is the way it is" as is customary in *positivist* designs, I chose to present this data more as "this is what I found" (Rubin & Rubin, 2012). In the four case studies of 2011, I used both a formal, semi-structured interview approach and more informal unstructured interviews as follows:

1) audio and video recorded informal, conversational interviews with singers, conductor/leaders, and community members and recorded conversations en route to and from rehearsals, performances, and meetings;

2) open-ended interviews and shared biographical discussions using questions that were written in advance of the interviews and asked of all participants and more open-ended discussions that enabled participants to bring into the conversations

thoughts that were of interest to them. Information obtained during interviews was further enhanced through the use of three observation methods, as follows:

- a. passive observation where at times the singers were unaware of my presence;
- b. limited interaction – the singers were aware of my capturing small segments of data
- c. full participant – as I was singing or conducting.

3.4.4. Data Analysis

Analysis is the interplay between researchers and data. It is both science and art. (Strauss & Corbin, 1998, p. 13)

The data analysis involved an inductive, narrative analysis adapted from Lincoln and Guba's (1989) *grounded theory* approach as outlined by Maykut and Morehouse (1994). The analysis involved identifying emergent themes by first establishing units and interpretations of meanings from the text data of the four case study interviews and following the procedures for coding and 'chunking' these units for retrieval and clustering into common themes (Miles & Huberman, 1994). To develop a theory of what it means to be a transformative singing leader from the data of raw interview texts, I used a coding procedure that grouped units of meaning into categories. These categories were then placed into narrative themes using the constant comparative method (Maykut & Morehouse, 1994). My analysis also involved cross-referencing by colleagues to assist in providing validity as well as deepening insights (Strauss & Corbin, 1990).

3.5. Participants

The main participants in the four case studies were the recognized singing leaders/choral conductors in each of the four countries, as follows:

- 1) Alina Orraca and the *Coralina Chamber Choir*, Havana, Cuba: made up of professional singers ages 25-50 years;
- 2) Joseph Muyale Inzai and the *National Boys Choir of Kenya*, which involved a) 24 singers (aged 17-23 years) drawn from 42 tribes in Kenya, and b) children from schools surrounding the Ol Pejeta Conservancy, in Nanyuki, Kenya;
- 3) Helle Hoyer and the singers (aged 18-25 years) of *Aarhus Pigakor Choir*, Demark.
- 4) Anatoliy Avdievski and the singers of the *Kiev Symphony Chorus*, Kiev, Ukraine: made up of adult professional singers

3.6. Thematic Attributes of Transformative Singing Leaders

In this section I construct the thematic attributes that were portrayed in the sets of interviews with each singing leader with a focus on two areas: (1) the *context* of each singing leader's work, and (2) the affordances, values and self-beliefs, and means and mechanisms that inform and construct each singing leader's *conceptual lens*. A third area focuses on developing a heuristic or overarching framework for examining themes across the common and differentiated attributes of each case study. For this third focal area, I am acutely aware of the need to avoid portraying thematic attributes as 'behavioral roles'; rather, I aim to capture the interactive, influential motion from one leadership attribute to another. The content of their practices (the *what*) and the leadership style (the *how*) through which each singing leader engages in his or her roles are connected and inseparable. I have therefore come to view these as context-dependent 'stances' (Stetsenko, 2004, p. 275), which are inseparable from their respective cultural and social environments. My aim is therefore to present common

thematic attributes/stances through which each individual singing leader presents his or her perspective on their own singing leadership.¹⁰

In the following sections, I begin by presenting the themes for each singing leader separately. The aim is to highlight some of the nuanced understandings that emerged through each case study and to offer an interpretation of the meanings that contributed to a sense of each leader's own conceptual lens. I also looked at what was missing in what was being said and in particular the absence of the obvious aspects of what I had observed during my encounters with each leader. What emerged through this analysis is a holistic model in which *what* is achieved with these singing leaders and their singers is seemingly inseparable from *how* it is achieved. Therefore, the themes that are presented in the following sections aim to honour the holistic nature of the singing leaders' accounts while at the same time illuminate constructs for the purpose of understanding more specific attributes and characteristics associated with each context. One overarching narrative that emerges through my encounters with each singing leader is related to transformative singing leadership, and this becomes the focus of the second part of the chapter.

3.7. Kenya Case Study

3.7.1. Inter-tribal Understanding (Pan-African) as a Model for Global Socio-cultural Understanding

As mentioned previously, the opportunity to develop the case study in Kenya came about in 2008 through a visit with the Kenyan Boys Choir (KBC) and the Mangano National Choir. This visit coincided with my involvement in education development work through Project Kenya Sister Schools in Central Province, Kenya. Formally established eight years ago, the Kenyan Boys Choir was formed through the public support of the

¹⁰I have found Anna Stetsenko's notion of the self to be relevant to these case studies in singing leadership: "viewing the self as being embedded within socio-cultural contexts and intrinsically interwoven with them" (Stetsenko, 2004, (p.475). Although each singing leader was "imbedded" in their cultural environment, each was also very interested in the context of the other leaders' work.

Kenyan Government and the private support of the technology company *safari.com*. After many years of working for Kenyan Railways, and adjudicating at regional choral festivals, Joseph rekindled his music career, dedicating his efforts to providing singing opportunities beyond the festival experience and to establishing a national choir. Joseph decided to respond to what he perceived to be a need to develop the singing capacities of boys in high school and college by creating the KBC:

after the festivals, most of the boys have lacked the opportunity to pursue and have their talents nurtured. The reason why I had to start this institution to cater for high school and college going students, to have their talents nurtured.

Observing, interviewing, and rehearsing with the boys on multiple occasions during my visit gave me the opportunity to experience what I refer to as *full-bodied* singing; the boys seemed completely absorbed in the act of expressing the music, with consistent physical energy, motion, and focus that Joseph qualifies as an embodied 'pan-African' way of singing and dancing as 'one expressive idea'. Underpinning the notion of agency in singing, he states proudly that "every folk song has a story to tell" and must convey tribal meaning. Inherent in that message is the sense of purpose in carrying this out. Joseph fosters the mechanisms of his main idea *connectivity* through developing collaborative skills between tribes and generating coherence between tribal 'ways of being' (Davis, 2009). Joseph's inclusive imperative of representing all 42 tribes of Kenya within the choir is an essential element to making meaning through tribal folk music:

If the Kenyan Boys Choir is truly a national choir, then we must represent ALL tribes.

The ethnomusicologist, John Blacking, describes similar expanded parameters of music from the Venda tribe in South Africa in the following broad terms:

The Venda taught me that music can never be a thing in itself, and that all music is folk music, in the sense that music cannot be transmitted or have meaning without associations between people. (Blacking, 1973, preface x)

Joseph appears to have a similar vision – a goal of inter-tribal connectivity that can be fostered through the KBC and developed through nurturing and empowering capacities for singing through trust, respect, and empowerment.

3.7.2. Mentorship (Resiliency) and Empowerment

Through mentorship and empowerment, Joseph encourages the older, experienced singers to nurture the younger ones; each singer adds an individual role in the ongoing operations of the KBC. Examples of these ‘positions’ are principal and assistant roles for conductor, fundraiser, transportation, counselor, performance coordinator, coordinator, physical drills, choreographer, communication director, and personnel director. When I inquired about these roles within his empowerment model, Joseph suggested I consult each of the singers to discover his musical and non-musical role in the KBC. Each singer’s role is derived from his own sense of strength and unique abilities in an area of singing expertise and a non-singing area mentioned above. Joseph describes his goal:

I wanted to investigate the interpersonal model of empowered leadership, involving the forty-one tribes represented in this choir, some of whom are at war at this time.

His trust and loyalty to the boys is apparent in his efforts and commitment to get them to rehearsal. Some of the boys occasionally rely on Joseph for their transportation as it can take up to three hours to navigate ‘the jam’ to get to the centre of town. Joseph lives in the largest slum in Africa, the Kibera slum¹¹, and spends considerable time crossing town in his car to facilitate rehearsal attendance by the boys. No stranger to struggle and resiliency through his life, he leads through mentoring his own experience:

I grew up in a one-room house with ten in the family. Took me to the railway houses. I had key music teacher who encouraged me and developed my skills and passion for music.

¹¹ Joseph Muyale Inzai lives with his wife and children in the Kibera Slum. I was hosted at his home where I saw first hand how a system of support and resiliency is nurtured within the community –1 million people of the 2.2 million (60% of the population) that live in slums in Nairobi live in the Kibera Slum, which occupies 6% of the land. The slum is the largest in Africa.

The rehearsals for the KBC occur in Nairobi's Central Park, a social and cultural meeting place for many groups who do not have the means to rent building space. Attending the daily rehearsals and events in the centre of Nairobi present significant transportation challenges for the singers of the KBC who arrive from different areas of the city having negotiated the typical three-hour traffic jams from outlying areas. The method of transportation used by some of the boys is to jump on and off the tailgate of delivery trucks that are heading in the general direction of central Nairobi. I was struck by their obvious sense of purpose and necessity to get to these rehearsals. Central Park seemed to be the geographical magnet drawing these boys together from their homes and tribal heritage. More than a geographic magnet of Central Park, Joseph attracts the boys through the warmth and trust he establishes – this is clearly evident through my observations.

3.7.3. Developing Capacities of Intrinsic Pulse, Embodiment, and Singing Purpose

Within the tribal renditions of songs, Joseph facilitates a strong sense of pulse¹² through a shared physical embodiment and creates the notion of an empathetic state of 'movement in time,' which is demonstrated in the solo/ensemble model of performances (Malloch, 1999). The soloist does not belong to the tribe that owns the song he is singing. He must learn the language, traditions, and values of one of the 42 tribes represented in the choir. The soloist employs imagination as the means to familiarize an identity onto the self of the soloist, he embodies the dialect, movements, context, and emotion of the song as taught by the tribal representative in the choir. It is here we find the KBC engaged in an empathic process similar to what Maxine Greene (1995) described as one where "we are called to use our imagination to enter into that world, to discover how it looks and feels from the vantage point of the person whose world it is" (p. 4). Greene presents the notion of 'viewing' and 'feeling' as constitutive elements of empathy. Among the singers of the KBC, empathy generates a merging of identities, a process for moving the self into the body of the community (choir) as one voice. I observed this phenomenon one afternoon at the Thomas Aquinas Secondary School,

¹² Intrinsic Motive Pulse (IMP) (Trevarthen, 1999)

the 'birthplace' of the KBC, where I attended an outdoor concert for students, parents, and community that lasted several hours. I was once again caught up in the phenomenon of the KBC – so much so that I didn't recognize that after several hours the daylight was gone.

Joseph also mentors the boys in learning his role as both arranger and singing leader, which allows for direct pedagogical access to the singers' learning experience as he guides the boys through learning musical arrangements¹³. His skill as an arranger and composer is an important attribute, which in an odd way is facilitated by the traffic jams in Nairobi. Driving to and from rehearsal locations I observed that some of these arrangements are created 'by ear' as Joseph listens to recordings and songs on the radio formatting the selected line-by-line parts in his memory as he is driving. He selects popular tunes that have a positive message and potential appeal to a wide audience.

There are many choirs now in Africa and Kenyan Africa at large that are doing my arrangements now and I think the US, a number of my arrangements are now being used there. One choir in Canada, in Quebec the Charamondeau Womens choir, they are also doing some of my arrangements.

For Joseph, singularly or collectively, the act of singing is a collaborative action from one body to another; the exchange of music and music pedagogy is very much like the music itself. The notion of sharing through singing is promoted and indicated in his desire for a type of 'call and response' of cultural traditions throughout the world.

3.7.4. Summary

In conclusion, the transformative singing leadership of Joseph Muyale Inzai is revealed through a conceptual lens that focuses on empowerment, connectivity, empathy, and trust. These capacities are evident in the 'full bodied singing' and the singers' purposeful engagement with telling stories through songs as a means to socio-cultural understanding and lasting peace in the country of Kenya.

¹³ Oxford University Press released a new choral collection, *Songs of Africa*, compiled and edited by Fred Onovwerosuoke (1989). Joseph arranges several of the songs in this collection.

3.8. Cuba Case Study

One of Cuba's most eminent choral conductors and educators, Alina Orraca, has promoted the music of Cuba through workshops and performances in Nicaragua, the Vatican, Venezuela, Spain, Brazil, México, Sweden, as well as throughout Cuba and Canada. Through workshops and presentations, *Choral Canada* conferences as well cultural exchanges with my choirs in Havana, Cuba, I became aware of Alina's formidable singing expertise. During these visits I encountered a new quality of singing engagement that appeared uniquely embedded in cultural tradition.

My first encounter with Alina and the Coralina Ensemble (C.E.) was an interactive exchange between my chamber choir and the C.E., which occurred in the three century old San Francisco Cathedral in Havana. During this workshop, both choirs exchanged representative national music by 'teaching' the parts to another choir. As with my experience with the KBC in 2008, I became aware of the 'full bodied' way of Cuban singing culture. This visit, as well as another subsequent visit two years later, gave me an opportunity to set up a singing leadership inquiry with Alina. This inquiry began with several days of interviews on various topics of Alina's practice including the history of organized singing in Cuba, which assisted in providing a context to her singing leadership.

3.8.1. National *Braiding* of Cultural Song-styles with Songs as Stories, and Singers as Storytellers

Alina's practice is located within the Basilica and the monastery of San Francisco de Asis (Saint Francis of Assisi) in old Havana, built at the end of the 16th century. Cuban choral music history features no formal choral music and no choral conductors. In my interview, Alina traced the European sacred roots of Cuban vocal music beginning with Esteban Salas y Castro (1725–1803), through the Eastern European influence of Germany, Hungary, and Russia, to the pedagogical influence of Maria Musta Crevio through the Havana Chorale, and the development of a new society of art:

And in Havana, Maria Musta Crevio created the Havana Chorale (Chorale de Havana). Many of Maria's students began to conduct children's choirs. And then began a new society of art in Cuba from

Monaco district, and they started doing the choral symphonic repertoire.

Alina left home at age 14 to live away from her parents in the care of nuns in a catholic seminary where she dedicated her life to music. Alina's early musical background emerged from an Eastern European political influence, which began at the National School of Arts:

In 1971, I began to study choir conducting; I only had 13 years. I started to study at a medium level and graduated when I was 17 in the year 1975. And there I had studies with Agnes Triovsky, a Hungarian professor who had studies with Zoltan Kodaly.

This European background would soon collide with the distinctive Cuban embodied style of folk music, from which she would build her singing leadership.

Enculturated in a socio-historical context of *social responsibility* in Cuba, Alina recalls this influence, which contributed to her focus on social connectivity, a 'giving back' to the community that in Cuban society occurs between the completion of university and employment:

When you finish the medium studies in music at the university, you do a social service – that you have to work for a minimum wage – you don't get paid much for two or three years. And I had a job working as an assistant to my professor. So, I was a teacher of choir conducting. And I was also studying at the University. So I was professor as well as student!

Having the dual role of 'professor' and 'student' gave Alina a unique opportunity to view her emerging leadership through the learner's perspective, a rich and dynamic influence that contributed to how her pedagogical approach was being received and also generated new ways of connection for her between conductor and singer. With this unique critical perspective, Alina recalls the influence of Hungarian/German pedagogy which laid a foundational awareness and capacity for hearing and reading harmonic language, spoken languages, and singing leadership. She relied on this background to support the many challenges in developing an internationally recognized Cuban choral tradition. As Alina explains, this tradition at the national university struggled to gain recognition, value, and popularity:

It was a subject here in Cuba that, for the young people, nobody liked. The young people only wanted to study their instruments. That's why we had to do something that the young people could find attractive so they could go to the choral class. So not only was it important to study Schubert, Morencio, Monteverdi, but in between those pieces we put pieces from the popular repertoire, not arrangements from the old professors, these were arrangements re-arranged for the younger people by themselves.

Alina situates her conceptual view of singing leadership between the recognized European pedagogical influences and the new emerging models in Cuba, which were generating a new singer and audience engagement. Alina recounts young musicians who felt empowered to even write their own arrangements of national Cuban songs:

But I felt very young and close to these young people who were creating this music, this new music. And then we started doing more popular music.

Through a developing *critical reflective practice*, Alina resolved to include popular Cuban songs with her university ensemble. This started yielding results in singing engagement and in particular, audience engagement. Young composers and arrangers were seeing *value and purpose* in the future of the singing ensembles throughout Cuba. From my perspective, the 'affordances' for Alina's singing leadership appeared to be threefold: (1) being 'enculturated' in an environment of *social responsibility*, which gave her an enormous sense of purpose in her work; (2) she was able to empower her own leadership by having the dual perspective of 'conductor' and 'singer'; and (3) these perspectives gave her an understanding of where to situate her singing leadership to develop 'the new style', based in popular song forms. These affordances then created the momentum for Alina's leadership to grow internationally.

3.8.2. International Validation: Vienna

In the face of this new emerging choral style and a new way of singing, Alina described a backlash of criticism that came from the established academic music community in Cuba. The criticism was particularly aimed at the physical body movement associated with this new style, a style of singing that had generated interest in the

international choral community and invitation to the *Europa Cantat*¹⁴ in Vienna. It seemed that the new emerging 'holistic' approach to singing by a national Cuban choir was being recognized by the international community as exemplary:

In that contest we won the second prize. It was in 1979. When we returned to Cuba, we began to do what we did in those concerts – to dance, and many professors told me it was wrong and they made some criticisms. They told me that it wasn't correct that a choir danced. And that it wasn't the way that I studied... But I knew that we had triumphed in Europe with this way of doing things... It's what marked the differences between the big European choirs like the Nordic choirs and the small choir from Cuba.

Defying the Cartesian dualistic influence of classical singing with little body movement, this new style brought a new Cuban way of embodied singing within the choral ensemble that 'caught up' to the embodied nature of instrumental music that had been a mainstream practice in Cuba.

From apart it was proved that to use movements in the choir works and it was proved in the festival in Vienna and it was proved that choir should be a subject in the school.

The new physical, embodied approach of singing, once recognized and valued in the international community 'outside' Cuba, gained the recognition and respect as a legitimate approach within Cuba.

3.8.3. Further International Validation: Sweden

Following the success and recognition that Alina and the singers received in Vienna, Alina and the Cuban ensemble was invited to Sweden to present their new and emerging style of vocal music which, at this point, featured both the foundational training of European singing and the forms of indigenous music found in Cuba. Alina describes

¹⁴ Founded in 1960, the Europa Cantat is a network of choral organizations and singers who gather every three years to celebrate singing in a festival honouring choirs of Europe and through the membership in the International Federation of Choral Music (IFCM), the festival invites recognized international choirs.

an experience that helped transformed the new Cuban style to receive even further international recognition:

And we only had claves, maracas, but we didn't have many instruments. So I wanted to give some explanations about the popular music of Cuba. But I didn't have the instruments in my hand. I had a group of very interesting and forward thinking music students – especially the boys. They told me “Alina, don't worry. We are going to make the rhythm of the instruments with the voices”.

Vocal percussive effects had not been introduced at this festival before, yet these innovations did not come out of nowhere; these boys in Cuba had been aware of singer and conductor, Bobby McFerrin, who had compiled a style derived from indigenous music incorporating rhythmic and melodic ideas from around the world.

And we listened to how he performs with his voice – for all the different rhythms and sounds. And these kids spent the whole time trying to imitate his sounds of vocal percussion.

Due to the success and recognition of this new style, after the tour to Sweden six of the boys created a group called *Vocal Sample*, now an internationally recognized popular vocal band from Cuba.

Through *empowered singing leadership, critical reflective practice*, and a sense of *value and purpose*, Alina provides an example of transformative singing leadership to western singing institutions with a particular emphasis on releasing the ‘mind grip’ on the body's response to sound, rhythm, and vocal connectedness.

3.8.4. Developing the Capacity of *Singing Connectedness*

Throughout her accounts, Alina focuses on developing four capacities for *singing connectedness*: (1) through embodiment in singing, (2) through the connection of conductor to singer, (3) through singer-to-singer relationality, and finally (4) from the singers' connection to audience. A key idea in developing these capacities is the order in which these capacities are brought about. Alina describes her pedagogy of capacity as building in the singer the perspective of what is *received* by the audience. The move to include popular Cuban songs was yielding results in singing engagement and in

particular, audience engagement. Alina begins her description of authentic singing engagement (embodiment) by describing a national ‘way of being’ of talking with the hands and the socio-cultural implications of this for singing:

And then if you’re saying for example a text for our national poet, he talks about the way of doing things – the way of the Cuban people is very fun. It’s very extroverted. The women are very communicative – we walk moving our bodies. We talk with our hands.

Recalling the *Europa Cantat* experience in the context of all the European traditional choirs, Alina describes her realization that the new style connected with a national identity:

When we were singing, it occurred to me in the middle of the contest that the choir began to move, to dance. For us, we were not ashamed because we’re from Cuba. We were in a different country where nobody knew us. And when we ended the song – the public started screaming. When he sings he is giving his soul to the public and he knows how to move in front of the public and he knows how to capture the attention of that public.

Alina suggests that out of the traditional European singing models, based on structure and control, a new form of singing was seen and heard from the Coralina ensemble; this form revealed a ‘call and response’ natural expression of cultural identity between both singer (the call) and audience (response). Ironically, in Cuba, what assisted this emerging form was the ‘outside’ innovative influence of Bobby McFerrin featuring vocal imitation of the instruments.

3.8.5. Summary

Alina’s conceptual lens of singing leadership centers on developing the capacities of social connectedness, singer embodiment, and connectivity. The ‘new style’, which emerged out of traditional European influences and merged with popular forms of familiar songs and styles, connected with and began to build new audiences within Cuba and the world.

3.9. Denmark Case Study

My collaboration with Helle Höyer and the Aarhus Pigakor Choir (APC) began at the International Choral *Kathaumixw* in Powell River in 2010. *Kathaumixw*, is the Coast Salish term meaning an *act*, “a gathering together of different peoples.” The *Kathaumixw* brings together eighteen international choirs biannually for a week long festival in a collaborative format consisting of national concerts and international massed singing events featuring a pre-prepared repertoire of choral works. When I heard the Aarhus youth choir, I predicted that they would be recognized as the most outstanding choir at the festival. The tone, expressiveness, and audience connection existing in this choir made them an audience favourite and captured the imagination of the panel of judges. Sure enough, they won “Choir of the World” for 2010. In a meeting facilitated by Don James, the artistic director of *Kathaumixw*, Helle Hoyer and I discussed a plan for a potential collaborative study in Denmark in 2011.

3.9.1. National/Regional Singing Communication Through ‘Expertise’

Following the case study in Kiev, Ukraine, I travelled by train to the town of Horsens in northern Denmark to be a special guest of *Norbusang 2011*, a youth choir festival involving choirs from Sweden, Norway, Denmark, Finland, Iceland and Greenland. The festival alternates location from each of these countries every year and I was fortunate to include this festival in my visit as Denmark was hosting *Norbusang 2011*. The festival, a four day event, consisted of performances by each of the choirs (14 in total) as well as theme choirs; participants were divided into similar aged groups and participated in different styles of repertoire such as gospel, contemporary, pop and classical. As with all international choral festivals, the most compelling aspect is the interchange and sense of world community that is fostered through common purpose among singing leaders. Meeting the conductors was very compelling and far too brief.

The design of this festival is similar to the *Kathaumixw* festival in Canada, a representation of cultural expression, and a massed choral event where all participants work together on the same massed choir project. For 2011, the project was *Habits Ø: The Story of Vitas Bering* by the Danish composer/conductor in residence, Michael

Bojesen. The text of the work describes the Danish explorer's harrowing discovery of the passage from Asia to North America and was commissioned by the Danish Choral Society for this annual festival, this year in Horsens, Bering's birthplace. The massed choir project brought youth singers together and built awareness and a shared purpose in conveying the story through song, composed by Bojesen. I became aware of a deep abiding purpose in Helle's work through this festival; she is fully committed to sharing historical and contemporary forms of singing expression promoted not only in Denmark, but throughout many regions of Scandinavia.

I accepted the gracious invitation from Helle (and her partner Alex) to join them in at their country home as a backdrop to gaining a deeper understanding of her work and to continue with semi-formal interview segments.

3.9.2. Context of Helle Höyer

As with the other singing leaders in the case studies, Helle started music study early in her life. Her parents supported her music development through lessons in recorder, flute, and piano, as well as singing in a children's choirs. Helle sang in a choir directed by her father who she characterizes as 'self-taught'. He clearly had skill as a conductor:

Self-taught, yes but we were singing the Bach's Christmas Oratorio when I was 14, I was sold to the music.

As we discussed early memories of music, it was clear that the music of J. S. Bach evoked a sense of purpose in Helle's music understanding; she aligns her perspective in music leadership with the role that Bach had himself at the keyboard of the baroque chamber ensemble, conducting and playing:

Bach, yes especially Bach ... I knew at that time that I had to do something with music. And after school, I was 18, I went to the school that we have in Denmark where I prepare for the conservatory, I was singing and playing flute and there I started to conduct a little.

Flute, recorder, piano, and the bright vocal timbre of youth voices are also observable elements in her vocal leadership. Helle's sense of purpose and agency in

music leadership gained traction in her early twenties at the conservatory where she developed a passion in conducting choral music.

We had a lot of different subjects but I knew that it was choral conducting and at the time, until I was 20 I had been singing really many big works, Poulenc, Monteverdi, and Bach. I simply loved it: I knew that I had to do something with choir.

3.9.3. Developing the Capacity of *Expertise*

A key theme that emerges in relation to Helle's singing leadership is her focus on and approach to developing *expertise*. Located at the Aarhus conservatory, the music school and the University of Aarhus, the APC is supported by a leadership model of rigorous drill, practice, and intervention, which I observed in the rehearsals leading up to the final performance of the season. Singing expression is arrived at through constant repetition of facial presence in the singers. Vocal tone and facial expression are linked to a bright 'lifted' sound and forward placement. The repertoire featured the brightness and high tessituras assisted by the bright vowels of the Danish language. Helle's *expertise* model draws on the qualities of singing skills that are bound up in a series of refined technical exercises. Influenced through her considerable national and international experience as a choral conductor, these attributes of singing technique including the development of timbral colours for precise expressive purposes. For Helle, singing expression is developed through repetition over extended periods of time in order for the singers to 'own' the song:

We have to sing the pieces many times by heart. If we don't do that it's very difficult to release that expression.

