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Compositional Process as Discourse and Interaction

A Study of Small Group Music Composition Processes in a School Context

HØGSKOLEN STORD/HAUGESUND
STORD/HAUGESUND UNIVERSITY COLLEGE

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PREFACE

Some weeks ago I watched my three-year-old grandson who for some reason or another kept throwing different things like balls, branches, even my carpenter's tools into my garden bushes. When asked why he was acting the way he did, he seemed very puzzled and thoughtful, but not remorseful. He did not answer my question, but stopped doing it. The next day he resumed this activity seemingly with great enjoyment. This observation kept revisiting me for some time and has kept me wondering. Why on earth would this little lad enjoy throwing things into bushes, not only once, but repeatedly, just to see them disappear? John Dewey might have explained what happened by his belief, written in 1897 as part of his famous "My Pedagogic Creed", that "…the active side precedes the passive in the development of the child nature; that expression comes before conscious impression; that the muscular development precedes the sensory". But could such an explanation account for my grandson's obvious *fascination* for what he was doing? I can only find one plausible explanation: an explanation, which is just as relevant for a three-year-old's throwing things into bushes as for the practice of, as well as for the research on, music composition in schools and society.

Throwing things into bushes as well as composing music and researching such an activity challenge the unknown. Its common denominator is the fascination of intended action towards something uncertain, something in which you don't quite know what will result, something you want to find out, something you want to express through some kind of action. I think my belief in a form of public education that allows young people to act creatively and challenge the unknown, and my fear that this might not be the case in public education in the future for my grandson and other young people growing up in this world, are the main reasons why I am presenting the present study to an international audience. The study has been with me for a long time, almost to the extent of establishing itself as a "hobby" alongside my professional life as a music teacher educator, and it has brought me "fascination" in a number of ways.

I have learnt a lot from this "hobby" and I am indebted to a number of great people and institutions: first and foremost to Class 4- 7 and Mrs. L., the teacher of Alexander, Linda, Cathy, Helge, Siri, Roy, Turid, Irene, Lisa, Sigrun, Martin, Iselin, Harriet, Inga, Carol, Ingvald, Eric, Mary, and Todd and their primary school. They allowed me very generously to be curious about something unknown and included me in their experience and knowledge about doing music composition. I am also grateful to my colleagues in music education and my institution, Stord/Haugesund University College for their support and encouragement over quite a few years, and to Åsmund for assisting with music transcriptions.

I have benefited greatly from my participation in "The Nordic Network for Research in Music Education" and in a number of international conferences, notably those of International Society of Music Education (ISME). A special thanks goes to my advisor in this research process, Professor Frede V. Nielsen at the Danish University of Education, Department of Curriculum Research. His insights and advice have been invaluable and has inspired me in a number of ways. I am also very grateful to Professor Liora Bresler, University of Illinois, USA,

who introduced me to ethnographic research in education and to a very lively international research community, and to Regina Murphy, St. Patrick's College, Dublin, for her advice and meticulous reading and corrections of my English.

Last but not least I want to thank my family for allowing me to "sneak off" into my home office—often at times normally considered to be family time—to allow me to challenge the unknown.

Stord, Norway, July 2005
Magne Espeland

SECTION I:

POINTS OF DEPARTURE

Chapter 1

PRELUDE

Introduction

> Through the ages, music, song and dance have absorbed, expressed and communicated the moods, thoughts and feelings associated with mankind, in play, celebration and everyday life. In school, music provides a framework within which all children and young people are given the opportunity to share in the musical knowledge of others. Pupils should be taught to be able to express their experiences of life, musically; according to their individual talents. One important aspect of the subject is the creativity; another is the receptive element. Both are manifested when pupils sing, play and dance, and compose and listen. (Royal Ministry of Education, Research and Church Affairs, 1999, p. 250)

> For music isn't just something nice to listen to. On the contrary, it's deeply embedded in human culture (just as there isn't a culture that doesn't have language, so there isn't one that doesn't have music). Music somehow seems to be natural, to exist as something apart – and yet it is suffused with human values, with our sense of what is good or bad, right or wrong. Music doesn't just happen, it is what we make it, and what we make *of* it. People *think* through music, decide who they are through it, *express* themselves through it. (Cook, 1998, Foreword)

I have chosen to illustrate one important point of departure for this thesis with the two quotations above taken from published documents towards the end of the past century (1998 and 1999). The reason is simply that I find no better way to express a central belief underpinning my own professional work as a music educator and researcher in the last quarter of that century. Both of the quotations underline the natural and interactive presence of music in every aspect of human life. Both of them underline how music means something deeply important for every human being; for their experience of life, for knowledge, feeling, expression and thinking, and for creativity. I find it quite reassuring, actually, that the first quotation is taken from an official music curriculum text from the Norwegian Royal Ministry of Education, and that the other one is a book text written by a recognised musicologist and theorist as a general introduction to the phenomenon of music in modern society.[1]

The two corresponding views on music disclosed here, signal that there exists a strong commonality between so widely different parts of society as schools and concert halls, primary classrooms and university auditoriums, educational theory and cultural theory, teachers and artists, popular culture and elitist culture, media and live expression, and children and adults. And this common and global "thing" is *music* in its broadest sense.
Even so, we all know that music in all its varieties, also is something special, something local, something that needs to be understood and described within the framework of its own context. To me music, and everything

[1] Nicholas Cook is a British musicologist and theorist. He holds separate degrees in music and in history/art history, and his work reflects an interdisciplinary orientation as well as a commitment to broadening the musicological agenda.

connected to music, is local as well as global. This means that any study of music or ways and contexts in which music is being used should take into account its commonalities as well as its particularities.

Music composition in society and in education

Wherever there is music there must be composers, wherever there are composers there must be music and wherever there are human beings there must be music and composers. This axiom, appearing to be self-evident, is not necessarily as self-evident as it seems. The connotations and uses of the concepts “composer” and “composing” have developed and changed considerably over the years in our western society and in music education.

With regard to describing what “composing” is, there is, for example, a great difference between the way Mozart and Beethoven ostensibly describe their compositional processes and Beatles members’ descriptions of the way they made their music. Whereas Mozart and Beethoven in their famous letters published long after their deaths, focus on how the music “comes” already finished into their individual mind (Cook, 1999, pp. 63), Beatles members focus on how songs come into existence and evolve through practical music making and group efforts (The Beatles, 2000). [2]

In music education there are a number of “definitions” of ‘composition’ ranging from relatively simple ones to more comprehensive and complex ones. The composer John Paynter once described “composing” as “simply an age-old natural process of thinking and making”, (Paynter 2002, p.224) whereas educational researcher Pamela Burnard summarises her definition of the nature of composition in a considerably more complex way:

> Composing involves an act of forming or constructing something, which reflects changes through time. By nature, composition involves thinking about ideas and fixing retrievable elements. Composing is concerned about conscious control, clarifying intentions, refining, evaluating and revising ideas. Composing can evolve in an organic way or be envisaged as a whole. The final form can be retrieved through notation or recalled in memory, but writing music down takes the place of memory. Composing can involve an interplay of oral and notated traditions, or be exactly specified products or encompass purely oral forms which do not lead to a single version of a piece for replication. What defines the experiences is the composer’s intention. (Burnard, 1999, p. 36)

Burnard arrives at her definition on the basis of a comprehensive review of what ‘composition’ is. She seems to build her “universal” definition on positions in musicology, ethnomusicology as well as in philosophy, and underlines aspects such as temporality and intention (Searfine, 1988; Merleau- Ponty, 1962), composition as a processual object (Campell and Teicher, 1997), and the necessity of an identifiable kind of piece (Goehr, 1992). Her definition also seems to be coloured by her review of what ‘improvisation’ is. Even though she admits that ‘improvisation’ can be part of what she calls the compositional process, she ends up with an operational

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[2] In their own written account of their activity up to 1970 (The Beatles, 2000), former members of The Beatles account in detail for the process of generation of some of their songs and CDs. Ringo Starr, e.g. says: “ ….all of us helped. The great thing about Beatles was that in the end we always used the best idea, irrespective of who had produced it. No one worshipped their own ego and said; “this is my song”, or claimed a special kind of ownership to things. The best was always used. That is why the quality of the songs was so good. Everything was possible and it was an exciting process”. (p. 241, my translation from the Norwegian edition)

definition of ‘improvisation’ underlining its experiential aspects in such a way that it is clearly distinguishable from her concept of ‘composition’ (Burnard, 1999, p.22).

My position and point of departure with regard to the question about what composition and composing means is slightly different from that of Burnard’s. I agree of course, that it is important also for an educational researcher to build our understanding of the concepts “composing” and “composition” from the etymological meaning of “putting together, arrange” (Harper, 2001) and “ the activity of creating a musical work” (Randel, 1986 in Burnard 1999, p. 30) by describing positions, usage and conventions; in short, compositional “lived experience” (see the section on “phenomenology” in Chapter 2). But I don’t find it appropriate for my research departure to arrive at a common understanding of “music composition” across all music genres, fields and historic times, from Guido of Arezzo’s use of the term *componere* (Randel 1986, p. 183) to the ones held by contemporary composers and songwriters and in education.

This position of mine is also based on the impression that modern historic research continually seems to bring us new insights into the music as well as the compositional processes of our most famous composers.[3] It appears, for example, that the ‘authentic’ letters about the nature of composition ascribed to Mozart and Beethoven might be falsifications dictated by *Romanticism* rather then authentic reports about compositional processes. Nicholas Cook maintains that:

> The letter attributed to Mozart was almost certainly an invention of Friedrich Rochlitz, the journalist and critic who edited the magazine in which it first appeared. And Schlösser's account of his conversation with Beethoven was almost certainly copied consciously or unconsciously from Rachlitz's letter; the two are just too similar for any other interpretation to be plausible. Contemporaries believed these accounts were authentic not because they corresponded to what Mozart or Beethoven said (remember each account appeared long after the composer's death), but because they represented what, in nineteenth-century eyes, the composers *ought* to have said. In short they tell us a great deal about the thinking of the Romantic period, but little about Mozart, Beethoven, or the compositional process. (Cook 1999, p.66)[4]

My position with regard to composition as an object for educational research is first and foremost a *pragmatic* one.[5] To me musical composition as a part of music education is what curricula and textbooks for music education *describe* as music composition and what teachers and pupils *do* under the umbrella called music composition in education. As such it will be an operational definition. Even so, I will be the first to underline the fact that this important discipline of modern music education, to an amazing degree, seems to be formed and

[3] In an article on “The Historiography of Music” Leo Treitler refers to “…intense research activity aimed at narrativizing the changes in European art music around 1800, characterizing the changes in highly detailed ways and assessing causes in ways far less simplistic and redundant than had been done earlier this century. “ (Treitler, 1999, p. 363 ff)
[4] Bruce Ellis Benson, referring to Solomon (1988) remarks that it is a little disappointing “that these accounts turn out to be spurious”, and that Rochlitz (who happened to be greatly influenced by Kant) “was instead describing the romantic *ideal* of the creative process” (Benson, 2003, pp 36/37).
[5] This does not mean that I find attempts at arriving at “universal” definitions of what ‘music composition’ means uninteresting or irrelevant for music education. However, a priori and “universal” understandings of what an activity or concept means in terms of actions, activities or intentions might run the risk of losing sight of some of the particulars of music composition in educational settings.

shaped by members of a profession outside of education, namely active and recognised composers in classical art music.

At the beginning of the 21st century composing as a discipline of music education for all seems to be established in music curricula and subject descriptions in countries all over the world (see e.g. Odam 2000)[6]. There is no doubt that composers of art music have been crucial in bringing this about. Zoltan Kodály's use of compositional tasks (Burnard, 1999, p. 38) and Carl Orff's impressive input with his creative philosophy of the "Schulwerk" (Orff and Keetman, 1953) can be regarded as preparing the ground for what is now often described as "the Composition Movement" in music education[7]. According to Australian Margaret Barrett, it was not until the 1960's that "a focus on compositional experience in general music education became more prominent" (Barrett, 1998, p. 11). Barrett mentions a number of recognised art music composers who did important pioneering work in this respect and who became very influential not only in their own countries, but on several continents, e.g. Peter Maxwell Davies (1963), George Self (1967), John Paynter (1970, 1972, 1982, 1992) in the UK, and Murray Schaeffer (1965, 1967, 1969, 1975, and 1986) in Canada.

Even though none of the above mentioned composers have developed grand theories about music learning in music education, their prominent role in different kinds of educational projects and their rationale for, and descriptions of, compositional *activity* have influenced music composing in schools and curricula all over the world. In her review of 'the composition movement' and the role of composition in music education, Barrett maintains that this field has been conceived of in a range of ways. She mentions 1) composition as creative expression; 2) composition as a means to introducing children to contemporary art music composers; 3) composition as a teaching and learning strategy employed to promote musical thinking and understanding, and finally, quoting Paynter (1989); 4) composition as a craft that is the province of a few very special minds (Barrett, 1998, p. 13).

Today, compositional experience from other musical genres finds its way into music education. It is hardly surprising that the way popular and rock musicians talk abut their creative experience is somewhat different from that of their colleagues in art music. In her description of "How popular musicians learn" Lucy Green focuses more on
enculturation, listening and copying, friendship, taste and peer-directed learning than creative individual expression or general musical thinking and understanding (Green, 2002, pp.186). In their studies of the life of a rock-band, Berkaak and Ruud point to the importance of technology and the "play" aspect. They maintain that:

> A major characteristic of the creative process in rock bands seems to be that inspiration for the making of new songs can come from a variety of sources; moods, life experiences or other music band

[6] Scottish Jonathan Stephens, art music composer and educator, seems to have noticed a difference in this respect between British and Scandinavian music education and the corresponding one in North America. He maintains that: "There are substantial political and educational hurdles to be surmounted if composition is to attain a level of respectability in American music education. The fact that it has achieved such status in other parts of the world (such as the United Kingdom and Scandinavia) and in other educational programs (such as the International American Schools' music program and the International Baccalaureate) means that we are not chasing an impossible dream in seeking a central place for composition in all schools" (Stephens, 2003, p. 114).

[7] Burnard prefers the expression "The Creative Music Movement" to denote the same phenomenon. (Burnard , 2000, p. 37)

> members listen to. But also the technology itself can provide inputs to the creative process. The "play" aspect of the technological possibilities and potential give rise to sounds, riffs, and compositional solutions. (Berkaak & Ruud, 1994, p. 131, my translation)

Green, however, maintains that "group work in the school has a number of characteristics that set it apart from informal learning practices" and that: "In a formal music education setting, it would be impossible to entirely replicate informal peer-directed and group learning practices, nor would it necessarily be in the best interests of the learners to do so" (Green, 2002, p. 204). Even if so, music educators and proponents of music composition in schools, now seem to rely to a greater degree than during the pioneering days of the 1960s and 70s on a broader knowledge and acceptance of several and different musical genres as a basis even for creative music making. In his recent review and analysis of the teaching of music composition, Stephens maintains that:

> The more accessible, less challenging tonal language in much contemporary "classical" music contrasts with the inventive, groundbreaking work of those composers who, in the third quarter of the twentieth century, became the models for much creative work in the classroom. Paradoxically, as Richard Wolfson (2001) observes, rock music is now the avant-garde genre from which classical music might learn: "Perhaps it's time for the classical tradition to take note, and return the compliment paid to it 30 years ago, when pop musicians showed themselves willing to learn form another culture", (p. 7). While experimentation is not a prerequisite of an imaginative approach, creative thinking and practice flourish where there is interaction, exchange, and even conflict between ideas and traditions. (Stephens, 2003, p. 117)

A major part of the projects and rationales developed within the "composition movement" in formal music education (Barrett, 1998), centres on creative music making in *groups* (e.g. Schaeffer, 1965; Paynter & Aston, 1970). Even if there are no world wide reports describing how composition in schools are organised in classrooms, it is not surprising that in the few reports we do know, we find the group aspect prevalent. With other genres than art music, such as rock and jazz, as inspirations for creative music making in schools, it seems quite natural that the group approach described by several of the pioneers of the composition movement, is being strengthened. Green reports from the British scene that:

> Group composition for all pupils, not only those taking specialist instrumental lessons, has become a regular occurrence in British music classrooms and in many other parts of the world during the last twenty years or so. Typically, students from the age of 5 right up to 16 and often beyond will be given a group composition task, sometimes of a thematic or programmatic nature such as "The Storm", to use a hackneyed example; sometimes of a structural nature such as 'fast-slow-fast' or 'fugue'; or the task will combine these two paradigms. Pupils then work at their composition in pairs, or more typically in groups of three to six, usually returning for one or more plenary sessions at various stages when groups perform their work (thus integrating composition with performance), whilst their peers listen attentively to it (this integrating listening). Sometimes recordings are made of the pieces and further follow-up work is undertaken. (Green, 2002, p. 203)

Green's report from British classrooms corresponds very much to what can be observed in recent educational texts on music composition in Britain and the US as well as in Scandinavia (e.g. Harris & Hawksley, 1989; Wiggins, 1990; Bakke, 1976; Andersen, Espeland, Husebø, 1997). In a recent national survey and evaluation of composing in British schools, George Odam (2000) observes, as does Green (2002), that the majority of the work in Britain today is small-group work and this, according to Odam is:

> …highly effective when it is tightly controlled and used as one of the variety of ways to deliver the music education curriculum. It can be the best way to spark off really exciting ideas about music. (Odam, 2000, p. 125)

It seems that even if music composition during the past 50 years or so has taken a giant step into international music education for all, there are still issues to be discussed and researched and practices to be developed in practical school music. To me "life in the classrooms", and in particular life in the music classrooms, still holds the position of being that part of music education for all, which is real and actual, and I would like to add, full of mysteries waiting to be researched.[8]

The genre of "School Music"

People in my local neighbourhood sometimes ask what I do in my everyday work. As a university college lecturer in music education, I never find answering these questions easy, wondering whether I should emphasise the "music" part or the "education" part. I am afraid that I probably may sound confused when I try to explain that: "Yes, I teach music as well as teaching students to become educators". Reflecting on this part of my "everyday" dialogue with the "outside" world, it strikes me how important knowledge, recognition and the metaphors and language we use about the specifics and contexts of an artistic, educational or research field, seem to be for an adequate understanding and interpretation of questions and phenomena connected to such a specific field. An important point of departure for this thesis is, therefore, to explain in what kind of landscape the present study takes place, and also to underline that the choice of research area, design and research issues—yes even the theory I create and develop—in many ways are inseparable parts of this landscape.

I believe my background and initial training as a music teacher and viewpoints on music in schools lie at the heart of a number of the choices I make as an educator as well as a researcher. Such choices have to do with the arenas I prefer, the research questions I pose, the concepts and language I use, the literature I read and the theory I develop. Referring to music teachers, Thorolf Krüger reminds us about this aspect of our professional lives by underlining that what is taken to be "more or less self-evident (e.g. the concepts of student, teacher, discipline, or knowledge) is actually the product of complicated discursive practices" (Krüger, 2000, p. 33) The music teacher as a social and cultural agent, he says, carries a history "in body and mind that disposes her/him to think and act in certain ways within such practices" (ibid, p.31) This aspect of music education has implications for how we deal with knowledge. He writes:

[8] In 1999 I had the pleasure of listening to Philip Jackson at the American Educational Research Association Annual Meeting in the US. He talked about his classic study from 1968, "Life in Classrooms" (Jackson 1968). What impressed me the most was his ability, after 30 years, to convey his fascination with the educational "mysteries" he was allowed to observe over time in an actual classroom.