Designed to support the bright tessituras that are featured in Scandinavian vocal repertoire, vocal technique exercises were interspersed throughout the rehearsal and are specifically designed for building range, tone, and flexibility in the female voice of this age group (18-24 years). Not surprisingly, she takes all voices, altos included, to C6 on short two octave arpeggios – staccato. The short release of tone gives no opportunity for tension to set in. She is 'training' tension *out* of the voice. On the other end of the range spectrum, Helle takes the voices on descending scales, pulling the upper register

down in unexpected ways – utilizing the pentatonic and whole tone scales while insisting on warm light but resonant production. For Helle, vocal expression is rehearsed:

I work very much with the expression in the face, which I also think colours the sound, the colour and the voice. So I work very much that they express something with their face, of course also with the body but that's maybe a more difficult thing because we don't have so much time.

Linking singing with imagination, Helle suggests '*singing in and out of the head and out of the eyes*'. She acknowledges the difficulty of 'reaching' vocal expressiveness with singers in her current practice, who she describes as 'technology driven' and "*sleepy girls standing with stone -faces*".

A feature of her sense of purpose derives from collaborating with other singing leaders through shared environments such as symposiums and large community choral events such as the Eric Erikson movement in Sweden and the 'song-bridges' sponsored by the International Federation of Choral Music (IFCM). Many of these events have been choral festivals, cultural meeting places, and other project-based events in Denmark, Scandinavia, and other parts of Europe where expansive learning opportunities exist for singers and singing leaders.

3.9.4. Summary

Advancing *expertise* with youth singers emerges as a dominant feature of Helle's conceptual framework for her singing leadership where she places particular emphasis on using techniques to develop capacities of vocal tone colour for expressive singing and the promotion of national and international opportunities for young singers to share their craft.

3.10. Ukraine Case Study

Including the national singing of Ukraine in my inquiry came about through an invitation from Anatoliy Avdievsky, a 'national folk hero' and world-renowned choral conductor of the National Veryovka Choir. Anatoliy became aware of my research in

vocal cultural expression through Dr. Wes Janzen and subsequently provided me with a formal state invitation to come to Ukraine and study his practice. For over six decades and in the face of Soviet occupation, Anatoliy has worked tirelessly to illuminate the vocal and dance music of Ukraine to the world. Accused and charged with 'nationalism' and 'treason', he was threatened with exile to the prison camps in Siberia. In a very passionate manner, Anatoliy conveyed to me an ideology of cultural nationalism through his life-long dedication to the preservation of cultural value and meaning through the songs and dances of Ukraine.

3.10.1. National Story-Teller Using Communicative Musicality as a Means to Political and Social Innovation.

The Veryovka Choir was founded in 1943 by conductor, Hrihory Veryovka, in Kharkov (east of the capital of Kiev), following the city's liberation from Nazi invaders. As the successor, Anatoliy shares Veryovka's dual expertise of singing and dancing and maintains that this alone sets this dance company apart from other national artistic institutions. Throughout my interviews, I inquired on the cultural sources of past and present day singing in Ukraine, the Veryovka Choir, and the restrictions on Anatoliy's efforts to procure this culture in the face of Soviet occupation as well as present day 'constraints' and affordances for his singing leadership.

My visit with Anatoliy began on Thursday, May 26, 2011 at the Ukrainian Choral Festival held at the Veriovka Cultural Place, 50-52, T. Shevchenko Avenue. As a special invited guest, I heard fourteen choirs from across Ukraine participating in a choral festival over three days with an adjudication panel consisting of four national judges. I was also invited to observe the conducting exams at the Tchaikovsky National Academy of Music. The exams were three to four hour concerts held in the choral theatre (250 seats) over four days. Anatoliy was one of a national panel of judges. My interviews with Anatoliy occurred in his office assisted by my translator, Sergei Basarov, an academic researcher, who was most persistent in getting the exact translation in all the sessions. I was barely seated when Anatoliy began speaking enthusiastically, showing me twelve volumes of published Ukrainian folksongs. He stressed the regional strengths of diverse styles and historical contexts within the country:

It's interesting that Ukraine is usually divided into 4 geographic zone [s]! North, South, West and East. So closer to the west in Vinnitsa region, recently one folk singer, a lady, sang to the folklore specialist as we call her, 5000 Ukrainian folk songs, 5000!

3.10.2. Purveyor, Protector, and *Incubator* of Cultural Singing

Anatoliy sees his role as a curator, cultural purveyor, and protector of indigenous songs within the four geographic zones of Ukraine.¹⁵ According to Anatoliy, Ukraine is losing regional historic songs and the associated skills and expressions from its populations. Anatoliy's national presence as a cultural leader stands in the gap between the 'authentic' singing of the past and the present singing of Ukraine, which faces the pressures of globalization, urbanization, and technological influence. His answer is to provide a kind of 'incubator' for cultural representation:

So we are using artificial selection, in a way it's like an incubator. The same goes for Hungary, Czech, Slovakia, Croatia and you know Croats are directly related to Ukraine. We have a special Lemmke region in western Ukraine, which has authentic culture, a distinct culture within Ukraine.

Lamenting the current singing culture in Ukraine and, in general, the decline of 'authentic singing' values that he perceives in the modern globalized world, Anatoliy speaks critically of the influence of globalization:

Of course show biz has access to mass media. Professionalism sinks to a very low level and of course morality of this culture of mass media is highly questionable as well everything that was held sacred.

He goes so far as to question the value and integrity of 'authentic' singing culture to society:

So everything that is related to the Ukrainian national culture, including a choral culture, is kind of diluted and devalued.

For Anatoliy there are important cultural remnants that still portray a 'distinct culture'. From his stance reflecting the value of braided cultural representations in song

¹⁵ Anatoliy divides Ukraine into cultural zones: northwest, northeast, southwest, and southeast.

and dance, Anatoliy conveys his attempt to present close representations of these cultural-historic songs that portray actual events related to the lives of people belonging to those stories. Anatoliy understands his role as cultural purveyor/curator and provided me with singing examples of regional style differences using a big open dark tone to demonstrate the Russian influence/operatic sound for the Central Ukrainian sound and a lighter quicker, rhythmic tone associated with the singing in western Ukraine.

For example, we have some regions in western Ukraine, the Carpathian region, trans-Carpathian region was a centre in Ujgura. Then we have Galicia and Galician territories including Naviv, which has a very distinct culture. All those regions are very different from central Ukraine for example. Carpathian region is Sinkapinct. [Anatoliy sings] This is a characteristic of central Ukraine. Almost like opera, like an aria from opera. And there in the west they use Collemikit special sounds. [Anatoliy sings], a Carpathian style, [he sings in a lighter quicker, rhythmic tone]. We have a special Lemmke region in western Ukraine, which has authentic culture. And they live on the border with Poland. Some of them migrated to southern and they actually stopped in the area of Czechoslovakia. So another group migrated an area and actually established Croatia.

Anatoliy's invitation to the national Ukrainian Choral Festival gave me the opportunity to see first hand the discernable regional differences in Ukrainian singing, costuming, and dance. Outlining his view of singing *authenticity* as culturally and historically distinct, Anatoliy qualifies the present day work of the Veriovka Choir:

Well, our choir is not one that sings authentic folklore. At that time, the Ukrainian village was still singing. [implying the absence of singing in rural areas now] And some great material [Folk songs] was there. For example, great female voices could be found there. Right now we can't find such voices that were available to Veriovka. He was the founding director of this choir back in '43. Back in '43 you could find great altos with a wide and deep range in the small octave. [Low voice] Those people back in 1943 had unique gifts. But now we are trying to select the voices and keep them within the authentic field, the field of authentic music by using artificial methods. So, we are using artificial selection, in a way it's like an incubator.

3.10.3. Developing Capacities: Expertise and Communication through the *Timbral Palate*

A key question that emerged during this case study is how does Anatoliy bring about the variety of tonal colours for the expressive purposes in his work. He describes the timbral palate to include *the folk tone*, sometimes recognized internationally as the 'Bulgarian Womens' sound. This is a familiar folk tone that I have heard across all the case studies, particularly with children in rural areas. My curiosity in how this tone is achieved led to a vocal session at the office of the Kiev Symphony Orchestra and Chorus with Victoria Konchakovska (Vikka), assistant conductor of the Kiev Symphony Orchestra and Chorus, and recognized expert with coaching this folk tone with professional singers. This particular vocal timbre can be characterized as a highly pressurized chest tone that creates a somewhat strident sound. To avoid the negative effects of this vocal placement on the voice (strain), the method relies on more engagement of the abdominal and abdominal oblique muscles to a great extent.

In my experience, the sight-reading expertise of the singers that I observed with the Kiev Chorus was exceptional; they were singing the melismatic sections of Mozart's *Requiem* on the first reading. The singers were placed in mixed formation, which seemed to bring about a tonal consistency across the sections. This singing formation is not normally used when singers are sight-reading, even within professional choirs.

The 'means' through which Anatoliy develops expressive communication with his singers is through the skill of what he terms, *timbral meaning associations* (TMA). Anatoliy outlines the mix of 'head' and 'chest' tone as the determiner to regulate colour in the voice, which he relates to a form of national meaning-making through timbral colour:

The intonation of meaning is important as well – meaningful intonation in other words. We are trying to imitate what actors do; one word can be pronounced in ten different ways, which would carry ten different shades of meaning. Every nation has a vibrato, which is winding up to heaven, and this vibrato is related to the linguistic peculiarities.

Just as sounds of distinctive languages have *timbral meaning associations*, accessing range in both height and depth have meaning attachments as well. For

example, we associate the plodding sadness of the Chesnokov with a low, dark, open sound in the male voice; this is easily achieved with the open vowels of the Russian language.

And the range . . . , there is a peculiar range characteristic for any given nation. Every niche is full, every niche is set for every particular nation. So we have an opportunity to create or have this temporal palette and we can demonstrate that palette at our rehearsal.

Anatoliy's work develops the capacity of expressiveness through timbral colours through tuning systems. He describes his approach to develop these timbral meaning associations with the use of '*zone natural intonation*', a system of operating within the shortest distance between sounds in western music (100 cents). In typical western singing pedagogy, we have described 'brighter' or 'darker' adjustments to intervals; however, Anatoliy speaks of this skill through pitch variation of 30 cents to increase the colours of the timbral palette for expressive purposes:

It will be not hundred cents, but 70 cents. And I call it a 'zone natural intonation'. This system is rarely used now, but we are still trying to use the things, and we'll display it, and we'll demonstrate it.

Indicating a loss of this skill and means of expressive singing communication in present day singing in Ukraine, Anatoliy's purpose in re-developing and preserving TMA requires "both head and chest, both head and chest should be involved plus intellect, and emotion." Similar to Alina, Helle, and Joseph, Anatoliy highlights the importance of awareness through critical reflective practice in transformative singing leadership.

3.10.4. Summary

During the Soviet Union's occupation of the Ukraine, much of the national orchestral and choral repertoire was avoided or given little attention. After Ukraine gained independence in 1991, the Kiev Symphony Orchestra and Chorus premiered the standard repertoire of western music for chorus and orchestra. In addition, for the first time audiences were hearing the jewels of Slavic music from composers such as Tchaikovsky, Prokofiev, Rimsky-Korsakov, Mussorgsky, Borodin, Chesnokov and Rachmaninov. During my visit, I observed and participated in rehearsals with the Kiev

Chorus in their preparation of Mozart's *Requiem* – to be performed the week I left to initiate the case study in Denmark. This was to be one of the first times in post Soviet occupation that this music had ever been heard in Kiev. The warm hospitality of Wes and Kim Janzen and their children was invaluable in setting up opportunities for engaging with the musicians, singers and conductors in Kiev. As principal conductor of the Kiev Symphony Orchestra and Chorus, Wes secured the opportunity to make personal connections for me to gather data for this study and continues providing ongoing connections amidst the political turmoil in Ukraine.

The case study in Ukraine provided opportunities to observe and investigate the cultural singing view and transformative pedagogy of Anatoliy, and through his influence, other singing leaders in the Tchaikovsky Conservatory. By observing the national singing festival, the student conducting exams at the Conservatory, and the rehearsals of the Kiev Symphony Chorus, I was able to see a picture of the *transformative singing leadership* of Anatoliy Avdievsky, whose life work appears to be dedicated to developing the transformative singing capacities of authenticity (*incubation*), timbral expressiveness (*timbral meaning associations*) in purposeful ways to improve lives in Ukraine.

3.11. Exploring Transformative Singing Leadership Capacities

In this section I describe some of the leaders' shared or common approaches to developing capacities of singing and nurturing these capacities through collaborative mechanisms and processes, which I refer to as transformative singing leadership (TSL). My aim is to highlight the apparent themes (some shared, some unique) from across the four singing leaders in four emergent areas: (1) communicative musicality (quality of skill and expression, intrinsic pulse, narrative), (2) distinct cultural identity and intersectionalities, (3) resiliency, and (4) social innovation. What overrides all four themes or capacities is a collective approach toward making meaning from the art form of singing.

3.11.1. Capacities within *Communicative Musicality*

As mentioned in previous chapters, a broad approach that underpins capacities (innate and cultural) in all responsive music learning may be rooted in Malloch and Trevarthen's (1999) notion of *communicative musicality* (CM). CM occurs as a dynamic sympathetic state that allows coordinated companionship to arise and appears as "an innate sense of motivated time" and an innate source of impulsive expression in which there is a demonstrated "attitude, facial display, locomotion, voice, and gesture" (p. 7).

As the case studies feature singing leaders who develop singing capacities as a central aspect of their work, I have adapted and grouped these capacities within the theory of CM to describe three key sources that were found in the case studies: intrinsic pulse, skill and expressive qualities, and narratives.

As mentioned in the overview in Chapter 1, the fundamental missing piece in singing pedagogy in my view, is the connection of singing to *meaning-making* – an absence which is apparent in the non-descript faces, the lack of connection of conductor to singer and singer to singer, and in the gap between the chosen repertoire and the social-cultural make-up of the singers. The singing leaders' perspectives open up a wider concept of 'musicality' in singing and singing pedagogy that offers the potential for helping singers develop a connection or reconnection with the origins of childhood singing: a prosodic, melodic contour rooted in the necessity for social connection (Malloch & Trevarthen, 1999; Welch, 2005). A pedagogical framework begins to emerge that includes the sources of intrinsic pulse, quality, and narrative within *communicative musicality* is featured in the transformative singing practices found in these case studies.

3.11.2. Intrinsic Motive pulse

As mentioned in Chapter 2, the *intrinsic pulse* is a locomotive, succession of 'behavioural events' in vocal and/or gestural time that is coordinated by two or more people (Trevarthen, 1999). These episodes convey a sense anticipation and expectation as to what and when an event will occur. The source of that instinct in music form is not necessarily a regulated pulse over time, but may take form in a long sweep of time that has been robbed (ebb) and paid back (flow). CM seems to suggest

that natural phenomenon such as the sound and behaviour of water on a beach is at the core of the intrinsic musical sense of pulse. This intrinsic sense of pulse, cultivated and conveyed through an embodied approach such as Alina's, seems to be a great *connector* to link singer and audience together in a shared experience. In recounting her efforts to cultivate Cuban audiences for the 'new style', Alina describes the essence of the singer-audience connection:

And then when we sang in the concert. When Carlos sang the solos of the choir the public stand up from their chairs and start screaming because Carlos not only sang the solo, he FELT what he was singing.

Inherent in her explanation is the notion of abandon, a letting go of the technical aspects to make space for a shared vulnerability, facilitated through a *relational understanding*, an awareness of the mechanisms that enable connective understandings between author to singer, singer to singer, conductor to singer, and singer to audience.

When he sings he is giving his soul to the public and he knows how to move in front of the public and he knows how to capture the attention of that public.

The 'call and response' between solo and ensemble takes on an engaged conversation featuring space and expectation. The KBC seem to embody a relational understanding of singer to singer that, from my vantage point, is modeled to a large degree through Joseph's use of eye contact. In an inviting manner, Joseph looks directly at each singer and holds his gaze for quite some time until there is a connection. This appears not in an intimidating manner; rather, it is a form of encouragement for engaging physicality and connection. I observed the boys deriving a version of the IMP from Joseph and in turn, modeling this for each other.

Anna Stetsenko's expansion (2004) of Vygotsky's Cultural Historical Activity Theory framework provides a significant theoretic lens on what may be occurring in the 'call and response' forms I observed in the work of Joseph and Alina. These forms of back and forth 'sung' conversations give rise to what Stetsenko views as the important aspects within a 'unified human social life', where the "collective practices of material production, the social interactions among people . . . and the self – such that the agentive role of both the individual and social dimensions in human development is

revealed and ascertained" (p. 498). Through solo and group singing forms, Joseph and Alina facilitate "interactions" of collective meeting points between audience and singers. These meeting points have potentials to move and deepen understandings of self and others.

Helle employs different methods to nurture the *intrinsic motive pulse* among her singers and audiences. One such method is to surround the audience with the singers in one curved line allowing the audience to experience the sound as it washes over them. As with the Kiev Symphonic Choir, the singers also position themselves in mixed formation (SATB) providing the audience all parts coming from the same peripheral direction. Helle advocates this method as a 'change of hearing' that expands the experience of the audience and fosters the singer-audience connection with a more immediate 'big sonic hug'. During their final performance at the Aarhus Conservatory, I positioned myself at right angles to the audience to determine the reaction to the singing. Facial reaction is a particular tool of interest for me to regulate the effect of expressive singing on the part of the audience. The sense that comes through the interviews of Helle being a reflective practitioner is demonstrated in her attempts to 'read' the audience by viewing videotaped performances where she positions the camera not at the choir, but rather at the audience. As a conductor or singing leader, you do not get the opportunity to 'read' the audience reaction until the applause at the end. As Helle indicates, the singing encounter with the audience can reveal poignant moments in singing expression. Although my *reading* of the audience may be suspect in this encounter, I did observe a 'state' of audience connection with the music by their energy and facial expression indicating a sense of awe. Although the capacity of *intrinsic motive pulse* appears in varying forms in the contexts of their work, Trevarthen's notion of 'behavioral events' between two or more people take form through the leader, singer, and audience. In my observations within the case studies, the aspects of sound, motion and embodiment are the interwoven aspects in singing communication that 'move' an audience (the listen) to enact an involvement or participation in the collaborative 'behavioural event'.

3.11.3. Qualities: Skill/Expressiveness

I observed the physical and communicative qualities of singing in relation to skill and expressiveness with each of the singing leaders with varying blended proportions. For Alina, developing these capacities is central to her work, which had an enormous influence on international choirs attending world choral events:

and then they [international audience] saw that the choirs could have a visual way on the stage. After that, each and every choir of the country has movement. Many of the choirs at the beginning didn't move.

It seems that Cuban singing suffered the same Cartesian body/mind disconnection that still exists with western singing practices. After Alina's 'new style' of physical embodied singing was presented in European choral festivals, Alina states, "*they lost the shame that they felt to do those movements and they found it was a valid option.*" In the case of Joseph and the KBC, physical movement is the first priority of each rehearsal. The KBC rehearsals begin with 'physicals' in which the lead and assistant 'movement leaders' take the group through a progression of physical exercise that lasts 30 minutes and awakens the body for the rendering of tribal songs, according to Joseph: "*You know with us it's all about singing, dancing at the same time and really expressing.*"

In addition to the physical and communicative aspects of skill and expressiveness, there were examples of the importance of timbral meaning associations (TMA) in the case studies. In conceptualizing TMA, I draw on Lonergan's (1993) notion of 'colors and tones' that reflect art and experience to highlight the singing leaders' development of capacities for tonal colour to convey meanings to an audience. According to Lonergan, "art is an objectification of a purely experiential pattern. . . . It is the pattern of internal relations that will be immanent in the colors, in the tones, in the spaces [in the art work itself]" (pp. 217-219). As mentioned above, Helle and Anatoliy in particular mention tonal colour expressiveness in their work to convey both regional and content meanings. An associated skill in developing TMA is developing range capacities. With Joseph, the development of the falsetto and head tone is very prominent in his work and increases the flexibility for his arrangements. As described

earlier in this section, Helle's development of range capacities with the girls is also prominent.

3.11.4. Narrative

For Joseph Muyale Inzai in Kenya, each song is used for a purpose that is enacted in the daily events such as births, funerals, weddings, and celebrations. In Bantu languages there is no word for singing (Sparks, 2009), which is as common as breathing and talking. The thematic narratives within these songs exist in all tribes; Joseph's description of the singer's process to prepare the story in an authentic way is a key element in his leadership in transformative singing engagement. He states proudly that every folk song 'has a story to tell' and must convey tribal meaning through the text, the motion, and the body.

With the Kenyan case study in particular, it was at times very challenging to separate out and distinguish the narrative content of the stories from the way the boys related to each other in the song - their 'ways of being.' I have acknowledged my role, within the complexity of a cross-cultural study, as the foreign 'Wageni' [visitor] researcher and that any assumptions and generalizations I make regarding the relations between these participants are open for critical interrogation. However, during my time with the boys and Joseph, I was aware of a deep sense of trust and love between choir and leader which had an immediate positive effect and appeared to unify aspects of their singing engagement.

Malloch and Trevarthen (2009) describe the *narrative* of the mother-infant interaction as being made up of the shared innate motives that are initiated through joint partnership. The musical narrative generated through the companionship of two 'musical authors' provides intentional expression and "a sense of sympathy and situated meaning" (p. 4). These transformative singing leaders build on this innate framework by generating environments that are safe, dialogic, rigorous, humorous, and trusting; each of the case studies displayed these elements in their singing environments. Two prominent examples from my inquiry come from Joseph and Alina in this regard. As mentioned earlier, Joseph gathered the environmental supports that 'nurtured' the

capacities for singing, which in turn foster a sense of value and contribution (Stetsenko, 2010) within musical and non-musical roles. Particularly with the soloists, Alina has achieved ‘the new style’ featuring an embodied natural singing style that is an extension of a Cuban natural ‘way of being’ through empowering her singers to express meaning.

3.11.5. Summary of CM

The *pulse*, *quality*, and *narrative* forms of CM can be manifested in singing through interdependent ways that may be recognized as mutually definable to each other. For example, we *feel* the rich resonant timbre in an expressive vocal sound simultaneously with *seeing* the facial expression emoting the same expression as we *hear* the text of the narrative. Found within the concept of *synesthesia* (Abrams, 1996), these previously described components work together in dynamic relationship as the source and impetus of action and motion. In Western cultural modes of perception we tend to ‘think’ in between hearing and feeling. Thinking can place a barrier between the immediacy of hearing and feeling (Damasio, 1995; Merleau-Ponty, 1967). Awakening potentials through nurturing *pulse*, *quality*, and *narrative* parameters outlined in CM is a pedagogical challenge; however, I would assert that the common evidence of a ‘proto-musicality,’ ‘mimesis’ (Brown, 2000; Falk, 2004), and synesthesia (Abrams, 1996) may inform singing practice and pedagogy with fresh new ways of learning. These capacities found within CM are especially evident through the transformative singing leadership that the case study singing leaders demonstrate as they promote among their singing community their particular values and self-beliefs, agency and purpose, connection, and physical and communicative skills.

3.12. Cultural identity and Intersectionalities: Braided, Blended, and Blurred

In this section I describe how the singing leaders position their practices between distinct cultural singing identities on the one hand and intersections of cultural singing traditions on the other. The approach to cultural forms of singing by each leader may be viewed through socio-cultural and socio-political transformative processes (O’Neill, 2012a), and I have therefore applied O’Neill’s (2014b) conceptual framework of

braided, blended, and blurred as a framework for examining the singing leaders' work. These transformative singing leaders provide 'authentic' pathways for both individual connections between 'singer and story' and collective identities derived from cultural traditions and influences, shared histories, and new opportunities. These connections emerge from generative processes that provide links to 'lived experiences' and connect to textual meanings in the stories of songs leading to cultural understandings (Althusser, 2001; Aoki, 1993). The singing leaders can be described as protectors and curators of cultural authenticity in singing, purveyors of identities and mixed identities, and promoters of shared cultural understandings between singers and audiences.

Political foundations that are laid between nations such as Russia and Cuba, Kenya and its surrounding African countries, Denmark and other Scandinavian countries, and more recently, Ukraine and Estonia, generate allegiances that foster the intersections of cultures from which can be observed the many rich opportunities that exist at their meeting points. Alina's socio-cultural 'stance' emerges out of an interchange of eastern European socialist countries in the 20th century, particularly Russia, Germany, and Hungary. Pointing to the socio-historical make-up of music pedagogy in Cuba, she outlines the beginning of a recognized form of choral music in Cuba:

And those years began the interchange with all the Eastern European countries because of the social- political reasons of socialism. Many of his students from here started to go to scholarships in Russia, Germany, and some of them returned, married, with people from those countries.

From her early Eastern European influence, Alina works with singers and composer/arrangers to invite in the popular indigenous music forms of the Cuban people, specifically Afro-Cuban which stems from *Santeria* (a belief system that itself is a fusion of west African religion and Roman Catholicism), the *taino* indigenous people, and the Spanish colonial influence.

Roberto Aleba, wrote two important pieces for Electo's choir – the Choir of Santiago de Cuba. He also tried to do some other way of popular music. And he took the roots of Gua Guanco for example – the Rumba – to do a contemporary piece with those elements of folkloric music, "So like Oscar Escalade's Tanguendo"

Alina described the forms of repertoire from her arrangers as an *Ajiaco*, a Cuban stew of vegetables in which the flavours do not blend but contribute individually with their distinct flavours – a *braiding* of cultural styles of singing.

In Ukraine, Anatoliy's approach differs from Alina's braided model although he recognizes culturally distinct forms of singing that derive from language:

Every nation has a particular vibrato, which is winding up to heaven and this vibrato is related to the linguistic peculiarities. And the range, there is a peculiar range characteristic for any given nation.

However, in bringing back the old traditional forms of distinct cultures, Anatoliy is responding to what he describes as a "*diluted and devalued*" view of singing in present day Ukraine. He favours a *blended* approach, an *incubator* of cultural singing that recognizes the complexity and the historical singing expertise through the development of his *timbral meaning associations*, and cultural singing forms of the regions of Ukraine. The singing expertise of the folk song specialist (mentioned earlier) is a long-forgotten skill according to Anatoliy; replicating these skills that were considered 'authentic' to a cultural region many years ago is a practical impossibility. In reality, through personal knowledge that is passed on, these forms of singing and dance are combined with the present day skills and training by his artists to form a present day 'take' on past cultural-historic singing.

Joseph's 'one tribe' philosophy and approach is one that features a blurring of cultural lines. Recent inter-tribal marriages (including his own) are at odds with the present political motivations of the country; his approach to cultural identity is carefully measured:

the singing is actually pan-African and we are looking at African folklore. So I do a lot of research . . . and I meet my colleagues, my friends and we exchange music across Africa.