> This aspect, so self-evident that it is usually not reflected upon, also has implications for how we deal with issues of knowledge, such as how the agenda for discussion is set, and how the discussions of knowledge in music education are organised…One also often forgets that the languages of didactics and music aesthetics enable one to categorise and classify events in ways that involve pre-dispositions towards those solutions we see as appropriate (Krüger, 2000, p.181)

In a debate in AERA's Educational Researcher about cognitive and situated learning Cobb and Bowers (1999, p. 13) make a similar point referring to Nuthall who maintained that:

> …differences between theories of classroom learning….reflect differences in the paradigm that researchers have in mind as they think about how their research relates to classroom practice and theory. The evolution of research and theory is itself a socio-cultural activity shaped by the working relationships that researchers establish with those lives and experiences they study and whose lives and experiences they hope to influence. (Nuthall, 1996, p. 6)

At the very outset of the present study, therefore, I wish to underline some of the boundary conditions and aspects readers should be aware of. This study is not *primarily* a study of *music composition*, nor a study of *group processes*, nor is it a study of *children*. It is a study of *the compositional processes of pupils* composing in small groups in a primary school within the genre of ”school music” in formal music education.

My use of ”school music” as a genre concept is based on Liora Bresler's introduction of this concept as a framework for describing and analysing music in schools. (Bresler 1998)[9]. She underlines that any kind of music is inseparable from the conditions under which it is generated and experienced. According to Bresler, understanding "school music" as a specific genre suggests a research position, which is slightly different from an understanding of music as a "school subject"[10]. Seeing "school music" as a genre, implies a stronger emphasis on an understanding of its contexts—on macro, meso and micro levels—and how the mutual shaping of these contexts create the genre of "school music"[11]:

> Each of these three identified contexts is comprised of other, general and local contexts. The meso context, for example, draws on the tradition of music as a school subject; on the other arts subjects in the school and their relationship to music; on the particular school's organisation and mission; on the specific community in which the school is located, and the nature and extent of community/school interactions. Within the micro and macro levels, too, multiple contexts interact with each other to

[9] "Genre" normally denotes "kind, sort, style" or even "independent style". It is this meaning that is implied here. (Harper 2001a)

[10] Nordic writers within music education, e.g. Frede V. Nielsen (1998) and Johansen (2003) have written extensively about music as a "school subject". Nielsen's contribution focuses on different positions within music as a school subject and on describing a three-part basis for this subject, - the artistic, the scientific and the "everyday" musical expression (Nielsen 1998, p.110).

[11] Bresler, referring to Grossman and Stodolsky, (1995) defines "context" as "the whole situation, background or environment relevant to some happening".

> impact school music in myriad ways. Thus, it is the mutual shaping of contexts that creates the genre of school music. (Bresler 1998, p. 2)

Bresler's use of the concept 'genre' is somewhat different from the traditional use of this concept as a special kind of music related *to its function* in a social context (see e.g. Olsson, 1993, cited in Folkestad, 1996, p. 63). Bresler's genre concept is broader and underlines 'the mutual shaping of contexts'. She maintains that the genre of 'school music', even though it draws on other genres, is not in the same way as other genres of music, commercial or elitist; further, that its contexts, format, clientele and value systems are rarely discussed and that it is characterised by unique goals and structures. (Bresler, 1998, p. 2)

I would like to add to this view that the context, format, clientele and value systems of a genre called "school music", has a special relationship to other genres within the vast field we know as "music" as well as to the field of education. As such it can also be described as *subculture* within a broader culture of "school" education. As a researcher within the genre of "school music", I therefore need to be conscious of my position, background and predispositions as an educator, as well as in areas of knowledge traditionally dealing with other genres of music, e.g. musicology and ethnomusicology.[12]

Into composing in schools

Some years ago I found myself playing again and again a video of a group of four 10-year old pupils who were busy composing and performing in a music classroom. The pupils were part of a research project with the aim of developing adequate music resources and materials for small group composing in Norwegian primary music classrooms.[13] The pupils participated in this project together with approximately eighty other pupils and six teachers, and the aim of the particular activities that was videotaped, was to develop and test musical board games for composing in small groups. For feedback the research group relied for the most part on classroom observation, but some of the groups were videotaped—on their own in separate group rooms—using the materials in compositional assignments, and a couple of the videos were transcribed and analysed.

When studying the video footage I was fascinated and amazed; not so much because of what I observed in terms of musical invention or the musical quality of what the pupils composed and performed, but because of the complexity of situations in terms of musical and social actions, negotiations and decisions and the unexpected turns and approaches to challenges in the group. After many years of doing formative research in music classrooms relying on my teacher education and experience, my dialogue with music teachers and general classroom observation, I suddenly realised that my knowledge and understanding of pupils' lived experience in music classrooms and their way of thinking and acting when composing music, was severely limited[14]. My new

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[12] In his keynote to the 13th Nordic Congress of Musicology, Even Ruud argued for a much closer connection between the different areas of music. From a position as a researcher in musicology as well as in music therapy and music education, he maintained that music education and musicology are forever linked through their sharing of some underlying assumptions about the very nature of music. (Ruud, 2000)

[13] "The Filibong Project", (see later in this chapter)

[14] The concept "formative research" is sometimes used alongside the concept "developmental research". A number of different traditions and concepts denote what may be called "genres" of research. (see e.g. Bresler, 1994). In Scandinavia a major distinction is often made between "forsking" and "utviklingsarbeid". ["research" and "developmental work"]. I have not detected a similar distinction in the Anglo-American scientific community. I prefer the term "formative research" as introduced by Liora Bresler and Decker Walker (Bresler, 1994) to denote research focusing on "the development and /or

insight was confirmed when I showed the videotape to the experienced music-classroom teacher. She was amazed too, and suggested that this video scrutiny—compared to her normal class observation— gave her a new and different knowledge about the pupils, their way of approaching a creative assignment and their way of solving social and musical challenges. Looking back I realise that this particular experience and insight was a very important point of departure for the present study.

Personal research background

In more general terms my experience in formative research also is an important part of my professional and personal background. Growing up in a family where teaching and musical activity was a natural part of life, it was probably no surprise to anyone that my own professional life started with studies in musicology and music education. As an educator it feels natural to be preoccupied with good practices and to look for improvements of practices. Looking back at my professional life as a formative researcher in music education from a position in a College of Education almost exclusively working with music teacher training, I still feel perhaps more like a teacher than a researcher. I have conducted most of my research with the general music classroom as the basic reference and cooperated closely with teachers over many years and this strengthens this feeling of actually being a teacher.

The majority of the research projects I have been involved with before the present study, had their focus on developments of musical practice and materials. My first project with teachers, "The Integration Project" was born as a result of an ongoing national debate in the beginning of the 1980s. Could music as a curriculum subject not serve its purpose best as " a method", integrated in the other activities in a sort of "topical" approach? (Espeland, 1982)

My second project, the "Degree Project", followed in the mid- 1980s and was designed to meet the criticism that most post graduate in-service training was hopelessly inefficient with very few consequences for classroom practice. As the "Integration Project" had given us, we felt, a good model for collaboration with teachers in the job, we designed this as a music education degree course heavily based on the participants' own classroom work. (Espeland, 1986)

My third project, The "Music In Use" project, followed in the late 1980s. This project was the result of a long process and represented an effort to re-examine through formative classroom research the case for music appreciation. One of the reasons for starting this project was the frustration we felt when watching a major discipline of music education in Norway—music listening— slowly dying during the late 1970s and early 1980s at the same time as the general music production in terms of different audio formats was growing in quality and quantity, and technologies such as the CD player were creating unprecedented access (Espeland , 1987, 1991, 1992).

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implementation of an educational product or program with the explicit purpose of the improvements of the products (or program) under study or of the developer's abilities to design and produce similar products or programs in the future." (Bresler, 1994, p. 11) A related term, "design-based research" has been introduced in recent writings (Sandoval and Bell, 2004). This term seems to me to correspond very much to the term "formative research" used by Bresler (1994).

In the “Filibong Project”, which followed in the mid-1990s, I co-operated with six teachers, all of them specially trained in music education. This project was a result of an apparent shift in general classroom practice in Norwegian primary schools, where the teachers in their planning seemed to focus more than before on self-instruction and a more flexible organisation where the child could plan and work for him/herself. The Filibong Project focused on musical composition as a part of music education, a discipline that had grown in importance internationally as well as in Norway since the 1960s. As mentioned above, the Filibong Project aimed at developing what we called “constructionist curricular materials” designed for music composition in small groups in the form of board games (Espeland, 1999)[15].

Initial wondering- from formative to phenomenological and ethnographic research

Revisiting parts of my own research practice, and particularly the one connected to the Filibong Project reveals, at least to me, that what I am trying to do here and now, is to document and demonstrate an important transitional experience in my process of adjusting my practice as a researcher towards an ethnographic and phenomenological way of looking at and interpreting educational practice.

To illustrate this point even further, I present below a selected text transcript with my comments from the video of the board game project[16]—a three minute transcribed glimpse of a longer process. This text also includes my initial reactions to, interpretations of and wonderings about the lived compositional experience unfolding on my video player. The four 10 year olds—one boy, Kjell, and three girls, Anne, Berit and Trine are working on a compositional assignment and have just decided to create a musical “canon” using song, small chant snippets of a rhyme and Orff instruments:

“The two of you sing together and then the two of us sing”, Berit announces and seems to refer to herself and Trine. “We don’t want to sing” Anne responds, “we can SAY it”. Berit takes the lead and tell the others where to begin so it can become a canon. They discuss whether to repeat it five times, but decide quickly on three times. “One, two, three..” Berit tries to start them off. Meanwhile Kjell is protesting: “I don’t know where to begin. “ The two girls, Berit and Trine, start anyhow and play their instruments alongside, keeping a steady pulse, but stop after a short while. Kjell and Anne do no come in and Kjell protests: “Yes, but I don’t know where to hit on this..” he points at the xylophone. They try again and fail again. Kjell repeats, seemingly in despair, “but I don’t know where to hit”. Trine realises the problem and shows the others by chanting the text alongside. It looks as if they understand and they try again, but another failure takes place. Anne and Kjell just don’t play. “You have to start earlier”, Berit says, a little condescendingly. “Yes, but Kjell did not play…he just does like this”, Anne responds and imitates Kjell’s inability to play. “Mmmm” say the other two girls. “It isn’t THAT easy”, Kjell protests. “But you just have to chant it”, Berit continues. “Well, CHANT IT”, Kjell resorts

[15] Well into the Filibong Project I was asked to chair the work on the new national curriculum for music and accepted (see The Royal Ministry of Education, Research and Church Affairs, 1999). This work increased my interest for musical composition as a part of a national curriculum for music education even further. Some of the most interesting discussions during the curriculum process, focused on the role of musical composition as a part of a national compulsory music education. For a comprehensive description and discussion of this curriculum process (see Espeland 1998 and 1999).

[16] The board game project, called “The Filibong Project” was initiated in 1994 and included six teachers and eighty pupils from the age of 7 to 13 in four primary schools. The project took place in Western Norway and continued for two years. The board game, “Filibong”, was professionally produced in 1999. In the game pupils are guided through a set of small individual musical tasks and options towards a choice of a small group composition assignment (Espeland, 1999)

in indignation, "it is a little difficult actually, it isn't that easy!", and the girls, Anne and Berit, laugh. Trine, who has been watching, says "Ok Kjell, you start then". But Kjell seems deeply insulted. He waves his mallet slowly hitting tones on the xylophone more or less by accident. "Yes, you start", Trine repeats. Kjell does not respond, he keeps waving his beater. "No point", he mumbles, "no point". For some seconds no-one says anything and everything is quiet. Everybody seems to realise that their process has run into a crisis.

Berit seems to realise that they need a new solution. "Then we have to do it like this" she says and points to the Assignment Card containing "composing with crescendos". "Crescendo?" Anne is surprised. "And everybody has to say it together" Berit continues. "we can say it three times. Let us try it once first. One, two three" And then they all start chanting. Kjell joins in too, even if he does not look very interested in the beginning. The first time their chant collapses, but then Trine takes the lead and involves the others in a great crescendo. Then there is a short disagreement about how to proceed, but Trine takes the lead again and exclaims: "No, you guys, listen, when we have chanted three times we take all the instruments (she demonstrates on her drum)- one, two, three, four, and then we start again, one!" (two beats on the drum this time), "two!" (two new beats), "three!" (doing likewise) and four". The group, (and now everyone seems eager, Kjell as well), starts a chant, whispering pianissimo in the beginning and developing into a strong crescendo, then an instrumental interlude, before repeating the chant.
(Text transcript, Filibong Project, pp. 3-5)

Looking back at my written comments (below) and interpretation of the situation transcribed above, I realise that my wondering in many ways anticipates my research questions as well as some of the findings of the *present* study. I seem to be amazed by a number of aspects concerning the characteristics and unfolding events of the group process, notably:

How fast decisions, about musical form as well as performance, seem to be taken and how social relationships are integrated into compositional and musical actions and activities.

> "It is amazing how fast things develops and decisions are taken. No wonder Kjell has problems finding out what is happening. Berit does not seem to be the leader, but she pushes for decisions in a tempo that frustrates Kjell. The two pupils having performance problems, Kjell and Anne, try to hang on. Anything else would be to admit that they are unable to perform. Kjell has obvious problems, and Anne can't do it as well. Anne does not hesitate to explain her failure by blaming Kjell, who soon realises that everyone is against him. He is being considered to be a straggler and is hurt."
> (Annotation, transcript "Filibong" video, p. 3)

How musical leadership emerges, evolves and is practised when pupils compose together.

> "Berit seems set upon leading. She seems to be aware of how to organise the musical performance horizontally, but is not aware of vertical aspects like a common tempo and pulse. When everyone has her/his own tempo a "canon" is bound to run aground. When they resume the musical activity after the "crisis", Trine takes over by virtue of convincingly showing musical control over tempo as well as dynamics. In a matter of seconds, everyone—even Kjell—shakes off frustrations and joins in fully. It is her ideas about form and musical leadership that brings the process forward". (My comments on transcript from "Filibong" video, p. 4)

How conflicts develop and coexist with meaningful and creative actions; how the whole thing develops in fits and starts towards performance and how all of this seems to be linked together in subtle ways.

> "The distance is very short, only a few seconds, between what seems to be a feeling of crisis that stops musical actions and development completely, and a new development and solution that brings the process on track again. What is strange is that Berit, who caused the crisis, also is the pupil in the group who suggest the new solution". (Annotation, transcript "Filibong" video, p. 5)

In the examples given above I do not seem to be concerned about the quality of the educational practice in terms of to what extent pupils learn something musical, how well the situation is organised, or how well the materials seem to be suited for a specific educational purpose. In stead, my focus is on what the pupils do and don't do in the compositional process, why they do it, how actions and reactions interact and relate, how everything seems to be linked together in subtle ways and how the group process develops towards "something". This is truly observation on a micro level of music education with a view to understanding the influence of other levels. On my part, this can be described as a transitional experience, from the "enlightened eye" of a formative researcher towards that of an inexperienced ethnographic and phenomenological researcher with a focus on *description*, *interpretation* and *understanding* of actions, events and phenomena on a micro level of music education. [17] This transitional experience is an important part of my way into the present study.

A focus on compositional process

Revisiting my transitional experience as described above, reveals that my focus when observing and reviewing the videotapes seemed to be on the *compositional process* of the pupils. What took place over time, what shaped the chain of actions, how were ideas born and what happened to them, whose ideas survived and what ideas disappeared, who decided what and why and why did it end up the way it did? This is in many ways also the focus of the present study.

The concept 'process' is used and understood in many ways[18]. The etymological meaning of the concept 'process' closest to my understanding and use of the term stems from Latin 'procedere' "go forward". In this sense it means "course or method of action" or a "continuous series of actions meant to accomplish some result" (Harper 2005b).

This meaning of the concept is widely used in research. Strauss and Corbin, for example, the proponents for the use of 'grounded theory' (see Chapter 2), define 'process' as "sequences of action/interaction pertaining to a phenomenon as they evolve over time" (Strauss and Corbin, 1998, p. 123).

The phenomenon to be researched in the present study then, is, broadly speaking, small group composition as it evolves thorough sequences of action/interaction over time.

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[17] In Elliott Eisner's book "The Enlightened Eye" (Eisner 1991), he argues convincingly for the use and importance of educational experience in connection with qualitative and ethnographic research in education. Such an experience seems to me to be of an equally great importance within the genre of formative research.

[18] I will not go into the many uses of this concept here. See Espeland, 2004 for a comment on the many uses of the term "process" in the field of creativity in music education.

Structure and organisation of the thesis

This thesis is organised in two sections. *Section I: Points of Departure* consists of the present chapter, the Prelude, and three more chapters. In this section I present the research background for the present thesis and the theoretical and methodological inspirations guiding it. The section also contains a chapter on the contextual framework for composing in music education and a chapter on research design and data analysis accounting for my use of ethnographic microanalysis (Erickson, 1992) and grounded theory (Strauss and Corbin, 1998).

Section II is the *Findings* section. In includes seven chapters ranging from an introductory findings chapter to a Postlude. The chapters provide findings and discussions concerning a wide range of aspects of compositional processes and products. Throughout the first six chapters of this section I present my findings with a strong emphasis on theorising and concept development, and with a view to relevant literature.

Chapter by chapter

In the Prelude, Chapter 1, I introduce my background as an educator and researcher paying special attention to my transitional experience of moving my research interest from formative research to ethnographical and phenomenological research in music education.
I explain the background and my interest for the focus on compositional processes in the present study and I introduce a central concept in the study; music as "school-art" (Bresler, 1998).

In Chapter 2 I discuss some methodological and theoretical "inspirations", which underpin the present study in terms of providing theoretical as well as methodological guidelines for my research and theorising. The theory I discuss comprises issues in phenomenology, socio-cultural theory, ethnography in education, naturalistic inquiry and grounded theory.

In Chapter 3 I try to contextualise my own study in what can be labelled as the immediate and professional macro context of music composition within the genre of 'school music' internationally and in Norway. I conclude by maintaining that by the turn of the century, a general opinion in Norwegian music education seems to be that composition as a major discipline within compulsory primary and secondary schooling is well established, but still in its infancy.

The last chapter of Section I, Chapter 4, provides the reader with a thorough discussion of central aspects of the research design and data analysis. An important part of the chapter deals with my use of ethnographic microanalysis (Erickson, 1992) and grounded theory (Strauss and Corbin, 1998). The chapter ends with a discussion of some contextual considerations and problems in the present study.

The first chapter of the Findings Section, Chapter 5, is an introduction to the other chapters in this section. In Chapter 6 I present and discuss some basic components of the compositional process and develop a model for understanding small group compositional processes as relational and circular activity. In Chapters 7 and 8, I examine more closely the different elements and phenomena which are taking place in the compositional processes of seven group processes (GPs). Chapters 7 and 8 connect more directly than Chapter 6 to my first

group of research questions and deal with characteristics of compositional processes in many ways. The next chapters, Chapters 9 and 10, build on and refer to the concepts and findings I have presented in earlier chapters, but focus more directly on the connections between the music being created and the contextual field of its creation. Chapter 11, which is the concluding chapter, serves as a Postlude with a summary and some reflections on the most important findings with a view towards some central issues and possible future research in this field. For a more detailed introduction to the Findings Section, see Chapter 5.

General remarks

A CD-Rom with video excerpts and sound files is available on request. The Appendices include musical transcriptions of seven group compositions, the complete wording of compositional assignments as prepared by the classroom teacher, my guidelines for conducting pupils' interviews, and some other documents.

Abbreviations will be used for some recurring concepts and expressions, such as special group processes. The seven group processes are generally referred to by the abbreviation "GP". GP1 is group process no 1, GP2 is group process no. 2 etc. When referring to the accompanying pupil compositions, CGP1 is sometimes uses to denote: 'Composition belonging to group process no. 1". Such abbreviations will also be used for core concepts and categories, i.e. Compositional Actions (CAs) and Personal Actions (PAs). Similar abbreviations are used for reference to interviews, e.g. "P-Interview-H", which means "Personal Interview- Helge and "G-Interview, GP1", which means "Group Interview- the pupils of Group Process 1".