An example of his approach can be heard in the recent album, *The Spirit of Africa* by Universal Records¹⁶ in which the music forms on this album feature his pan-African approach. Songs, such as *Soon and Very Soon* feature tribal chants overlaid with civil rights gospel music, and authentic rap¹⁷ interwoven throughout. The theme of struggle represented in each layer of the music is separate and distinct, yet on first hearing the tracks *blur* together to create a cohesive mix.

3.13. Developing Resiliency

Each singing leader has experienced struggle, conflict, and even threat to their lives and work. In each case, these adversities have led to renewed purpose. Indeed, it seems that the more barriers, constraints, and conflicts that seemed to get between the leader and his or her purpose, the more refined, intense, and agentic the singing leader's work became. Struggle seems to feature in the stories of their journeys, which are infused with a sense of 'always becoming' (Althusser, 2001).

Giroux (2009) attributes this struggle as "both a struggle for meaning and a struggle over power relations" (p. 439). Through Victor Frankl's perspective, 'forged in the flames of Nazi cruelty,' we may understand that development of purpose can be promoted through ways in which "high level belief systems can enable people to endure life's hardships. . . . the sheltering fortress in a world of constant threat" (in Damon *et al*, 2003 p. 119).

In the face of imminent civil war in Kenya in 2008, and further tribal violence between farming and livestock tribes since that time, Joseph has continued to promote peace through his practice of inter-tribal singing; his complicated 'one-tribe' philosophy is

¹⁶ Obama's favourite choir: the Spirit of Africa . . . (n.d.), *The Free Library*. (2014). Retrieved Sep 28 2014 <http://www.thefreelibrary.com/Obama's+favourite+choir%3a+the+Spirit+of+Africa.-a0203508912>

¹⁷ see 'griots' in <http://novaonline.nvcc.edu/eli/evans/his135/events/rap79/rapmusic.html>

a practiced art form in itself¹⁸, and relies on a deep sense of trust, acceptance, and forgiveness among the singers. In his positive world-view, he outlines his purpose of the inter-tribal singing model:

a model for world singing . . . particularly for our country where we find politicians trying to separate the Kenyans on tribal lines. But this is a model that will tell our politicians that look we are co-existing and this is how we want our country to be. We want to live in one union, as a people of Kenya and we also want the whole world to impress the same. Less of the Arabs, English, Indians, the Asians, Africans, less of 'nationality'. Impress humanity together and appreciate the time frame God has given us to live together.

More recently, two of his singers were in hospital for weeks recovering from the bombing at the Westgate Shopping Mall in Nairobi. He contacted me several times to report on the condition and recovery of his singers who he was visiting every day.

In developing 'the new style' of singing that was closer and more authentic to the experience of the Cuban people, Alina faced significant barriers rooted in traditional European singing approaches. Alina points that struggles and challenges foster innovation and a sense of resiliency: "*I think that sometimes the mistakes and the needs necessitate that you create something new. It makes a violent form to the human so the human has to make something new*". The acceptance and affirmation of her embodied approach in the festivals outside of Cuba gave her an emboldened sense of purpose to face the struggle for acceptance of embodied singing within Cuba.

Anatoliy's personal test of resilience in which he faced the political accusation of 'nationalism' and subsequent threat of deportation to Siberia is something that still seems raw for him. He did not wish to dwell on this in my interviews although in an odd, somewhat prophetic statement, he touched on the antecedent of events that would repeat the threat of Russian domination over Ukraine in the winter and spring of this year, 2014, threatening the very purpose of Anatoliy's work.

¹⁸ Some of the boys in the KBC have seen horrific tribal warfare in their communities involving family members. Through my limited observations, there appeared to be a distinct closeness and bond that existed between boys who represented the 42 tribes within Kenya. I found this to be the most powerful aspect of my time in Kenya.

Some of the neighboring nations [Russia] do not like independent Ukraine; they do not like the fact that Ukraine is independent. For 300 hundred years, Ukraine did not enjoy statehood. And some politicians in those neighboring nations do not think Ukraine is a nation and they don't think the Ukrainian language exists.

The very location of this case study, the Tchaikovsky Conservatory of Music, was the site of bloody violence and killings in the past few months. Images in the media show snipers on the roof of the Conservatory, blackened with the soot from the ramparts of burning tires in Independence Square. During this time, Anatoliy risked his life by appearing in the media with the Veriovka singers, asserting their collective purpose to protect and promote the cultural forms of Ukrainian song and dance.

3.14. Social Innovation

The case studies feature leaders who inspire social innovation through self-reflective practices within their evolving and collaborative environments, taking risks in their work, and by having a deep purpose for their work that extends beyond the music.

3.14.1. Self-Reflective Practice

Vera John Steiner (2000) opposes the classical view of *the self* as an independent rational being and presents a 'life-span' approach to human development in which "humans come into being and mature in relation to others" (John-Steiner, 2000, p. 189). This relational lens on development reminds us that through the many and varied activities associated with ensemble singing, "we confront our shifting realities and search for different solutions" (p. 3) through evolving pathways with the aim of reaching today's singers and audiences. In each context, the singing leaders faced shifting and unpredictable realities, some of them threatened their very work. And yet, all demonstrated a form of self-reflective practice that enabled them to not only transform their singing leadership; they also fostered transformations among their singers and audiences.

In Cuba, Alina has faced shifting realities in attempting to break the restrictive mould of the uni-dimensional classical approach of singing in favour of establishing a recognized 'new style' which brought together popular forms of singing. Joseph responds to the political unrest in Kenya, by keeping the Kenyan Boys Choir in existence with a model of inter-tribal singing as a message to those in power positions in the country. Anatoliy, in his 90s, faces the political uncertainty of his country and by extension, the legacy of his life-long commitment to protecting, preserving, and reconstituting the cultural diversity of singing in Ukraine. His response through the past six months of political strife and threats to his life is to face the world head on in the media, demonstrating the will of a people through song. Each of these leaders face change with a strong sense of agency and purpose, with a will to act and lead with contemplation and innovative decision-making.

3.14.2. Self-Challenging/Rule Breakers

To varying extents, these leaders may be viewed as rule breakers, renegades, and revolutionaries in their own contexts. And yet, as Charles Taylor (1989) suggests, their examples may be more inherent in all of us through our quests for "a certain ideal of citizenship". In creating participatory cultures of expressive singing, these leaders are possibly searching for "something constitutive of the people's autonomous humanity" (p. 415). Influenced by Herder's expressive individualism, Taylor offers a view of 'the good' as pluralism. Cultures need their own individualism; sources of inspiration become important. Taylor's view of pluralism can be seen within Anatoliy's singing leadership in present day Ukraine, a stance that resonates with Taylor's view of the 'infinite self':

This choosing of ourselves, this placing of ourselves in the infinite, lifts us out of despair and allows us to affirm ourselves . . . the self-choosing infinite self is what we truly are, a dignity which we should live up to . . . (p. 450)

Taylor provides us with a way of seeing how the response and platonic 'quest for justice' might be seen in Anatoliy's response to violence was a kind of reversal to Cartesian disengagement:

Rather than disengaging, we throw ourselves more fully into the experience, as it were. There is a kind of search which involves “being all there”, being more attentively ‘in’ our experience. (Taylor, p. 163)

I have observed these leaders attempt what Taylor describes as “a capacity of vision which is forever unimpaired” and referring to Plato, moving from “darkness to the brightness of true being” (Taylor, p. 123). An example of this appeared toward the end of a long interview with Anatoliy in which an exchange occurred with Wes Janzen. Anatoliy spoke of the relenting grip of Russia on the citizens of Ukraine and praised Wes for his work with the victims of war, some of who have been professional singers:

because you know, just look at those veterans those who still remain alive [Holodomor¹⁹ survivors]. Many of them are disabled, crippled. And of course the war itself had its nuances in Ukraine. It is great what you are doing for the old people. Who have no access to surgery or have no medical assistance whatsoever. Those who actually participated in action, those who actually participated in the war, they are not able to walk these days. I am referring to the page in the history of Ukraine, it’s good that there are so many foundations and organizations working to restore justice in Ukraine because many Ukrainians have been deprived of justice and in particular, those people who were sent to Germany to do slave labour in German concentration camps or those who lived actually on the occupied territory here in Ukraine. After the war many of them were exiled to Siberia as enemies of the soviet state and they were virtually stripped of any civil rights, many of them died in Siberia too. And maybe the Soviet Union has disappeared and we pray that it would not re-appear again, but I fear it will.

As mentioned in the previous section on resiliency, Anatoliy is mindful of the constant threat to the sovereignty and autonomy of Ukraine and is openly critical of the present government’s capacity to lead the country:

We can also recall the Ukrainian headman who was at that time the highest ruler of Ukraine. He knew at least 6 foreign languages.

¹⁹ Holodomor - *Holodomor*, translated as ‘killing by hunger’, is the Ukrainian genocide orchestrated by Stalin that preceded the Nazis purge into Ukraine from the west. The Holodomor victims number in the millions. Some examples of the tools of *instrumentality* that are found in the *Inquiry into the Famine – Genocide of 1932-33 in the Ukraine* are listed (translated).

Yanukovich, the present day Ukrainian leader, how many languages does he know? He only speaks both. [Russian and Ukrainian].

3.15. Conclusion of TSL Study

The singing leaders conveyed the themes of their respective practices, which have been bound up in their own subjectivity – they are subjective storytellers, each with a view of the world, each with their own distinct conceptual lens. Hannah Arendt (1958), in her critique of thought, *The Human Condition*, calls attention to the nature of action as constituting subjectivity: “even though the stories are the inevitable results of action, it is not the actor but the storyteller who perceives and ‘makes’ the story” (p. 192). In collaborating with Cuban composers, Alina provided a form of TSL that made possible an expressive vehicle for new, innovative forms of vocal expression: “...and he wrote the piece, *Qui Sierra (I wish)* and *Y Lia Santiago (And It’s Santiago)*. *The voices do some imitation of the instruments with syllables that don’t mean anything.*” Alina gathered together like-minded composers who risked breaking traditional vocal forms in favour of generating new ideas such as adding percussion parts through vocal percussion, or ‘beat boxing’. The bass parts were added using syllables that reflected the sound of a string bass. Groups such as *Vocal Sample* and *Novel Voz (New Voice)* are examples of vocal ‘bands’ that arose out of Alina’s new innovative style and gained national and international recognition.

The concept of ‘one tribe’ asserted by Joseph, provides an example of what Greene (1995) describes as, “a social vision of a more humane, more fully pluralistic, more just, and more joyous community (p. 61). This form of TSL appears to be a possible outcome of *communicative musicality* manifested in singing pedagogy. Joseph, restating his collaborative imperative for singing and choral music, indicates his desire for pan-African music reaching out of the continent: “*Most of the songs, or most of the arrangements are my own arrangements and others are from my friends from all of Africa and the world at large.*” Joseph shows a practice that negotiates tribal difference within the community through the art form of singing. Out of a seemingly unimaginable poverty in the experience of most singing leaders, a model emerges that mitigates cultural identities toward pluralism, enacting what Bauman (2000) describes as *liquid*

modernity in which, “the volatility of identities, so to speak, stares the residents of liquid modernity in the face. And so does the choice that logically follows it: to learn the difficult art of living with difference or to bring about, by hook or by crook, such conditions as would make that learning no longer necessary” (p. 178).

These leaders are people workers – life changers who see their roles within an agency of narrative action. Through the examples of transformative singing leadership, we may be encouraged to “understand our lives in narrative form, as a ‘quest’” (Taylor, 1989, p. 52).

Chapter 4.

Study Two: Transformative Singing Engagement

4.1. Study Aims

Pedagogical practices in singing need to be responsive to the challenges and leverage the affordances of engaging young singers that are growing up in today's fluid and fast-changing digital age, in deep, meaningful, and enduring learning of western music and singing traditions. Little is known about the extent to which singing engagement fosters transformative experiences and very little empirical research has examined potential factors leading to engagement in transformative singing experiences. In particular, the pedagogical practices associated with transformative learning within school-based choral singing programs focusing on western music and singing traditions has received little attention. O'Neill (2012a) suggests that pedagogical practices in western music traditions:

have actually increased the focus on performance achievement outcomes as indicators of learning and perpetuated the simplistic notion that if we discover the optimal conditions of learning through rigorous, systematic performance, we will become better music [singing] learners, or by implication, better teachers. (p. 168)

Drawing on literature within the transformative paradigm, what appears to be needed is research focused on young singers' experiences from their own perspective as a way of gaining insight into their 'insider-knowledge' (McIntyre, 2008). Young singers' understandings can then be used to inform how we might best foster learning opportunities that are capable of engaging learners growing up in today's globalized and technological world in ways they find personally meaningful.

An explicit focus on personal meaning making seems to be largely absent in the curricula, course descriptions, and approaches used by many singing teachers who work with youth in Canadian public schools. Although there are exceptions, there appears to be a widespread lack of engagement in singing pedagogy specifically aimed at exploring the meaning of messages inherent in vocal music and how to engage students in making their own meaningful connections with these messages. We might refer to this as *singer subjectivity*, and evidence for its absence can be found in the ‘non-descript’ facial expressions that can be observed among many choral singers, and the lack of coherence in repertoire and programming choices you find in many choral concerts. It is also possible that this lack of focus on personal meaning making with singing students is contributing to a decline in engagement in choral singing and the number of choral programs in public schools in Canada. Since little is known about the extent to which singing engagement generates transformative experiences, and very little empirical research has investigated learning opportunities that lead to engagement in transformative music and singing experiences, singing learning in trained western communities is lacking a pedagogical framework for fostering deep and meaningful singing engagement.

Although there has been no large-scale study of singing activity of youth in Canada, such as *The Choral Impact Study* by Chorus America in the United States²⁰, my sense is that public school singing in Canada appears to be in decline. However, in an interview I conducted with the president of the Association of Canadian Choral Communities, Christina Murray, in 2011, she pointed out that while public school choirs had decreased, there had been an increase in private school and community choral programs. Although the reasons for this are likely to be complex and multifaceted, it signals a potential need for research into how we might better engage learners in school-based choral programs. Drawing on the approach of *transformative music engagement* (O’Neill, 2012a), this study aims to investigate key capacities of deep, meaningful, and enduring learning in singing with secondary school students in a Canadian public school choral education program. Specifically, theory and practice are

²⁰ The *Choral Impact Study* was carried out in 2009, see www.chorusamerica.org/publications/research-reports/chorus-impact-study

interrelated and examined in relation to the transformative paradigm through an action research study involving an interrelated 16-week program development component and study using an innovative retrospective assessment procedure to examine 50 secondary school students' perceptions of transformative singing engagement (TSE) involving two singing capacities (embodied physicality and communicative expression) and three learning capacities (engaged agency, connectivity, and values/self-beliefs).

The research aims to:

1. Develop a TSE program focusing on two singing capacities (embodied physicality and communicative expression) and three learning capacities (engaged agency, connectivity, and values/self-beliefs) across a range of diverse singing activities;
2. Implement the program using emergent curriculum, transformative pedagogy, and reflective practice approaches aimed at empowering learners and situating meaning making at the core;
3. Examine secondary school students' perceptions or 'insider-knowledge' of personal meaning in and through singing, and their experience during and following the TSE program implementation.

The following section provides a description of the TSE program development and pedagogical approach. This is followed by a description of the study and presentation of the results.

4.2. TSE Program and Pedagogy

The design of the TSE singing program involves four main components: (1) emergent curriculum, (2) transformative pedagogy, (3) reflective practice, and (4) an 'unlikely partner' involving a deliberate practice model (DP). The DP model (Ericsson, Krampe, & Tesch-Römer, 1993) is based in cognitive psychology and may seem a rather odd addition to this study, which aligns more with cultural psychology; therefore, its inclusion here requires some explanation, which is provided below after a description of the other TSE program components.

4.2.1. Emergent Curriculum

An emergent curriculum, according to Aoki (2005), features a learner-centered paradigm of *lived experiences*. O'Neill (2012a) describes how music learners' past "lived experiences" connect them within a "continuous process of becoming music learners" (p. 164). It is this notion of "becoming" that emphasizes the need within an emergent curriculum approach to recognize that music learning is a continual and relational process. Osberg and Biesta (2008) describe an emergent curriculum as a way of promoting a "particular way of being" that is sensitive to the responsibility of "the singularity and uniqueness of each individual student" (p. 313). Stacey (2011) defines emergent curriculum as "a cycle" that involves (a) watching and listening to learners with care, (b) reflecting on and engaging in dialogue with others about what is a happening; and (c) responding thoughtfully in ways that support learners' ideas, questions, and thinking" (p. 1). It requires a responsive approach on the part of the educator because learners' ideas and behaviours are "often unexpected, thought-provoking, or just plain puzzling" (p. 1).

Related to notions of emergent curriculum and its emphasis on learner-centered approaches, and the increased emphasis in music education on collaborative teaching and learning (Luce, 2001), is the role played by *participatory cultures* (Jenkins, 2009) in developing social connections and a sense of purpose. Within participatory cultures, "members believe their contributions matter, and feel some degree of social connection with another (at the least they care what other people think about what they have created)" (Jenkins, 2009, p. 3). Within the TSE program, youth capacities are nurtured and 'meaning-schemes' are brought forward as both acknowledgment for learning and opportunities for adjustments between singing learner and singing leader. This requires a tandem flexible pedagogical paradigm of critical reflection whereby opportunities for singing learning are nurtured through pedagogical adjustments that are responsive to students and that happen 'on the fly.' Participatory cultures also "encourage the sharing of distributed knowledge" (O'Neill, 2012a, p. 172). Skill building in singing features a holistic, reflexive approach that involves encouraging questioning and using metaphors to generate understanding of participant views in the group rehearsal setting.

Another related aspect of an emergent curriculum includes the recognition of the need for forms and expressions in vocal music to connect with “the other curriculum,” in the lives and stories of singers, such that the ‘planned curriculum’ is informed by a “multiplicity of lived curriculum” (Aoki, 2005, p. 203). For example, in the TSE program a narrative approach (Bruner, 1990; Fry, 2002) was taken to elicit stories of real life experience from the participants that could link with the textual ideas in the music. As Barrett (2009) reminds us, *narrative inquiry* exists along side the ‘planned curriculum’ to provide opportunities for music learners to “story their lives and live their stories” (p. 2).

4.2.2. Transformative Pedagogy

Transformative pedagogies have their origins in social and political theory, which Kincheloe (1993) describes as having four main propositions: (1) being conscious of the role of power in all dimensions of education; (2) working to “uncover the deep structures that shape education and society” (p. 197), (3) seeking to elucidate how “hyperreality” (i.e., the blurred borders of reality and media images that create a film-like reality that is believable) shapes the lives of learners and educators, and (4) supporting community-based actions to bring about change in entrenched and oppressive practices. Since music education environments are not immune from the consequences of controlling, manipulative, and oppressive practices and subjugating discourses, there is a need to help young music learners recognize, understand, and overcome constraints, while at the same time realizing the power of their own efforts to explore untapped potential and create new possibilities (O’Neill, in press-a).

According to McCaleb (1997), transformative pedagogy “attempts to facilitate a critical capacity within the classroom while promoting the integration of students, families, communities, and the world” (p. 1). Similarly, transformative practice involves students in a critical exploration of their own knowledge of music through representations that involve existing artistic and cultural ecologies. Transformative pedagogy is not a method of teaching but rather a set of principles that guide teaching and learning interactions. These principles vary between different epistemologies and perspectives; however, several key elements are common to most approaches, which O’Neill (2012a, pp. 178-179) describes as:

- *Teaching begins with student knowledge.* Opportunities for expansive learning are provided that enable learners to manipulate or interact within their own artistic and cultural ecologies in a way that helps them make meaningful connections.
- *Skills, knowledge, and voices develop from engagement in the activity.* Learners are asked to create, express, or display their own representations of a particular issue, event, or phenomenon.
- *Teaching and learning are both individual and collaborative processes.* The role of the instructor is one of facilitator, organizer, leader, and source of knowledge on the topic, but not the primary source of learning.
- *Teaching and learning are transformative processes.* Learners share their creative representations with others and engage in a process of dialogue, shared meaning making, and sociocultural and sociopolitical associations.

Willingham (1997) describes transformative education through the arts as “a connected and interrelated experience without the fragmentation of traditional territorial structures that technical-science based education offers” (p. 118). Within the TSE program, a strong emphasis is placed on creating and sustaining “connected and interrelated experience” (p. 118) in ways that respect the diversity of participants and the rich and varied nature of vocal music.

4.2.3. Reflective Practice

The TSE program design is based on a *set of assumptions* about singing teaching and learning that are both informed through the TSE study and findings from the four singing leaders, as well as my own experience as singing practitioner. As a reflective practitioner/educator, the TSE study was a way of informing my own practice, and this intention was strongly related to both the emergent curriculum and the transformative pedagogy components of the program. In particular, is the recognition that the personal knowledge of the participants, as well as the assumptions of the researcher, have a bearing on the program design, temporal aspects of the unfolding

program implementation, and the emergent interpretations of sung texts that “validates embodied knowledge, competencies and experiences” (Green, 2008, p. 185).

By opening up the rehearsal learning space for learners’ interpretations on sung texts, there exists the pedagogical opportunity for what Schön (1983) describes as, “a capacity for reflection on their intuitive knowing in the midst of action and sometimes use this capacity to cope with the unique, uncertain, and conflicted situations of practice ” (pp. 8-9). Schön emphasizes that as the practitioner views and responds to each case uniquely, generic approaches are discarded in favour of emergent ones, which are constructed with “an understanding of the situation as [she/]he finds it” (p. 129). In this environment, the activity is an “exploratory experiment” through which we “get a feel for things” which “leads to the discovery of something there” (p. 141). This discovery may lead to new ‘frames’ through which the practitioner finds alternative ways of viewing the “reality of his practice” (p. 310).

In arts education, Burnard (2006) regards *reflective time* as distinct in educational contexts where artists “place reflection at the heart of the creative process” (p. 3) through reflecting *in time*, an absorbing “intensified experience,” where attention is focused on a limited field of awareness, and *over time* through which thoughts and actions are “recovered, re-viewed, revised, re-evaluated, and re-ordered” (p. 3). O’Neill (2012a) describes the potential of critical reflection as a practice where “educators and learners create the conditions and circumstances in which they can search together collaboratively for more comprehensible, authentic, and morally appropriate ways of valuing and engaging in musical practices” (pp. 174-175). Reflective practice is perhaps the most pervasive and complex aspect of my teaching practice, for my students, and myself, as contexts in teaching environments are always shifting, and each learner comes with unique and evolving potentials.

4.2.4. Deliberate Practice

For many singing practitioners, the idea of singing ‘practice’ has suffered from an absence of a critical reflective pedagogy from which the singer may gain a sense of achievement, value, and contribution. The notion of a *deliberate practice* method (Ericsson et al. 1993) arose out of a study that attempted to reconcile experience with skill acquisition. Ericsson came up with a set of four components that were associated with improved achievement. In Ericsson’s study, participants were (1) given a task with a well-defined goal, (2) motivated to improve, (3) provided with feedback, and (4) provided with environmental catalysts that gave ample opportunities for repetition and gradual refinements of their performance (p. 991). The TSE program adapted these four components within a context-dependent learning plan that featured: (a) an experienced leadership team of singing practitioners who each value a learner-centered ‘reflective practice,’ (b) opportunities to work interactively in small groups where learners are empowered to ‘take hold’ and ‘own’ their part in the music, and c) the creation of new, expansive learning opportunities (Engström & Sannino, 2010), such as collaborating with a university choir and performing in a world class acoustic space with a professional symphony orchestra.

As outlined in the literature review for TME, the behavioral component of “effort, intensity, and focused concentration” (O’Neill, 2012a, p.165) became an aspect in the design of the singing program. The TSE adaptation and application of Ericsson’s components for development were as follows:

1. The singing program features tasks with *well-defined goals*²¹ designed to promote learning and understanding of two singing capacities (embodied physicality and communicative expression) (see Table 1.);

²¹ Based on studies of skill acquisition, I followed a ‘set of conditions’ for practice that had been associated with improved performance engagement (Ericsson, 1993, 2008).

2. The participants are given opportunities to work with a number of vocal specialists and conductors (see singing leaders section below) leading to public performances;

3. Leaders and singers are provided with *feedback* using a pedagogical tool, the 'check in,' to provide instant feedback to the singers as well as the leader. I use this regularly in my pedagogy as an instant feedback mechanism for understanding the *learners'* view of their comfort level with the *challenge* of the program, to promote a caring and trusting *learning environment*, and to generate new strategies and avenues of *connections* with the music. The 'check in' takes two forms:

- a. 'quick-response' survey²²
- b. *dialogue* in small groups and as an entire choir²³.

4. Based on feedback (above) the singing program provided ample opportunities for *repetition* and gradual *refinements* featuring the following components:

- a. sectional rehearsals with team leaders
- b. all group rehearsal exercising
- c. 'full concentration'
- d. 'mimed singing'²⁴

²² The 'quick response' survey involved the student showing their understanding of the learning using 3 fingers: 1 = not at all understood, 2= somewhat understood, 3= completely understood.

²³ Dialogue was informed by studies that had been conducted in the previous two years at LFAS on Artistic Learning (O'Neill, in press-b) in which Bohm's (1996) four principles of dialogue were applied in the form adapted by Issacs (1999) as *listening, respecting, suspending, and voicing*. For the purpose of this study, the exercise was minimally applied and was used as a catalyst for creating trust within a positive learning environment.

4.2.5. Leadership Team

The leadership team for the TSE study included two singing practitioners/conductors who worked collaboratively with the author (also a singing educator-practitioner) on the TSE program and implementation. Both singing leaders are familiar to each other and the author, as they have all worked within the choral community of British Columbia for many years. The role played by each singing leader is explained in the next section, following a brief description of each leader.

1. Fabiana Katz, voice specialist: Fabi has developed an 'embodied approach' through her cultural background in Argentina, the influence of her teachers before and during her singing career, and a critically reflective practice of her own teaching, particularly in relation to connections and similarities of singing and everyday life. By directly working in front of the participants in an interactive space, Fabi's empathy in teaching draws from her awareness, knowledge, and understandings of the singers' visual and sound cues; the sensory aspects of singing and observing singing.

2. Dr. Wes Janzen, conductor, Kiev, Ukraine: Wes is the former director of choirs at Trinity Western University in Langley, British Columbia. Wes has been familiar with the LFAS singers and program through past LFAS and TWU performing collaborations.