All figures and tables are numbered according to which chapter they appear in. Figure 6.1 thus means the first figure of Chapter 6, Table 7.2 the second table of Chapter 7 and so on. Examples, a concept I use for text transcripts as well as for music transcripts, on the other hand, are numbered continuously throughout the thesis. Reference numbers used for "Examples" is a way of keeping track of the exact position of the example in question in terms of time passed in the compositional process. I have added "early", "middle" and "late" to simplify this information for readers. In some cases I have for the sake of simplification integrated small excerpts of 'texts' and 'music notation' in the text without numbering them.

All names of the participants of the study are anonymous, including the names in the *Preface* of pupils and the teacher. As for the video excerpts I have modified them visually in such a way that individual pupils hardly can be recognised. They are research documentation and not professional films.

Chapter 2

THEORETICAL AND METHODOLOGICAL INSPIRATIONS

Introduction

Accounting for theoretical and methodological positions that have inspired my research is primarily not a matter of arguing *against* someone or throwing suspicion on other positions than my own. To me it is a matter of finding one's own identity as a researcher and in the search of such an identity, theoretical and methodological positions often are aspects of the same coin. I prefer to regard these positions as looking into some sort of mirror where one can take a step back from the practical, analytical and 'speculative' aspects of empiricism in order to contemplate one's own research, and to consult and be inspired by the wisdom of others.[19] The Danish anthropologist Kirsten Hastrup underlines that every kind of scientific identity emerges through what she calls "meaningful dialogue". She says:

> Every scientific identity is constructed in the meeting of others; this is the case for the meeting of individual researchers, for professional traditions and schools, for the different fields of humaniora, and between natural and cultural science. No one will ever find The Truth, which renders dialogue superfluous. Disagreements will always deliver what is needed for a continued dialogue. (Hastrup, 1999, p7, my translation)

My research 'mirror' seems to tell me that even if I am influenced by a number of different scientific traditions or schools, these 'schools' also have a lot in common. Basing my ontological and epistemological beliefs about music and research in music education on positions within phenomenology, socio-cultural theory, ethnography in education, naturalistic inquiry and grounded theory, my research identity can hardly be characterised as very eclectic. This may be regarded as a sort of "theoretical triangulation", not in the sense of producing "evidence" for a particular position, but rather as an attempt at building a platform for a lookout point, which can be identified and appreciated by others [20]. It is my intention in this chapter to account for and discuss my research identity and relationship to positions within the 'schools' mentioned above with regard to the present study.

Phenomenology

Reading dissertations in music education I sometimes wonder why so many of them distinguish so clearly between what is called 'theory' and 'methodology'. To me the account of what constitutes the background for the empirical approach and the ontological and epistemological platform for a scientific study is closely linked. The field of phenomenology is, as I see it, a very good example of a 'theory' where it is difficult to distinguish

[19] The "inspirations" I will be accounting for in the next paragraphs have partly evolved during the research process and partly been with me for a longer time.
[20] The issue of "theoretical triangulation" is dealt with by many prominent writers in the field of educational research, e.g. Denzin 1978, and Lincoln and Guba 1958.

between ontological, epistemological and methodological aspects.[21] When Thomas A. Schwandt (2001) introduces and describes 'phenomenology' in his dictionary of qualitative inquiry, he not only describes a recommended attitude and approach for research activities starting from such a position, but he also refers to how phenomenology accounts for perception, for our general relationship to things and everything we experience as human beings, as well as for meaning making. He says:

> Hence, phenomenologists insist on careful description of ordinary conscious experience of everyday life (*the life-world*)—a description of 'things' (the essential structures of consciousness)—as one experience them. These things we experience include perception (hearing, seeing, etc.), believing, remembering, deciding, feeling, judging, evaluating, and all experiences of bodily action. Phenomenological descriptions of such things are possible only by turning from things to their meanings, from what is, to the nature of what is. This turning away can be accomplished only by a certain phenomenological reduction or epoché that entails 'bracketing' or suspending what Husserl calls the 'natural attitude', which is the everyday assumption of the independent existence of what is perceived and thought about. (Schwandt, 2001, pp 191/192)

Some central concepts within phenomenology as developed by Edmund Husserl (1900-01, 1913, 1915), Heidegger (1927, 1975), Merleau-Ponty (1945) and others [22], invite us to consider what research means in all its complexity. Phenomenology conceives of research as "the study of essences" experienced from a "first-person" point of view in the "life-world" consisting of lived time, lived space, lived body, and lived human relations in which we as researchers always are a part (Merleau-Ponty, 1962, p. vi, van Manen, 1990, p. 18). To me this suggests a research attitude that suits a researcher emphasising an awareness of and interest in close observation of a complex set of interrelated phenomena and "the things themselves" (Husserl, 2001). Van Manen maintains that the word "essence" should not be mystified. He understands it as a linguistic construction, " a description of a phenomenon". But it is not any kind of description. He continues:

> A good description that constitutes the essence of something is construed so that the structure of a lived experience is revealed to us in such a fashion that we are now able to grasp the nature and significance of this experience in a hitherto unseen way. When a phenomenologist asks for the essence of a phenomenon—a lived experience—then the phenomenological inquiry is not unlike an artistic endeavour, a creative attempt to somehow capture a certain phenomenon of life in a linguistic description that is both holistic and analytical, evocative and precise, unique and universal, powerful and sensitive. (van Manen, 1990, p. 39)

[21] On this issue I agree with Van Manen, who explains "methodology" as referring on the one hand "to the philosophic framework, the fundamental assumptions and characteristics of a human scientific perspective. It includes the general orientation to life, the view of knowledge, and the sense of what it means to be human which is associated with or implied by a certain research method. We might say that the methodology is the theory behind the method, including the study of what method one should follow and why." (van Manen, 1990, p. 27/28)

[22] I refer to the years of the early publications of some central and classic texts here (see Smith 2003). In the years 1900 through 1915 Edmund Husserl published some of most important books; translated as "Logical Investigations", (Husserl 2001), and the publications known as "Ideas" (Husserl 1963 and 1989). Martin Heidegger's most important contributions appeared in 1927 and 1975 (Heidegger 1962 and 1982) and Merleau-Ponty's "Phenomenology of Perception" in 1945 (Merleau- Ponty 2002).

To me, the phenomenological idea of experience as being "intentional", always focused on "something", explains the mystery of what consciousness really is and what kind of process we are into when trying to come up with meanings about what we experience, observe, describe and analyse. Merleau- Ponty explains consciousness as 'being- towards- the – thing' through the intermediary of the body. According to Husserl as well as Merleau-Ponty, consciousness is always directed towards 'something' and perception does not presuppose a separate mental representation, since the object, subject to observation and experience, must exist before representation. Merleau-Ponty writes:

> Consciousness is being -towards - the - thing through the intermediary of the body. A movement is learned when the body has understood it, that is, when it has incorporated it into its 'world', and to move one's body is to aim at things through it; it is to allow oneself to respond to their call, which is made upon it independently of any representation. (Merleau- Ponty, 2002, p. 160/161)

Accordingly, phenomenology rejects the Cartesian dualism of mind-body (Descartes, 1641)[23] and points to conscious experience and scientific analysis as acts of meaning making of situations[24]. Van Manen (1990) underlines the interpretative and meaning making aspect of phenomenology to such a degree that he prefers to denote his research platform as *hermeneutic* phenomenology. He contrasts a hermeneutic phenomenological approach to research with experimental or artificially created test situations and underlines that human science wishes "to meet human beings—men, women, children—*there* where they are naturally engaged in their worlds". Phenomenological research, he writes, " finds its point of departure in the *situation*, which for purpose of analysis, description, and interpretation functions as an exemplary nodal point of meanings that are embedded in this situation" (van Manen, 1990, p. 18). Phenomenology's insistence on the "embeddedness" of meaning in 'the things themselves' and the intentional perceptive act of the observer also discards another dualism well know in science; the view that reality consists of two disparate parts and that there is an objective reality that is separate from the experiencing subject.

Phenomenology has implications for my research identity and approach to research in music education as well as for my attitude and relationship to music. Research wise it means that when I observe and analyse compositional activity, my thinking and writing is subjective as well as objective in the sense that it is based on my experience of what I see and listen to as well as my experience of who I am and how I experience. Merleau- Ponty underlines that analysis discovers in each quality meanings, which reside in it. He writes:

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[23] Smith describes this dualism as follows: "René Descartes, in his epoch-making text "Meditations on First Philosophy" (1641), had argued that minds and bodies are two distinct kinds of being or substance with two distinct kinds of attributes or modes: bodies are characterized by spatiotemporal physical properties, while minds are characterized by properties of thinking (including seeing, feeling, etc.)" Smith points to Gilbert Ryle (1949) as the theorist who through his demonstration of what he called Descartes' 'category mistake', reawakened the modern debate about the mind-body problem. (Smith 2003 a)

[24] It is food for thought to realise that what we refer to as the Cartesian dualism of mind versus body is a Western phenomenon. In an article on bodies and minds seen from an African perspective, the Namibian music educator and ethnographer Minette Mans reminds us of the obvious fact that:
"In the first place, the Cartesian dualism of mind versus, and controlling, body has never been an African understanding. Here in Africa mind and body are traditionally conceived of as one and the same. One knows life through one's body. Life is embodied—felt and experienced ("erlebt") in all its sensory levels, and learning is situated in physical experience, not dissociated intellectual pursuits." (Mans, 2004, p. 80)

> Analysis, then, discovers in each quality meanings, which reside in it. It may be objected that this is true only of the qualities, which form part of our actual experience, which are overlaid with a body of knowledge, and that we are still justified in conceiving a "pure quality" which would set limits to a pure sensation. But as we have just seen, this pure sensation world amount to no sensation, and thus to no feeling at all. (Merleau- Ponty, 2002, p. 5)

As a human being and researcher, then, I am, as it were, living in the middle between myself and not myself, between the physical world and what is not physical, and in this "middle" meaning resides. As such it resembles my experience of a piece of art, e.g. music, where the essence is not the different sounds and notes I hear, but what I make of them in terms of musical meaning. To explain what constitutes 'meaning', Merleau- Ponty underlines that expression is indistinguishable from the thing expressed. In this respect he compares the 'body' to a work of art. He writes:

> A novel, poem, picture or musical work are individuals, that is, beings in which the expression is indistinguishable from the thing expressed, their meaning, accessible only through direct contact, being radiated with no change of their temporal and spatial situation. It is in this sense that our body is comparable to a work of art. It is a nexus of living meanings, not the law for a certain number of covariant terms. (Merleau-Ponty, 2002, p. 175)

As mentioned above, phenomenology has not only inspired me in my search for a research identity. It has also influenced my view of what music is and means to me. This is a fundamental question to address in any kind of research where music is involved and I will try to account for my view of music in the following.

Music as meaning

In the beginning of the Prelude of this thesis I quoted Nicholas Cook who maintains that "Music doesn't just happen, it is what we make it, and what we make *of* it". (Cook 1998, foreword) What Cook is saying here is simply that any kind of music making and understanding of music is always connected to some kind of meaning. We are "condemned to meaning" to use Merleau-Ponty's words. (2002, p. xii). I believe this to be true for pupils composing music in classroom as well as for me as a listener, observer and researcher. To explain what I mean, I will refer to and comment on Nielsen's phenomenological theory of "music as a *multi-spectral* (also: *multi-dimensional*) universe of meaning and of its *correspondence* to us, our consciousness and *Befindlichkeit* (cf. Heidegger)" (Nielsen 2004, p.43.[25]

Nielsen's main thesis is that between man and music, there exists, as he puts it, "a potential and fundamental 'correspondence' (connection, congruence, concord)" between something he calls "layers of meaning in the

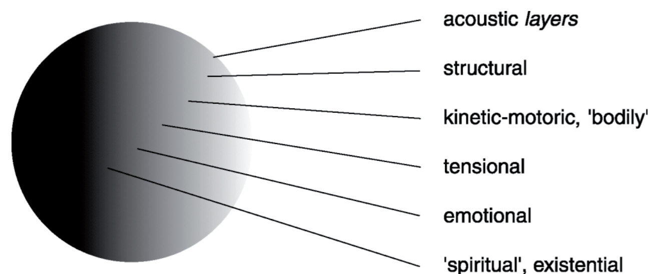
[25] Frede V. Nielsen is professor of music education at the Danish University of Education. As a basis for his article he refers to a number of theorists who have contributed significantly to phenomenology, among them Edmund Husserl, Roman Ingarden, Mikel Dufrenne, Merleau-Ponty and Ernst Cassier. In his article Nielsen claims that any involvement with music, whether artistic, scholarly or pedagogical, is more or less affected by some underlying view of music. He underlines the importance of "spelling out" one's overall view of music also for analysts of musical activities and the music appearing within the subject of music. He writes: "To my mind, in connection with a reasonably sensitive and penetrating analysis of the pedagogy of an educational subject (in this case the subject of music), an overall view of the very field of phenomena that constitutes the object area of the subject (in this case music and musical activity) will have to be spelled out or at any rate presupposed." (Nielsen, 2004, p. 44)

music" and "layers of experience and consciousness in human beings. Something in one corresponds to something in the other" (ibid, p. 51). Nielsen explains the essence of his theory as some kind of "meeting" between an experiencing subject and a musical object. He calls this meeting "a multi-spectral universe of meaning". This universe is "one integrated field of phenomena, so that the phenomena in question are viewed as both object-characteristic and act-characteristic" The layers of meaning in the music (the object) Nielsen refers to, correspond to a number of potentially different aspects in the person's experience:

> "…the person's sensing of acoustic data, to perceptual and cognitive processing structures, to the experience of tensional processes (fluctuations) and tensional relations, to bodily, movement-related, gestural existence, to the person's own emotional universe, to his or her spiritual and overall existential consciousness and sensation or feeling, something that may be called the person's *Befindlichkeit* (cf. Heidegger)". (ibid, p.8)

Nielsen underlines that "the outer structure(s) of music merely constitute(s) certain dimensions within a cohesive universe or spectrum of meaning." The outer structure, he says, "leads into, and is reciprocally anchored in, other more deeply situated layers of meaning of e.g. kinetic-motoric, tensional, emotional, spiritual and existential kinds.
He illustrates this the following way:

Figure 2.1 Sketch illustrating certain layers of meaning in the musical object



An important aspect of Nielsen's theory is that: "These layers, or dimensions of meaning, mesh together so that each individual aspect is intelligible only when the others are taken into account"(ibid, p. 5). Nielsen underlines that the meeting between the aesthetic object and the experiencing subject does not always reaches its optimal level. He lists a number of subject–dependent factors that will affect the meetings or even block such "meetings:

> Let me merely mention such subject-dependent factors as (a) the person's degree of familiarity with the musical code or style in question, (b) knowledge of the particular work or object, (c) selective attention, i.e. what feature of the music attention is consciously directed towards, (d) the level of concentration, (e) the person's attitude, interests, habits, (f) (musical) personal type or personality. Add to this (g) factors pertaining to the entire overall experiential situation: the physical and social

> environment of the musical act, and as a basis for that, of course, not least (h) the type of musical activity involved (composing, performing, listening, analysing, evaluating) (ibid, p.6).

Nielsen's theory corresponds very much to my own view of music. For a number of reasons it appears to constitute a platform not only for my personal experience of music, but also for my professional work in education and my research within the genre of 'school music' (Bresler, 1998). First, it connects music to *meaning* in a way that illustrates the inseparability of the two concepts: music and meaning. Second, it includes any kind of music and any kind of music making. In principle, there is no difference whether the music, the music making or analysis in question goes on in a professional composer's chamber, a concert hall, a dance floor or in a music classroom. Thirdly, the theory underlines the wholeness and contextual aspects of musical experience as well as being aware of the multidimensional layers and the potentiality of different approaches and ways into our meetings with the musical objects. And last, but not least, it advocates a phenomenological view of perception, experience and cognition.

Socio-cultural cognition theory

For the past 25 years or so an interesting development has taken place in the wake of what is called the *second* wave of the cognitive revolution[26]. Many researchers consider this to be a major shift in focus for educational research. DeCorte et al. describes this as a shift:

> ….from a concentration on the individual to a concern for social and cultural factors; from "cold" to "hot" cognition; from the laboratory to the classroom as the arena for research; and from technically to humanistically grounded methodologies and interpretative approaches*"* (DeCorte 1996, p. 491)

In this second wave the situated perspective and the importance of accounting for human socio-cultural actions seem to dominate the discussion about thinking, understanding, learning and the acquisition of knowledge within and across a number of research communities. A majority of the theorists dominating this second wave of the cognitive revolution are in some or other way indebted to Russian Lev Vygotsky.[27] Vygotsky believed that

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[26] The so-called "cognitive revolution" is referred to by a great number of writers, in particular Anglo-American theorists. In his retrospective article "The cognitive revolution: a historical perspective", American George A. Miller, a pioneer in the development of cognitive science in the US, describes how "the cognitive revolution" in psychology originated in the US in 1950s. He argues that it was a "counter revolution" (Miller 2003, p. 141). "The first revolution" according to Miller "occurred much earlier when a group of experimental psychologists, influenced by Pavlov and other physiologists, proposed to redefine psychology as the science of behaviour. They argued that mental events are not publicly observable. If scientific psychology were to succeed, mentalist concepts would have to integrate and explain the behavioural data. We were still reluctant to use such terms as 'mentalism' to describe what was needed, so we talked about cognition instead." Miller credits international scholars like Jean Piaget, Fredrick Bartlett, and A.B Luria as inspirations for the pioneers of the cognitive revolution and mentions Jerome Bruner, Noam Chomsky as important writers and the Harvard Centre for Cognitive Studies as an important institution for the early days of this movement. (ibid, p.141/142)

[27] A quick look at a well known internet encyclopaedia "Wikipedia- the free encyclopaedia" reveals the extent to which Vygotsky's work has influenced modern socio-cultural theory of cognition and beyond, and how the scientific community now values his contribution. In Wikipedia his contribution is recognised and summarised as follows: "However, early - albeit indirect – his influence on growing cognitive science community in the United States was already apparent in the late 1950s and early 1960s through the work of Vygotsky's student and later collaborator Alexander Luria, which was read by early pioneers of cognitive science J. S. Bruner and George Miller. By the 1980s, Vygotsky's work became well known in the United States in part due to the opening of the Soviet Union due to glasnost. Vygotsky's work became extremely influential because it offered a way of reconciling the competing notions of maturation by which a child is seen as an unfolding flower

human development and cognition was strongly dependent on social interaction and that social learning leads to cognitive development. He focused on the interaction between people and the cultural context in which they lived and in their shared experiences. An important element in Vygotsky's theory is that humans use tools that develop from a culture to mediate their social environments. He believed that activity connected to these tools could be internalised leading to higher thinking skills operations. Vygotsky viewed egocentric speech as a transition from social speech to internalised thoughts and he believed that thought and language could not exist without each other (see Vygotsky 1934/62 and 1978).

This second wave's concern with the situatedness of experience has stimulated the general discussion about issues such as the relations between the individual and the context, the universal and the particular, and the very characteristics of knowledge and learning[28] (see e.g. Van Manen 1990; Lave, 1991; Wenger, 1998, Engestrøm, Miettinen, Punamäki, 1999)

To me, a major influence representing this tradition is the writings of James K. Wertsch, in particular his 1998 book: "Mind as Action". Wertsch introduces this book by stating that the task for socio-cultural analysis is to "understand how mental functioning is related to cultural, institutional, and historical context." (Wertsch, 1998, p.3) In addition to crediting Vygotsky, Wertsch builds on the writings of Kenneth Burke (1969).[29] He is particularly known for his theory on the "dramatistic pentad", "which suggested that social interaction and communication should be understood in terms of a *pentad*, which includes act, scene, agent, agency, and purpose. Wertsch has adopted Burke's basic notion that *human action* should be the basic phenomenon to be analysed, and this, according to Wertsch, is the very link between Burke's ideas and those of figures like Vygotsky (1978), Bahktin (1981), Mead (1934) and himself (1991). Wertsch maintains that:

> Although there are important differences among these figures, at a general level they all took human action to be their fundamental unit of analysis. In all cases they were primarily concerned with describing, interpreting, or explaining action, as opposed to some other phenomenon such as behaviour, mental or linguistic structure, or attitudes (Wertsch, 1998, p 12).

According to Wertsch, action may be external as well as internal, and it may be carried out by groups, both small and large, or by individuals. (ibid, p. 23) The specific notion of action Wertsch proposes is *mediated action*. In the pentadic terms outlined by Burke, this involves focusing on agents, the mediators of action, and their cultural tools—the mediational means, such as language and things (artefacts).

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best left to develop on his or her own, and behaviourism, in which a child is seen as a blank slate onto which must be poured knowledge. His views are influential on activity theory, distributed cognition, and Cognitive Apprenticeships" (Wikipedia, 2005)

[28]Etienne Wenger (1998) maintains that theorists of "situated experience give primacy to the dynamics of everyday existence, improvisation, coordination, and interactional choreography. They emphasize agency and intentions. They mostly address the interactive relations of people with their environment" (Wenger, 1998, p. x). In education, Wenger lists J. Dewey (1922) and Schön (1983) as representatives.

[29] Kenneth Burke (1888-1993) was an American literary theorist and philosopher. He proposed that most social interaction and communication can be approached as a form of drama whose outcomes are determined by ratios between five pentadic elements,-"a *pentad*, which includes act, scene, agent, agency, and purpose" (Wikipedia-a, 2005)

This *actional* view is the very basis for Wertsch's method of socio-cultural analysis. According to Wertsch, the task of this socio-cultural approach is to "explicate the relationships between human action, on the one hand, and the cultural, institutional and historical contexts in which the action occurs, on the other" (ibid, p. 24). Mediated action can be described as action that is influenced by agents (i.e. those who are acting), and their cultural tools—both of which are the mediators of action. Focusing on agents and their cultural tools gives the relationship between agent and instrumentality a privileged position, even if Wertsch makes an important point of the fact that he outlines a way to "live in the middle" of what he calls "the individual-society antinomies" and several other analytic perspectives. He states:

> It forces us to go beyond the individual agent when trying to understand the forces that shape human action….the point is that even when one focuses primarily on the individual agent's role in mediated action, the fact that cultural tools are involved means that the sociocultural embeddedness of the action is always built into one's analysis. (ibid, p. 24-25)

Action, interaction and discourse: Same phenomenon, different positions?

If one believes that musical learning and musical creations are primarily a result of human *action*, then it can be argued that human action should be the basic phenomenon to be analysed in music practice in society as well as in music education. My approach to research on small group musical composition in schools is, as shown in the next chapters, in several ways an attempt to investigate this important discipline of music education from an *actional* perspective.

The fact that my focus of interest is on small group composition brings another complicating element strongly into this actional perspective, namely *interaction*, not only—to use Burke's and Wertsch's terminology—in terms of the dialectic between the "agent" and instrumentality, but also *between* "agents". In social psychology, group interaction connected to a specific task, e.g. music composition, is sometimes described as "the simultaneous and sequential behaviours (verbal and motor) of group members as they act in relation to one another and to the task that the group is trying to accomplish, over time." (McGrath & Altermatt, 2001, p. 525) The use of terminology in social psychology, e.g. "behaviours", reflects a different paradigm and a different tradition from sociocultural cognition theory, but the focus on action, interaction and the dynamics of relationships (verbal and motor) remains the same.

A similar focus can be found among theorists coming from the so-called Chicago school in sociology[30], notably Erwin Goffman, who from a symbolic interactionist perspective argued for the importance of investigating the details of group relations and interaction, and the movement and interactive meaning of information through micro-sociological analysis. In Goffman's "dramaturgical approach", interaction is viewed as a "performance," shaped by environment and an audience (Goffman, 1959, p.17ff).

Yet another illustration of how the same phenomenon is approached from different, but related positions, is Norman Fairclough's work and theory on critical discourse analysis (Fairclough, 1995). The now so popular

[30] For an introduction to the Chicago School of Sociology, see Bulmer, Martin, The Chicago School of Sociology: *Institutionalization, Diversity, and the Rise of Sociological Research*. (Bulmer, 1984)

concept in academia, “discourse”, seem to inhabit a number of different meanings (see e.g. Bredsdorff, 2003) and some of these meanings seem very close to the concept “interaction” as used by Goffman and Wertsch. Fairclough, coming from sociolinguistics and semiotics, builds on Goffman’s work.[31] In his 1995 book Fairclough places discourse analysis firmly within socio-cultural practice and sociolinguistics. He says: “My view is that “discourse” is use of language seen as a form of social practice, and discourse analysis is analysis of how texts work within socio-cultural practice”. (p. 7)
In a more recent work Fairclough and Copenhagen-based Lilie Chouliaraki define the term “discourse” somewhat broader. They write:

> We shall use the term ”discourse” to refer to semiotic elements of social practices. Discourse therefore includes language (written and spoken and in combination with other semiotics, for example with music and singing), nonverbal communication (facial expression, body movements, gestures, etc.) and visual images (for instance, photographs, film). The concept of discourse can be understood as a particular perspective on these various forms of semiotics – it sees them as moments of social practices in their articulation with other non-discursive moments. (Chouliaraki & Fairclough, 1999, p.38)

In their 1999 book Fairclough’s and Chouliaraki’s definition of “discourse” includes music and singing as well as nonverbal communication such as facial expression, body movements and gestures. For me, and the present study, this raises an important question of overlap between two important concepts in the present study, ‘interaction’ and ‘discourse’ respectively. Both concepts focus on the interactive expression of meaning and communication and relationships between agents. Both refer to a socio-cultural framework and both consider individual and social aspects of human activity. To me the difference between them can best be explained by considering their academic roots and traditions. Whereas “discourse”, as in discourse analysis, clearly has a verbal and linguistic basis, “interaction” clearly has a physical and actional basis. In actual and scientific uses of the two concepts in the educational and other fields of experience, then, there seem to be some overlaps in terms of what is what.[32]

Even if ‘interaction’ is a prime focus of attention in an investigation on small group composition, I also rely to a great extent on what pupils say, play and communicate. My way of investigation, as we shall see in later chapters, relies to a great extent on verbally transcribed videotapes as well as on direct and indirect observation of what happens in verbal communication and musical and social action on a micro level. I have therefore

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[31] Anna-Lena Rostvall and Tore West’s video-based micro-study of interaction and the development of knowledge in instrumental teaching (2001), borrows some of their central theoretical concepts from Norman Fairclough and Anthony Giddens. They claim that Goffman’s analysis and concepts form an important part of the fundament for Fairclough’s work (p. 13 ff)

[32] I am aware that the concept “discourse” and also the term “discursive practices” are used in ways where the semiotic tradition is less obvious, notably in a Foucaultian tradition. (see e.g. Popkewitz, 1993; Rønholdt et al, 2003, pp 96). In a discussion about the relationship between the Foucaultian concept of “discourse” and “the linguistic turn”, Nils Bredsdorff (2003) points out that Pierre Bourdieu seemed to be very aware of the difference between himself and Foucault in this matter. Bredsdorff quotes Bourdieu who writes that: “Foucault ignores the whole process of and inculcation of cognitive schemata of perception, appreciation and action, resulting from the internalization of the structures of the world and which, arising out of gentle violence, make gentle violence possible. In short, lacking everything that I put under the notion of habitus, Foucault cannot account for the much subtler forms of domination which come to operate through belief and the pre-reflexive agreement of the body and mind with the world (in Loïc J. Wacquant, 1993, p.34)

chosen to use both concepts— ‘discourse’ as well as ‘interaction’—as basic concepts in my study as this seem to best reflect a holistic perspective on action, expression and communication.

Educational ethnography

In a paper in one of the 2001 issues of Educational Researcher (AERA)[33], Margaret Eisenhart, tries to tidy up of some of what she calls the “muddles” or confusing situations that confront her as an ethnographer working in what she characterises as “today’s contentious educational research atmosphere” (Eisenhart, 2001, p. 16). Referring to the anthropologist Clifford Geertz (1995), she claims that ethnography:

> …have always been trying, with limited success, to understand some aspects of a form of life—call it “culture,” “meaning,” “cultural forms,” or “public symbols”—that belongs to others. We have always been trying to convince others that we can learn something important by doing what we call “ethnography.” We have always been giving our ideas, views, and images up for debate and scrutiny in an attempt to encourage others to take an interest in the people, places, and things that interest us. (Eisenhart, 2001. p. 24)

Reflecting on the “rising tide of enthusiasm for ethnographic and other forms of qualitative research in educational research”, Eisenhart remembers the time (around 1980) when only a few papers on ethnographic or qualitative research were presented at AERA conferences. “Now”, she says,” more than half of AERA research papers are based on some form of qualitative research”.[34] (ibid, p.18)

There can be no doubt that Eisenhart’s analysis of the impact on education from anthropology and ethnography is relevant. This can be observed in different areas of education, e.g. on learning theories (e.g. Lave, 1991 and Wenger, 1998), but perhaps even more in relation to methodological and ontological issues on how to approach educational research and knowledge acquisition. One of the most influential individuals in this respect has been the American anthropologist Clifford Geertz, (referred to by Eisenhart above) (see also Flinders and Richardson, 2002, p. 1162). In his famous 1973 book, “The Interpretation of Cultures”, Geertz introduced the concept “thick description” and highlighted the importance of awareness of the insider/outsider dimension in cultural research.[35] To Geertz, thick description is the ethnographer’s method for apprehending and interpreting cultural “texts”. In Geertzian terms, culture and meaningful action should be interpreted as if it were a literary text. As a researcher the ethnographer “inscribes social discourse; he writes it down. In so doing, he turns it from a passing event,

[33] AERA is the abbreviation for American Educational Research Association. Their yearly conference has for a long time been the biggest and most important meeting place for scholars in the educational field from the US, and in later years also increasingly for educational scholars from all over the world. I have attended twice (1997 and 1999).

[34] Eisenhart illustrates this point by referring to her conversation with a colleague, an assessment expert, about ethnography’s recent history in educational research. She recalls:
“She looked at me incredulously and said, with an edge of irritation, “That should be easy. Ethnography has won!” She was, of course, referring to the battle for first-methodology position in educational research. From her perspective as a psychologically oriented measurement specialist, there is no question that ethnography and other forms of qualitative research have proliferated and even come to dominate many areas of educational research. (Eisenhart, 2001, p. 18)

[35] Geertz borrows the concept of ‘think description’ from the philosopher Gilbert Ryle and his story about the many possible and different meanings of boys’ “winks”. According to Geertz a boy’s wink can be an involuntary twitch, but it can also be conspiratorial signal to a friend. Geertz’s point is that registering the wink as a twitch is a kind of “thin” description whereas interpreting the wink as some sort of meaning requires a form of interpretation that can only be conceived of and described in much more complex and “thick” ways. “Ryle’s example”, writes Geertz, “presents an image only too exact of the sort of piled-up structures of inference and implication through which an ethnographer is continually trying to pick his way” (Geertz, 1973, p. 6-7)

which exists only in its own moment of occurrence, into an account, which exists in its inscriptions and can be re-consulted". To Geertz "ethnography *is* thick description". (ibid, p. 19, 9-10)

Geertz's viewpoints on the insider/outsider issues in cultural research are connected to his famous thick description essay on the "Balinese cockfight"[36]. Geertz uses this story to show how he and his wife, after a dramatic episode including the police, were included and given access to information in the Balinese community "extremely difficult for outsiders to penetrate" (cited in Titon, 2003, p. 175).

Even if influential in a number of areas, Geertz's "thick description" is also being criticised. In a discussion about the use of "textual analysis or thick description" Jeff Todd Titon points out that Geertz's cockfight text is highly processed as well as pre-digested. He questions Geertz's reliance on his own authoritative interpretation and belief in his own "voice speaking from within the inscribed account" (ibid, p. 175). This way of doing ethnography, writes Titon, is problematic when one intends to treat meaningful action as "text". The fact is, he says, that certain meaningful actions do generate texts (words) in the conventional sense, and in Geertz's thick description some important voices seem to be missing.

> "-the voices of the handlers, the wagerers, the spectators, and what it is exactly, that they say—that is the texts in the conventional sense, generated in the performance of the cockfight. These, if given in Geertz's ethnography, would be on display, as it were, as grist for the mill of everyone's interpretative efforts, whether Geertz's or the reader's" (ibid, p. 178).

Tinton argues for a thickening description, which not only includes names of people and shows them in dialogue, thus becoming multi-vocal, but ".. also restores texts in the more narrow sense of the words (and music) on the page... Interpretation of meaningful action as a text requires that the ethnographer inscribe the observed action into a narrative description – interpretation" (Titon, 2003, p. 177).

Geerzt's concepts and Tinton's viewpoints and suggestions for modification of doing thick description are highly relevant for the present study. Not only do I study in detail and over a long time a kind of subculture—the unbroken chain of meaningful actions within small group processes of pupils—but I also transcribe videos of what happens, thus creating "texts" in Geertz's meaning of the concept as well as incorporating dialogues and the voices of the pupils as Titon suggests. By placing them "on display" in the findings section, I hope to invite readers to think for themselves with regard to my interpretations as well as to the voices of the pupils. The most direct and easy to observe influence of ethnography in the present study, however, is my use of what Frederick Erickson denotes as ethnographic microanalysis of interaction. (Erickson, 1992, pp. 201).

Ethnographic microanalysis of interaction

> One of the main purposes of ethnography in educational research is to reveal what is inside the "black boxes" of ordinary life in educational settings by identifying and documenting the processes by which educational outcomes are produced. Those processes consist of the routine actions and sense making

[36] Described in "Deep Play: Notes on the Balinese Cockfight", in Geertz, *The Interpretation of Cultures* (1973, pp. 412-453).

of participants in educational settings, which, because they are habitual and local, may go unnoticed by practitioners and researchers alike. The close study of interaction through ethnographically oriented analysis of audiovisual records is a potentially useful component of an ethnographic study of education. It is not an alternative to more general ethnography, but, rather, a complement to it (ibid, p. 202).

The quotation above is the very opening paragraph of Erickson's article on ethnographic microanalysis of interaction in "The Handbook of Qualitative Research in Education" (LeCompte, Milroy and Preissle, 1992). In the "Prelude" of this study I described what I called my transitional experience, from the "enlightened eye" (Eisner, 1991) of a formative researcher towards that of an inexperienced ethnographic and phenomenological researcher with a focus on *description*, *interpretation* and *understanding* of actions, events and phenomena on a micro level of music education. In short, I described my intention to unravel the secrets of some of "the black boxes" Erickson is describing above.

Erickson identifies what he calls five streams of work or intellectual antecedents to ethnographic microanalysis: Context analysis, ethnography of communication, symbolic interactionism and conversational analysis. A fifth influence comes from continental scholars who see communicative action as a discursive practice "that manifests power relations among social actors (see Bourdieu, 1977; Habermas, 1979; Foucault, 1979; Bakhtin, 1981)" (Erickson, 1992, p. 203). Erickson compares ethnographically oriented microanalyses to more general educational ethnography and underlines that the former shares with the latter the aim of specifying and describing those local processes that produce outcomes in educational settings. He adds that the purpose of microanalysis is "to document those processes in even greater detail and precision than is possible with ordinary participant observations and interviewing" (ibid, p. 204).

Erickson also compares ethnographic microanalysis to methods of ethnographic participant observation. In both cases, he writes, the researcher is attempting to understand events whose structure is too complex to be understood all at once. These limits are compensated for in participant observation by spending time in the field setting. In microanalysis, the limits are compensated for "by reviewing the audiovisual record and often by reviewing field notes as well" (ibid, p. 208). Comparing the two approaches more in depth, Erickson acknowledges that a major strength of general participant observation is the opportunity to learn through active participation. The strengths of microanalysis on the other hand, can be listed as:

1. *A capacity for completeness of analysis*

   The recorded instances allow unlimited opportunities to revisit the observation by replaying it and this enables a much more thorough description than those taken from field notes.
2. *Reduction of dependence of the observer on premature observation*

   In microanalysis, Ericsson maintains, the opportunity to look and listen more than once relieves the observer's tendency to leap too soon to inferences of intent.
3. *Reduction of the dependence of the observer on frequently occurring events*

   In participant observation it is the frequent event that one comes to understand best. The rare event often will be understood only partially, whereas analysed audio-visually "the rare event can be studied

> quite thoroughly through repeated reviewing”. (ibid, p. 210)

Erickson also accounts for two important weaknesses or limitations of microanalysis. The first, he says, is that “replaying a film or videotape only permits the analyst to interact with it vicariously. No opportunity exists to test one’s emerging interpretive theories by trying them out as an active participant in the scene”(ibid, p. 210). The second limitation is described as absence of contextual information beyond the frame of the screen. Erickson maintains that both limitations can be overcome by combining participant observation and the collection and analysis of data with the analysis of audiovisual records. “Analysing the interaction”, Erickson concludes, “that occurs in a particular event in relation to the broader circumstances of choice and constraint within which the event itself occurs is what makes ethnographic microanalysis ‘ethnographic’ “ (ibid, p. 210)

Erickson’s description and evaluation of ethnographic microanalysis in educational research appears to me to be a balanced account of the strengths and weaknesses of this approach. My experience with the approach in the present study will be extensively accounted for in Chapter 4. This will also be the case with two other important theoretical and methodological inspirations, namely ‘naturalistic inquiry’ and ‘grounded theory’, but I have chosen to deal with what could be called the ‘inspirational’ aspect of these areas below.

Naturalistic inquiry and grounded theory

From my postgraduate studies in the 1970s in musicology and music education at the University of Trondheim I still remember the debates about positivism and its accompanying research methodology. I also remember my frustration about the lack of alternative concepts and descriptions of practical research procedures, which could equal and challenge those of the positivist paradigm.

Naturalistic inquiry

My postgraduate study experience referred to above might be a very subjective and personal experience, but thinking back, it is probably one of the reasons why Lincoln and Guba’s classic book “Naturalistic Inquiry” (1985) appeared as a sort of revelation to me.

By means of a systematic and comprehensive analysis, description, and concept formation this book challenged the traditional quantitatively based research approach in new ways.

In their article on contemporary issues in qualitative research in music education, Flinders and Richardson (2002) view the appearance of “Naturalistic Inquiry” as a fuelling event amid what was at that time a very hot qualitative/quantitative debate. They write:

> Their widely cited book Naturalistic Inquiry (1985) drew loosely on Kuhn’s perspective in framing the debate as a case of conflicting paradigms. The assumptions of what Lincoln and Guba labelled the positivist paradigm included the following: (1) reality viewed as independent; (2) research aims defined as developing “nomothetic”, cause-and effect generalisations; and (3) the use of procedural objectivity as the criterion for validity. They characterised the “naturalistic paradigm” as focusing on multiple realities constructed by the researcher, the development of “ideographic” knowledge, and the value-laden nature of inquiry.“ (Flinders and Richardson, 2002, p. 1163)

Even if regarded as provocative by some scholars, my view of the importance of Lincoln and Guba's contribution is rooted in their combination of being able to spell out in detail the epistemological and ontological theory, aims and characteristics of their proposal *as well as* the practical "doings" and procedures for applying research. The authors do not argue that their ideas are original or that they have expressed them better than others, but they have tried:

> …to cast them into a form that might be palatable and appear reasonable to an audience of readers who have not entertained them before and who might, *quite properly*, approach them with an attitude of extreme scepticism. And we have added enough practical material so that the reader who might be persuaded of them on theoretical grounds might also be able to apply them, however tentatively. This is a book aimed at helping the reader both to understand and do naturalistic inquiry. (Lincoln and Guba, 1985, p. 9)

In my view, this communicative and pedagogical aspect of their approach might have been just as important for their position in the research community of the 1980s as their discussion and definition of basic concepts. They describe, for example, the concept "naturalistic", which denotes their new paradigm, as a concept which has "other aliases as well, for example; the post-positivistic, ethnographic, phenomenological, subjective, case study, qualitative, hermeneutic, humanistic". They maintain that their "naturalistic" paradigm only has two tenets as prime directives, namely that: ...first, no manipulation on the part of the inquirer is implied, and second, the inquirer imposes no a priori units on the outcome" (ibid, p. 7-8)[37].