²⁴ 'mimed singing' is a mechanism developed for singing by the author as a means to maximize focus and concentrated learning while resting the voice. The method is based on previous studies in dance, which found that when trained participants 'imagined' they were performing while observing others dance, they showed almost the same neurological activity as actually dancing. Prof. Patrick Haggard, University College London, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/health/4113891.stm>

4.2.6. TSE Program Implementation

The singing program implementation with the Langley Fine Arts School (LFAS) choir occurred over 16 weeks using an emergent curriculum approach where adjustments, opportunities, and changes were made ‘on the fly.’ The transformative and reflective practice pedagogical approaches and deliberate practice approaches involved learners and the leadership team in holistic learning focusing on the two singing capacities: embodied physicality and communicative expression (i.e., both capacities were introduced and experienced together when possible). The first six weeks focused more on the physical capacities of singing; however, as the physical capacities became secure, strategies for connection to translations and exploring textual meanings were introduced to emphasize the communicative capacities. These capacities are described below and were fostered through the TSE learning capacities (engaged agency, connectivity, and values/self-beliefs), as described previously in Chapter 2.

By combining the approaches of emergent curriculum, transformative pedagogy, reflective practice, and deliberate practice, a multi-layered dynamic approach was established to address the four principles of TME (as described in Chapter 2): (a) *connections* between sources of music learning and the learner, (b) a focus on the *learners’ views* of their own learning, (c) a *collaborative approach*, and (d) socially and culturally *transformative experiences*. The TSE program also included a focus on several other components: (1) linking singing with everyday experience, (2) youth empowerment, (3) ‘scaffolded’ learning influenced by Vygotsky’s theories of human development (1978). Seven formative and summative assessment strategies were used:

1. ‘digital’ survey²⁵ (formative): participants closed their eyes to remain impartial holding up fingers corresponding to their understanding.

²⁵ the *digital survey* involved students showing their understanding of a concept, line of music, music preparedness, and other aspects that can be self measured: one finger represents ‘not yet’, two fingers represents ‘somewhat’, three fingers means ‘I have it’.

2. group dialogue (formative): dialogue provided a space for the leaders and singers to share difficulties, achievements, concerns in a limited way.
3. sectional dialogue (formative): the soprano, alto, tenor, and bass sections had opportunities to share their thoughts about the program within the context of a sectional rehearsal.
4. teacher assessment (summative): testing for parts (groups of 8): this was an opportunity for the leaders and singers to hear the section parts in pairs, small groups or solos. Students chose their 'comfort zone' with the performing format they preferred.
5. recording and playback (formative): excerpts were recorded and played back for immediate feedback.
6. *repertoire engagement survey* (formative): the singers chose their top three pieces of twenty-four in the program, from which they experience the most singing engagement.
7. *Retrospective assessment* (formative): this was also used as the main measure in the study component and is described in Section 4.3.2.

A more detailed description of the implementation process is provided below.

4.2.7. TSE Emergent Curriculum

The singing capacities (embodied physicality (EP) and communicative expression (CE)) were introduced conceptually and implemented through increasing levels of challenge to maintain and increase learner engagement, but not to the point of overwhelming the learner. The following conceptual model (Figure 2) illustrates several aspects that were prioritized in seeking to achieve a delicate balance point between PA

and CA through the emerging curriculum. The physical aspects such as breathing, stance, and tension release were introduced first, followed by communicative aspects such as meaning-making strategies, and memorizing.

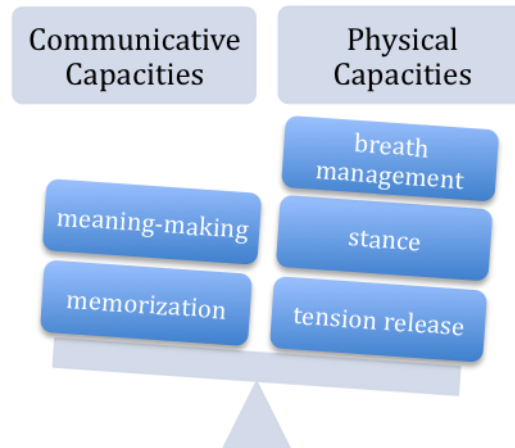


Figure 2. Cognitive Challenge of Communicative and Physical Capacities

The leadership team was mindful that the complexity, content, and volume of repertoire of the singing program could run the risk of overwhelming the learners, particularly given the magnitude of the performance at the end of the program (with Trinity Western University Choirs and the Vancouver Symphony Orchestra). To support the emergent aspect of the implementation process, the content, timeline, and level of singing challenge was continually open to change throughout the program, even up to the final performance. Adjustments occurred every meeting to establish a strong understanding of one concept before going on to the next. Through dialogues, singers were given opportunities to explore and select techniques and metaphors that assisted their understandings; they were also invited to offer new ideas that they connected to in their experience, particularly in relation to textual understandings. During the four 'breathing' workshops with vocal specialist Fabiana Katz, learners engaged with the following interrelated physical capacities with the aim of developing *quality of vocal tone*. Table 1 below provides an overview of the 16-week singing program content.

Table 1. TSE 16-Week Program Overview

Wk	Skill	Expression
	Physical Capacities of Singing	Communicative Capacities of Singing
1	<p><i>Introduction to the 16-week Singing Project</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Explanation of design of the program - Intro to DP 	(Due to the challenge of PA, CA was not introduced until the 4 th week)
2	<p><i>Breathing Workshop 1: Fabiana Katz</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Use of the breathing apparatus - Posture and stance (flex) - Breath management - Awareness of the importance of inter-costal muscles in breathing and support - Effective use of the diaphragm and abdominal wall - Sound placement registers 	
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 'Check in' with singers on workshop - Dialogue in sections with reporting back (what 'resonated', what 'troubled'). This feedback was discussed with Fabi for the next workshop. 	
4	<p><i>Breathing Workshop 2: Fabiana Katz</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Resonance - Use of 'chest' register - Sound placement registers - Resonance - Use of 'chest' register - Use of 'head' register - Use of middle voice -- blending the lower and upper registers - Placement of vowels to achieve depth and resonance 	

Wk	Skill	Expression
	Physical Capacities of Singing	Communicative Capacities of Singing
5	'Check in' with singers on workshop - Dialogue in sections with reporting back (what 'resonated', what 'troubled'). This feedback was discussed with Fabi for the next workshop.	Intro to CA - Concept outline of a narrative and the singers' role - Textual relationship to the music - Discernable (recognizable) 'authentic' singing expression ²⁶
6	<i>Breathing Workshop 3: Fabiana Katz</i> - Vowel modification for tuning and blending - Use of 'natural speech' for projection - Efficient and clear diction	
7	Section rehearsal with student leaders - 'check in' with positives and/or troubles	- Discernable authentic body involvement - Meaning-making
8	<i>Breathing Workshop 4: Fabiana Katz</i> - Review of interrelated concepts	
9	CC performance at the Fall Festival Chan Center, UBC - 'check in' with positives and/or troubles	
10	Debrief of performance (CC) - Section rehearsal with student leaders	
11		- Communicative connection to fellow singers - Communicative connection with other conductors (with leadership team)
12	Section rehearsal with student leaders	
13	Section rehearsal with student leaders	
14	Performance at TWU. Memorization using 'mimed rehearsal technique'	Communication with conductors

²⁶ The basis and context for my use of the term 'authenticity' refers to what is real to the youth singers' lived experience (Green, 2005).

Wk	Skill	Expression
	Physical Capacities of Singing	Communicative Capacities of Singing
15	<i>Chan Center Performance</i>	Warm up: Embodied Physicality visualization and communication (with Fabiana Katz)
16	Debrief and Questionnaires	

4.2.8. TSE ‘Naturalistic’ Pedagogy (Lived Experience)

With the Ericsson deliberate practice model in mind, I began the four-month singing program with a series of four *Physical Capacities of Singing* workshops with the first collaborator on the leadership team, Fabiana (Fabi) Katz. Interspersed through the first eight weeks, Fabi implemented the her concept and practice of *breath awareness and management* in singing through her method of a *re-introduction* of natural ways of breathing²⁷ that are innate in humans and present in everyday life. Fabi introduced her philosophy and practice of singing as a natural *way of being*; she advises that although we have the capacities and ‘tools’ for singing which are present in everyday life, we need positive prompting and guidance to connect/re-connect these capacities together. Some of these ‘tools’ are deep breathing expansion exercises to open air capacity in the body and allow for rapid intake of air such as ‘sniffing a rose, the onset of a sneeze or laugh’. Fabi introduces the approach of ‘controlled abandon’ through the analogy of standing on the edge of a cliff, half unbalanced, in a suspended state with the breath ‘ready to go.’

²⁷ Fabi describes breath in singing: “Simply put, breath is life. Breath is also energy, power, and healing. AND breath is sound. Without breath our bodies die, without breath we can’t harness energy, without breath good posture is difficult. And without breath there is no sound. The vocal cords can’t function without the breath, so the lungs can’t engage necessary pressure without breath. Most of us do it (breath) naturally when we are not thinking about it, but some of us are completely disconnected from both the actual physical activity of breathing, and from its primordial importance in the making of a sound, any sound. If we are aware of how breath moves through the body, how both the skeletal system and muscular systems move with the breath, and how the breath both creates and impacts our sound, then we have a better chance of singing in a connected, organic and coherent manner with our body” (personal interview, 18/08/2014).

The participants were encouraged to use a metaphor to assist with their *imagination* such as breathing in the scent of a rose, the *ah-ah-ah* of a sneeze, or thinking of something outrageously funny to *onset* a laugh. Four additional physical exercises were emphasized:

- physical tension displacement - for range issues (quad exercise)
- body alignment exercises (adjustments of torso, neck, head, and spine)
- embodiment which connects the messages in the text and music with a physicality of singing.

4.2.9. Youth Leadership Opportunities

Self-selected individuals volunteered as youth leaders (section leaders) to develop leadership skills and empower others. Five youth singers immediately demonstrated positive, emerging leadership skills in the following four ways:

- 1) taking attendance or having it done
- 2) leading sectional rehearsals with those in their singing part
- 3) taking part in 'warming up' the choir
- 4) being encouraging, resourceful, and reliable

Further leadership capacities were encouraged among all the singers and noted when the opportunities came up. For example, the capacity of risk taking is encouraged in singing, particularly in a strongly supportive environment. When this occurred in the ensemble through singing out, making mistakes, singing solo, or voicing thoughts, the learner was recognized, and thanked by the collaborators, singers, and myself.

4.2.10. TSE Learning Progression

The learning progression features a fluid approach of pushing to the next level and backing off, incorporating Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD)²⁸. The following five levels were implemented using with gesture, movement, listening examples, discussion/dialogue to gain learner insights:

- 1) speaking/discussing the text, preparing the environment for meaning-making
- 2) speaking/interpreting text in rhythm
- 3) singing pitches in rhythm
- 4) independence on voice part
- 5) singing in mixed formation/expressive communication

The following conceptual model illustrates the learning progression (Figure 3):

²⁸ *Zones of Proximal Development* refers to the distance between the actual level of development reached independently by the learner and the potential for that development (Vygotsky, 1978 p. 86).

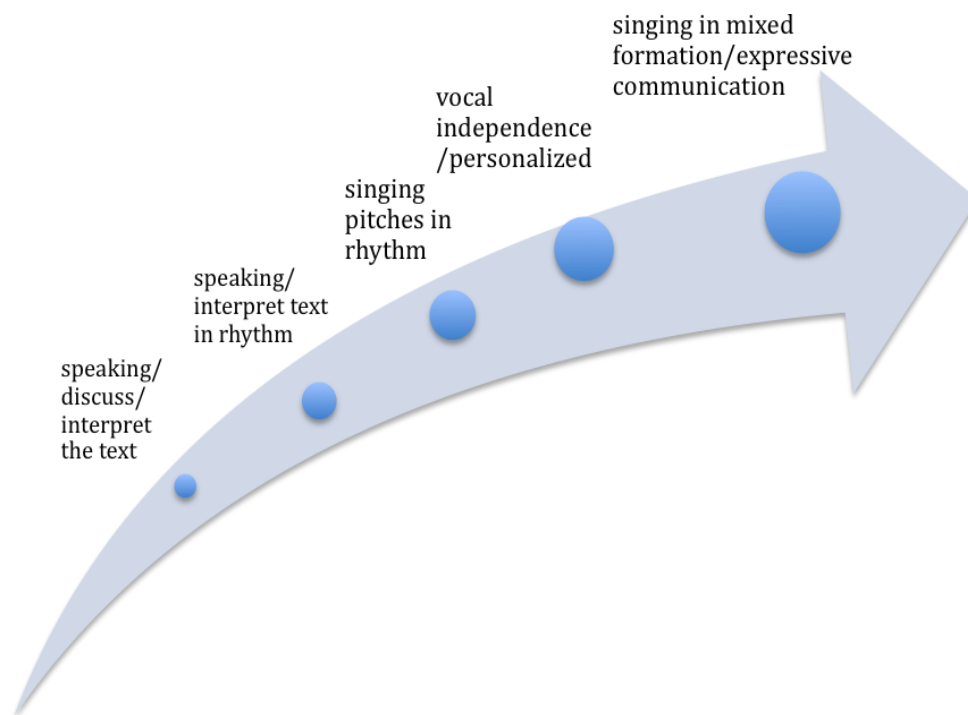


Figure 3. TSE Learning Progression

4.3. TSE Study Method

The research is based on *action research* (McKernan, 1991), which calls for a reflective approach from the researcher, coupled with purposeful informed pedagogical action (McNiff, Lomax, & Whitehead, 1996). ‘Critical’ action research (Mills, 2003) leads the researcher toward a shared purpose in seeking knowledge and understanding, a departure from systemic and bureaucratic ‘agenda-driven’ reforms in education (Carr & Kemmis, 1986). This approach supports and validates the primacy of field research and the individual researcher’s claim to know her own educational development for educational development (Whitehead, 2009, p.176). As a key aim of this study involved gathering ‘insider knowledge’ of participants’ meaning making through singing, a participatory action research model seemed a good fit.

The remainder of this chapter describes the TSE study component. I begin with a description of the 50 secondary school participants. This is followed by a description of the data collection methods and a presentation of the results.

4.3.1. Participants

The participants for this study were 50 (males = 13; females = 38) secondary school students from the Langley Fine Arts School (LFAS), in Fort Langley, British Columbia. Participants were aged 15-18 years and from European ethnic backgrounds. Participants reported being involved in an average of four years of ‘organized singing’ activities. Participants were members of the LFAS Senior Choir and a sub-group within this choir involved members who were also in a separate singing ensemble, the LFAS Chamber Choir.

Age

Figure 3 below shows the number of participants for each age. To enable comparisons between younger and older participants, ages were recoded into two groups as follows: Ages 14-15 years (n = 17) and Ages 16-17 years (n = 33).

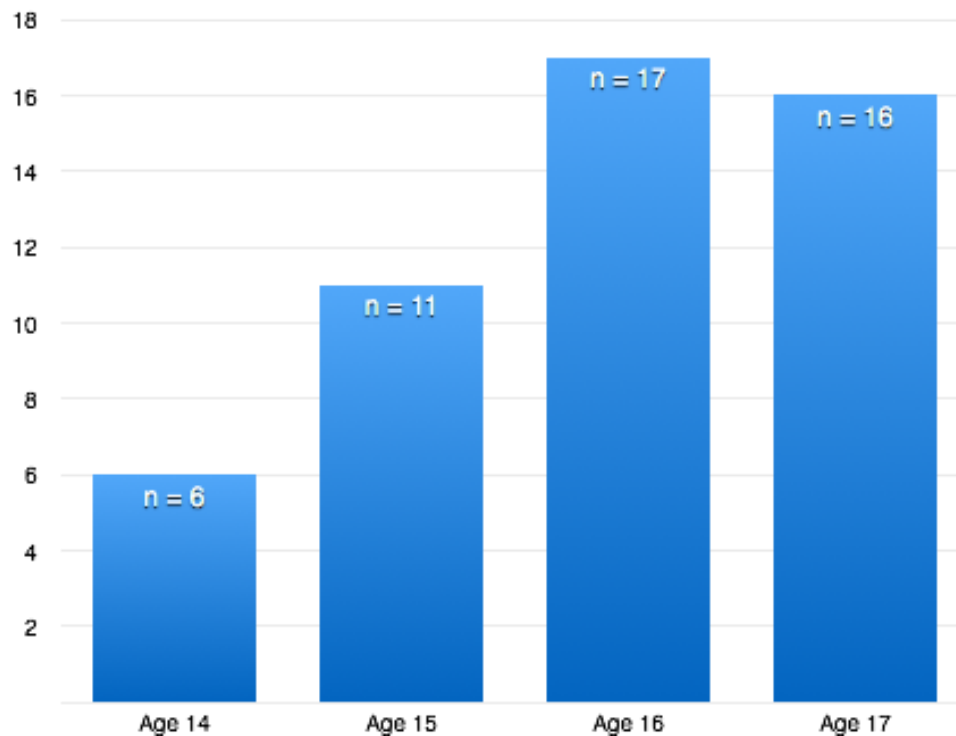


Figure 4. Age Range of Participants

Grade

Figure 4 below shows the number of participants for each grade. To enable comparisons between higher and lower level grades, they were recoded into two groups as follows: Grades 9-10 ($n = 18$) and Grades 11-12 years ($n = 32$).

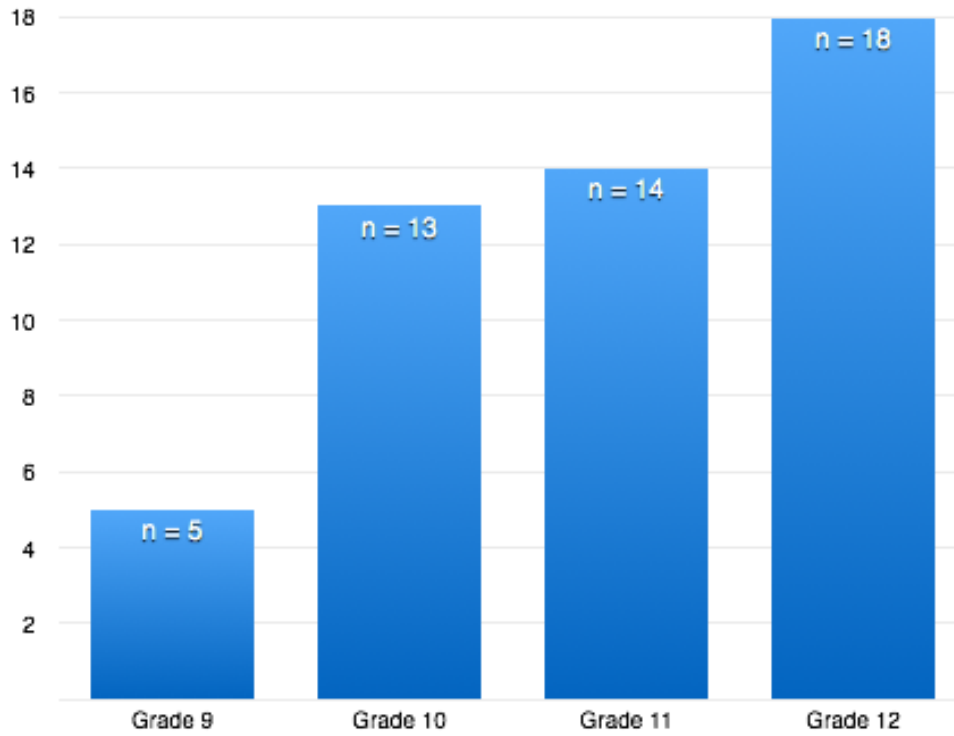


Figure 5. Grades of Participants

Arts major

In the Grade 1 to 12 progression at LFAS, students explore music, art, drama, and dance, until Grade 6, when they choose two areas. Students are able to choose an arts area of specialization (major) in Grade 9 through to Grade 12. Figure 5 shows that the majority of participants were Music Majors. The category for arts majors was therefore recoded into music (n = 29), and non-music (n = 21).

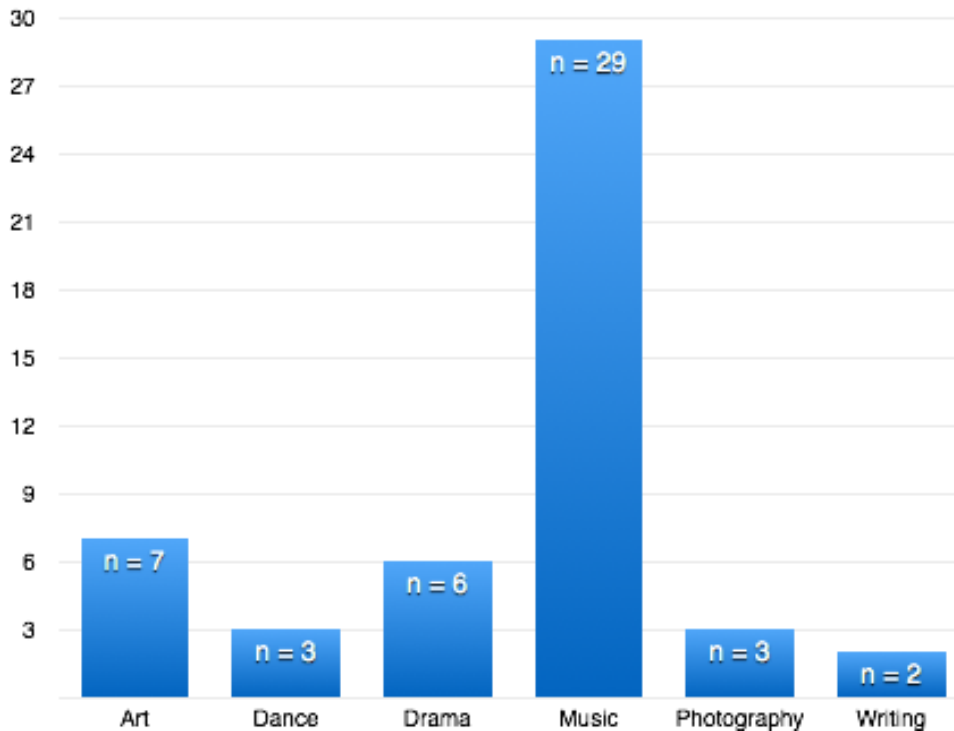


Figure 6. Arts Majors of Participants

Parent education

Highest level of parent education is often used as an indicator of socio-economic status. These were coded according to whether a parent had completed secondary school or an undergraduate degree (n = 30) or a graduate degree (n = 20).

Years at LFAS

The number of years participants had attended the Langley Fine Arts School ranged from 1 to 12 years as shown in Figure 6. Number of years at the school was recoded into 1-3 years ($n = 23$) and 4+ years ($n = 27$).

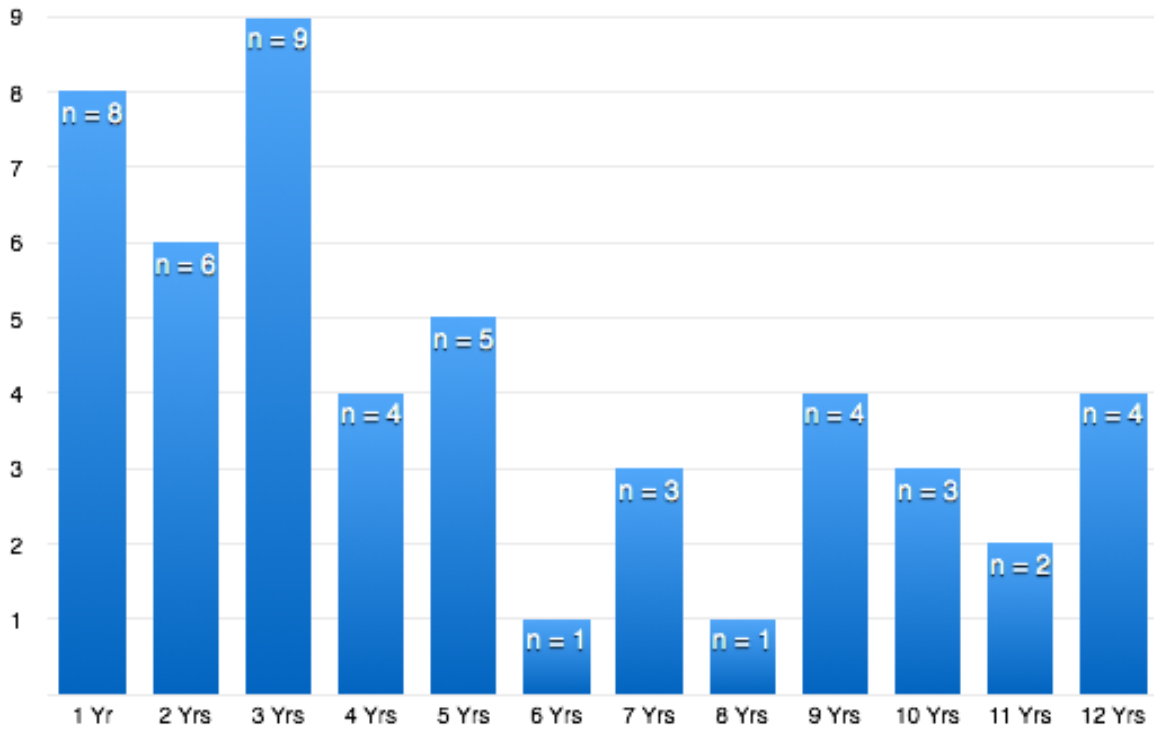


Figure 7. Number of Years Attending LFAS

Voice Lessons

Participants reported whether or not they had taken voice lessons: 18 students had voice lessons; 32 students had no voice lessons.

Years Singing in Organized Choirs

The number of years participants reported singing in organized choirs ranged from 1 to 12 years as shown in Figure 8. These were recoded into two categories: 1-7 years ($n = 27$) and 8-12 years ($n = 23$).