Their most important contribution in my view, however, is their systematic description and discussion of the 'naturalist' research paradigm with regard to trustworthiness and scientific rigor in terms of data collection, data analysis and theorising. Written in the mid-eighties in the rather contentious research climate of educational research in the US, Lincoln and Guba refer to this debate by saying:

> The naturalist inquirer soon becomes accustomed to hearing charges that naturalistic studies are undisciplined; that her or she is guilty of "sloppy" research, engaging in "merely subjective" observations, responding indiscriminately to the "loudest bangs or brightest lights". Rigor, it is

[37] In later works Lincoln and Guba have proposed to change the name of the paradigm to "constructivist". Thomas A. Schwandt remarks that: "Egon Guba and Yvonna Lincoln's 'constructivist paradigm' is a wide-ranging eclectic framework. They originally discussed their approach under the heading of "naturalistic inquiry" ….(Lincoln and Guba, 1989, p.19), …although they acknowledge that constructivist, interpretive, naturalistic, and hermeneutical are all similar notions". (Schwandt, 1994, p. 128) The "naturalistic" paradigm then, should be understood as an umbrella paradigm, which in view of the contested discussion of the mid-eighties, rightfully, as Lincoln and Guba suggest, can be denoted as a "heresy" to a conventional positivistic paradigm. (Lincoln and Guba, 1985, p. 9) Their subsequent work on a division of paradigms into positivism, post-positivism, critical theory, constructivism (Lincoln and Guba 1994), and more recently a fourth "participatory paradigm" including an ontology of "subjective-objective reality, co-created by mind and given cosmos" (Lincoln and Guba 2003, p. 258) is not generally accepted, but this discussion belongs elsewhere. However, it is worth noting that Thomas A Schwandt describes "qualitative inquiry" as a reformist movement that began in the early 1970s in the academy. "Of course", he writes, "anthropologists and fieldwork sociologists had been doing "qualitative inquiry" for decades earlier. But methods for generating and interpreting qualitative data acquired a particular currency in a variety of other human science fields in the 1970s" (Schwandt, p.320, 2003).
It should also be noted that there are important differences between several of the research methodologies being categorised under such "umbrellas", e.g. with regard to the nature and position of empirical fieldwork. Frede V. Nielsen, e.g., points out from a phenomenological and continental point of view, that the Anglo-American tradition in qualitative research for education needs to include what he calls a "wide concept of what might constitute the empirical field" (my translation) [utvidet empribegrep] with regard to educational research. (Nielsen, 1995, p. 86)

> asserted, is not the hallmark of naturalism. Is the naturalist inevitably defenceless against such charges? Worse, are they true? It is the purpose of this chapter to deny those allegations, and to provide means both for shoring up and for demonstrating the trustworthiness of inquiry guided by the naturalist paradigm (ibid, p. 290/291).

In answering the question of trustworthiness, Lincoln and Guba argue for an introduction of the four terms 'credibility', 'transferability', 'dependability' and 'confirmability' as the "naturalist's equivalents for the conventional terms "internal validity", "external validity", "reliability", and "objectivity". The reason, they claim, is that the conventional terms are inappropriate for naturalistic inquiry and that their alternative stands in a "more logical and derivative relation to the naturalistic axioms" (ibid, p. 300/301). In their chapter on "establishing trustworthiness" they account in detail for a number of research procedures that will contribute to enhanced credibility, e.g. prolonged engagement, persistent observation, triangulation by different sources and different modes of data collection, peer debriefing and member checking.

Lincoln and Guba also describe what they call the "operational naturalistic paradigm" in terms of listing fourteen different characteristics, which can be "justified in two ways: 1) their logical dependence on the axioms that undergird the paradigm, and 2) by their coherence and interdependence. A number of these characteristics are relevant for and have inspired the design and research procedures of the present study; e.g. 'natural setting' and the importance of context; 'purposive sampling' with regard to increasing the range of data exposed; 'emergent design' as a function of the interaction between the inquirer and an unpredictable phenomenon; 'case study reporting mode' because of its suitability to a description of the multiple realities encountered at any given site, and 'tentative application', because the particular "mix" of mutually shaping influences may vary from setting to setting. (ibid, pp. 39-43)

In many ways Lincoln and Guba's important book might serve as an example of an "early", general and comprehensive description of an operational paradigmatic context for the present study.[38] The *specific* research design and research procedures for the present study will be discussed in Chapter 4.

Grounded theory

One of the fourteen basic characteristics for what Lincoln and Guba called "operational naturalistic inquiry" is ' grounded theory'. They use this concept referring to Glaser and Strauss' pioneering work (1967). Even if using and accepting the term "grounded theory", Lincoln and Guba are somewhat critical of certain aspects of what Glaser and Strauss then referred to as 'the constant comparative method' for data processing. Lincoln and Guba maintain for example, that Glaser and Strauss' purpose is to enable prediction and explanation of *behaviour*, a purpose with which the naturalist researcher probably would not agree, and that there is no reason to suppose

[38] I regard Lincoln and Guba's writings as an inspirational source for the present study, especially with regard to the operational aspects of their paradigm description. Their "constructionist" position, which they hold as "their own position" (Lincoln and Guba, 2003, p. 264) is problematic in terms of the phenomenological basis for the present study. However, this might also be viewed as yet an example of what Denzin and Lincoln, referring to Geertz (1983), call the "blurring" of research genres. (Denzin and Lincoln, 2003, p.24). I also find it worth noting that Lincoln and Guba in 2003 maintained that: "On the matter of hegemony, or supremacy, among post-modern paradigms, it is clear that Geertz's (1988, 1993) prophecy about the "blurring of genres" is rapidly being fulfilled. Inquiry methodology can no longer be treated as a set of universally applicable rules or abstractions" (Lincloln and Guba, 2003, p. 254)

that these authors were even “aware of the existence of a comparative paradigm” (Lincoln and Guba, 1985, p. 339).

My inspirational relationship to “grounded theory” is not primarily based on Glaser and Strauss’ work, but rather on the follow-up work and adjustments of the methodology with regard to theory development carried out by Anselm Strauss and Juliet Corbin (Strauss and Corbin, 1990/1998; 1994). Strauss and Corbin position their methodology firmly under the paradigmatic umbrella “qualitative research” by underlining that their focus is on qualitative analysis understood as a “nonmathematical process of interpretation, carried out for the purpose of discovering concepts and relationships in raw data and then organising these into a theoretical explanatory scheme” (Strauss and Corbin, 1998, p. 11) In their book “Basics for Qualitative Research” (1998) they justify their emphasis on data analysis and theory building by referring to a well- known situation and challenge for researchers. Referring to the initial and often exciting experiences of gathering data, they write:

> However exciting their experiences may be while gathering data, there comes a time when the data must be analysed. Researchers often are perplexed by this necessary task. They not only are dismayed by the mountains of data confronting them but also often are troubled by the following questions. How can I make sense out of all of this material? How can I have a theoretical interpretation while still grounding it in the empirical reality reflected in the materials? How can I make sure that my data and interpretations are valid and reliable? How do I break through the inevitable biases, prejudices, and stereotypical perspectives that I bring with me to the analytic situation? How do I pull all of my analyses together to create a concise theoretical formulation of the area under study? The purpose of this book is to answer these and other questions related to doing qualitative analysis (ibid, p. x)

Very relevant for the present study is Strauss and Corbin’s claim that their emphasis on theoretical conceptualisation makes the methodology especially suited for researchers who are interested in “patterns of action and interaction between and among various types of social units (i.e. actors) (Strauss and Corbin, 1994, p. 278).

Strauss and Corbin present “grounded theory” as a general methodology for developing theory that is grounded in data systematically gathered and analysed. Theory evolves during actual research, it is a complex activity, it requires systematic as well as creative work and it does this through continuous interplay between analysis and data collection. They underline that the major difference between this methodology and other approaches to and aspects of qualitative research, e.g. to Geertzian thick description, is its emphasis upon theory development characterised by “conceptual density”. *Conceptual density* refers to the “richness of concept development and relationships—which rests on great familiarity with associated data and are checked out systematically with these data. (This is different from Geertz's "thick descriptions" where the emphasis is on description rather than conceptualisation)” (ibid, pp. 273/274).

Another consequence of their emphasis on theory development is their focus on coding procedures and micro-analytical approaches to data interpretation. The purposes of their coding procedures can be summarised in five points: 1) Build rather then test theory; 2) provide researchers with analytic tools for handling masses of data;

3) help analysts to consider alternative meanings of phenomena; 4) be systematic and creative simultaneously; 5) identify, develop and relate the concepts that are the building blocks of theory. (Strauss and Corbin, 1998, p. 13). Central to their coding procedures are the analytic processes they have labelled "open coding", "axial coding" and "selective coding". 'Open coding' is the analytic process "through which concepts are identified and their properties and dimensions are discovered in data" (ibid, pp.101); 'axial coding' is the "process of relating categories to their subcategories" (ibid, pp.123) and 'selective coding' is the "process of integrating and refining the theory" (ibid, pp.143). They also advocate the identification in the data of what they call a "central category" or "core category". A *central* category evolves from the research, it has "analytic power" in the sense that such a category has the ability to pull the other categories together to form an explanatory whole (ibid, pp. 146).

Strauss and Corbin (1998) devote a whole chapter in their methodology book to "analysis through microscopic examination of data". They use the term "microanalysis" and define it as "the detailed line-by-line analysis necessary at the beginning of a study to generate initial categories (with their properties and dimensions) and to suggest relationships among categories" (ibid, pp. 57). There is no doubt that their approach to microanalysis has many similarities to Erickson's "ethnographic microanalysis of interaction" that was discussed earlier in this chapter. However, Strauss and Corbin's definition of the term also demonstrates some important differences between the two approaches. Whereas Strauss and Corbin to a great extent, although not exclusively, seem to focus on a detailed study of transcribed verbal texts, e.g. of videotapes, Erickson describes an approach to study videotaped interaction where the *holistic* aspects of interpretation and theorising is highlighted and underlined very clearly. In essence, Erickson writes, ethnographic microanalysis proceeds similarly to the analysis of other kinds of participant observational data—"one begins by considering whole events, continues by analytically decomposing them into smaller fragments, and then concludes by recomposing them into wholes" Erickson, 1992, p. 217). Where Erickson goes from whole to detail and back to whole, Strauss and Corbin seems to believe that a detailed type of analysis is " necessary at the beginning of a project to generate initial categories" (Strauss and Corbin, 1998, p. 57).

With regard to the present study I have chosen an approach closer to ethnographic microanalysis of interaction than to grounded theory (see Chapter 4). The reason is simply that Erickson's approach is more in keeping with my phenomenological and ethnographic research approach and that the focus of my study is more "actional" than "verbal". However, I also use important elements from 'grounded theory', in coding especially and in the development of concepts, the relationship between concepts and in the creation of a conceptually dense theory. This specific approach of analysis can be characterised as a mixture of Erickson's and Strauss and Corbin's methodologies and is accounted for in depth in Chapter 4.

Summary

In this chapter I have discussed my research 'mirror' in the sense that I account for and discuss some basic scientific traditions or "schools", which underpin a number of aspects of the present study. It can be argued that phenomenology, socio-cultural theory, ethnography in education, naturalistic inquiry and grounded theory, can be regarded as a "family" of theories and as such be considered as a sort of "theoretical triangulation". However, I hope to have shown that a description of such a "familiarity" is not my *intended* focus in this chapter. The

potential relevance of the different specific theories for the present study, on the other hand, is.

Phenomenology, as the huge area of scientific and philosophical theory that it is, constitutes the basis for my view of how we as human beings perceive the world, including music, and begs the question of what our consciousness really is. Social cultural theory appeals to me because it explains the relationships of the individual and culture, and because this theoretical branch of science tries to account for 'cognition' as something more than schemas of mental operations. Ethnography in education, notably ethnographic microanalysis, naturalistic inquiry and grounded theory, do not represent identical approaches to inquiry and knowledge, but they share a common interest in getting to the bottom of things, to study phenomena in-depth and to evolve theory that is conceptually dense. In this chapter I have also dealt with and discussed some central concepts in the present study and their uses in different theories, such as the notions of 'action', 'interaction', and 'discourse'.

Chapter 3

CONTEXTUAL FRAMEWORK FOR THE STUDY

Composing in School Contexts

> *Composing* takes place when pupils in music education give expression and form to their own ideas. In music in primary and secondary schooling the concept "composing" includes for pupils to make their own music and dance, to improvise and to arrange. (Undervisnings- og forskingsdepartementet, 1997 [Royal Ministry of Education], p. 252- my translation)[39]

As an *official and ministerial* major curriculum concept, "composing" was introduced into the Norwegian National Curriculum in 1997. For the first time in Norwegian history composing was introduced as a major educational activity and intended as something all schools and all pupils should be trained and educated in. Together with "lytte" [listening], "musisere" [performing and musicing] and "danse" [dancing], "komponere" [composing] is one out of four major activity areas of music, a compulsory subject to be included in every school at every age level from 6 to 16 (Undervisnings- og forskingsdepartementet, 1997). It is important to notice that the definition of "composing" given above is a national music curriculum text suggesting to teachers what the concept means in this particular context.
Compared to other definitions of 'composing', e.g. Burnard's definition (see Chapter 1), it is considerably broader including improvisation as well as musical arranging and making of dance.[40]

Even if "new" as a major curriculum concept in a Norwegian setting, the activity area described (above) as "composing" was not new in terms of educational practice in schools or even as a concept used in curriculum texts and music resource books. Rather, its position can partly be seen as a consequence of the international "Composition Movement" in western music education (see Ch. 1 and later in this chapter) and partly as a further development of practices in Norwegian compulsory music education connected to the concepts "skapende virksomhet", [creative activity] and "eksperimentering og komponering" [experimenting and composing] within music as a school subject (Johansen, 2003, p. 39).

[39] The Norwegian text for this passage goes as follows: "Komponere gjer elevane når dei i musikkopplæringa gir eigne idear musikalsk uttrykk og form. I musikkopplæringa i grunnskulen omfattar omgrepet å lage sine eigne musikk- og danseuttrykk, improvisere og arrangere." The Ministerial official translation of this passage is translated the following way: "Pupils *compose* when they give musical expression and form to their own ideas. During their compulsory schooling, pupils should find their own forms of musical and dance expressions through improvisation and arranging" (Royal Ministry of Education, 1999, p. 252). In my opinion the translation of the second sentence is a rather free, even misleading translation. Hence, I have used my own translation and competent readers should judge for themselves which one is closest to the original meaning of the passage.

[40] It is not my intention to argue here that 'improvisation' should always be considered as a natural and integrated part of 'composing'. I agree that 'composition' and 'improvisation' can be described as different and separate abilities. A number of influential music educators would support such a view, e.g. Webster (1989; 1990). However, in this context we are dealing with an operational definition of what composing means in a special context. As such 'composing' is chosen as an 'umbrella' concept including improvisation and musical arranging.

Composing in school music - the Norwegian setting

> For me it started when I was working as a fresh music secondary school teacher in 1970. I started to find my way towards a meaningful praxis, especially in relation to a group of students who had chosen music as an elective. We started recording things and sounds and just went on from there……..The response I got from the kids was amazing. They were fascinated and even volunteered to travel by bus on a Sunday to be present at an art exhibition the group had made up music for. I still have this "glass" music on old tapes. We played these pieces that the pupils had composed, and I watched these secondary school children sitting still on a concrete cement floor listening to their own music for twenty minutes. I had never experienced anything like it before…..There was nothing in my own education as a music teacher suggesting that something like this was possible. When I started I did not know about anybody who had tried something similar….(Interview Stein Bakke, quoted in Andersen, Espeland, Husebøe, 1997 p. 33, my translation)

The interview extract above illustrates how Stein Bakke, one of the pioneers of creative activity in Norwegian music education, describes his first fundamental and seemingly unprepared experience as a composition teacher within music as a school subject.[41] Even if Bakke, and the rest of us who were educated as Norwegian music teachers in the late 1960s, had not experienced 'music composition' as a part of music education in our formal education, such an educational praxis existed. As pointed out in Chapter 1, internationally, creative music making in the form of improvisation and composition in music education had been going on for a long time. In Scandinavia the Danish organist, jazz pianist and music educator Bernhard Christensen started using improvisation in informal education as early as the 1930s. (Christensen 1983). [42] A number of Norwegian music educators took part in the courses arranged by Carl Orff and his colleagues who based their "Orff methodology" on improvisation and creative activities. The spreading of the "Orff Methodology" accelerated in the 1950s through international courses and the revised appearance of Orff's and Keetman's Schulwerk "Musik für Kinder" (1950)[43].

However, these early Norwegian pioneers did not manage to bring creative music activities into formal education in Norway until much later. (Jørgensen 1982; Andersen, Espeland, Husebø, 1997). It was not until the "Composition Movement" in music education (see Chapter 1) reached Norway that this situation started to change. Young Norwegian teachers, such as Stein Bakke in Bergen, took part in international courses on how to use composing as a part of music education and was strongly influenced by composers and pioneers such as John Paynter and Murray Schaeffer (see later in this chapter). Some of their projects and publications, Paynter (1970; 1972; and 1982) and Schaeffer, (1965; 1967; and 1969) were translated and used in Norwegian education

[41] Today Bakke works as a music educator at the University College of Bergen, an institution where he started working in the early 1970s. He is well known as a clinician within creative activity in schools and has published a number of books on this topic. Part of my presentation in this section of "the Norwegian setting" is based the book, "Komponering i klasserommet- en praktisk metodikk" [Composing in the classroom- a practical methology] (Andersen, Espeland, Husebø & Husebø, 1997) The book is only available in Norwegian and I find it relevant to present some its analyses here to an international audience.

[42] Bernard Christensen was an early pioneer in this field in Scandinavia. He was influenced by jazz and African and Oriental music traditions and started courses administered by his jazz club. He has described his "pioneer" story in the book (Danish) "Mitt mofiv" [My motif] (1983)

[43] This is not the place to elaborate on the history of music composition in education. However, readers should be aware of that even the philosopher J.J. Rousseau, who was a composer of music as well, mentions musical composition as part of education in his Emile (1762).

by dedicated teachers. In an article in the journal "Musikk i skolen" [Music in Schools] (1974) Bakke describes these new developments. He concludes his article the following way:

> Those of you who want to know more should read in his [the reference is to Paynter] own words in the books "Sound and Silence" and "Hear and Now". That is: here you will find an extremely interesting offer for those of you who are looking for materials for creative music making in the classroom. Look out you people in the visual arts, here we come! (Andersen, Espeland & Husebø, 1997, p. 36, my translation)

Bakke's optimistic reference and direct address in 1974 to his colleagues in visual art (above) signalled a new optimism on behalf of introducing a more creative music education in Norway. This optimism was implemented to some extent in educational practice as well as in the forthcoming national curriculum (1974), and focused on 'composing' as creative expression with 'sounds' and composition as a vehicle for a comprehensive and versatile education of children. (Andersen, Espeland & Husebø, 1997) This emphasis and direction remained for the most part unchanged throughout the eighties and into the 1987 national curriculum. The interest and instances of creative music education praxis increased during these years in primary schools and in higher music education as well as in informal educational settings (Andersen, Espeland & Husebø, 1997, p. 38; Johansen, 2003, p. 39).

In England as well as in other European countries, for example Germany, the focus was to a greater extent on composition as a means of introducing children to music and techniques of contemporary composers[44]. I visited and observed one of John Paynter's project teachers in England, Tom Gamble, in the early 1980s and noticed how he emphasised the teaching of musical understanding alongside creative expression. Gamble documented his compositional practice in his classroom in articles in the British Journal of Music Education (1982 and 1984). In 1984 he wrote:

> Composition helps to develop an insight into the very nature of music by involving students in a very intimate way with music and directly confronting them with the problems of making or inventing an expressive and coherent musical object……..In the process of manipulating musical materials, in developing, shaping and structuring musical ideas, in forming relationships between ideas, children are using imagination, intelligence and feeling. Composing, after all, is thinking in sound….(Gamble, 1984, pp 15/16)

In her review of 'the composition movement' Barrett (1998) does not comment on the critique of this movement. This critique *was* raised in England as well as in Norway. In England, Peter Abbs found the combination of modern art music, progressive education and self-expression to be self-destructive (Abbs, 1987). In Norway, music as a school subject was criticised for not being in keeping with its cultural and musical context—a context said to be based on Afro-American music rather than modern art music (Ruud, 1990).

[44] The "Composition Movement" (Barrett, 1998) influenced music educators in Germany as well. A number of publications appeared during the 1970s focusing on creative activities with sounds, e.g. Gertrud Meyer-Denkmann (1970) and Breckoff, Küntzel-Hansen, Rogge, Siegler (1970). Frede Nielsen suggests that the emphasis on creation with "sounds" has a direct link to the teaching philosophy of the composition movement as well as to that of Carl Orff. (Nielsen, 2002, p. 277).

In the Norwegian setting, the emphasis—in the classroom as well as in higher education— during the 1970s and 1980s was also no doubt on the first of Barrett's categorisations, (see Chapter 1, 'composition as creative expression'). In the 1990s this changed somewhat to an emphasis on Barrett's third direction: composition as a teaching and learning strategy employed to promote musical thinking and understanding. The culmination of the composition movement in the Norwegian setting was the inclusion of 'composing' as one out of four major activity areas in the national curriculum of 1997 (accounted for in the beginning of this chapter).

The extent to which Norwegian music education includes musical composition in practical everyday classroom work is hard to say. In his recent enquiry of how the 1997 national curriculum influenced musical practice and attitudes in schools, Johansen found that the music curriculum did not lead to radical changes in educational practice. However, he also found that the attitude to 'composing' was one of the areas where change could be observed:

> Firstly, courses in composing seem to have influenced the understanding of composing. From appearing as an insurmountable challenge in the beginning when the curriculum was new, this understanding of composing has changed in direction towards a more practical attitude, especially in relation to the concrete teaching challenges my informants faced. This attitude was especially noticeable for the understanding of what composition could mean to pupils at different age levels. (Johansen 2003, p. 337, my translation)

Dyndahl (2004), commenting on different "positions" and "identities" in public music education in schools, maintains that 'composing' has gradually become more common in the music classroom as well as in curricula and educational discourse. (Dyndahl, 2004, p.88).
By the turn of the century, then, a general opinion in Norwegian music education seems to be that composition as a major discipline within compulsory primary and secondary schooling is well established, but still in its infancy.

International research on composing in schools

In a retrospective article on his own pioneering research projects into Swedish children's musical creativity in the 1960s, Bertil Sundin (1998) expresses a deep concern about *contemporary* research on children's creative music making. Sundin's research in Swedish kindergartens in the beginning of the 1960s is a truly innovativeinquiry into children's creative music making, not only in Scandinavia, but internationally as well. He "wanted to find out what children did musically when they were not directly influenced by adult authorities, what children came up with when they were asked to invent their own songs, and what music meant to children" (Sundin 1998, p. 35). His impressive thesis "Barns musikalska skapande" [Musical Creativity in Childhood] was the first major research publication in this area, which influenced Scandinavian music education and musical practice in schools and teacher education profoundly (Sundin 1963 and 1978). A similar observation can be made with regard to Norwegian Jon Roar Bjørvold's research into children's spontaneous singing in the late 1970s. (Bjørkvold 1981 and 1989) [45]. Coming from the tradition of educational progressivism more than 40

[45] Sundin's impact was mainly due to the book he wrote somewhat later. His "Barns musikaliska utvekling" [Children's musical development] found its way into the curricula of music teacher education throughout Scandinavia and was widely read (Sundin, 1978). Bjørkvold's work had many similarities with Sundin's, but his approach was less psychological.

years ago, Sundin rebelled against a research focussed upon what he recently calls a "normative adult-oriented perspective". In his 1998 retrospect he refers to his own feeling of being in opposition to previous research into the music of young children (e.g. Werner, 1917, and 1948; Schünemann, 1930) and their tendency to exclude authentic creativity in young children's music making. Cohen (1980) maintains a similar view on these issues. She argues that researchers should not view the child as an imperfect adult, but make sense of children's authentic worlds (p. 71). As for contemporary research on music creativity in childhood Sundin writes:

> This discussion continues today. The various opinions are dependant upon several factors: whether product or process is emphasised; whether childhood is seen as a special culture or just as a precursor to adulthood; what is counted as music and what is not; what criteria are used for categorising and assessing the products, and so on. (Sundin, 1998, p.37)

Academic research into areas relevant for what we now call music composition in music education can boast of a more than 40 year history (Barrett, 1998). The research literature has increased considerably in volume and variety especially in the past 20 years. Even so, Barrett suggests that this research is in its beginnings, and that:

> A number of conflicting views of children's capacities to engage in compositional experience have emerged from the research findings, suggesting that we have still much to learn from the study of children's compositional processes and products.
> (ibid, p. 30)

A number of the conflicting views referred to by Barrett have to do with what children are able to *do* music wise at different ages, what 'counts' as compositional activity and "in what universal categories they are able to *think* about music generally and in composition specifically" (ibid, p. 16 ff). Barrett's survey *Researching Children's Compositional Processes and Products* (ibid) accounts for a substantial amount of research in composing grouped into studies of product and process respectively. The great majority of the studies claim to pay equal attention to process as well as product. Some of them, however, rely heavily on analysis of children's compositions. Swanwick and Tillman for instance, build their well-known theory of musical development on the analysis of 745 child compositions (Swanwick and Tillman, 1986).

The research literature on children's composing also covers a wide range of research methodologies, age ranges and research arenas. As mentioned above, overviews often group the research according to their relationships to products and processes respectively (e.g., Barrett, 1998; Hargreaves, 1992; Webster, 1992).

Referring to the early research on composing by Pond (1981), Sundin reminds us that children's creative music making must be regarded as a way of expressing meaning:

Bjørkvold's dissertation, "Den spontane barnesangen- vårt musikalske morsmål" [Children's spontaneous singing - our musical mother tongue] appeared in 1981. His book "Det musiske menneske" was translated into a number of different languages. The English title is "The Muse Within". The book seems to be widely read, not only in Scandinavia, but internationally.

> ..how children work hard to make the world meaningful, including the world of music. Perhaps they cannot make much meaning out of creativity studies conducted in non-natural settings with highly specific tasks, which severely limit their own imagination and also their choices. (Sundin, 1998, p.53)

Sundin seems to argue for a shift in research focus, a shift that puts children's discourse and interactions in natural settings as the focus of interest. According to Sundin such a direction "might lead to an abandonment of the traditional but artificial dichotomy between process and product" (Sundin 1998, p. 54). In my view the dichotomy between process and product is a result of the concentration of research in music education during the 1970s and 80s within the frames of the so-called "cognitive revolution" where the main focus was on "development studies" and "music as cognition" (e.g., Serafine, 1988; Hargreaves, 1986 and 1992). Cognition studies have drawn on observation of processes, for instance as a problem solving activity (Bunting, 1988), as well as analysis of products, (e.g., Swanwick and Tillman (1986). In some of these studies there has been little emphasis on the importance of situation, intention, process, context and culture, for interpretation and theory development. In more recent studies these aspects seem to play a more important role (see e.g. Wiggins, 1994, Folkestad, 1996 and Burnard 1999).

Research categorisation by setting and data focus

As suggested above, the research community in music education seems to have come up with number of different theories about music composition and young people. The differences do not only touch on what characterises and constitutes children's music composition, but also on approaches to data collection, what to study most rigorously, such as process or product, and the 'hows' and 'wheres' of studying the phenomena in question. A somewhat different categorisation of studies from the traditional one could be—to get a better overview—to group the research according to *arenas* and *conditions* for collection of data in addition to the more traditional process/product dichotomy. Do the phenomena being studied take place in a natural setting, i.e. as a part of a regular educational music program in a school, a regular informal environment outside school, or is it collected in experimental and /or laboratory settings? True, concepts such as "a natural setting " and " a laboratory setting" can be problematic in terms of defining what is what.[46] Likewise, the concepts "process" and "product" have similar definitional problems (see Chapter 1 and later in this chapter). A number of the studies reflect and discuss these problems, but not always in relation the extent to which different positions with regard to data collection and research arenas might influence findings and the theory produced.

Putting the two approaches to categorisations together creates a different kind of overview with options for identifying research by a richer set of criteria. In my view, when looking closely at the research in question, the division between different approaches are often not discrete enough to be used for analytic purposes in a "black and white type" of categorisation. Rather, I prefer to consider 'process-product' and 'natural setting and lab setting' as opposites on a continuum. This allows for the inclusion of borderline cases, something, which, as we will soon see, is relevant in some of the research studies in question.

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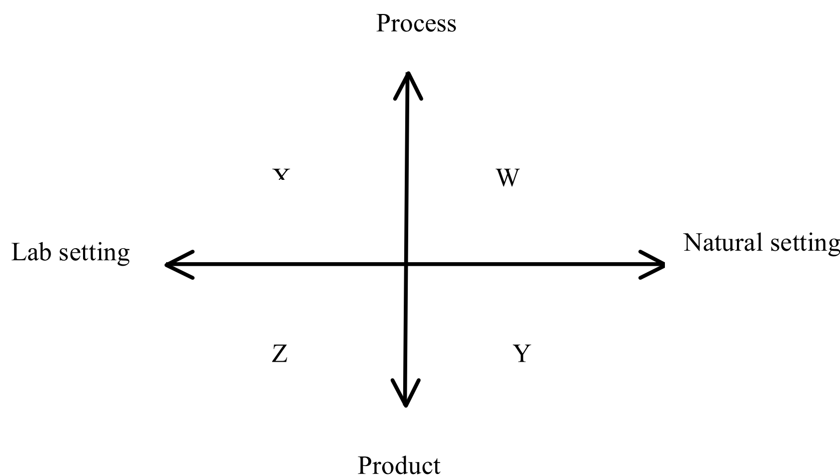
[46] I use the term "naturalistic" in keeping with Lincoln and Guba's (1985) use of the concept. They underline two major tenets for their understanding of what characterises naturalistic inquiry: "What is salient to us is that, first, no manipulation on the part of the inquirer is implied, and, second, the inquirer imposes no *a priori* units on the outcome. Naturalistic investigation is what the naturalistic investigator does, and these two tenets are the prime directives (Lincoln and Guba, 1985, p. 8). See also Chapters 2 and 4.

This implies that I see it as possible and legitimate to consider different studies, even if they claim to be dealing with compositional processes, in relation to how they deal with compositional products, and likewise, to consider studies that claim to be naturalistic or experimental, in relation to the extent to which they do or don't manipulate the collection of data. This kind of knowledge about the nature of the studies is in my opinion crucial to appreciate and evaluate findings and theory.

Fig. 3.1 Research categorisation by setting and data focus



Chapters 1 and 2 describe the present study as naturalistic with a major focus on compositional processes. However, I also underline the fact that compositional products, in the meaning of finished musical compositions will be studied and analysed in order to shed light on aspects of the processes. In relation to the model above, fig. 3.1, the present study can be placed to the very right in matrix in the [w]- and [y] areas with an emphasis on research activity in the [w] area.

In what follows I intend to take a closer look at some existing studies on music composition in education, something which I hope can serve two goals: (1) To provide a background for the present study and (2) to shed light on some of the conflicting views on music composition and young people suggested above (Sundin, 1998; Barrett, 1998).

Conflicting views on music composition

American John Kratus has conducted a number of studies using an experimental, lab setting approach (1985, 1989, 1991, 1994). His main focus seems to be the compositional processes, the [x] area in the matrix of Fig. 3.1 above, but his data analysis are to a great extent concerned with what can be labelled as compositional products: the [z] area. In his 1985 study, Kratus gave children a ten-minute limit on compositional tasks. He recorded the whole process and used independent judges who, when *listening* to what the children had produced, classified

and evaluated their music making according to a number of imposed categories. Among the many findings relevant for the present study are his view that children's compositional activity can best be understood in a stage model consisting of three phases: exploration, development and repetition. He also suggests that children without compositional practice cannot be expected to use artistic devices such as development and repetition until the age of nine (Kratus, 1994).

Kratus' study has been severely criticised by other researchers, notably Barrett (1998) and Burnard (1999). Both of them claim that Kratus' experimental approach to the data collection misrepresents childhood compositional activities. From a phenomenological point of view Burnard accuses Kratus of overlooking children's musical intentions in his attempt at clarifying whether distinctions exist in children's improvisations and compositions (Burnard 1999, p. 53 ff). Barrett refers to other researchers such as Davies (1994), van Ernst (1993), Hogg (1994), Younker and Smith (1996), Kaschub (1997) and DeLorenzo (1989) whose findings seem to modify as well as contradict Kratus' results. DeLorenzo, for example found in her classroom studies of creative music problem solving processes, that children have a tendency to continue the experimentation and development process to the end of the designated time, only arriving at the final product at the last minute. Barrett concludes by writing that:

> Whilst studies such as Kratus' offer some insights into the compositional processes of children when engaged in highly specific tasks (as described in the research) under certain test conditions, the degree of transferability between these tasks and conditions and the tasks and conditions found in the natural classroom setting is yet to be ascertained. Until more information regarding the compositional processes of children in natural classroom settings is available, it may be wise to reserve judgment on the applicability of the findings of such studies to the design of music curricula. (Barrett, 1998, p. 21)

Above, Barrett more than suggests that she puts her faith in research taking place in natural settings and that we still lack information regarding compositional processes of children in natural settings. Referring to the conflicting results of Kratus' studies and more naturalistic studies, she goes on to claim, referring to Brown (1992) that if educational research in this field is to produce "important knowledge, it should occur within the constraints of the natural classroom setting, where the researcher acknowledges and accommodates the complexity of the setting, and the multiple confounding influences that exist there" (Barrett, 1998, p.20).

Swanwick and Tillman's well known study and theory is seemingly the kind of research that Barrett asks for.[47] On the basis of this study the researchers advocate the view that children move sequentially through Piagetian-like stages from a focus on materials, to expression, followed by the ability to explore the structural possibilities of music (ages 10- 15) and finally to a concern with reflection, value and personal taste (Swanwick and Tillman, 1986, p. 331 ff). The researchers suggest that the age levels given are approximate, and that development can be

[47] In an article in "Psychology of Music and Music Education", Swanwick (1991) accounts for the impact of the study on practical music education in many countries. Referring to Polish and Japanese translations of the theory, Dutch research on its potential for music education in primary schools, and the Arts Propel team in the US, Swanwick claims that several generations "of students in teacher education have reviewed the theory and a number of college and university students dissertations have explored some of its possibilities. Teachers have frequently expressed a shock of recognition when confronted with the model". (Swanwick, 1991, p. 22)

dependent upon the “environment”. In a later follow-up article Swanwickadmits that the description given of “the characteristics of the compositions at the higher age levels was ambitious and risky, projecting well beyond our data” (Swanwick, 1991, p. 25). Even so, a major conclusion in their work seems to support Kratus’ (1994) suggestion that children below nine are unlikely to compose with musical and aesthetical meaning and to demonstrate a structural approach to music composition. The researchers maintain the fact that “there is such a thing as musical development and that it takes place in a certain sequence”, and that their evidence “suggests that there may be broad changes that occur in almost all children”. (Swanwick and Tillman, 1986, p. 338).

Swanwick and Tillman’s study was conducted in a natural setting in the sense that the majority of data collection took place in one school during normal school hours where the researcher and the music teacher were one and the same person. According to the researchers, data was collected in the form of observation of processes as well as an impressive number of compositional products including “the briefest utterances as well as more worked out and sustained invention”. The researchers claim that the advantage of their approach is “that we are observing relatively undirected musical *processes* rather then the products of polished performances, directly influenced by teachers and peers” (ibid, p. 311). When considered in relation to the matrix in fig 3.1. above, the researchers seem to claim that their research belongs to area [w] with a focus on processes and an approach to the collection of data, which keeps the influence of “teachers and peers” away from the data. Looking more closely into the study, however, it can be argued that; a) descriptions and analyses of compositional *processes* hardly exist; that b) the data analysed by independent judges are exclusively recordings of what the researchers label as ‘compositions’ and ‘ musical offerings’ from individual children or small groups and that c) the compositions are collected as a result of a series of up to ten small, but specific compositional ‘tasks’ given by the teacher-researcher (ibid, p. 311). This information brings the study much closer to the area categorised by [z] in the fig. 3.1- matrix, because the focus to such a great extent is on compositional products and because the collection of data to some extent resembles an experimental design and not a data collection technique within a naturalistic paradigm, a paradigm which claims there should be no manipulation on the part of the inquirer (Lincoln and Guba, 1985, p. 8).

Although influential, Swanwick and Tillman’s study and theory has been met with severe criticism and a number of studies have come up with alternative views. Davies’ (1994) study of the musical structural process of invented songs suggests that young children compose with meaning and that they use musical structures at a very early age. Davies warns that by considering children’s musical development within the framework of Swanwick and Tillmann’s stage model, the musical development sequence, we might seriously underestimate what young children can do (Davies 1994, p. 47). Other researchers, such as Marsh (1995), Barrett (1996), and Burnard (1999), support Davies’ view.

Folkestad (1996) suggests that it may not be possible at all, “or even desirable, to cover such a complex concept as musical development in a single figure.” Instead, he suggests, that musical development “appears in several very context- dependent areas at the same time” (p. 84). Commenting on Swanwick’s musical development sequence, Burnard (1999) suggests that as the research contexts did not allow the children to choose their own instruments and meanings, the child’s world could be filled with adult impositions from the outset (p. 62). In her

critique she maintains that the findings of Kratus, Swanwick and Tillman may limit our understanding of children's musical experience :

> "…separating these dimensions", *(and here she is referring to the different parts of the stage model)*," into a hierarchical view may limit our understanding of children's musical experience, particularly when the separation of sensory and intellectual and personal act of 'reflecting' seems to seriously undermine the view that children do find their own music meaningful." (ibid, p. 61)

Burnard concludes her critique by suggesting that in order to understand the nature of children's experience of composing, we "need to look more closely at not only what children actually do, but also what they have to say" (ibid, p. 61).

Research and what pupils "actually do" when composing.

It *is* interesting to study how contemporary researchers on children's composing position themselves in relation to important concepts in the research literature like 'process' and 'product', and 'experimental' and 'naturalistic' designs. In my view their attitudes and positions in relation to these concepts and practices seem to shape their ways of collecting and dealing with their data, as well as influencing what kind of findings they choose to describe and focus on. In Chapters 1 and 2 I presented this study as a study that is concerned with the *description*, *interpretation* and *understanding* of actions, events and phenomena of a compositional "naturalistic" practice in music education on a micro level. Hence, I have chosen to pay a brief visit into some relevant studies from "natural" settings in order to examine some aspects of their descriptions of what pupils "actually do".