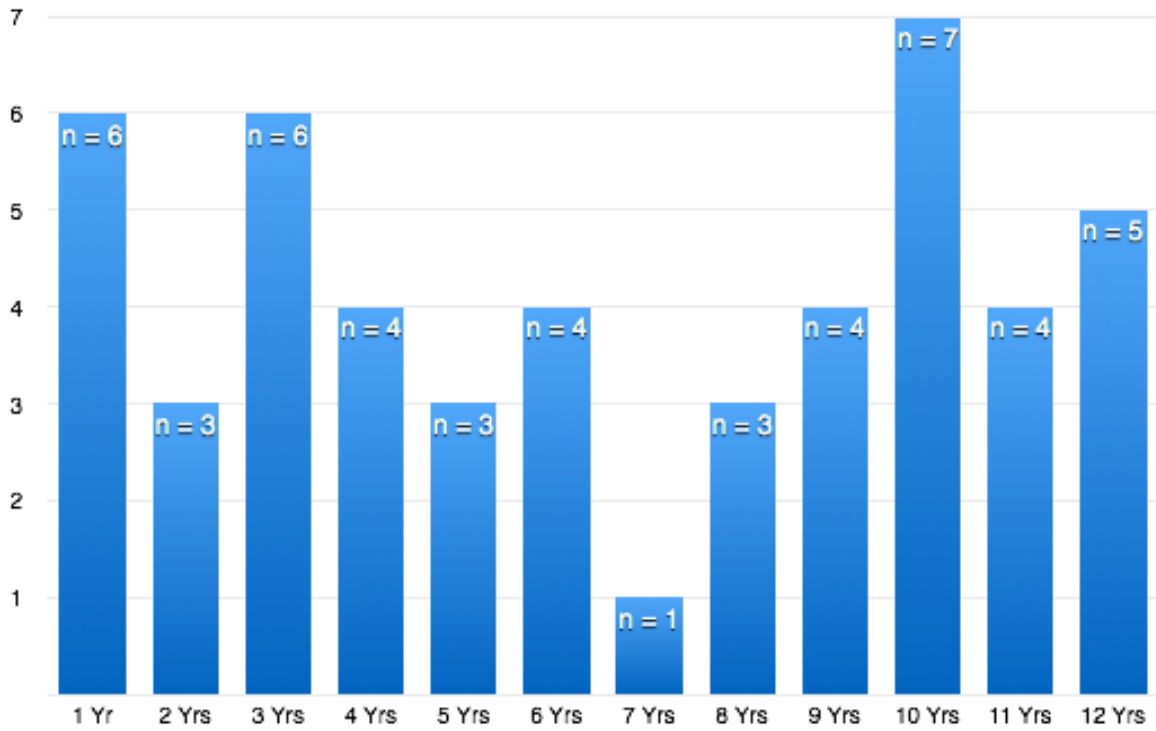


Figure 8. Number of Years Singing in Organized Choirs

4.3.2. Post-Pre Measure

A key concern with using traditional pre-post measures of learning or engagement is that the individual has not yet experienced the activity and/or gained a conceptual understanding of what it means to engage in the activity at the time of the pre measure; *they don't know what they don't know*. This is related to Vygotsky's (1986) notion that concept learning is a dynamic, ever-changing activity that emerges and takes shape through complex interactions. Concept learning is an active part of the learning process as the learner creates his or her own subjective relationships between objects through experience. What is needed is a measure that draws on learners' knowledge and understanding once they have experienced the activity and are able to make an informed comparison about their prior knowledge and understanding.

To address this issue, Hiebert, Domene, and Buchanan (2011) developed a 'post-pre assessment' that combines decision-making with a form of *retrospective assessment* that is used only after a project, program, or unit of learning is completed. It measures an individual's current level of knowledge or understanding to "create a common measuring stick" (p. 14) for comparing self-perceptions before and after a learning activity has taken place.

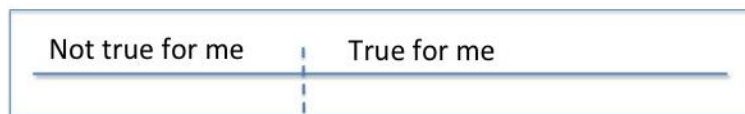
This approach to retrospective assessment (post-pre measure) was developed to measure participants' perceptions of TSE in relation to two singing capacities (embodied physicality and communicative expression) and three learning capacities (engaged agency, connectivity, and values/self-beliefs). The items for the TSE retrospective assessment were developed for this study based on both the TSE program goals and O'Neill's (2012a) transformative music engagement framework. The post-pre measure allows for two reflective questions: (1) *what am I going to do*" and (2) *how am I going to know the difference.*"

Heibert and his colleagues approach the assessment of participants' perceptions from a *decision-making perspective* using a two-step process and common language to describe each step to increase participants' understanding of what they are being asked to do. Using this approach, they report achieving marked increases in the consistency and reliability of the responses they obtain over time. A post-pre measure is only used

at the end of a program because it asks program participants to use their current level of knowledge and understanding for thinking about before and after to create a consistent measuring stick for pre and post assessments (see Rockwell & Kohn, 1989). The process of creating a post-pre assessment begins by creating a list of explicit outcomes that are being sought by the educator and then uses these outcomes as the items in the questionnaire. The following describes the steps involved in the post-pre assessment:

For each item (statement) on the questionnaire:

Step A – Decide if the activity or concept is “not true for me” or “true for me”



Step B – If it is “not true for me”, decide if it is:

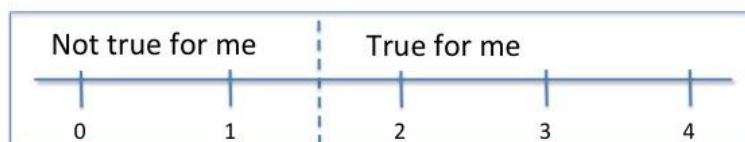
- Not at all true for me (= 0)

Or

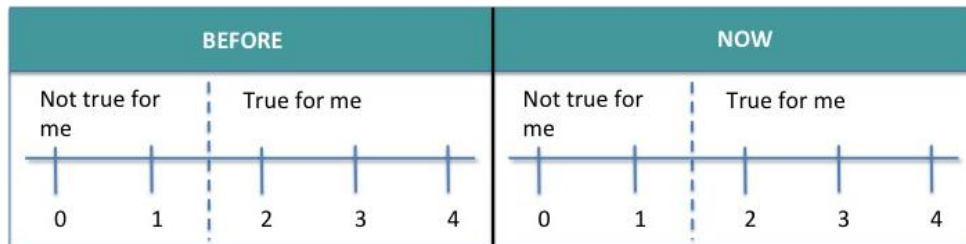
- Not very true for me (= 1)

If it is “true for me”, decide if it is:

- Sort of true for me (= 2)
- Mostly true for me (= 3)
- Very true for me (= 4)



Step C – Repeat Steps A and B thinking about “Before” and “After” the Activity (unit of learning, performance, engagement, etc.) thereby considering the temporal aspects of participants’ perceptions of what they knew to be true before and what they know to be true now.



To revisit the key concepts from the theoretical model of TSE, the post-pre measure included five capacities, as follows:

1) Embodied Physicality:

The singer connects breath energy with physical motion and resonance in the body that employs a *kinesthetic intelligence* (Gardner, 1991). There is a double recognition in the *feeling* and *hearing* of sound to the singer for reinforcing and supporting both. The singer is initially mindful of how the body is supporting the breath and progresses to unconsciously feeling without thinking. This key concept is an honouring of “body, mind and spirit relationships; they are trans-disciplinary in their own creation, presentation and embodied content” (Willingham, 1997, p. 118). Boundaries of textual meanings, sensory receptors, and self-identities are blurred and contribute to a way of being which involves “being all there,” being more attentively ‘in’ our experience (Taylor, 1989, p. 163). Vancouver singer and vocal teacher Fabiana Katz says, “technical skills require a somatic knowledge.”²⁹ For singing embodiment, the work is in accessing an inside/outside representation of sensory development.

2) Communicative Expression:

²⁹ Fabi is a collaborator in the leadership of the TSE singing program implementation. Her practice includes linking body-mind connectedness through the development of somatic knowledge. From an interview to set up the implementation: 08/20/2013.

The singer is aware of consciously and ultimately unconsciously emitting precise expressive aspects of his or her own “musical authenticity” to an audience (Green, 2005). TSE and TSL rely on processes of recalling lived experiences to interpret texts and musical ideas that inspire associations and connections within the listener. These processes are dialogic in nature and progress towards the singer adopting the identity of ‘storyteller’ and the music serving as the ‘story.’ Stories, real and/or imagined bring the texts alive to the singer’s narrative accounts of past lived experience such that through their authenticity, these ‘sonic accounts’ connect the singer to her audience (listener) by bringing forward those similar past lived experiences in the listener, developing a communicative capacity for meaning connections even in the listener (audience). The capacity of communicative expression has its roots in the broad based theory of *communicative musicality*, mentioned previously. Communicative expression in singing involves the role of the imagination as a means to experience empathy through divergent views. Green (1995) suggests that imagination brings forward “a new way of decentering ourselves, of breaking out of the confinements of privatism and self-regard into a space where we can come face to face with others...(p. 31). The role of ‘storyteller’ who relays the ‘story’ through song, is highlighted in the case study of Cuban singing leader, Alina Orraca described Study 2 (Chapter 4).

3) Engaged Agency:

The singer has a sense of empowerment or “voice” that make sense or meaning making possible in relation to purposeful engagement in singing (O’Neill, 2012b). Originating from Vygotsky’s ideas, Stetsenko (2012) reminds us that our sense of *engaged agency* derives from “...the first moments of life...in unbreakable intricate relations with the world” (p. 148). Our involvement matches the significance it has for us, how it connects to what matters to us and our community, and that we see it as ‘good’ (Stetsenko, 2009).

4) Connectivity:

The singer engages in self-reflection and actions (dialogue and inquiry) that connect texts, music, self and others with past “lived experiences” (Althusser, 2001; Mezirow, 2000). A key implication for TSE is that each singing ensemble comprises

singers with different 'lived experiences' and as they derive interpretations through dialogue, each choir will be differentiated year to year. In this sense, TSE fosters a break from the traditional fixed expected models of how we define 'choirs' and instead moves toward a view of choirs as context dependent participatory cultures with an ever-changing 'curriculum' with those who are 'in the room.' Perspective transformations about the students views of their own learning can be rooted in changes that sometimes appear to be 'under the radar' of their own reflective analysis of their own learning. In this respect, TSE extends the ideas of Mezirow (2000) to include the notions of 'implicit memory' (Taylor, 2001) and 'thinking without thinking' (Gladwell, 2009) where past experiences that are sometimes accessed in split-second associations are often under the 'cognitive radar.' These meaning associations are open and available to singers and audiences through connections with multimodal means (Kress, 2010) such as gesture and vocal timbre that also contribute to how learning is transformed through singing.

5) Values and Self-beliefs:

The activity of singing contributes to a sense of self-identity and intrinsic value that fulfills personal needs, confirms central aspects of one's self-schema, and affirms and/or elicits personal values (Eccles, O'Neill & Wigfield, 2005). Both the research aspects and the pedagogical aspects are dialectic for TSE and TSL – the 'doing' and the 'measuring of the doing' is inseparable.

Drawing on the above conceptual understanding, items representing the three learning capacities (engaged agency, connectivity, and values/self-beliefs) were combined into one questionnaire with 32-items measuring embodied physicality (EP) capacities of singing and a separate questionnaire with 32-items measuring communicative expression (CE) capacities of singing. Table 2 provides sample items that appear in the both questionnaires (EP/CE). The key concepts are tagged with each item in this sample however they were hidden and randomly dispersed throughout both 32-item questionnaires. (see Appendix A for the full questionnaires that were used).

Table 2. Sample Items in the Post-Pre Measure

During rehearsal I apply the physical aspects of singing. [Embodied Physicality]
I apply the knowledge I've learned about the communicative aspects of singing to enhance my singing performance. [Communicative Expression]
My singing helps expand my thinking about things that matter to me. [Engaged Agency]
I notice that singing helps me connect the messages we are singing about with other singers in some way. [Connectivity]
Singing in the choir is an important part of my life. [Values/Self-Beliefs]

The analysis of participants' responses to the TSE post-pre measure was carried out using SPSS (statistical package for the social sciences) to calculate descriptive statistics and to compare mean responses according to eight variables: gender, age, grade, arts major, years at LFAS, voice lessons, and years in an organized choir.

4.3.3. Participants' Written Reflections

In addition to the TSE post-pre measure, participants were asked to write open-ended responses at the end of the TSE program to the question:

Bearing in mind the singing program of the past 16 weeks, please reflect and describe what struck you during and after the performance. What recollections, ideas and insights can you offer from your own perspective?

Participants were encouraged to voice how they felt the singing program had impacted their performance. However, as with the TSE post-pre measure, the participants were informed that this was a voluntary activity and that they could refuse to do the activity without any consequences for their grades or participation in the choir.

The analysis of the written reflections involved establishing *units of meaning* from the text data of the open ended questions and following the procedures for coding and 'chunking' these units for retrieval and clustering into common themes (Miles & Huberman, 1994). The data analysis involved an inductive, narrative analysis adapted from Lincoln and Guba's Grounded Theory approach (1989) as described by Maycut and Morehouse (1994) to identify emergent themes though establishing units of analysis

and interpretations of meanings. Because the participants responded to open ended questions in their own words, the interpretation of the units of meaning led to cluster and cross-themes that were inter-related.

4.3.4. TSE Study Procedure

Prior to participating in the study, informed consent was ascertained before the data was collected. Consent forms were sent home with students from which parents and students were apprised of the contents and purpose for the study for which they were directly involved. All parents and students signed the forms indicating they understood the 'study' aspects of the TSE program.

The post-pre measure was given at out to the students in the rehearsal room at LFAS at the end of the singing program in week 16. All students completed both questionnaires (embodied physicality (EP) and communicative expression (CE)) during two 30-minute sessions, which I collected at the end of each session. The written reflections were completed in a third session and collected by me at the end of the session. The students were asked to provide their names (which were later removed at the analysis stage) to provide the teacher-researcher in this study with an opportunity to learn more about each student's perspective.

As with the investigation into TSL (Chapter 3), I present the findings below through a conceptual lens of 'indication and suggestion' rather than 'this is the way it is' (Rubin & Rubin, 2012). My aim is to have the student participants lead this inquiry into singing engagement; how the singing program fosters transformative singing capacities according to the views of the participants themselves is the main feature of this study into TSE.

4.3.5. Results: TSE Retrospective Assessment

This section presents an overall view of the descriptive statistics to provide a 'big picture' of any changes that occurred following the TSE program from the students' views of their learning experience (see Figures 9 to 12). Following a description of the general post-pre scores, I provide more detailed results of the program implementation

according to the top ten means scores of EP and CE. Finally, I describe the results according to the comparison variables. These descriptions may be best understood in figures (bar graphs) and tables, showing mean, standard deviation and t-tests for the variables. I interpret these results through the lens of a researcher-practitioner, adding 'insider knowledge' to complete a more rounded, holistic portrayal of the investigation.

Before proceeding with the overall scores and descriptive report, I would like to explain why four items shown below were not included in the analysis. These items affected the mean scores in opposite ways, therefore distorting the results. They were excluded from the SPSS calculations for reporting for the following reasons:

Item 17 (EP): I think the physical aspects of singing are challenging: 2.86 (before) 2.16 (after).

The result with this item is predictable: over the course of the 16-week singing program, the participants found the embodied physicality less challenging, yet the overall mean scores would have been lower had I included this in the overall result. Not to overlook the result however, it is interesting to note that the mean result for this item is rather low comparatively indicating that the challenge with the physical aspects of singing still remains which also indicates an awareness of the complexity and long-term scope for improvement on this aspect.

Item 2 (EP): Singing using physical aspects is easier for me in a group setting: 1.98 (before) 2.48 (after).

In the feedback from the questionnaire, some of the senior singers in the program focused in on this question as they anticipated a problem with the interpretation of the result. Most of the advanced and experienced singers, particularly the ones who have had private voice lessons, indicated the 'drag' of singing physically with less experienced singers. They explained that it was not an issue of 'willingness to lead,' rather an issue related to the meaning of the item: it was not easier to sing physically in this particular group setting (i.e., with less experienced singers).

Item 6 (CE): I think the communicative aspects of singing are challenging: 2.48 (before); 2.44 (after)

As with item 17 (EP), through the singing program the singers felt more at ease with the communicative and expressive aspects of singing. Again, the result is moderate indicating continued challenge with the concept of communication in singing. The value of singing as communication was rated high; yet in practice, the students' perceived a continued challenge with communicative expression in singing.

Item 21 (CE): I find I need to solve problems with my singing part before I can work on the communicative aspects: 2.82 (before); 2.98 (after)

The participants reported relatively no difference between before and after on the need to solve problems before contemplating and executing communicative skills with their singing. Clearly, they understand the need at any stage of the learning to solve physical aspects first before contemplating singing communication. This result supports the singing program design of slowly introducing communicative aspects after the physical aspects were more in place (see Figure 2: cognitive challenge).

While these four results would have negatively impacted the group mean scores, by removing the items and taking a closer comparative look, it was possible to clarify how the participants' were responding and gain a deeper meaning from the numbers, with supportive implications for the TSE program design.

1) Overall scores derived from means:

All items in both questionnaires show positive shifts; as explained above when looking contextually, the data revealed improved learning on all aspects (see Figures 9-12). The average difference scores from both questionnaires, part 1 and part 2, was very similar, 1.1 for EP and 1.0 for CE.

The item with the highest difference score derived from the means score overall was found with item 2 in CE: *I find it interesting to think of singing as communication*. With this item, the participants had a mean score of 1.7 on the 'pre' (between 'not very

true for me' and 'sort of true for me') and a mean score of '3.36' on the 'post' (between 'mostly true for me' and 'very true for me'). Clearly, the participants had a *change in perspective* on the *role* of singing; however, the context for this item needs further explanation. The item out of context may be misleading due to the use of the work 'thinking' in the time. However, the singers were 'doing' singing as well as 'thinking' about singing. In other words, as the participants completed the questionnaire after 'doing' the singing program, they had an experiential understanding of the item as well.

The highest means scores found in EP was for item 29: *I feel good when I apply the physical aspects of singing*. The participants had a mean score of 2.26 on the 'pre' and a mean score of 3.74 on the 'post', a difference of 1.48. Given that singing references sound and feeling as sensory reinforcement for positive and negative effects, this finding suggests that the collaborative leadership in this study had 'enculturated' the participants with the dualistic notion found in the embodied physicality of singing that if the singing 'feels good,' it probably 'sounds good,' and if it 'sounds good,' it probably 'feels good.'

A particularly gratifying result is the highest mean score in both EP and CE was for item 15 in EP: *I consider myself a singer*. With a mean score of 2.7 at the 'pre' (between 'sort of true' and 'mostly true' for the participants) the final mean score at the 'post' was 3.9 ('very true for me'), a difference of 1.2. Although present day youth arts learners have been shown to self-identify as artists, performers, and musicians (O'Neill, 2006), these particular participants in this study did not *start out* the singing program with strong identities as singers. On many occasions, Fabi, Wes, and I reinforced the idea of a singer identity and the student participants appeared to embrace a greater sense of this notion following the TSE program.

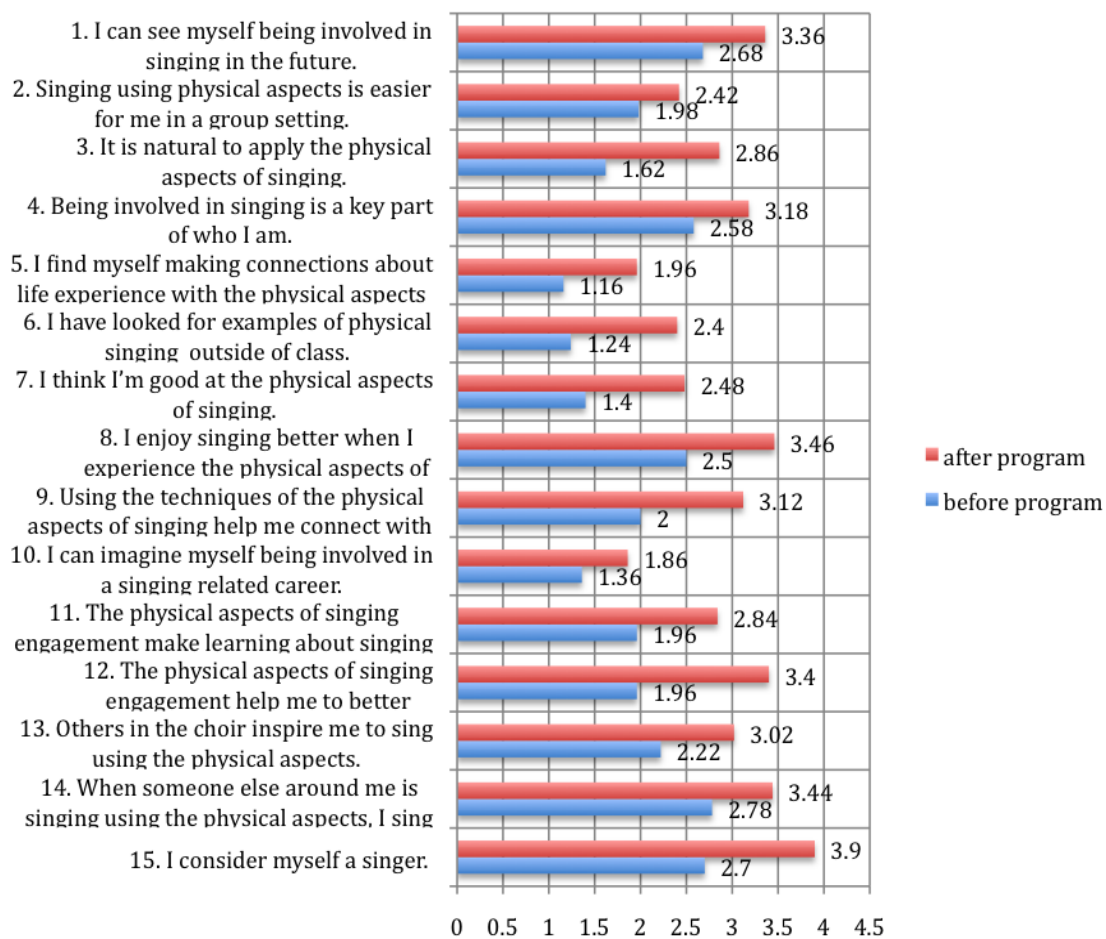


Figure 9. Means Scores for Post-Pre Measure: Embodied Physicality Items 1-15

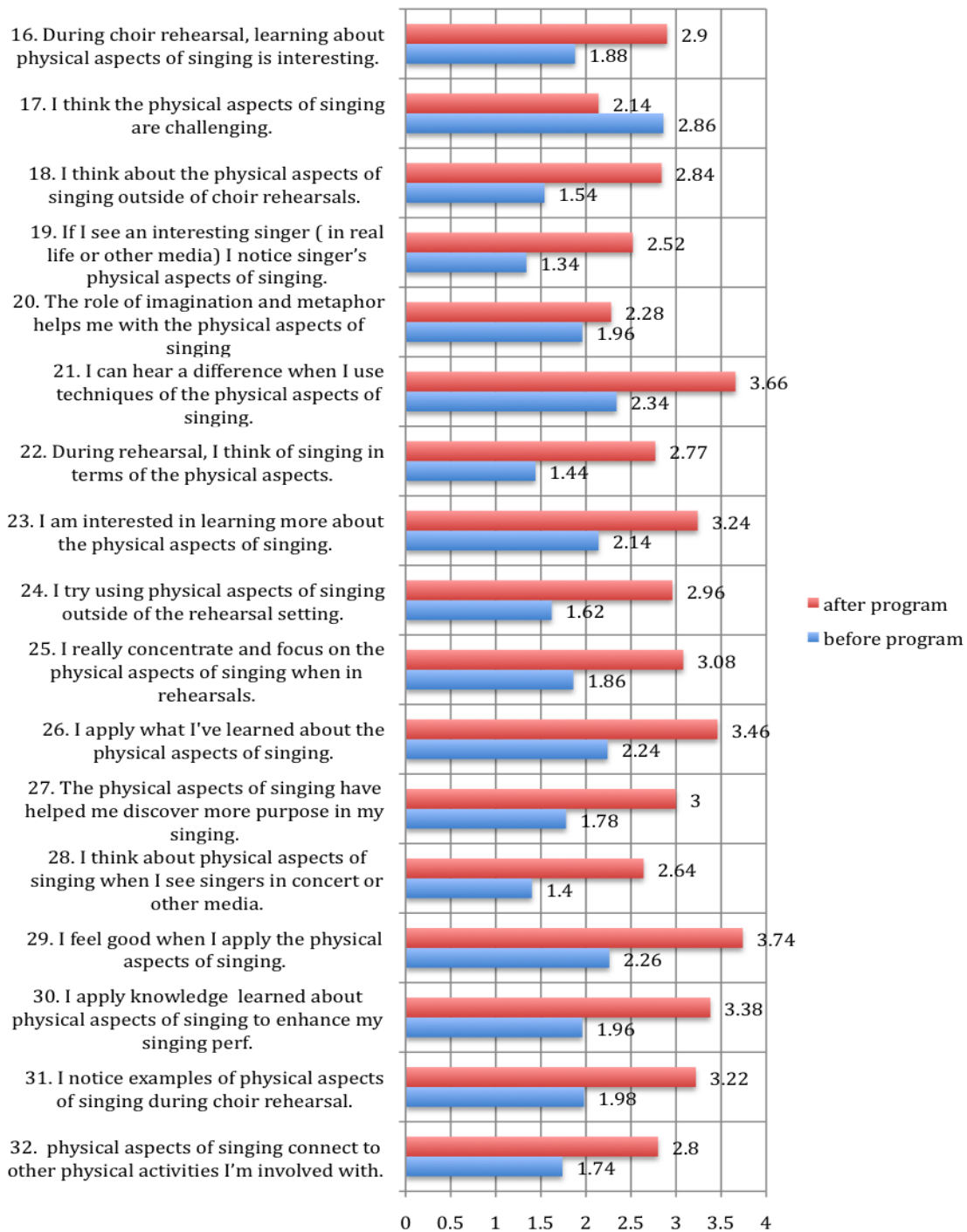


Figure 10. Means Scores for Post-Pre Measure: Embodied Physicality Items 16-32

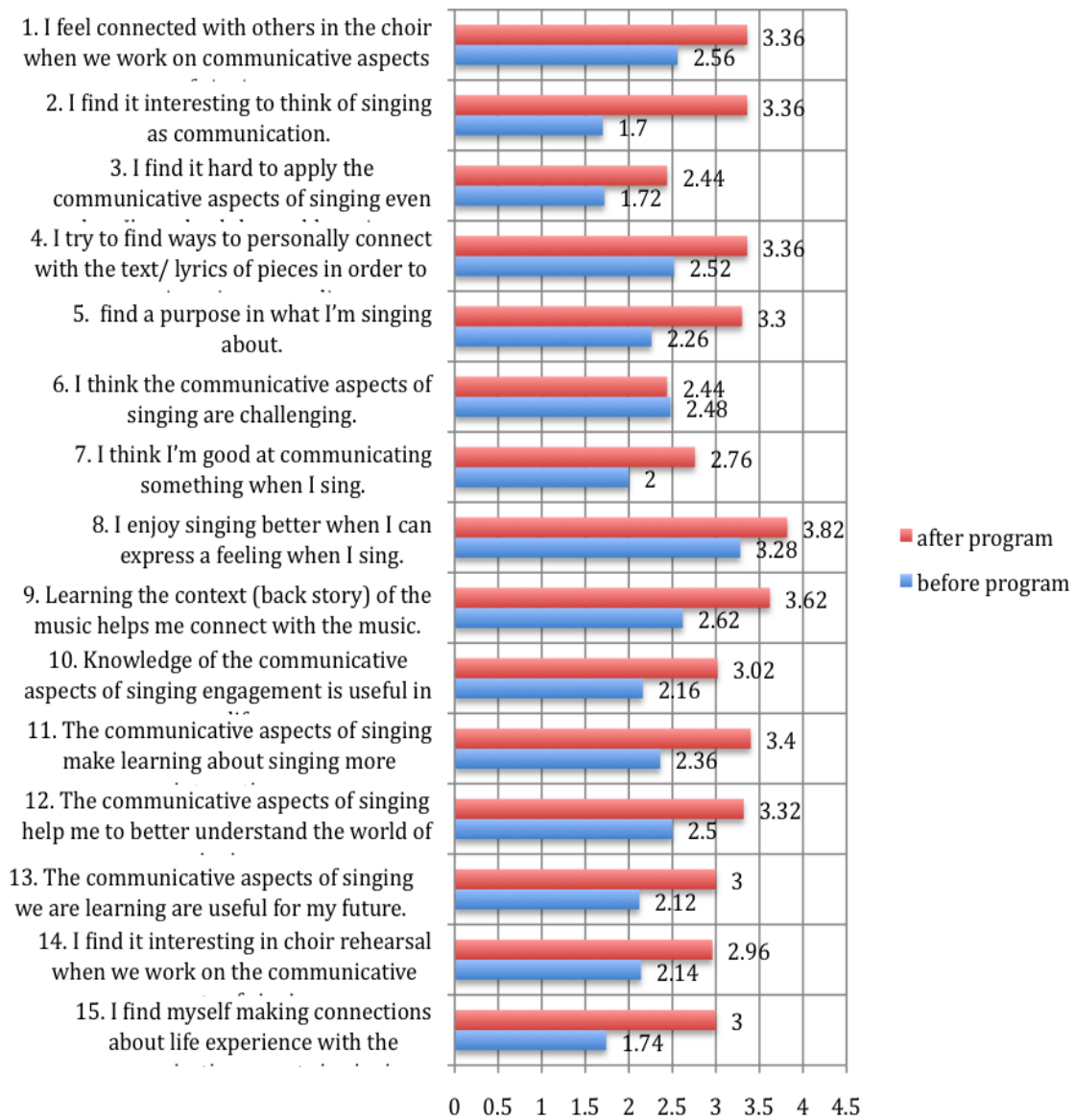


Figure 11. Means Scores for Post-Pre Measure: Communicative Expression Items 1-15