American Jackie Wiggins' main study on compositional activity is a study of her own general fifth-grade music classroom. She studied the musical experience of two target children within the class context (Wiggins, 1992). Wiggins deals with data collected from a broad spectrum of composing activities over a period of five months, with an emphasis on small group composition. Her reports and findings draw on products as well as on process. She underlines the importance of looking at process in addition to product (Wiggins, 1994). In Wiggins' reports one can find numerous examples of the dynamism of the compositional process and the importance of musical ideas in such a process, e.g.:

> Sam: I have an idea. Matt, listen! I have an idea.
> Michael: Well, that's for your part. Now for me and Matt….I know…."A" will be very light and then "B" will be like strong. All right?
> Sam: But I have an idea for "B!"
> Negotiation began. When peers work together, it becomes necessary for individuals to express, clarify and justify their ideas and to evaluate one another's ideas before they can be assimilated into a unified work. (Wiggins 1995, p. 64)

In her reports it is also possible to find detailed descriptions of events and actions that shed light on the actual creation and making of specific compositions.

> Sam: "I got an idea! I got an idea! Wait…….."
> In this segment, Sam seemed to be seeking on the xylophone the pitches he could hear in his head. He played the first two pitches, paused, then the next three, paused again, but once he found the tonic, he proceeded to perform, with no hesitation, the entire melody in a form very close to the way in which it appeared in the final product. Once he had established the melody, he immediately taught Matt to play it. (ibid p.65)

Wiggins' main agenda in her studies, however, seems to be to put forward a strong argument against the findings of cognitive researchers suggesting that children at this age are not capable of dealing with structure and holistic planning. To me this is not the most interesting part of her study. I find the descriptions and interpretations focussing on the dynamic nature of relations between actions and contextual elements in the compositional process to be of greater interest for our understanding of music composition in a school context.

Australian Margaret Barrett's (1996) research focuses on children's aesthetic decision-making as evidenced in their original compositional products. Her research arena is the regular classroom music program and a great number of compositions by children from preparatory class to grade six. Her findings suggest that children as young as five years and nine months are capable of aesthetic decision-making as evidenced in their use of structure and form in their original compositions. In addition to analysing the compositions she relies on her observational data of classroom practice. In justifying why she wants to research children's aesthetic decision-making by examining children's products, Barrett argues that:

> … form and structure are integral to music and the communication of musical meaning. To place one sound after another is to make a number of structural decisions: how soon after the first sound will the second sound appear; will the second sound be the same or: shorter; longer; higher; lower; louder quieter? Even in the most simple of compositions, these decisions are made. (ibid, p.147-148)

Barrett is right that composing involves a number of decisions on structure and that these decisions are important. What I do question, however, is how an examination of outcomes of compositional processes, the musical pieces, can give sufficient information about something which I would consider to be an *actional* activity belonging to the process, namely decision-*making* and the *making* of a composition. Barrett's motivation for her approach seems to be that we may learn more of children's aesthetic thinking and decision-making "through the careful examination of what they do and the musical discourse that arises from such action than through the reliance on verbally communicated meanings alone" (Barrett 1996, p.4).

In Gøran Folkestad's Swedish study the focus is on musical composition as cultural practice with 13-16 year olds (Folkestad, 1996). Folkestad examined composition through computer-based music-making. He deliberately chose an out of school setting in order to be closer to what he calls "real life" and collected his data over three years through interviews and through having the young composers continually save the MIDI information from the creative process on the computer from the first idea until the completed piece of music. A major finding in his study is to describe what he calls 'horizontal' and 'vertical' composition as "qualitatively different ways of

composing” (ibid, pp 132). He refers to the context of the study when explaining his choice of labels by arguing that the categories of ‘horizontal’ and ‘vertical’ composing illustrate the “essence of the categories in relation to how the computer is used, how the work is visualised on the screen, and the creative processes involved in the activities” (p. 199). Referring to Swanwick and Tilman (1986), Folkestad argues that ‘process’ can be defined as "products over time" and that "process and product are coherent, two sides of the same coin, in an intertwined relationship" (Folkestad, 1996, p. 107). And he adds:

> Studying the process focuses our attention on the creator's perspective; his or her thoughts, acts and understanding of the activity become the basis of their description. In contrast, studying the product implies a shift in focus, where the music is separated from its creator and is regarded as an independent object and analysed from the perspective of the observer. Thus, the observer's, not the creator's criteria, thoughts, musical praxis and musical theory, become the basis for the analysis. (ibid, p. 108)

By examining a great number of "save as" files and through interviews of the participants, Folkestad seems to claim that he is given access to the compositional process of the computer-based pieces of music as well as to portfolios of “products over time”. Even if this undoubtedly gives a richer collection of data, I would still question whether the definition of process as "products over time" is convincing. To me a retrospective examination and focus on the preliminary outcomes of a composition process cannot fully account for the inter-relatedness and dynamic aspect of such a process, e.g. in terms of what happens when the participants are not being observed and move in and out of the compositional process.

The research arena for Australian Pamela Burnard is a study of 12 year olds in a London comprehensive school where she observed the children over 21 weekly music making lessons over a six-month period (Burnard 1999). These sessions were part of an extra-curricular lunchtime activity, the reason being that it then would not be regulated by the demands of a school curriculum. Burnard relies heavily on child interviews, as well as observations of compositional and improvisational processes and interpretations of the children’s music. She seems to pay equal attention to products and processes. The major finding of her study is that children’s experience of improvisation and composition is time-dependent. “Improvisation”, she says, “can be described as an account of time experienced in the form of a series of ‘nows’ embedded within an experience which embodies past, present and future”. Composition, on the other hand, “is encountered as activity prolonged ‘over’ time” (p. 316). The examples she gives from children’s interviews, especially, are rich with references to actions taking place during the compositional process. The following is taken from a research interview with Maria:

> Maria said:
> I figure out a couple of ideas first. Then I play them and Sidin makes something up and then we stop and talk. We keep starting and stopping and then going back over and over parts and then playing the whole thing through loads of times. [Source: Lunchtime interview] (ibid, p.237)

In commenting on this interview, Bernard maintains that the working process includes externalising decisions, feeding back opinions, reinforcing ideas, and making explicit the musical plans. The planning, she comments:

> ..is made explicit by a process Sidin described as 'confirming' whereby they play and then purposively stop in order to share with each other feedback on the worthiness of an idea. As a revisionist strategy, 'confirming' appeared to be central to the formative process of composing. (ibid, p. 237)

What Bernard describes looks to me as a combination of evaluation and compositional actions with an emphasis on relational activity: "feeding back, reinforcing, confirming".

All of the four important studies highlighted above have similarities and dissimilarities. All of the researchers collected their data in natural or close to natural settings, in classrooms and in out of school activities. They describe compositional activity and products in some detail, they emphasise the complexity of the phenomenon called music composition, they pay attention to process as well as product and they seem to share a belief in the context-dependence of findings in terms of descriptions and explanations. They differ, however, in their descriptions of and inquiries into the compositional process: Barrett and Folkestad by suggesting that compositional processes can be most meaningfully studied by analysing different categories of "products"; Burnard by relying heavily on interviews and the children's own perspective on composing and Wiggins by observing as teacher–researcher different aspects of the compositional processes in her own classroom.

Research based 'models' of the compositional process

In Chapter 1 I described the focus of the present study to be concerned with the enigmas of small group compositional *processes* in school contexts. The understanding of 'process' as a continuous series of actions over time with the intention of accomplishing some result, lends itself to the construction of 'models' in the sense of descriptions of the components, elements or aspects as part of the 'process' and the manner in which a thing is done or action takes place.[48] Swanwick's and Tillman's ' stage model' for musical development that we looked into above, is one example of the use of such a model. Their model is ostensibly constructed on the direct basis of their empirical study. In other cases these kinds of models can be used to summarise viewpoints based on a number of research studies, to summarise theoretical reviews and studies of such research, or some kind of theory, or combinations of these approaches. A number of theorists and researchers on music composition in education use this device to put findings and/or viewpoints into a holistic or more comprehensive system, which explains what they want to communicate.[49]

On the basis of her experience and research in her own and other music classrooms, Jackie Wiggins describes a comprehensive model she calls "a frame for understanding children's compositional processes". She claims that

[48] The etymological meanings of the concept 'model' are several. Meanings vary from 'architects set of designs' to; be 'on display' (as in fashion) to; the 'manner in which a thing is done' (Harper 2001c). Models are often created normatively, i.e. expected to be copied and used in practice. But they can also be used in a descriptive and explicatory sense, i.e. to help understanding.

[49] Models of this kind are used to describe the compositional processes of adult professional composers as well. British John Sloboda for example, in his book "The Musical Mind" (1985), puts forth such a model to describe compositional processes of professional composers. He suggests that the compositional process is a four-part structure where the main elements are: the holistic concept of the creation itself (A), the thematic idea or core (B), the development of this idea into a intermediate form (C) and the final form (D). Sloboda ascribes inspiration to phase B in this model; development, extension and change of the emerging piece can be located between B and C and evaluation and modification of the piece between C and D (Sloboda, 1985). Sloboda's model of the compositional process focuses strongly on the compositional process as a linear *structure* and the composers artistic decisions attached to the emerging piece.

her data has enabled her to describe what seems to be "a consistent modus operandi" for students irrespective of whether they are working alone in class, in small groups, or in whole-class settings. (Wiggins, 2003, p 143ff) Wiggins' "frame", or model, describes how the process tends to move forward in a progressive manner towards a goal. According to Wiggins this process is highly interactive and becomes more intense as it progresses. In her description Wiggins pays special attention to the 'beginnings', which tend to be quite complex and focussed on role decisions, the invention of musical material, selection of sound sources and creation of texts. In keeping with major findings in her research studies, she maintains that the children—as they progress—have a holistic vision of the work in progress and that this attitude of setting ideas into the context of the whole, involves organising, evaluating, revising and refining. Her frame also deals with the performance of the "product", the shared understandings of culture, the compositional problem and the curriculum, and the social contexts.

British Martin Fautley describes a model of group composing considered as an activity happening over eight phases followed by a final performance. Using a grounded theory approach, he bases his model on a study of group composition by lower secondary pupils in a typical UK comprehensive school. Fautley labels the phases from the beginning to the end as: 1) initial confirmatory phase; 2) generation of ideas; 3) exploration; 4) organisation; 5) work in progress performance; 6) revision; 7) transformation/modification; 8) extension and development (Fautley, 2003). Fautley underlines that progression through the phases should not be considered unilinear and that the different phases can be categorised as pre-generative, generative and post-generative. In his study, Fautley hypothesised that effective composing would involve a transfer in emphasis from the generative phases towards the post-generative. Fautley found that steady progression in the compositional process could be observed, but that no single 'best-fit' route of phase-traversal could be postulated. An interesting aspect of Fautley's study is his use of the model to describe what he calls 'points of maximum efficacy for teacher intervention' in the composition process. He designates these points as 'loci of teacher intervention', an intervention that may comprise teacher as resource, checking of task-understanding as well as different aspects of assessment.

American Maud Hickey's model for what she calls "creative musical thinking in the context of musical composition with children" is almost, in its entirety, based on an adaptation of Amabile's (1996) "Componential Model of Creativity". (Hickey, 2003, p. 37 ff) She refers to Amabile's empirical support for the model from a variety of settings and domains. Hickey uses the term 'creative' to describe "personality traits (person), thinking styles or behaviours (process), the characteristics of a product, and the place of environment in which an activity occurs" (p. 32). The model describes a cycle of what Hickey calls "general creative thinking" where the creative or composing individual proceeds from *task identification*, to *preparation* (including exploration and practising ideas), to *response generation* (generate possible ideas; search memory), to *response validation* (test response—seek feedback), and to *outcomes*. Here the cycle can be ended or repeated. The creative individual—at different points in the process—is influenced by task motivation, domain-relevant skills (such as musical aptitude, experience), creativity relevant processes (such as fluency, flexibility, originality) and social environment. Hickey presents and discusses the model as a sort of universal model relevant for any kind of creative-thinking process through music composition in education.

In 1987 Peter Webster presented his ‘conceptual model of creative thinking in music’. Webster’s model is based on a general review of and findings from relevant research in this field, plus, as he puts it, “…some speculation about how creative thinking in music might occur” (Webster, 1987, p. 159). In his first presentation of his now well-known model, Webster underlines that “this is a *conceptual* model and not a detailed representation of the many interacting variables that constitute the creative process” (ibid, p. 159). In a recent revision of the model Webster claims that creative thinking is driven by a “force” in the creator that inspires or drives the creative spirit. The “response” to this force is embodied in composition, performance/improvisation, listening and analysis (Webster, 2002, p.28). The basic components of Webster’s model is (1) a problem solving context, (2) convergent and divergent thinking skills, (3) stages in the thinking process, (4) some aspect of novelty, and (5) some usefulness of the resulting product (ibid, p. 28). Even if Webster in his first presentation suggested that his conceptual model could not account for the many interacting variables of the creative process, he maintains that the thinking process is a “constant interplay” between two qualitatively different ways of thinking, divergent and convergent thinking, as introduced by J.P. Guildford (1967) as a part of his ‘Structure of Intellect Model’. According to Webster:

> Divergent thinking on the part of the music creator involves imaginative thought. Here the creator is exploring the many possibilities of music expression, always cataloguing, sifting through, rejecting, accepting only to change yet again. Small kernels of musical thought, which might be a melodic or rhythmic phrase, a harmony, a timbre, or even longer and more complex patterns of music, are all imagined and possibly realised on some musical instruments. These primitive gesturals (PGs) are all part of the exploration process that often characterises the opening periods of creative thought. Such thinking is largely divergent in nature. Of course, such thinking occurs all through the creative experience as ideas are refined, then rejected, and new periods of divergence occur. All of this is cast against convergent thinking that is more linear and more analytical. (Webster, 2002, p. 28)

Webster seems to equate musical creativity with creative thought processes, “all imagined”, and underlines that he continues to believe “that creative thinking is a dynamic process of alternation between convergent thinking, moving in stages over time, enabled by certain skills (both innate and learned), and by certain conditions, all resulting in a final product”. He also underlines that creative thinking is not “a mysterious process that is based on divine inspiration….”. (ibid, p. 26). Webster’s “stages over time” is placed in a very central position in his model in between divergent and convergent thinking. When he launched the model in 1987 he referred to Guilford’s (1967) Structure of Intellect Model and Wallas’ (1926) stage theory. In his 1987 model Webster adopted Wallas’ stage model of preparation, incubation, illumination and verification in its entirety to explain the movement in stages between the two qualitatively different ways of thinking[50]. In the 2002 version of the model, Webster has modified some of Wallas’ stages and changed the movement between the stages from linear, starting with preparation, to “circular motion” to show that the movement is “often clockwise and counter clockwise as the creator progresses in a non-linear way through the process” (ibid, p. 30). Webster explains the function of what he calls the “model centre” the following way:

[50] In a section on “the creative process” in his influential 1986 book “Hargreaves (1986) refers to Wallas’ model as “widely quoted” (p. 148).

> The reader familiar with my last model might be startled to see that I no longer use the traditional notion of "preparation, incubation, illumination, verification" that grew from my endorsement of the Wallas model created some years ago (Wallas, 1926). I still am quite sure that the stages operate in the creative process and have retained the notions of preparation, verification, and incubation (though I have renamed this "Time Away" which seems to make more conceptual sense to me). I have come to believe that illumination is not as much a stage as a qualitative event that occurs many times in the creative process. I also feel that the notion of verification is best reserved for the final polishing stage of the creative processes that are more reflective in nature. The idea of "Working Through" is attractive because it functions both in terms of reflective thinking and "in the moment" thinking. It is this stage, too, that likely occupies the greatest percentage of convergent/divergent thinking in combination. (ibid, p. 30)

Even though the four models of compositional processes presented above may seem quite different, they also have some major similarities. All of them operate with some kind of "stages", which represent different levels of progression from being given a task to completion of an outcome. All of them seem to advocate the view that there exists some kind of *circular and interactive* motion in the process in addition to something more linear. For Wiggins this circular motion seems to be taking place repeatedly throughout the process; for Fautley it seems to take place at specific points in the process, such as between 'exploration ' and 'generation of ideas', and for Hickey it seems to be a matter of repeating the whole sequential motion with a view to revision. Webster has changed the strong linearity of Wallas' original stages adopted in his model to some kind of clockwise motion.

Some striking differences between the models have to do with what kind of phenomenon the models are describing. Wiggins, e.g. presents her model as a description of "a consistent modus operandi for students working alone in class, in small groups, and in whole-class settings" (Wiggins, 2003, p. 143), whereas Fautley restricts his model to having relevance only for group composing. Both Wiggins and Fautley seem to focus on what might be called compositional *agency* in terms of the labels they choose to use and phenomena they describe. Hickey and Webster, on the other hand, have a much more universal approach to their descriptions where the focus is on compositional and creative *thinking*, and where the scientific background to a greater extent seems to be that of cognitive psychology and creativity theory. By building their models to such a degree on universal theories of *creative* processes Hickey and Webster seem to advocate that different contexts for musical composition play a subordinate role in our understanding and description of music composition in education.

It is beyond the scope of this discussion to go deeply into the field of different positions of creativity theory and creative processes here.[51] However, because of the obvious relevance of the field and theory of *creativity* to my study of compositional processes in an educational context, I find it necessary to comment on some aspects of the relationship between creativity theory and theory about compositional processes.

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[51] See e.g. Hargreaves (1986), Webster (1987, and 1990) and Hickey (2003) for more information and discussion of "creative thinking". For a general introduction to creativity see: Sternberg, RJ (edit) (1999) "Handbook of Creativity".

Creativity theory and compositional processes

As suggested above, in scientific studies of *creativity* in compositional processes, the emphasis has been on creative *thinking* rather than *creative agency and actions*. In the present study creative thinking is not my prime focus. A study of inner creative thinking would mean a study of the *mental* processes involved during the generation and production of the compositions.[52] Instead I am focussing on creative *agency* from a phenomenological position. According to Merleau-Ponty it is misleading to believe that "thought" is an independent internal "thing". He writes:

> Thought is no 'internal' thing, and does not exist independently of the world and of words. What misleads us in this connection, and causes us to believe in a thought which exists for itself prior to expression, is thought already constituted and expressed, which we can silently recall to ourselves, and through which we acquire the illusion of an inner life. But in reality this supposed silence is alive with words, this inner life is an inner language. (Merlau-Ponty, 1962/2002, p. 213)

As pointed out above, it is possible to differentiate between descriptions and models of compositional processes in terms of their focus on creative *agency* versus creative *thinking*. As discussed in Chapter 2, James Wertsch (1998) suggests a middle position by introducing what he calls *mind as action*, and such a position might seem to reconcile such an ostensible dichotomy.