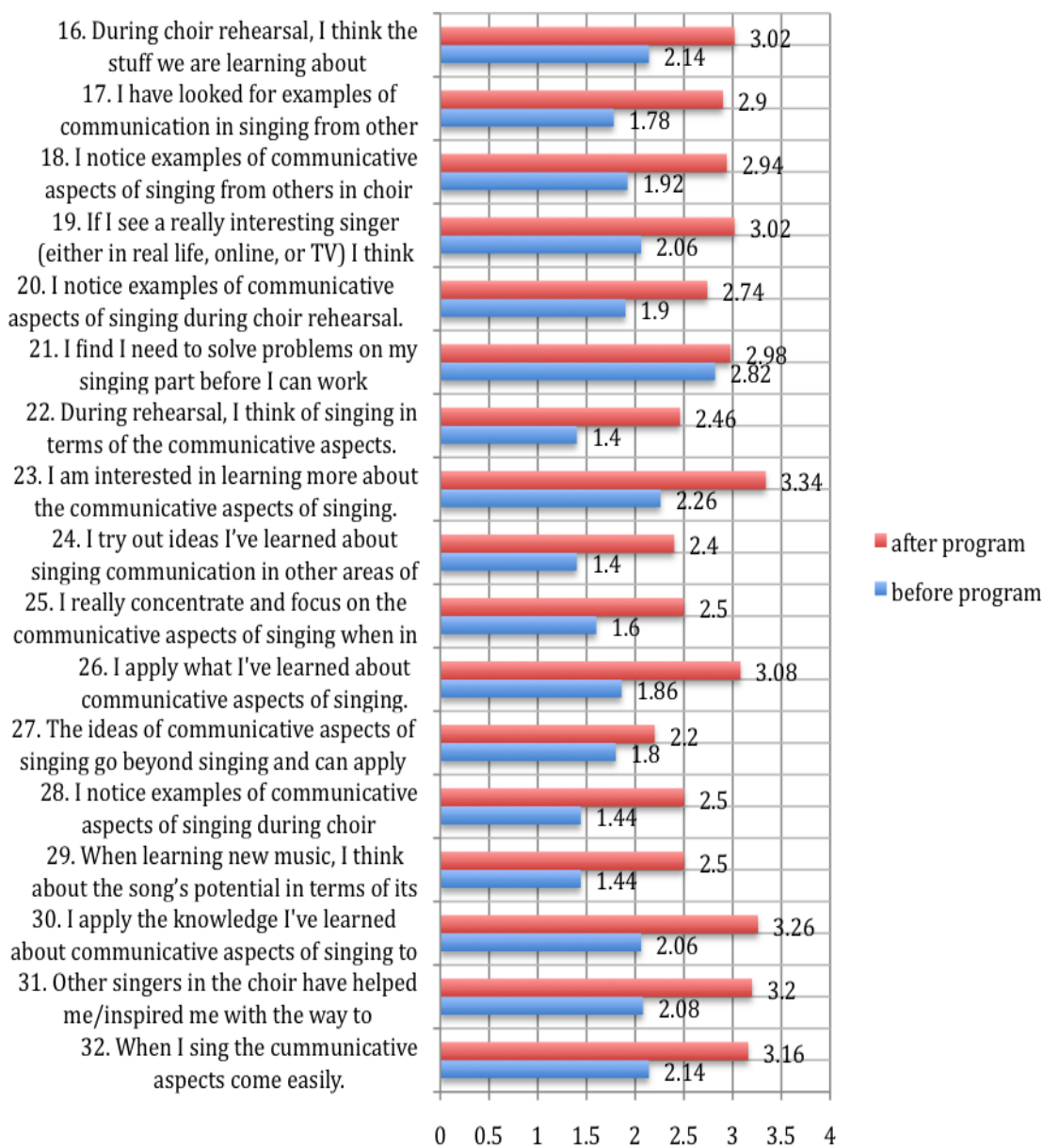


Figure 12. Means Scores for Post-Pre Measure: Embodied Physicality Items 16-32

2) 'Top Ten' Mean Results:

From the overall picture that the data demonstrates from the EP and CE post-pre measures, I draw attention to the top means scores showing the greatest difference, the top overall mean scores showing greatest value, and the key concepts associated with these items. However, while focusing on the numbers it is important to retain the story of this inquiry; therefore, I will qualify and cross-reference the results in order to 'round out' the interpretation of the following data.

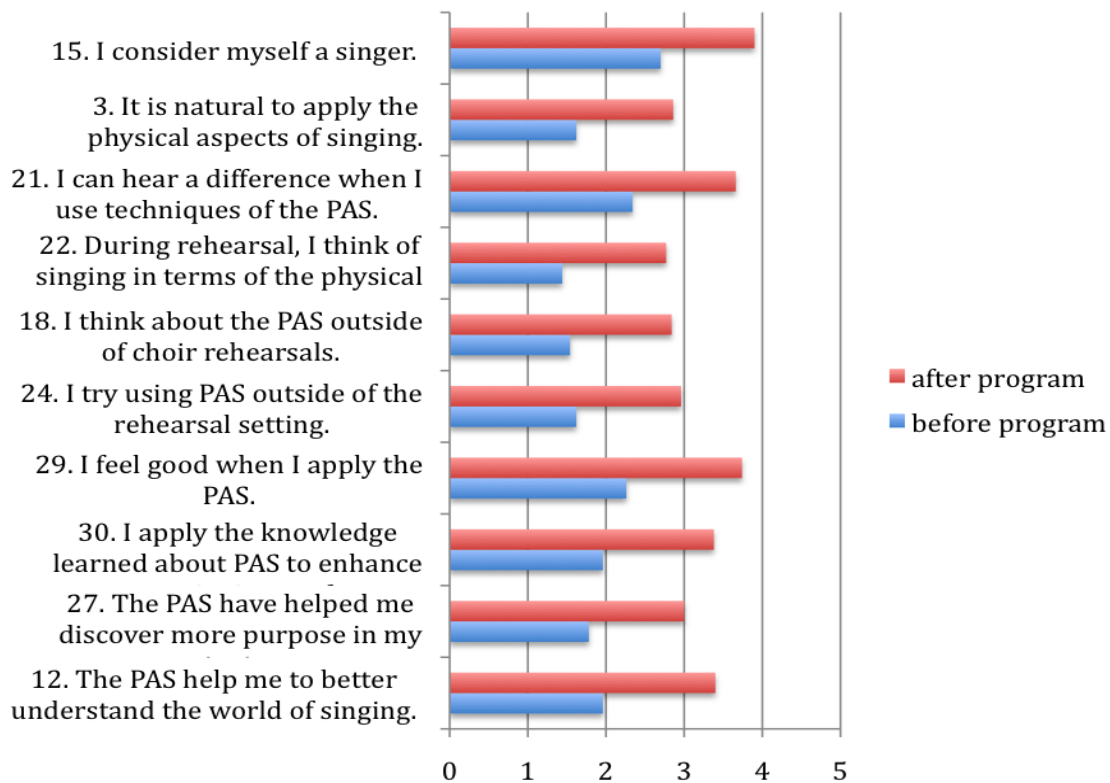


Figure 13. Top Ten Means Scores for Post-Pre Measure: Embodied Physicality

From Figure 13 above, it can be seen that participants' change in viewing singing as natural (3) lends support to a key component of the singing program, particularly with the singing workshops, where connecting breathing with 'real life' was emphasized. This also lends support to the pedagogical *emergent curriculum* of this study and its emphasis on *lived experience* (Aoki, 2005). Mentioned earlier, sensory reinforcement within physical aspects of singing was also rated positively in item 21, *I can hear a difference when I use techniques of PAS*. The strong result of item 15, *I find myself*

making connections about life experience with the communicative aspects of singing, provides evidence of the learning capacity *connectivity* and participants' views about the connections they were able to make with singing and their own lived experience. EP was also found to be related to the learning capacity engaged agency in item 27, *the PAS have helped me find more purpose in my singing*.

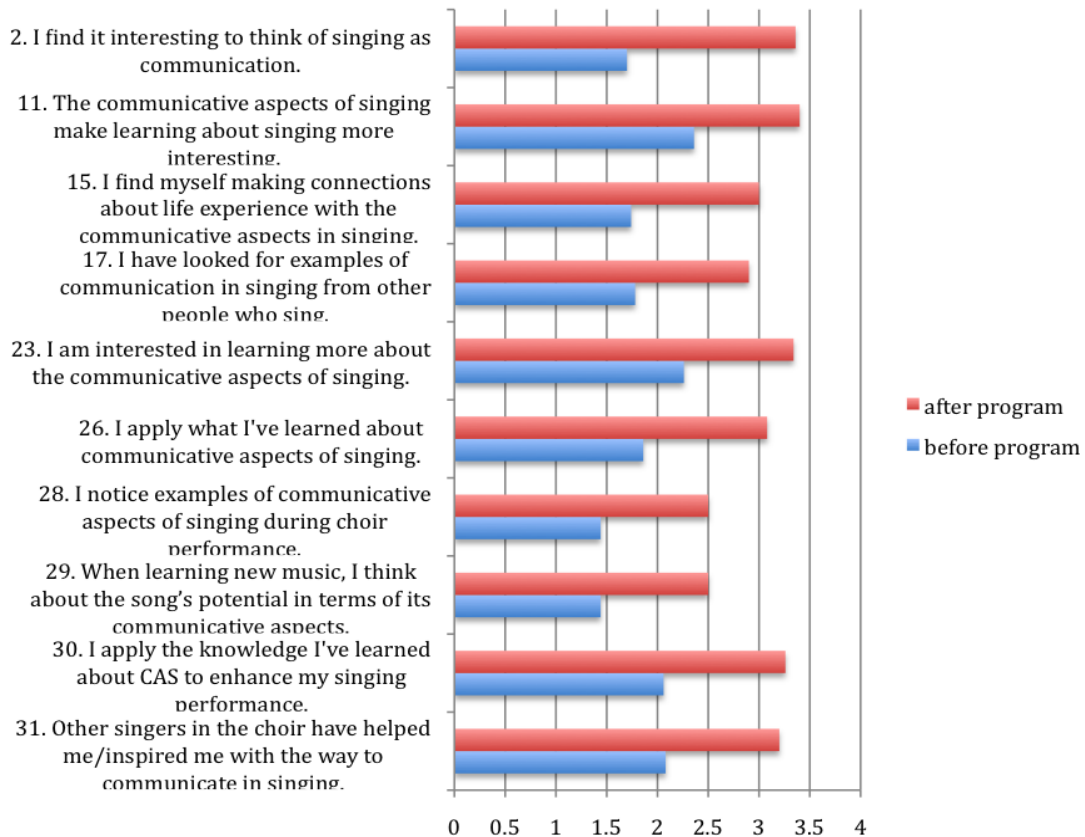


Figure 14. Top Ten Means Scores for Post-Pre Measure: Communicative Expression

In Figure 14, the means scores from CE indicated positive pre-post rating shifts in relation to key communicative capacities of TSE, as follows: Items 17, *I have looked for example . . .* 23, *I am interested in learning more . . .* and 26, *I apply what I've learned . . .* showed a positive shift in *engaged agency*; items 11, *the communicative aspects of singing make singing more interesting*, 15, *I find myself making connections with life experience . . .* and 31, *other singers in the choir have help/inspired with ways to communicate in singing*, related to *connectivity* and the relevance of *lived curriculum*.

3) Comparisons of Groups:

In order to explore further participants' responses on Embodied Physicality (EP) and Communicative Expression (CE) post-pre measures, comparisons of the means according to eight variables (gender, age, grade, arts major, parents' education, years at LFAS, voice lessons, and years in an organized choir) were conducted using t-tests (a statistical test used to determine if two sets of data are significantly different from each other). For EP, and separately CE, mean difference scores were created by subtracting the pre score from post score for each of the 32 items and then creating a single overall mean score for EP and CE. Higher scores indicated student participants' reported greater positive change in their overall sense of EP and CE following the TSE program. For EP, difference scores ranged from .43 to 2.63 (Mean difference score = 1.02; SD = .47). For CE, difference scores ranged from .14 to 2.71 (Mean difference score = 0.99; SD = .47).

The results and table of means are provided below for EP, and separately CE, for each of the eight variables, followed by an interpretation of the results.

Gender

A t-test was used to examine whether males or females differed in their perceptions of change for EP and CE following the TSE program (see Table 3 for means). The results revealed no significant differences between males and females for either EP $t(48) = 0.95, p = n.s.$, or CE $t(48) = 1.30, p = n.s.$

Table 3. Means and Standard Deviations for EP and CE According to Gender

	<u>n</u>	<u>Embodied Physicality</u>		<u>Communicative Expression</u>	
		M	SD	M	SD
<i>Gender</i>					
Male	13	1.13	.52	1.13	.36
Female	37	0.98	.44	0.93	.49

Age

A t-test was used to examine whether older students (aged 14-15 years) or younger students (aged 16-17 years) differed in their perceptions of change for EP and CE following the TSE program. The results revealed no significant differences between younger or older students for EP $t(48) = 1.98, p = n.s.$ However, there was a significant difference for CE $t(48) = 2.82, p < .01$, with younger students reporting higher positive change than older students (see Table 4 for means).

Table 4. Means and Standard Deviations for EP and CE According to Age

	<i>n</i>	Embodied Physicality		Communicative Expression	
		M	SD	M	SD
<i>Age</i>					
14/15	17	1.20	.54	1.23	.56
16/17	33	0.93	.39	0.86	.36

Grade

A t-test was used to examine whether older grades (Grades 9-10) or younger grades (Grades 11-12) differed in their perceptions of change for EP and CE following the TSE program. The results revealed no significant differences between lower or higher grades for EP $t(30) = 1.93, p = n.s.$ However, there was a significant difference for CE $t(30) = 2.79, p < .01$, with students in Grades 9-10 reporting higher positive change than students in Grades 11-12 (see Table 5 for means).

Table 5. Means and Standard Deviations for EP and CE According to Grade

	<i>n</i>	Embodied Physicality		Communicative Expression	
		M	SD	M	SD
<i>Grade</i>					
9/10	18	1.23	.55	1.24	.54
11/12	14	0.89	.39	0.76	.39

Arts Major

A t-test was used to examine whether Music Majors or non-Music Majors differed in their perceptions of change for EP and CE following the TSE program. The results revealed no significant differences between Music Majors and non-Music Majors for EP $t(48) = 1.76, p = n.s.$ or CE $t(48) = 1.98, p = n.s.$ (see Table 6 for means).

Table 6. Means and Standard Deviations for EP and CE According to Music Major

	<u>n</u>	Embodied Physicality		Communicative Expression	
		M	SD	M	SD
Music Major	29	1.12	.52	1.09	.52
Non-Music Major	21	0.89	.33	0.83	.34

Parents' Education

A t-test was used to examine whether Parents' Education (highest level attained) differed in relation to students' perceptions of change for EP and CE following the TSE program. The results revealed no significant differences between students' perceptions according to their Parents' Education level for EP $t(48) = -1.48, p = n.s.$ or CE $t(48) = 0.19, p = n.s.$ (see Table 7 for means).

Table 7. Means and Standard Deviations for EP and CE According to Parents' Educations

<i>Highest Level of Parents' Education</i>	<u>n</u>	Embodied Physicality		Communicative Expression	
		M	SD	M	SD
Secondary School/ First degree	30	0.94	.47	0.99	.52
Graduate degree	20	1.14	.44	0.97	.38

Years at LFAS

A t-test was used to examine whether the number of Years at LFAS (number of years students had attended the Langley Fine Arts School) differed for students attending 1-3 years and 4+ years in their perceptions of change for EP and CE following the TSE program. The results revealed no significant differences for number of Years at LFAS for EP $t(48) = 0.82, p = n.s.$ or CE $t(48) = 1.20, p = n.s.$ (see Table 8 for means).

Table 8. Means and Standard Deviations for EP and CE According to Years at LFAS

	<u>Embodied Physicality</u>		<u>Communicative Expression</u>		
	<u>n</u>	<u>M</u>	<u>SD</u>	<u>M</u>	<u>SD</u>
<i>Years at LFAS</i>					
1-3 years	23	1.08	.55	1.07	.54
4+ years	27	0.97	.38	0.91	.39

Voice Lessons

A t-test was used to examine whether students who had Voice Lessons or No Voice Lessons differed in their perceptions of change for EP and CE following the TSE program. The results revealed no significant differences between Voice Lessons or no Voice Lessons for EP $t(48) = 1.76, p = n.s.$ or CE $t(48) = 0.65, p = n.s.$, indicating that students with Voice Lessons did not differ significantly in their perceptions of change in Embodied Physicality or Communicative Expression following the TSE program compared to students with No Voice Lessons (see Table 9 for means). However, slightly higher difference scores were found with those with No Voice Lessons, particularly on Embodied Physicality.

Table 9. Means and Standard Deviations for EP and CE According to Voice Lessons

	n	Embodied Physicality		Communicative Expression	
		M	SD	M	SD
Voice Lessons	18	0.87	.29	0.92	.36
No Voice Lessons	32	1.11	.52	1.02	.52

Years in Organized Choirs

A t-test was used to examine whether the number of Years in Organized Choirs differed for students attending 1-7 years and 8-12 years in their perceptions of change for EP and CE following the TSE program. The results revealed no significant differences for number of Years at LFAS for EP $t(48) = 1.19, p = n.s.$ or CE $t(48) = 1.66, p = n.s.$ (see Table 10 for means). There was, however a small difference on CE for those singers who had relatively less years of experience in an organized choir.

Table 10. Means and Standard Deviations for EP and CE According to Years in Organized Choirs

	n	Embodied Physicality		Communicative Expression	
		M	SD	M	SD
<i>Years in Organized Choirs</i>					
1-7 years	27	1.09	.52	1.08	.53
8-12 years	23	0.93	.37	0.86	.34

4) Differences on comparison variables - looking deeper:

Although there were no significant differences with the comparison variables found in the t-test scores, there are small and subtle differences in the descriptive statistics mentioned above that bear a closer look, particularly in a complex learning environment such as the Langley Fine Arts School. As the comparison variables of age, grade, major and years contained multiple sub-groups, the SPSS program required a recoding of these variables into two groups. As such, the details are not as pronounced as if all groupings were represented as is.

In relation to gender, the boys showed a higher difference score on both EP and CE. A possible reason for this is the 3:1 gender ratio of the educational leaders in this study. The gender split of the participants also reflects the gender split in the school population overall.

The variables of age and grade revealed slightly higher scores in the younger age and grade than the older group. This was particularly evident with the CE. A plausible interpretation of these scores may be the response to the new opportunity that the younger singers (grade 9/10, age 14/15) experienced with the singing program, particularly in a choir with older, experienced singers.

There were slightly higher mean scores with the music majors for EP and CE. This should not be surprising, other than one might expect the difference to be greater given the amount of time that the music majors devote to music learning. When looking closer at the make up of the singers, particularly the music majors, it should be acknowledged that several of the singers were new to singing and new to the program. Several of the non-music major singers, however, have been in choirs for many years at LFAS and elsewhere. Perhaps this result might provide a more accurate indication if the variables of major and years in choir were compared. However, the small sample size did not enable multiple-level comparisons of this type.

Although there were no significant differences between parents who had completed high school/undergraduate degrees and those who had completed graduate degrees for both EP and CE, the number of parents with graduate degrees is very

intriguing: 20 of 50 participants, representing 40% of participants, had one or more parents having completed a graduate degree. One would assume this grouping is on the very high end of the Canadian average for working people: 6.5% of Canadian working people³⁰. This statistic raises questions for possible future research regarding the basis for parents orienting their children toward education in the arts.

It is also interesting to note that that slightly higher different scores were found with those participants with fewer years at LFAS (one to four), than those who had been at the school for more than four years, possibly accounting for new experience and opportunities. As well, there were several recently landed immigrants and international students in the choir that found singing in the choir very rewarding.

New experiences in learning can also account for the slightly higher difference scores found with those who had not had voice lessons, particularly on EP and even more so for CE compared to those who had less experience in an organized choir.

4.3.6. Summary of the Retrospective Assessment

The overall post-pre results, the top ten means and difference scores, and the t-tests on Part 1 and Part 2 of the retrospective assessment yield strong indicators of the presence of principles and key concepts in Transformative Singing Engagement. The strength of the post-pre measure adapted from Bryan Hiebert (2011), lies in the pedagogical adjustments that can be implemented after analyzing the results. In this case, the adjustments would be resulting from the nuances and suggestions arising from the comparison variable mean scores.

³⁰ Source: <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/12-581-x/2012000/edu-eng.htm#t9> last accessed on 29/08/2014

4.4. Qualitative Inquiry Results: Senior Students' Dilemma with the Study: the Numbers Don't 'Represent'

A major concern was highlighted by a number of 'senior' students who perceived the potential for an unrepresentative view of the impact of the singing program. Quantitative data of this study suggests that across all comparison variables, all singers viewed substantial improvement on the key concepts. The study also shows a similar access to improvement before and after across the comparison variables suggesting that the holistic design of the study was successful.

4.4.1. Themed Reflections

Students' Reflective Writing: Post Chan Centre Concert

The responses by 21 students who volunteered to provide reflective writing following the concert at the end of the TSE program are provided below. The students responded to two open-ended questions about their learning experience: 1) Describe your learning experience of the singing program from the perspective of final performance at the Chan Center, and 2) What singing ideas 'struck you'? I am presenting their comments here, followed by my interpretations in brackets of how they relate to TSE capacities for singing (Embodied Physicality (EP) and Communicative Expression (CE)), and learning (Engaged Agency, Connectivity, and Values/Self-beliefs). Although there is overlap in many of the comments, which refer to more than one capacity, I've separated them here into themes to emphasize the main capacity being referred to and to give a sense of how the students were able to describe their experience and their developing understanding of each capacity.

1) Skill: Embodied Physicality

"When I was just worried about the music and not the other things that can sometimes bother you when you sing - (*resistant to releasing for expression*) This also made the physical aspects of singing come naturally (*Skill - recognition of EP*) rather than having to think about them a lot. The magic truly came naturally when performing

and I was able to think about what the music was saying.” (*release of EP transforms to CE*)

“I found on stage I had difficulty on the breath and not very warmed up for the show.” (*Skill - recognition of EP*)

“I found connection to the breath and the voice was important. (*Skill - recognition of EP*)

“Overall, it was an amazing experience, possibly better than last time, mostly due to singing in mixed formation and it was great to sing with an orchestra because it adds greatly to the musical experience.” (*Skill - recognition of EP through mixed formation*)

“I felt being mixed really made the performance better and changed the way I could hear myself.” (*Skill - recognition of EP through mixed formation and sense of achievement*)

“I was really physically engaged in some of the pieces – the brass instruments were right in front of me and it was exciting music. – Having physical engagement helped me to keep time.” (*Skill - recognition of EP and Connectivity*)

“Singing in ‘the round’, I learned that the audience WANTS to see proper posture, breathing, a smile” (*Skill of EP transforms to Connectivity, which transforms to CE*)

“Also, to really watch, in the round or not.” (*Skill*)

“The breathing exercises and learning to expand really isn’t quickly understood. You have to practice it over time and it gets easier. I realized this first hand at the concert because unlike usual, my expansion stayed open when I was nearly out of breath. My ribs stayed open and I didn’t collapse inward.” (*Skill - recognition of EP*)

“I found it kind of hard to breathe properly. I feel like I don’t how to still. I understood everything we have been taught I just don’t know how it feels so often I think I’m breathing properly but I’m not. *(Skill - recognition of EP)*

I liked singing in mixed formation mostly. Dixit in mixed formation was difficult and some other songs I don’t know as well, however I thought it was good. Same with singing in the round.” *(Skill - recognition of EP through mixed formation)*

“Every 20 minutes I was re-adjusting my posture and shoulders to prevent collapsing. *(Skill - recognition of EP)*

“The breathing exercise helped me very much (in the warm up before the concert with Fabi) *(Skill - recognition of EP)* I was not nervous at all. Sometimes, I felt disconnected from the rest of the choir even though I was following the choir conductor. On one song I tried to out-sing the timpani because I couldn’t hear myself. I felt really dizzy at the end of that piece. When I sang the songs I thought about what the words meant and tried to tell a story through my singing. Surprisingly it improved my posture, breath and tone. *(Connectivity tranforms to Skill - recognition of EP).*

2) Skill: Communicative Expression

“I found the purpose of the extraordinary experience really helped me to know I can achieve such heights and know I can perform as a singer to the audience.” *(Purpose/Engaged Agency was a transformative experience that resulted in CE)*

“We really understood and enjoyed the music more with the orchestra playing *(Connectivity)* and we were able to express the feeling to our audience.” *(Connectivity tranforms to CE)*

“I also experienced Dr. Janzen’s reminders of breathing during the performance. He seemed to be able to tell when we weren’t thinking enough about breath and made a gesture to remind us.” *(Skill - EP [gestural] - recognition of CE)*

“Singing in the round was a lovely but strange experience because people in the audience were right there looking at me. It made trying to communicate through music a whole new experience because the people are right there. (*Value of CE*) There’s no faking it.”

“I think physically, singing always improves for me anyway when it’s the actual performance because of wanting to put on the best show.” (*Skill - EP transforms to CE*) The physical aspects come along with the confidence in what I’m singing.” (*Skill - EP transforms to CE*)

“I don’t think about anything else other than making a beautiful sound.” (*Skill - recognition of CE*) “The audience doesn’t respond nearly as well as fellow performers, and I found communicating with the fellow musicians made me more engaged, excited, and just more entertaining to watch and listen to.” (*Connectivity transforms to CE*).

3) Purpose: Engaged Agency

“The orchestra was so into the music, it gave me the intuition to want to sing and give more.” (*Connectivity and Engaged Agency*)

“I also found that most of the performance was memorized, so I could watch the conductor the whole time. Singing to an audience made it feel more like sharing rather than being work, so it made it more fun and seemed like there was more of a purpose to it.” (*Engaged Agency*)

“I found that being behind the VSO made my hearing difficult and due to that I sang louder and breathed deeper to obtain a more powerful sound. The strong and full music gave me confidence.” (*Skill - EP transforms to Self-belief*)

“I found that when the Chamber Choir was singing in the round for the Christmas Song and White Christmas, I was able to just let go of my voice (*Release*). Generally in performance my voice refuses to be as strong as in rehearsal, but the concert at the Chan Centre was different. It may have had something to do with the vast multitude of voices – since I knew my voice was buried, I was able to unleash without worrying about

voice cracks and such. (*Skill – EP and sense of Engaged Agency*) That feeling carried into the ‘round’ even though we were much more exposed surrounding the audience.

“I was less scared of making mistakes and sang with no fear”. (*Skill transforms to a sense of Engaged Agency*).

“Having a full house made the whole experience more real. There felt like there was a bigger purpose (*Engaged Agency*) when we had an audience.”

“Purpose – my view on my purpose as a singer completely changed from the Chan Center weekend. I used to think that my purpose as a singer was to give the audience the best possible experience. (*Purpose – recognition of Engaged Agency*)

“But then I was not among the orchestra and choir when I was out in the round. I realized listening is nothing compared to ‘being in’ the sound. And why should I try and enrich the lower half of the exciting experience [the audience] when it is so much more limited than the performers experience. My new purpose is to enrich and make greater the experience of the performers on stage with me, and that will also make the audience’s experience greater.” (*Purpose - Connectivity transforms to CE - recognition of Engaged Agency*)

4) Connectivity

“When we sang with the orchestra it helped me keep time and in some pieces, made the connection stronger.” (*Connectivity to other musicians*)

“I felt extremely connected to ‘Salvation is Created’ after the explanation of the song I was given. I actually felt the meaning of the song when I sang it and I connected to the audience the most during the song because I felt the emotional tension between us and them”. (*Connectivity to message subject*)

“connecting with the audience – thanking the audience by smiling and recognizing the applause.” (*Connectivity to audience*)

“During the whole performance I felt as though the audience was really connected and wanted more. This motivated me to sing more and to be even more engaged to the music.” (*Connectivity to audience transforms to personal meaning/Values and Engaged Agency together*)

“The orchestra helped in supporting the high notes.” (*Connectivity transforms to skill*)

“Singing with the orchestra made me forget about things such as notes and rhythms and instead I listened to the musicality of the orchestra and responded musically to them.” (*CE transforms to connectivity*)

“Also, I found the audience expressing emotion and the story or message from each piece of music and to spread the joy to the audience – into people’s lives. (*Connectivity transforms to CE and this transformative experience is personally meaningful and Valued*)

“The point where I really felt the connection between the orchestra and the choir was during Saturday’s rehearsal (dress rehearsal). The orchestra added so much life to the music. I immediately started engaging more. It was so magical!” (*Connectivity transforms to Engaged Agency and Values*)

“I also found that the collaboration with a professional group made us sing at a higher level.” (*Connectivity transforms to skill and a sense of achievement*)

“I was struck with the communication with orchestra, conductor and other singers, the maracas were awesome!” (*Connectivity*)

“When I could hear my part being played I found that my voice tried to follow and emulate the instrument sound.” (*Connectivity to skill - recognition of EP*)

“The Chan Center acoustic pushed my abilities further and made the breathing click more.” (*[Acoustic] Connectivity to skill - recognition of EP*)

“Also, on the Dixit the altos actually came in on the right beats – Yaay. It amazes me how much people’s faith and religion affect their singing experience. I have no religious beliefs so I can’t connect with the words like some people can. Objectively, looking at the words as an agnostic person, they seem strange, but when you let the enthusiasm of the spiritual people was over you, the music takes a different, more earnest feeling. It wasn’t easy for me to let go of the scepticism I originally held for some of the repertoire, but when I did, performing was much more fun.” (*Transformative experience - Connectivity*)

“Singing with the orchestra was a phenomenal experience for me. It brought so much to all the songs and playing with such amazing players inspired me and I enjoyed the experience even more by singing to my full potential. Since the orchestra was so loud, it forced me to really focus on the physical aspects (*Connectivity transforms to EP*) of singing - specifically, engaging the breath. I pretty much had to, just to merely hear myself, but I felt I actually sang better.”

“Although I may not have had a personal connection to all of the lyrics, it’s amazing how the feeling of singing with so many people with great music is truly inspiring. I was able to connect to the music through the great melodies and a great sense of the Christmas spirit around me.” (*Connectivity to Values/Self-beliefs*)

“I always felt more connected to everyone on easier songs –like White Christmas.” (*Connectivity*)

“I loved the first note of Gloria. I just was overwhelmed especially during rehearsal and I remember this happening in grade 10. (*Connectivity - emotional connection that is personally meaningful*)

5) Values/Self-beliefs

“The value of singing on time and to have that ringing sound.” (*Skill - recognition of Values*)

“I liked that we switched into mixed formation. It’s a little bit scary at first, but it forces you to be independent and know your part, and it’s fun to be able to hear the harmonies all around you.” (*Skill transforms to connectivity and transformative experience is Valued*)

“Singing behind the orchestra was super cool because it felt like the choir and the orchestra were more connected since we were sharing the same stage.” (*Values transforms to Connectivity*)

“the emotions that we have on the audience is all due to the value and purpose of singing.” (*Values and Engaged Agency*)

“I found that during our performance at the Chan Centre, I felt for really the first time that I was not just performing but it was my job to bring a sense of joy and spirit to those watching me. (*Engaged Agency transforms to Values/Self-beliefs*) So even if I didn’t exactly have any personal connection to the songs I was singing, I knew someone in the audience did, so I tried to put myself in their place and portray their feelings back to them. (*Connectivity transforms to Engaged Agency and a sense of purpose and recognition of ‘the other’*) And I have never felt like that before . . . I’m not sure what made it so different and special, but it was.” (*Values/Self-beliefs – personally meaningful*)

4.5. Conclusion of TSE Study

The study into TSE set out to discover the nature of singing engagement in present day learners in a fine arts school in order to build a theory for singing pedagogy. This study is an effort to respond to a perceived disconnect between the level of engaged singing in present day choirs and group singing learning communities and the potentials that exist for developing the capacities within transformative singing engagement.

Working within an action research approach, two methodologies were chosen for this study: (1) an adaptation of Heibert’s (2011) retrospective assessment, and (2)

written responses by singers who volunteered to respond to open-ended questions about their learning experience. This research sought to:

1. Develop a TSE program focusing on two singing capacities (embodied physicality and communicative expression) and three learning capacities (engaged agency, connectivity, and values/self-beliefs) across a range of diverse singing activities;
2. Implement the program using emergent curriculum, transformative pedagogy, and reflective practice approaches aimed at empowering learners and situating meaning making at the core;
3. Examine secondary school students' perceptions or 'insider-knowledge' of personal meaning in and through singing, and their experience during and following the TSE program implementation.

Through the course of a 16-week singing program implementation involving 50 participants of a senior secondary choir and a leadership team with three singing leaders, the data was collected at the end of the study using the 'post-pre' measure and analyzed through SPSS to present a holistic picture of the key capacities of TSE. The second data collection involved the students' reflective written responses to open-ended questions about their learning experience following the TSE program and a grounded theory approach to thematic analysis (Maykut & Morehouse, 1994) was used to provide further interpretations of the students' experiences.

The three main findings were:

- 1) All students, regardless of their differences on eight comparison variables (gender, age, grade, arts major, years at the school, parents' education, voice lessons, and years in organized choirs), indicated improvement in TSE singing capacities (embodied physicality and communicative expression) through the learning capacities (engaged agency, connectivity, and values/self-beliefs). This suggests that the TSE

singing program had a positive impact on all learners, regardless of differences in their background and singing experience.

2) The results revealed a number of tendencies in the direction of students' responses, which although not statistically significant, were approaching significance and are therefore worthy of mentioning, as follows: (1) boys reported higher EP than girls, (2) the younger singers showed a slight edge over the older singers for EP, (3) music majors showed a slight edge over non-music majors for both EP and CE, and (4) those participants who had taken voice lessons had slightly higher difference scores for EP and CE. In addition, there was no significant difference in this study for EP and CE between students with parents who had high school diplomas/undergraduate degrees compared to those with graduate degrees, nor for the number of years the participants had been at the school.

3) The students' written reflections further supported their developing understanding and recognition of two singing capacities (embodied physicality and communicative expression), and three learning capacities (engaged agency, connectivity and values/self-beliefs), particularly in the area of *singing connectivity*, and indicated the potential for TSE as a pedagogical model for fostering transformative singing engagement.

Chapter 5.

Summary and Conclusions

5.1. Introduction

This research aimed to explore transformative music engagement (TME) as a perspective for understanding and developing transformative pedagogical approaches in choral singing education. A key feature of the research is that theory and practice were considered to be interrelated and necessary for research that might add to our understanding of the potential factors that lead to transformative singing engagement (TSE). Two studies examined the transformative paradigm: (1) a case study interviews with expert choral conductors from four countries (Cuba, Kenya, Ukraine, Denmark) using ethnographic encounters and narrative inquiry to identify key attributes of transformative singing leadership (TSL), and (2) an interrelated program development component and study of 50 secondary school students' perceptions of transformative singing engagement (TSE) for two singing capacities (embodied physicality and communicative expression), and three learning capacities (engaged agency, connectivity, and values/self-beliefs) following a 16-week program focused on developing these capacities and using an innovative retrospective assessment procedure.

The TSE program was developed using both theoretical conceptualizations of O'Neill's (2012a) transformative music engagement (TME) and insights gained through the case study interviews to respond to the challenges of engaging students growing up in today's fluid and fast-changing digital age. The TSE program also considered ways of negotiating students' diverse learning styles, maintaining and developing the 'doing' of music, and enhancing cultural awareness within music learning. Each of these areas is recognized in transformative pedagogical perspectives, which emphasize emergent

curriculum, transformative pedagogies, and reflective practice. By drawing on the key interrelated principles from TME, the conceptual views and practices of international singing leaders, and young people's views on the singing capacities they learn through engaging in transformative experiences, this research addresses a gap in considering how pedagogical practices in singing might respond to some of the challenges and leverage the affordances of engaging young singers who are growing up in today's fluid and fast-changing digital age, in deep, meaningful, and enduring learning of western music and singing traditions.

This chapter presents a summary of the TSL and TSE studies, limitations of this research, the implications for choral singing education, suggestions for further research, and concluding thoughts.

5.2. Summary of Study 1: Transformative Singing Leadership (TSL)

Through ethnographic encounters (Jordan, 2002) of four case studies featuring world recognized singing leaders, a new approach, which has its origins in transformative music engagement (O'Neill, 2012a), has emerged for conceptualizing transformative singing leadership (TSL). Using applications of narrativity and the constant comparative method (Maykut & Morehouse, 1994) from interviews, observations, video and audio clips, and still photography, four main attributes of singing leadership emerged: (1) developing skill and expression, (2) fostering resiliency, (3) forming cultural singing identities and intersectionalities, and (4) promoting social innovation. The combination of these four attributes offers a framework for exploring singing and choral music education in current, ever-changing environments.

5.2.1. Skill and Expression: Developing *Communicative Musicality*

The findings supported the notion that broad theoretical concepts associated with *communicative musicality* (Malloch, 1999; Trevarthen, 1999) encompassed the singing leaders' development of skill and expression in relation to three main singing capacities: *intrinsic pulse, qualities of meaning, and narrative*.

1) *Intrinsic motive pulse (IMP)* is an innate sense of motivated time. It appears in regulated or unregulated instances in which the singing dynamic of ‘call and response’ was found to occur through leader to singer, singer to singer, and choir to listener (audience). Through gestures, vocal sound, and collective physical motion, a sense of *expectation* occurred between the listener (audience) and singer through the shaping of sound and silence³¹. In Cuba, Alina Orraca developed ‘the new style’ that set up the *intrinsic motive pulse* between her Coralina ensemble and their audiences. The capacity of IMP was also found to be a key element in the work of Joseph Muyale with the Kenyan Boys Choir and can be seen and heard in the song circles in Nairobi’s Central Park, their rehearsal space.

2) *Qualities of meaning* featured most prominently in Anatoliy’s vocal concept of *timbral meaning associations (TMA)* in Ukraine. Through developing arrays of vocal colours in the collective choral sound, associated meanings were aligned with textual meanings in the music. In my interviews in Kiev, Anatoliy drew my attention to the unique historic precedence in the development of the timbral palette and highlighted the national and historic examples related to these skills:

We are trying to imitate what actors do; one word can be pronounced in ten different ways, which would carry ten different shades of meaning. Every nation has a vibrato, which is winding up to heaven, and this vibrato is related to the linguistic peculiarities.

Anatoliy’s *TMA* was also found in the other leaders’ work, particularly with Helle in Denmark, who valued clarity and brilliance in the bright, clear, sparkling nature of northern regional choral sound in Scandinavia.

3) Finally, *narrative* may be described in two ways: the content of the song (*the story*), and the collective *way of being* through which the singers (*storytellers*) convey important messages to the listener (audience). The pedagogical lens of the singing leaders, as shown in the collected data, featured both types of narratives.

³¹ An example of the sense of ‘expectation’ that is created through IMP (Trevarthen, 1999) can be seen in a segment featuring Bobby McFerrin at the World Science Fair from: Notes and Neurons: In Search of Common Chorus, June 12, 2009: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Hodp2esSV9E> last retrieved on 09/008/2014.

Aboriginal scholar Greg Cajete (1994) points out the central role of the capacity of narrative in enduring learning, saying,

Story is a primary structure through which humans think, relate, and communicate (p.117).

The theoretical approach of *communicative musicality* was found within the conceptual views of the singing leaders, and each placed stories and storytellers at the heart of singing engagement.

5.2.2. Distinct Cultural Identities and Intersectionalities

The study into TSL uncovered the singing leaders' positional views in promoting purposeful singing between distinct cultural singing identities on the one hand and intersections of cultural singing traditions on the other. I apply both *cultural identities* and *intersectionalities* as a means of describing the leaders' approach to the cultural intent of their work. As Zygmunt Bauman (2000) describes in *Liquid Modernity*, leadership systems are subject to "redistribution and reallocation of modernity's 'melting pot' powers' such that moulds have been broken and reshaped" (p. 98). Through his inter-tribal singing approach Joseph appeared to *blur* individual and collective tribal identities. Bauman (2000) reminds us that the singular identity always has its place within the collective:

One cannot be a bona fide communitarian without giving the devil his due, without on one occasion admitting the freedom of individual choice denied on another. (p. 170)

I have recounted the leaders' conceptions of these identities and 'fluid' intersectionalities as *braided, blended, and blurred* approaches to the singing leaders' work (O'Neill, 2014b). Through their nuanced descriptions of how they grappled with cultural identities, the singing leaders depicted their belief systems, which have enabled them to forge pathways for singing authenticity.

Alina described the braided mix of forms in her repertoire as an Ajiaco, a Cuban stew of vegetables in which the flavours do not blend but contribute individually with their distinct flavours of taino³² - indigenous, Afro-Cuban, and Spanish forms. Anatoliy did not assume that in the context of present day Ukraine he could develop authentic cultural representations of the past forms of distinct cultural singing. Instead, his conceptual view of singing identity represented a *blended* approach, an incubator of singing culture that recognizes the complexity and the historical singing expertise through the development of his *timbral meaning associations* and cultural singing forms of the regions of Ukraine. Joseph's 'one tribe' philosophy and approach was one that featured sense of *blurred* cultural lines. Recent inter-tribal marriages (including his own) are at odds with the present political motivations of the country; his approach to cultural identity was found to be carefully measured in which his efforts were dedicated to *pan-African* singing that may reach to a global audience. Stetsenko (2004) suggests that through agentic roles we can see how "individual and social dimensions in human development is revealed and ascertained" (p. 498). The purposeful agentic roles that were apparent among the singing leaders situate them as community builders who promote cultural identities and intersectionalities through singing. My investigation into the source of agency and purpose in the roles of the singing leaders, also uncovered common stories of struggle, conflict, and hardship, and ultimately stories of resilience.

5.2.3. Resiliency

The singing leaders relayed common obstacles, struggles, barriers, and constraints, and even life threatening circumstances that impacted their life and work. Yet each described the difficulties as catalysts for gaining a deeper sense of purpose and action. Alina recounted the ways in which her experience of struggle and challenge fostered her innovation and a sense of resiliency:

I think that sometimes the mistakes and the needs necessitate that you create something new. It makes a violent form to the human so the human has to make something new.

³² The *taino* were one of the major indigenous peoples of the Caribbean.

The international acceptance and affirmation of her embodied approach gave her an emboldened sense of purpose to face the struggle for her 'new style' to be accepted in Cuba. It is important to note that Alina found this sense of resiliency in order to pursue the new forms of choral music during 'the special period,' an extended period of over a decade of economic crisis as the Soviet subsidies stopped flowing due to the break up of the Soviet Union in the 1990s. This was an extraordinary period of hardship for the Cuban people. Charles Taylor (1989) describes an "autonomous humanity" resulting from leadership that is tested (p. 415). The leadership capacity of resiliency, when tested by the struggles experienced by these singing leaders, appeared to unearth a renewed belief system and sense of purpose in their work (Damon et al., 2003, p. 119). Ironically, while the Soviet Union was propping up Cuba with subsidies in the decades before the 'special period,' at the same time in Soviet-occupied Ukraine, Anatoliy was facing the personal political accusation of 'nationalism' and a subsequent threat of deportation to labour camps in Siberia. He discovered a deeper sense of purpose in protecting, preserving, and revitalizing a national choral art after the international pressure secured his status and work in Ukraine. In Kenya, the very existence of the KBC has relied on the resilient nature of Joseph's leadership. The political turmoil rooted in tribal divisions was found to be at the very essence of his inter-tribal singing model. I travelled with Joseph to various rehearsals of other choirs he has formed through cooperation with the Kenyan Ministry of Education (Kenyan Teachers Choir). Among the Nairobi city workers (Nairobi City Workers Choir), I watched him instil a sense of resiliency through music, while at the same time 'negotiate' conflicting views through singing common songs among tribes.

5.2.4. Social Innovation

Song festivals are generative of social innovation and lasting legacies of cultural understanding. Since 1869 the song festival *Laulupidu* has occurred every five years in Tallinn, Estonia, and presently includes over three hundred thousand singers. For centuries before that, thousands gathered and sang at the same location. For Estonia,

this song festival represents how culture saved a nation.³³ Not a new phenomenon, song festivals they may be the oldest form of communication between peoples (Mithen, 2005). David Abram (1996) quotes Marshall-Stoneking from *Singing the Snake* about the dream-life of Australian Indigenous people: “Through the singing, we keep everything alive; through the songs... the spirits keeps us alive” (Abram, p. 170). Here, singing is necessary for survival. These transformative singing leaders find ways for singing to act as a catalyst for human development and potential. Vera John Steiner (2000) states that through relations with others, we experience “a coming into being” (p. 189). This ‘coming into being’ through the relations of others was a prominent feature in Helle’s leadership through participation in international collaborations of song festivals that connect voices across the globe. One such festival was *Kathaumixw 2010* that, as mentioned previously, marked the beginning of this research opportunity.

The findings indicate that Alina, Joseph, Helle, and Anatoliy may be considered self-reflective ‘rule breakers’ whose work has presented new innovative means for ensemble singing to generate human potential and quality of life. The notions of Freire’s (1970) ‘critical consciousness’ as an imperative for socio-political change in education, as well as Charles Taylor’s (1989) description of ‘the infinite self,’ are found in the conceptual frameworks of these singing leaders who promote singing in a similar manner as Taylor’s ‘quest for justice’ (p. 450). In Cuba, Alina described facing shifting realities in attempting to break the restrictive mould of the uni-dimensional classical approach of singing in favour of establishing a recognized ‘new style’ which brought together the popular forms of singing. In Ukraine, Anatoliy Avdievsky, described his cultural labour of love, the Veriovka Choir, Orchestra and dance troupe, as an *incubator* of the stories of Ukraine, particularly from the Carpathian region:

³³ Laulupidu At the famous 1969 festival, Estonians were not permitted to wear their traditional costumes and were forbidden to sing ‘Land of our Fathers’. However, in the first unified bid to resist, the crowds refused to leave the festival at the end and thousands began singing. Officials tried to drown out the singing with the brass band but the singing overpowered. Over twenty thousand Estonians could not be silenced. The Soviets were forced to let the song’s composer, Gustav Ernesaks, conduct the song which then reinforced the original 1947 origin of resistance - all by singing this forbidden song. The Estonian people faced the USSR occupation head on and led the impetus to break the strangle hold for fifteen countries to vie for their independence under the Soviet flag. Source: *The Singing Revolution*.

So we are using artificial selection, in a way it's like an incubator.

Indigenous scholar, Cajete (1994) speaks of *incubation* as a stage of the indigenous *creative process*, “Incubation engenders hologizing, healing, and expressions of spirituality including those characteristics of various religious rites and practices” (p. 162). I have been privileged to witness *incubation* of transformative singing engagement through the four approaches to transformative singing leadership revealed through the singing leaders’ narratives, where resilient, expressive, and authentic singing appears as a means for transforming human potentials.

5.3. Summary of Study 2: Transformative Singing Engagement (TSE)

Using an interrelated action research (McKernan, 1991) and TSE singing program development component, this study set out to identify two singing capacities (physical and communicative) and three learning capacities (engaged agency, connectivity, and values/self-beliefs) associated with transformative singing engagement across a diverse range of singing activities with 50 secondary school students attending a Canadian public school. Through examining ‘insider-knowledge’ based on the students’ perspectives of their engagement in a 16-week TSE program using an innovative *retrospective assessment* procedure and written reflections, it was possible to shed light on the students’ personal meaning-making in ways that might assist in the development of new pedagogical approaches designed to engage students in deep, meaningful, and enduring learning of singing. An analysis of the students’ perspectives revealed six main findings:

- 1) The singing program had a similar positive impact across all comparison variables among the 50 participants. Regardless of gender, age, chosen arts major, years at LFAS, whether or not they had voice lessons previously, or years in an organized choir, all participants accessed positive transformative change in the two singing capacities of embodied physicality and communicative expression, and the three learning capacities of engaged agency, connectivity, and values/self-beliefs. This finding supports the holistic design of the singing program implementation.

2) Almost all of the participants showed a major shift in their self-views of what constitutes 'a singer.' Although most participants didn't consider themselves to be 'singers' before the program, almost all self-identified as 'a singer' at the end of the program. For example, one student's written reflection stated:

I found the purpose of the extraordinary experience really helped me to know I can achieve such heights and know I can perform as a singer to the audience.

3) The most significant difference in participants' perceptions of change from before the program to after was related to the notion of *singing as communication*. The findings showed a significant *perspective transformation*, with most students disagreeing with idea of singing as communication at the beginning of the program, and yet only 16 weeks later almost all had shifted their perspective to agree with this statement. This finding was supported in the open-ended writings: most participants expressed the value of communicating the messages in an embodied, physical way of singing. Many of the responses centered around singing communication connected to *value* and *purpose*, for example:

So even if I didn't exactly have any personal connection to the songs I was singing, I knew someone in the audience did, so I tried to put myself in their place and portray their feelings back to them.

4) The students' responses on the *retrospective assessment* and their open-ended written reflections revealed similar views about their sense of the importance of *connectivity* within singing engagement in two ways:

a. Connection of singing and 'lived experience': Responses to the direct statement, "*I find myself making connections with life experience,*" the participants showed a perception change from moderate disagreement to almost complete agreement. With the item "*other singers in the choir have help/inspired with ways to communicate in singing*" the participants also showed similar positive shifts through connecting their learning through the leadership of other singers. Both items showed significant positive shifts in *connectivity* and support the notion of the *lived curriculum* as a way of engaging students in meaningful learning experiences.

b. Connection of *singer to singer* inspires *purposeful* singing communication:

The 'messages' in the music/text that the students prepared and shared together had an impact on the students' sense of connective purpose. For example, one student wrote, "my new purpose is to enrich and make greater the experience of the performers on stage with me, and that will also make the audience's experience greater."

5) The finding indicated that for the participants, feeling a connection to the audience through 'telling the story' helped them realize a sense of purpose and engaged agency. For example, one young singing stated, "I actually felt the meaning of the song when I sang it and I connected to the audience the most during the song because I felt the emotional tension between us and them."

6) The capacities of skill in singing (physical and communicative) were found to be interconnected and participants were able to recognize a relational (rather than hierarchical or linear) link between physical and communicative aspects of singing, for example:

When I was just worried about the music and not the other things that can sometimes bother you when you sing, ... this also made the physical aspects of singing come naturally rather than having to think about them a lot. The magic truly came naturally when performing and I was able to think about what the music was saying.

5.4. Limitations of the Research

Studies involving ethnographic encounters encompass a complex set of temporal, geographic, linguistic, and cultural dimensions. The study into TSL relies on the words of singing leaders who do not necessarily speak English. As these themes are developed through the words of the singing leaders, I became extremely reliant on the translation skills of Anabel Gutierrez (Cuba) and Sergei Basarov (Ukraine). Due to time and resources, it was not possible to revisit each singing leader to verify the translations, transcriptions, and thematic analysis based on their narratives. It is possible that further complexity might have been revealed, particularly in relation to the translations and use of syntax, had a second visit been possible.

Another limitation of the case studies into the practices of singing leaders was the limited amount of time that could be spent during each of the four encounters. There is obvious value to increasing time in the field to provide more depth and breadth in developing the conceptual lens and thematic attributes of research participants from other cultures. Further investigation in TSL will greatly benefit from further studies in other diverse cultural contexts to build a greater knowledge base for understanding both common and varied approaches to achieving enduring learning for singing pedagogy and choral music education. It is my hope that future case studies involving ethnographic encounters may provide sustained periods of time for observation, reflection, relational understanding in order to shed light on the work and lives of other transformative singing leaders.

The TSE study was limited to 50 secondary school students at one school, which was also a fine arts school. There is a need for future research to explore TSE with participants from diverse backgrounds and learning environments, both within choral programs at schools, and other choral education contexts such as public, private, and community schools, as well as colleges and universities, community choirs, and intergenerational singing programs. Only then might we begin to paint a vivid picture of TSE and how it is manifested in common, interrelated, and diverse contexts.

A common criticism of action research is that there are latent possibilities for bias on the part of the researcher and the participants, as both are familiar to each other. In this case, I acknowledge not only its potential, but also the assumptions from my teaching practice that I carried forward in this research. As Marta McCarthy (2006) points out in her dissertation involving case studies with Canadian conductors, the researcher needs to be mindful of bias and its effect on the results of the study (p. 25). Like McCarthy, my experience as a singing leader has given me an advantage with this inquiry into the pedagogical practices of other singing leaders, and yet similarly, my subjective involvement in designing the interviews, observations, and analysis can influence the findings in ways that may not be readily apparent to the researcher. As a measure to obtain a sharper focus for the inquiry, my colleagues and collaborators involved in this study have provided invaluable insight and direction – even for example, re-direction toward areas of emphasis, particularly with the interviews of the case studies

with singing leaders, where they often spoke at length (sometimes ignoring a question) about areas of importance to them. I believe that this adds to the credibility and trustworthiness of the findings, as a continual conscious effort was made throughout the research to make it possible for participants to convey their experiences and ways of understanding singing engagement in ways that were personally meaningful to them.

5.5. Implications for Pedagogy from TLE and TSE

The affordances of TSL and TSE as an approach to singing and choral music education offer significant possibilities for the future of engaged singing learning and pedagogy. These approaches have potentials to unlock capacities for singing communication (Welch, 2005) from singer to singer, leader to singer, and singer to audience, and to replace strategies associated with agenda-based processes that focus more on *motivating* students to achieve performance skills rather than *engaging* them in in deep, meaningful, and enduring learning experiences. Young aspiring conductors may readily access this framework, replacing the talent/deficit model with empowered, holistic learning aimed at change that encompasses a cognitive and affective metamorphosis (Cossentino, 2004). Both studies support the claims of TME (O'Neill, 2012a) through the positive prospect of transformative pedagogical perspectives, which resonate with both *critical pedagogy* (Freire, 1970 Taylor, 2012) and *reflective practice approaches* (Brookfield, 1995; Schön, 1983). In the following sections I discuss these perspectives separately, however in practice, they are intricately woven together.

5.5.1. Reflective Practice

As the TSL and TSE studies bear out, examples of *critical reflective practice* are prolific and pervasive in all aspects of singing pedagogy, transcending singing cultures, length of professional career, and even the lives of singing leaders. The pedagogical choices of approach, curriculum, and learning space, all filter through the lens of critical reflective practice (McKernan, 1991). The singing leaders in the TSL study as well as my collaborators in the TSE study are all in the process of becoming *critically reflective practitioners*. In the transcripts of my interviews, observations, and reflections from my ethnographic encounters (Jordan, 2002), each leader demonstrated how they question

and reflect back (on a daily basis) their pedagogical decisions such that new ideas emerge for learning and curriculum. They are searching for new ways to empower their singers to ‘take hold’ and ‘own’ the aspects of physical, communicative singing expression. Their examples show us the power in ‘letting go’ of power; this letting go of *decision-making* to empower singers in diverse ways is an active *decision* on the part of the reflective practitioner who is constantly “hunting assumptions” to interrogate his or her own views (Brookfeild, 1995).

The TSE study benefitted greatly from Bryan Heibert’s innovative approach to *retrospective assessment* (Heibert, Domene, & Buchanan, 2011). As well as providing a valuable research tool, its provision as a diagnostic tool, which educators can use to determine the impact of particular approaches to singing pedagogy on learning and engagement, provides valuable formative feedback that can assist with reflective practice and professional development. Among educators interested in gaining deep level insights and understanding of their learners’ perspectives, retrospective assessment provides important knowledge about affordances and constraints on learning that can inform future pedagogical decision-making with the aim of improving educational programs and teaching practice. We must rely on a critical reflective practice if we are to respond to the perceived decline in the music education landscape in Canada (Hill Strategies Research, 2010) and to the discrepancies in music learning and music enjoyment found in the UK study mentioned in Chapter 1 (O’Neill, North and Hargreaves, 2000). As the singing leaders in the TSL study show, our pedagogical roles, program content, and learner engagement is reliant on a context dependant, critical reflective practice for re-visioning singing and choral music education.

5.5.2. Critical Pedagogy

TSE study involving learners’ perceptions showed that across eight comparison variables learners had similar experiences of conceptual change through a 16-week singing program. Key features of this program involved the principles found in TME (O’Neill, 2012a, 2012b): inclusivity, differentiation, critical reflection, social connectivity, and engaged agency. This holistic inquiry began with a conscious effort to promote a safe and inclusive learning environment and a strong sense of participatory culture

among students and educators. An implication for pedagogical practice of 'large ensemble' music learning is the necessity for looking at the assumptions of 'inclusivity.' In the TSL study, Joseph found that the safe, 'inclusive' environment must respect the views of 'difference' between tribes; for singing practitioners without a critical pedagogy, the principle of *inclusivity* within the learning environment runs the risk of being *exclusive* of *difference*, thereby becoming 'unsafe' (Sheilds, 2013). By connecting the narratives of sung texts to the 'lived experiences' in singing and choral music classes, different interpretations give rise to meaning making which may empower empathic learners. One such learner in my study qualified her purposeful role as follows:

I found that during our performance at the Chan Centre, I felt for really the first time that I was not just performing but it was my job to bring a sense of joy and spirit to those watching me. So even if I didn't exactly have any personal connection to the songs I was singing, I knew someone in the audience did, so I tried to put myself in their place and portray their feelings back to them. And I have never felt like that before . . . I'm not sure what made it so different and special, but it was.

Inspiring purposeful agency through singing, using a critical pedagogy and reflective practice approach, offers potentials for fostering the kind of purposeful understanding that is capable of creating agentic roles (Kress, 2010) and transformative singing engagement among diverse learners.

5.5.3. Building Capacities

Singing capacities have been shown to develop in young singers through the TSE study; the implications for singing leadership suggest the need to shift and alter our approaches to create new levels of challenge in our singing pedagogies. Once we become aware of the transformative nature of learning, by listening to the views of learners who are in our midst (because we bothered to ask!), then the onus is on us, the pedagogical leadership, to trust and continue trusting in the approach of capacity development. The turning point of the learner 'taking hold' is also the turning point for us to 'let go' and heed the advice of Wilhelm Ehman (1968):

In accordance with the traditional leader, the choir director should regard himself (sic) as a precentor or leading dancer who, as the best

performer in his group, emerges from the group to give direction and Leadership, but always withdraws again into and identifies himself with the group as *primus inter pares*. He should cultivate and strengthen this feeling within himself. His ideal objective should be a gradual withdrawal from the choir to the point where he could on occasion be dispensable. (p. 112)

The craft of Ehmann's 'dispensable' leadership is also a capacity to be developed in music education, singing leadership, and can take hold in many learning contexts. If anything, the participants of TSL and TSE have reminded us of foundational theoretical constructs in education today, such as the *zone of proximal development* of Vygotsky (1986), *empowerment* of Freire (1970), *indigeneity* of Cajete (1994), and 'the old ways' found in communities since the dawn of civilization (Davis, 2009).

5.6. Directions for Future Research Toward Collective Singing Education

The theoretical framework, methodology, and results from the TSL study provide a basis for future case studies that may lead to further knowledge and understandings of the pedagogy leading to transformative singing engagement. There is further need for longitudinal studies in TSE and TSL. Mapping the post-pre measure over a longer period of time would give us a more broad understanding of the transformative nature of singing learning. Singing studies using engagement models for different age populations and studies in schools with singing programs that are not dedicated arts schools would also provide understandings of generational singing and holistic singing methods.

5.6.1. Ongoing Case Studies

I am currently engaged in two other case studies that have the potential to contribute greatly to the approaches of TSE and TSL are: (1) the transformative practice of singer/educator and recording artist Dee Daniels and (2) a TSL study drawing from the wisdom of long time music educator, arts advocate and author, Dr. Dennis Tupman. Dee's reflective practice in the art of singing communication dwells in the notion of 'singer as storyteller' and 'song as story'. This conceptual view has had a profound

effect on my pedagogical approach and understanding of what singing leaders do. An in-depth study of the Dee's pedagogical practice would, in my view, greatly contribute to ongoing understanding of TSE and TSL and provide a rich experiential view into the action-oriented and transformative attributes of singing and teaching.

Life-long arts advocate, music educator, and humanitarian, Dr. Dennis Tupman has long been recognized as one of Canada's leading proponent of arts education. He has dedicated his life to bringing music and arts learning to, and for all. In 2010, Dennis suffered a serious stroke in the left side of his brain. Through a rigorous intervention and therapy program, Dennis has virtually recovered to the point that he terms the event as 'my stroke of genius,' referring to new insights he gained from his reliance on the right hemisphere. Dennis credits his recovery to singing.

Dennis graciously accepted my request to begin a case study into his life and work with a focus on stroke recovery through singing. In several visits at his retirement home on Green Lake in British Columbia, I began an informal case study into singing and stroke recovery, which simply was not possible to complete during the timeframe of this research. Data from interviews and observations has been collected for this study and through a similar grounded theory method utilized in this thesis, important insights may be gained into the potentials of singing for well-being. Drawing on previous knowledge and understanding of the physical and neural mechanisms that are engaged when singing occurs, I hope to generate more anecdotal data that may contribute to research in singing wellness with this particular case study.

5.6.2. Neuroscience and Singing

Singing appears at least as complex as language (Perry, 2002); as such, the practice and pedagogy of singing has much knowledge to gain from the rapidly evolving research into brain mechanisms of music (Mithen, 2008, Zatorre & Halpern, 2005). Neuroscience of music has captured the interest of musicians, educational communities, and health practitioners. New evidence of how our brains behave with music and singing perception (Peretz & Coltheart, 2003), production (Marin & Perry, 1999) and emotion (Blood & Zatorre, 2001) have significant implications for singing practice and

singing pedagogy. However, navigating the efforts through the labyrinth of technical language and tools of measurement proves to be a daunting task, revealing barriers between the neural findings and their implications that may never reach communities who can foster informed change leading to new knowledge and understanding. Neurological studies on empathy and singing have not occurred due to the technological measurement barriers, however the mirror neuron studies in primates and the mirror system in human studies on action suggest there may be a link to emotion and empathy. Our individual responses to singing seem to engage others in responding in similar ways. For example, social and physical synchronized interactions involving shared understanding, imitation, expectation and empathy are demonstrated in overt expressive behaviors such as smiling, laughing, and eye contact.

Philosophy and education writers such as Maxine Greene (1995) and Cynthia Ozick (1989) assert that empathy is derived from the imagination. Ozick (1989) describes how doctors can imagine the suffering of their patients, “those doctors who have no pain can imagine those who suffer. Those at the centre can imagine what it is to be outside” (p. 283). What seems to be suggested here is the connection of mirror neurons to empathy. ‘Reading’ the feelings of others as the basis of communication requires an imaginative capacity that allows for difference. Greene (1989) suggests that, “it may well be the imaginative capacity that allows us also to experience empathy with different points of view, even at interests apparently at odds with ours” (p. 31). The imagination is required to see how it looks and feels from the lens of others. Studies in neuroscience show evidence of isolated cases of mirror neuron activity along with associative theories from the fields of phenomenology, psychology, philosophy, and education. In my view, the apparent inter-subjectivity of these cases deserves a ‘weigh-in’ from these associated fields to bring about further knowledge and understanding the role of mirror neurons in music communication, the relationship of singing and empathy, and how these understandings can contribute to the approaches of TSE and TSL.

Finally, we need a better grasp of the singing activity within our nations. These studies need to stretch into communities where singing occurs not just in ‘organized choirs’ but also in singing ensembles, singing circles, and communities found in hospitals, daycares, and places where people gather to simply ‘sing.’ If the

transformative nature of music learning has the benefits that are showing up in recent studies, then accessing a baseline of singing activity in our populations can be a first step forward in formalizing the nature of singing's contribution toward wellbeing.

5.7. Conclusion

The research into TSL and TSE has been and continues to be a highly collaborative journey that involves singers I work with every teaching day, singing leaders and researchers whom I have come to respect and love, conductors who have made conscious choices to dedicate their lives for singing to be the catalyst for the good in the world, and my students who accept the value of singing within themselves and its purpose for sharing with others.

Transformational researcher David Cooperrider (as cited in Busche, 2012) highlights the kind of change that William James urged in 1902 in *Varieties of Religious Experience*. Rather than the kind of change familiar to us when fear and violence takes hold and lives are threatened, we need to familiarize ourselves with the type of change where “everything is hot and alive within us and everything reconfigures itself around it” (p. 16). Cooperrider summarized a transformative change that researchers, music leaders and learners can apply in practice:

The transformational moment is a pro-fusion moment when something so deeply good and loving is touched in us that everything is changed (as cited in Bushe, 2012, p. 16).

And I will give the final thought to long-time mentor Bobby McFerrin, for his description into the essence of singing as social communication:

You're working in a hall, three thousand seats, whatever the capacity is. Most of them don't know each other, you know? Maybe they come in, you know, couples and families, whatever, but they don't know each other. But in a ninety minute span, you can create a community of people who will walk out singing with perfect strangers . . . the music that took place might have come out of me, but it went into

them and became all of us and we took that out. And that's a wonderful thing.³⁴

³⁴ Bobby McFerrin in an interview for *The Music Instinct* in *The Power of Music: Pioneering Discoveries in the new Science of Song*.

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Appendix.

Retrospective Assessment Questionnaires (PA and CA)

Embodied Physicality

**SINGING ENGAGEMENT –PHYSICAL ASPECTS
LFAS Student Questionnaire**

Name _____

In answering these questions, we would like you to compare yourself now with before your singing in choir this year began (Sept. 2013).

Knowing what you know now, how would you rate yourself before the singing projects, and how would you rate yourself now?

Please use a two-step process:

- (a) decide whether the statement is “not true for me” or “true for me”

- (b) circle the rating that most applies
 - (0) **not at all** true for me
 - (1) **not very** true for me
 - (2) **sort of** true for me
 - (3) **mostly** true for me
 - (4) **very** true for me

Thinking about the singing in choir this year, and knowing what you know now,
how would you rate yourself before the singing projects and how would you rate yourself now?

ITEM	Before Program in Sept. 2013					Now				
	Not true for me		True for me			Not true for me		True for me		
	0	1	2	3	4	0	1	2	3	4
1. The physical aspects of singing connect with other physical activities I'm involved with.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. I notice examples of physical aspects of singing during choir rehearsal.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. I apply the knowledge I've learned about physical aspects of singing to enhance my singing performance.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. I feel good when I apply the physical aspects of singing.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. I think about physical aspects of singing when I see other singers in concert or on TV/computer.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. The physical aspects of singing have helped me discover more purpose in my singing.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. I apply what I've learned about the physical aspects of singing.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. I really concentrate and focus on the physical aspects of singing when in rehearsals.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9. I try using physical aspects of singing outside of the rehearsal setting.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10. I am interested in learning more about the physical aspects of singing.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11. During rehearsal, I think of singing in terms of the physical aspects.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

ITEM	Before Program in Sept. 2013					Now												
	Not true for me		True for me			Not true for me		True for me										
	0	1	2	3	4	0	1	2	3	4								
12.	I can hear a difference when I use techniques of the physical aspects of singing.					<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
13.	The role of imagination and metaphor helps me with the physical aspects of singing					<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
14.	If I see a really interesting singer (either in real life, on line, or TV) I think about the singer's physical aspects of singing.					<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
15.	I think about the physical aspects of singing outside of choir rehearsals.					<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
16.	I think the physical aspects of singing are challenging.					<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
17.	During choir rehearsal, learning about physical aspects of singing is interesting.					<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
18.	I find myself making connections about stuff in life experience with the physical aspects in singing.					<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
19.	When someone else around me is singing using the physical aspects, I sing better.					<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
20.	Others in the choir inspire me to sing using the physical aspects.					<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
21.	The physical aspects of singing engagement help me to better understand the world of singing.					<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
22.	The physical aspects of singing engagement make learning about singing much more interesting.					<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
23.	I can imagine myself being involved in a singing related career.					<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

ITEM	Before Program in Sept. 2013					Now				
	Not true for me		True for me			Not true for me		True for me		
	0	1	2	3	4	0	1	2	3	4
25. I enjoy singing better when I experience the physical aspects of singing.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
26. I think I'm good at the physical aspects of singing.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
27. I have looked for examples of physical singing engagement outside of class.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
28. I consider myself a singer.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
29. Being involved in singing is a key part of who I am.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
30. It is natural to apply the physical aspects of singing.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
31. Singing using physical aspects is easier for me in a group setting.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
32. I can see myself being involved in singing in the future.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Communicative Expression

SINGING ENGAGEMENT – COMMUNICATIVE ASPECTS LFAS Student Questionnaire

Name _____

In answering these questions, we would like you to compare yourself now with before your singing in choir this year began (Sept. 2013).

Knowing what you know now, how would you rate yourself before the singing projects, and how would you rate yourself now?

Please use a two-step process:

- (a) decide whether the statement is "not true for me" or "true for me"

- (b) circle the rating that most applies
 - (0) **not at all** true for me
 - (1) **not very** true for me
 - (2) **sort of** true for me
 - (3) **mostly** true for me
 - (4) **very** true for me

Thinking about the singing in choir this year, and knowing what you know now,
how would you rate yourself before the singing projects and how would you rate yourself now?

ITEM	Before Sept 2013					Now				
	Not true for me		True for me			Not true for me		True for me		
	0	1	2	3	4	0	1	2	3	4
1. When I sing in a concert, the communicative aspects come easily.	1	8	23	14	3	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	7	24	18
2. Other singers in the choir have helped me/inspired me with the way to communicate in singing.	2	9	21	15	2	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	7	22	20
3. I apply the knowledge I've learned about communicative aspects of singing to enhance my singing performance.	3	9	22	10	5	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	3	27	19
4. When learning new music, I think about the song's potential in terms of its communicative aspects.	8	21	11	7	2	<input type="checkbox"/>	7	19	12	11
5. I notice examples of communicative aspects of singing during choir performance.	3	11	17	15	3	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	3	29	16
6. The ideas of communicative aspects of singing go beyond singing and can apply to other activities I do.	7	17	9	9	7	<input type="checkbox"/>	3	11	23	4
7. I apply what I've learned about communicative aspects of singing.	4	11	21	12	1	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	8	26	15
8. I really concentrate and focus on the communicative aspects of singing when in choir rehearsals.	3	23	13	9	1	<input type="checkbox"/>	6	15	23	5
9. I try out ideas I've learned about singing communication in other areas of my life that require communication.	12	14	16	7		1	8	13	22	5
10. I am interested in learning more about the communicative aspects of singing.	3	10	17	7	12	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	4	21	24
11. During rehearsal, I think of singing in terms of the communicative aspects.	8	17	19	5		<input type="checkbox"/>	7	14	24	4

ITEM	Before Sept 2013					Now				
	Not true for me		True for me			Not true for me		True for me		
	0	1	2	3	4	0	1	2	3	4
12. I find I need to solve problems on my singing part before I can work communicative aspects.	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	9 <input type="checkbox"/>	16 <input type="checkbox"/>	18 <input type="checkbox"/>	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	10 <input type="checkbox"/>	17 <input type="checkbox"/>	19 <input type="checkbox"/>
13. I notice examples of communicative aspects of singing during choir rehearsal.	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	13 <input type="checkbox"/>	21 <input type="checkbox"/>	12 <input type="checkbox"/>	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	14 <input type="checkbox"/>	22 <input type="checkbox"/>	10 <input type="checkbox"/>	
14. If I see a really interesting singer (either in real life, online, or TV) I think about the singer's communication.	6 <input type="checkbox"/>	11 <input type="checkbox"/>	13 <input type="checkbox"/>	10 <input type="checkbox"/>	9 <input type="checkbox"/>	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	11 <input type="checkbox"/>	20 <input type="checkbox"/>	17 <input type="checkbox"/>	
15. I notice examples of communicative aspects of singing from others in choir class.	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	13 <input type="checkbox"/>	22 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>	6 <input type="checkbox"/>	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	9 <input type="checkbox"/>	24 <input type="checkbox"/>	14 <input type="checkbox"/>
16. I have looked for examples of communication in singing from other people who sing.	7 <input type="checkbox"/>	12 <input type="checkbox"/>	16 <input type="checkbox"/>	11 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	6 <input type="checkbox"/>	27 <input type="checkbox"/>	12 <input type="checkbox"/>	
17. During choir rehearsal, I think the stuff we are learning about communicative aspects of singing is interesting.	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	12 <input type="checkbox"/>	14 <input type="checkbox"/>	13 <input type="checkbox"/>	9 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	7 <input type="checkbox"/>	25 <input type="checkbox"/>	15 <input type="checkbox"/>	
18. I find myself making connections about life experience with the communicative aspects in singing.	6 <input type="checkbox"/>	13 <input type="checkbox"/>	19 <input type="checkbox"/>	9 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>		12 <input type="checkbox"/>	22 <input type="checkbox"/>	15 <input type="checkbox"/>	
19. I find it interesting in choir rehearsal when we work on the communicative aspects of singing.	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	10 <input type="checkbox"/>	14 <input type="checkbox"/>	15 <input type="checkbox"/>	6 <input type="checkbox"/>	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	7 <input type="checkbox"/>	31 <input type="checkbox"/>	10 <input type="checkbox"/>	
20. The communicative aspects of singing we are learning are useful for my future.	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>	22 <input type="checkbox"/>	15 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	9 <input type="checkbox"/>	19 <input type="checkbox"/>	18 <input type="checkbox"/>	
21. The communicative aspects of singing help me to better understand the world of singing.	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>	17 <input type="checkbox"/>	18 <input type="checkbox"/>	8 <input type="checkbox"/>		2 <input type="checkbox"/>	26 <input type="checkbox"/>	21 <input type="checkbox"/>	
22. The communicative aspects of singing make learning about singing more interesting.	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	8 <input type="checkbox"/>	18 <input type="checkbox"/>	14 <input type="checkbox"/>	8 <input type="checkbox"/>		1 <input type="checkbox"/>	24 <input type="checkbox"/>	24 <input type="checkbox"/>	
23. Knowledge of the communicative aspects of singing engagement is useful in my life.	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	11 <input type="checkbox"/>	15 <input type="checkbox"/>	17 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	8 <input type="checkbox"/>	20 <input type="checkbox"/>	18 <input type="checkbox"/>	
24. Learning the context (back story) of the music helps me connect with the music.	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	6 <input type="checkbox"/>	14 <input type="checkbox"/>	19 <input type="checkbox"/>		1 <input type="checkbox"/>	13 <input type="checkbox"/>	35 <input type="checkbox"/>	
25. I enjoy singing better when I can express a feeling when I sing.		2 <input type="checkbox"/>	6 <input type="checkbox"/>	14 <input type="checkbox"/>	27 <input type="checkbox"/>		1 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	45 <input type="checkbox"/>	

ITEM	Before Sept 2013					Now				
	Not true for me		True for me			Not true for me		True for me		
	0	1	2	3	4	0	1	2	3	4
26. I think I'm good at communicating something when I sing.	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	11 <input type="checkbox"/>	23 <input type="checkbox"/>	9 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	14 <input type="checkbox"/>	20 <input type="checkbox"/>	12 <input type="checkbox"/>
27. I think the communicative aspects of singing are challenging.	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	7 <input type="checkbox"/>	16 <input type="checkbox"/>	15 <input type="checkbox"/>	10 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	9 <input type="checkbox"/>	11 <input type="checkbox"/>	17 <input type="checkbox"/>	10 <input type="checkbox"/>
28. I find a purpose in what I'm singing about.	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	9 <input type="checkbox"/>	19 <input type="checkbox"/>	14 <input type="checkbox"/>	6 <input type="checkbox"/>			5 <input type="checkbox"/>	21 <input type="checkbox"/>	23 <input type="checkbox"/>
29. I try to find ways to personally connect with the text/ lyrics of pieces in order to communicate it to an audience.	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>	18 <input type="checkbox"/>	11 <input type="checkbox"/>	13 <input type="checkbox"/>			3 <input type="checkbox"/>	22 <input type="checkbox"/>	24 <input type="checkbox"/>
30. I find it hard to apply the communicative aspects of singing even when I've solved the problems in my singing part.	5 <input type="checkbox"/>	15 <input type="checkbox"/>	18 <input type="checkbox"/>	9 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	10 <input type="checkbox"/>	16 <input type="checkbox"/>	15 <input type="checkbox"/>	6 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>
31. I find it interesting to think of singing as communication.	6 <input type="checkbox"/>	12 <input type="checkbox"/>	21 <input type="checkbox"/>	9 <input type="checkbox"/>	1 <input type="checkbox"/>		1 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	17 <input type="checkbox"/>	27 <input type="checkbox"/>
32. I feel connected with others in the choir when we work on communicative aspects of singing.	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	19 <input type="checkbox"/>	19 <input type="checkbox"/>	8 <input type="checkbox"/>			6 <input type="checkbox"/>	16 <input type="checkbox"/>	27 <input type="checkbox"/>