However, first, I would like to draw attention to the fact that a number of the writings on creativity and creative thinking in music education, and not only those of Peter Webster (as described above), seem to rest quite heavily on the shoulders of Graham Wallas' classical work, "The Art of Thought", from 1926.[53] There is no doubt that Wallas' work has been important to creativity theory even though J.P. Guilford in his famous 1950 keynote address to the American Psychological Association ridiculed Wallas' contribution and referred to it as a theory that "tells us almost nothing about the mental operations that actually occur" (Guilford 1950, p. 451). It should be noted, however, that Wallas in his endeavour to create a theory of the very *art* of thought, introduces a comprehensive thinking model inspired by such diverse sources as the German 19th century physicist, Helmholtz, and the British romantic poet, Shelley. After referring to Helmholtz's 70th birthday speech at an 1891 banquet as the inspirational source of Wallas' first three "stages of control" as he calls them—preparation, incubation and illumination—Wallas goes on to reveal that what he has in mind is not a specific system explaining a limited area of the art of thinking, but something generic and general. In so doing he even refers to "music composition":

[52] The focus on mental processes is a natural consequence of the importance of psychology in such studies. As pointed out earlier in this chapter there are a number of studies where researchers intend to say something about mental processes involved in composition mainly through the study of compositional products. (See e.g. Barrett, 1996, and Swanwick and Tillman, 1986)

[53] Wallas introduced the concepts of Preparation, Incubation, Illumination and Verification for the first time in his book "The Art of Thought" (1926). They were concepts to denote what Wallas called "stages of control" in thinking. Also, Wallas introduced a fifth stage-like term, that of "Intimation", which is used to denote the final stage of Incubation, the moment before the bright idea surfaces into Illumination. This "stage" has not reappeared in writings on creativity in the same ways as the other four. (Wallas, 1945, pp. 45)

..and it must always be remembered that very much important thinking, done for instance by a poet exploring his own memories, or a man trying to see clearly his emotional relation to his country or his party, resembles music composition in that the stages leading to success are not very easily fitted into a "problem and solution" scheme. Yet even when success in thought means the creation of something felt to be beautiful and true rather than the solution of a prescribed problem, the four stages of Preparation, Incubation, Illumination and Verification of the final result can generally be distinguished from each other." (Wallas, 1945, pp. 52-54)

Secondly, it should be noted that Wallas' ideas seems to be deeply rooted in 19th century romanticism and Freudian psychology.[54] He seems to be profoundly inspired by Shelley's change from "what he called Reason to what he called Imagination", (ibid p. 95). He refers to Shelley's belief in the Platonian axiom that poetry is "the supreme form of intellectual creation" and that "there is no one in the world who deserves the name of Creator but God and the Poet" (ibid, pp. 95-96).[55]

Wallas,—and some of those who stand on his shoulders with respect to the field of creativity,—then, seem to represent a rare combination of cognitive and "mystical" positions with regard to what constitutes the decisive elements of creative processes. In a recent and major volume on creativity, "The Handbook of Creativity", Sternberg and Lubart are very clear about their scepticism towards what they call *mystical* approaches to the study of creativity. They write:

> The creative person was seen as an empty vessel that a divine being would fill with inspiration. The individual would then pour out the inspired idea, forming an otherworldly product……….The mystical approach to the study of creativity has probably made it harder for scientific psychologists to be heard. Many people seem to believe, as they do about love, that creativity is something that just doesn't lend itself to scientific study, because it is a spiritual process. (Sternberg and Lubart, 1999, p. 5)

The focus on "creative thinking" in compositional processes advocated in recent writings (see above and for example, Hickey, 2003 and Webster, 1987, 1990 and 2002) is clearly a cognitivist position. Since they draw heavily on Wallas' theory, it is also possible to suggest that some of these theorists might occupy what Sternberg and Lubart denote as a "mystical" position. However, as pointed out above, when Webster talks about "creativity and music composition" his empirical and theoretical background is clearly psychological where the focus is on "thinking" and the "mind". He says:

[54] Freud is recurrently referred to in psychological literature on creativity theory. According to Sternberg and Lubart, Freud maintained that "writers and artists produce creative work as a way to express their unconscious wishes in a publicly acceptable fashion" (Sternberg & Lubart, 1999, p. 6)

[55] In the book "Creativity and Music Education" (Sullivan and Willingham (eds.) 2002), a number of writers reveal that they rely heavily on Wallas' theory. Doug Goodkin, in his *Creative Education*, maintains that "artists in all fields need unstructured time left alone to follow their Muse", (ibid, p. 11); McLennon suggest that "illumination" might be a "myth", (Goodkin, 2002, p. 39), and Austin Clarkson, in his concluding chapter "A Curriculum for the Creative Imagination" seems to embrace Wallas' theory completely and advocate the view that students can "put their trust in the confluence of conscious and unconscious forces in the tertiary process." (Clarkson, 2002, p. 67)

> …what creativity in music really is: the engagement of the mind in the active, structured process of thinking in sound for the purpose of producing some product that is new for the creator. This is clearly a thought process and we are challenged, as educators, to better understand how the mind works in such matters- hence the term "creative thinking". (Webster, 2002, p. 26)

It should also be noted that even if Webster seems to be focused on inner cognition *per se*, he is also aware of the agency aspect of creative processes, in terms of referring to the *production* of some product. (ibid, p. 29) But this aspect of the process is not his prime concern. [56]

Summary

In this chapter I have tried to contextualise my own study in what can be labelled as the international and professional macro context of music composition within the genre of 'school music'. I have tried to show that by the turn of the century, a general opinion in Norwegian music education seems to be that composition as a major discipline within compulsory primary and secondary schooling is well established, but still in its infancy. My intention in this chapter has also been to give international readers an introduction to what has taken place and what has shaped Norwegian tradition in the field of music composition in schools.

The greatest part of the chapter is a review of international literature and research on composing in schools. Such a review needs to be selective because of the mass of documentation available on different aspects of composition, something I think shows that a great number of people find this field interesting and worthwhile to study. I have tried to show some of the breadth and scope of the research by categorising studies in accordance with setting and data focus for the particular studies I describe. My categorisation serves to question some researchers who claim to focus on compositional processes as well as products, but who not always do what they say they do. I have chosen to account more in-depth for some studies I find especially relevant for the present study and also, given the focus on compositional process in the present study, to account for attempts at developing "models" for how music composition in schools are structured and developed. Last, but not least, this chapter provides a closer look into the connections between theory on creativity and theory on music composition. I conclude this special part of my discussion by suggesting, referring to Wallas' (1945) influence in the field, that some of the research activity I review seems to be rooted in 19th century romanticism and Freudian psychology.

[56] This might not be in opposition to Webster's emphasis on creative *thinking*. The two concepts, 'divergent' and 'convergent', which he has borrowed from Guilford (1967) 'Structure of the Intellect' model, is presented as divergent and convergent *production* in Guilford's model. Guilford described intelligence as comprising operations, contents, and products. In his model there are five kinds of operations (cognition, memory, divergent production, convergent production, and evaluation). He describes six kinds of products (units, classes, relations, systems, transformations, and implications), and five kinds of contents (visual, auditory, symbolic, semantic, behavioural). Each of these dimensions is independent, which means there are theoretically 150 different components of intelligence.

Chapter 4

RESEARCH DESIGN AND DATA ANALYSIS

In this chapter I describe the present study with regard to the specific context, framework and approaches to data collection in the field of study, the research focus and problem, and my approaches to data analysis and theory development. This chapter builds on previous chapters, notably Chapter 2 where I discuss and account for theoretical and methodological inspirations for this study. In Chapter 2 I discuss aspects of phenomenology, socio-cultural cognition theory, naturalistic inquiry, grounded theory and educational ethnography, and the *relevance* of these areas for different aspects of the present study including research design and data analysis.

Initial plan for the empirical work

In Chapter 1, the Prelude, I describe the phenomenon to be researched to be, broadly speaking, small group composition as it evolves thorough sequences of action/interaction over time. This focus was the result of my initial wondering in the pre-study period about what was really going on when pupils composed music on their own in small groups. As a part of the emerging design of the present study I planned my entry to the empirical field with such a focus in mind, but without *a priori* and explicitly formulated research questions. I realised I had to get access to a school and class where small group composition actually was taking place over time and use purposive sampling for such a purpose (Lincoln and Guba, 1985, p.40)

School, teacher, pupils and educational context

In the autumn of 1997 I contacted a teacher, Mrs. L, in a primary school close to my university college campus. I knew that she and her class of 20 nine-year olds just had finished a project on composition called "We are Composers!" (HSH, 1997). This project had focused on whole class composition in co-operation with a modern art music ensemble. The musicians had visited the school several times and worked with the pupils to prepare a concert for a music festival where the pupils performed their own piece developed over time as a whole class activity. Mrs. L, the general class teacher, holds a postgraduate degree in music education and had expressed an interest in starting to use small group music composition as this was new to her as well as to the pupils, and also because composition was being strengthened in the new national 1997 curriculum (see Chapter 3). We agreed that I would get access to her music teaching in this class to observe, videotape and collect data over the rest of their primary schooling time, i.e. four years, if needed. In keeping with my naturalistic research approach Mrs. L agreed to let me come and go in her classroom to get to know the pupils, observe and plan the data collection. She also agreed to notify me well in advance when she had planned small group composition projects in order for me to install necessary video and microphone equipment in the rooms being used.

The school is a middle sized Norwegian primary school with approximately 250 pupils and approximately 20 teachers located in a rural area near a regional centre with approximately 15,000 inhabitants. Pupils come from the neighbouring area—which is the normal arrangement for Norwegian public schools—from a population which includes a wide range of social and economic backgrounds, from industry and public service to farmers and academics. In this particular class, which I visited frequently, the pupils were 9 to 12+ years, comprising

seven boys and twelve girls. The school is well resourced and has good facilities and playgrounds. The atmosphere of the school can be characterised as friendly. The educational ethos and philosophy can be considered as "progressive", but highly individualised. For many years the school has had a partnership with the university college in connection with teaching practice for teacher education students.

With the use of participant observation, interviews and videotapes of group processes, my initial plan was to study and micro-analyse the compositional activities of four pupils, and interview them extensively over three years. The four pupils would on the one hand operate as a group, and on the other hand be studied as members of other groups. I also had planned to observe and videotape these four pupils when they were working on individual composing assignments in order to compare this activity with their small group composition activity. This was the agreed procedure with Mrs. L. when I started to frequent their classroom in the late autumn of 1997. Mrs. L informed the pupils and parents about the research plan and project, and the pupils were told I was a professor who was curious about how pupils could compose music.

Mrs. L used a standard procedure for the organisation of her compositional projects. First, she gave the assignment and commented on it in whole class, then pupils were divided into groups and spread around in other rooms, then they all came back to the classroom to present and performed and talked somewhat about their performance. Sometimes they would repeat their performances for other classes or parents. The three assignments, which served as the educational inputs for the videotaped group sessions in the present study, were quite different in terms of musical content. The first assignment focused on composition of music based on a poem: "The Sun". The task for the group was described as making a composition, which suited the atmosphere of the poem and which simultaneously would exhibit and integrate elements from the poem such as words, form and expressions. The second assignment was given in connection with a project on fairytales. The pupils were asked to make and perform a piece of music, which could serve as an overture to their own dramatisation of the fairytale, e.g. "The Little Red Hen". The third assignment was connected to a topic on Africa, and the compositional task was to create and perform "rhythm music" which could be connected to this topic. Mrs. L would typically spend some time explaining the task given in the assignment in a whole class setting before the group sessions. All assignments are enclosed in the Appendices.

Even if compositional activity in groups was new to the class when I started to record the compositional processes, they were used to this kind of organisation in other areas of learning. It should be noted here that Mrs. L not only was the music teacher, but also the general classroom teacher who was responsible for the great majority of subjects throughout their primary schooling time. In Norwegian primary schools this way of organising teachers' work has a long tradition. Recent trends reflect a move towards the use of more team thinking and specialist teachers. At the start of the present study Mrs. L was in her early fifties and a very experienced teacher. She was trained as a general classroom teacher. Early in her career she specialised in music education. Her postgraduate work in music education also has its basis in her own music classroom. Her educational ethos and philosophy will appear more in detail in the Findings section of this study.

When composing, the pupils had access to a number of different musical instruments, notably within the Orff

tradition, such as xylophones, glockenspiels, a wide range of percussion instruments, and sometimes also special drums, such as djembes. A wide array of available instruments were selected by the teacher and placed in the rooms where the group activity was planned to take place. Pupils had the opportunity to ask for supplementary instruments during the compositional process if they so wished.

Sampling

I took field notes after every visit to the class and kept a diary for all my contacts with the teacher and the school[57]. The first videotaping took place in the spring of 1998. The whole class was divided into groups for the first composition project, but only the target group, which had been set up by Mrs. L, was video recorded. The videotaping took place in different rooms. Standard procedure for all use of videotape was the following: The equipment was positioned in a corner of the room covering most of the space where the pupils worked and an extra microphone was discretely placed to record sound and speech. (Erickson, 1992, pp. 214) When the pupils entered the room for their group or individual session, the teacher or myself switched on the camera and we left the room. [58]

The second small group composition project took place in the spring of 1999, and this time two groups, which also included the pupils from the target group, were videotaped. In the following school-year the only composition project for this class was an individual assignment. By then I knew the class well and realised that it could be of interest to videotape all of them when composing, something that was done for the individual composition project in the spring of year 2000. This was also a strategic decision taken in agreement with Mrs. L in order to give the pupils a feeling of being equally important research wise. At this time one of my target pupils moved from the school, and I had started to worry about the work load in terms of carrying out a thorough microanalysis of all the videotaped material piling up in my “research” office. I decided to change my research focus and initial sampling plan slightly and concentrate the video sampling on small group composition exclusively. By that time, spring 2000, I realised that videotaping all group activities in one composition project could yield valuable data in relation to my research questions. This opportunity came in early spring 2001. In this composition project all group activities were videotaped, i.e. four groups with five pupils in each group.

Every videotaped session consisted of approximately 60 minutes in all the projects[59]. The groups worked on their own and were only visited once by the teacher for a brief follow up or sometimes more if needed. I did interviews and member checks (Lincoln and Guba, 1985, p. 314) with groups and individual pupils using video and a stimulated recall method and an in-depth audio taped interview with the teacher. I also audio recorded all performances of the pupil’s compositions.

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[57] Lincoln and Guba refer to such a diary as a “reflexive journal”. They suggest that such a journal should contain a daily schedule or logistics of the study, a personal diary and as methodological log. Elements from all of these were included in my “diary”. (Lincoln and Guba, 1985, p. 327)

[58] Questions about the potential obtrusiveness of video equipment will be discussed later in this chapter.

[59] A time span of approximately 60 minutes for a composing session on this level seem to be a bit more than what is quite common. For example, Yonker (2003) reports from her study that “groups were given 30-40 minutes to compose the piece of music, and then reconvened as a class to play their own compositions and evaluate their own and peers’ compositions” (p. 25)

By the end of the spring term 2001, then, my data consisted of field notes spread over four years of participant observation, a corresponding diary, videotapes and transcriptions of seven group processes, videotapes of individual pupils composing, interviews of groups, individual pupils and the teacher, and audiotapes of performances of compositions.

Formulation of final research questions

The phenomenon to be researched was, broadly speaking, small group composition as it evolves thorough sequences of action/interaction over time. As I spent time in the field, observing pupils in action directly and indirectly via video in keeping with the emergent nature of this study, the need for a more precise and specified formulation of the research problem or questions grew stronger. Graue and Walsh (1998) claim that descriptions of the notion of data collection can be seen along a continuum that describes a way of looking at the world. "At the one end of this continuum", they say, "is the view that researchers collect performed data and then make valid inferences from these pieces of evidence". At the other end of the continuum is a much more interactive/generative view of data, which are not "out there" to be collected by objective researchers. "Instead", still according to Graue and Walsh," they come out of the researcher's interactions in a local setting…." (Graue and Walsh, 1998, p. 73).

In a study with an emergent design such a view is, as I see it, also relevant for the formulation of specific research questions. In many ways I found myself as a researcher placed in a middle position on Graue and Walsh's continuum. Even if I knew to some extent what I was looking for, it was not until I had spent some time in the field and in front of the video screen, that I was able to give a specific description of what I wanted to find out. Being present at the performances of the pupil's musical compositions, I realised that their compositions contained artistic and musical meanings, and that a scrutiny of the musical objects growing out of the compositional processes was just as relevant as examining the processes *per se*. My reading of the literature on music composition (see Chapter 3), also convinced me that previous research on music composition to a great extent had neglected to investigate the *microcosm* of compositional processes as well as the immediate connections between process and product viewed through musicological as well as educational lenses. Once I had decided on such a focus for my research, I was able to formulate more detailed research questions. Strauss and Corbin underline that although the initial question may start out broadly, it becomes progressively narrowed and more focused during the research process as " concepts and their relationships are discovered" (Strauss and Corbin, 1998, p. 41). They write:

> So, the research question begins as an open and broad one, but no so open, of course, as to allow for the entire universe of possibilities. On the other hand, it is not so narrow and focused that it excludes discovery. Qualitative research does not entail making statements about relationships between a dependant variable and an independent variable, as is common in quantitative studies, because its purpose is to test hypotheses. The research question in a qualitative study is a statement that identifies the phenomenon to be studied. It tells the readers what the researcher specifically wants to know about this subject (ibid, p. 41).

To this end, the present study was guided by the following research questions:

What are the main elements of compositional processes in a school context?
What characterises these elements and the relationships between them?
In what ways do compositional processes develop and how are they structured and constructed?
What are the connections between the musical piece being created and the process of its creation?

Data analysis and theory development

Ethnographic microanalysis of video footage is a very significant part of my approach to data analysis and theory development. I Chapter 2, referring to Erickson (1992), I discussed the relationship between microanalysis and participant observation in ethnographic studies. Erickson does not see these two forms of observation as different in terms of purpose. In both cases the researcher is attempting to understand events whose structure is too complex to be understood all at once. The two forms can complement and strengthen each other, and decisions on what and how to record are not neutral. They are "research decisions that are informed by the overall conduct of participant observation in the study" (ibid, p. 207).

Scholars who work with other forms of microanalysis, such as conversation analysis (Heath, 1997) or critical discourse analysis (Rostvall and West, 2001) may approach the relationship between participant observation and microanalysis differently. For instance, Rostvall and West point out that their approach differs from ethnography in this respect. "These differences", they write, " mean that we do not select sampling on the basis of our knowledge of the field, as is the case in participant observation". Instead they claim to have "knowledge of the field" through the *a priori* "analytical concepts we use to treat our transcribed data from the videos" (ibid, p. 92, my translation). The approach to data analysis in the present study *is* based on my knowledge of the field, not because I have participated directly in the group processes, but because of my use of purposive sampling and an emergent design of the study. Erickson underlines that analysis actually begins while in the field. Choosing events to record means making initial analytic decisions. "Moving to greater visual and audio selectivity at later stages", he writes, "represents another set of analytic judgments. Most of the analytic work, however, is done after fieldwork is completed" (Erikson 1992, p. 217).

The transcription and analysis of video footage

When transcribing and analysing the video footage I relied to a great extent on Erickson's model, but developed my own way of doing it by mixing some of the techniques of ethnographic microanalysis and coding methodology from grounded theory. Erickson sketches five different stages in the analytic process: 1) Reviewing the whole event; 2) identifying major constituent parts of the event; 3) identifying aspects of organisation within major parts of the event; 4) focus on actions of individuals; and 5) comparative analysis of instances across the research corpus (ibid, pp. 217). I analysed seven group processes, each process lasting approximately 60 minutes, using a similar approach. The concept "the whole event" as Erickson uses it, refers to what I in the present study may describe as "the group working on their own".[60]

[60] I use the concept "event" in the present study somewhat differently from Erickson. In my use of the word as derived from my grounded theory approach (Strauss and Corbin, 1998), an "event" is a meaningful happening or incident with regard to the structure or characteristics of the group process.

In the first stage of analysis I reviewed the whole process and took notes designed to map events and actions especially relevant for the research questions. In the second stage I reviewed the whole process a second time aiming at grouping what I observed into meaningful sequences of actions as part of the compositional process. According to Strauss and Corbin, process in data is represented by "happenings and events that may or may not occur in continuous forms or sequences" (Strauss and Corbin, 1998, p. 166)

The third stage implied detailed transcription of verbal and nonverbal behaviour of the whole group process. On the whole I tried to transcribe what took place by writing down verbal dialogues and sequences of actions as detailed as possible. Some sequences of actions were transcribed more in detail than others and in some cases I used a narrative structuring of passages to transfer my interpretation of the meaning of the discourse and interaction I observed into a verbal text (Kvale, 1997, p. 125). In this stage I also took notes as to my thinking about what I observed (annotations).

In the fourth stage I imported the verbal transcription of each group process into a computer programme, "HyperRESEARCH" (Gaskin, 1997), and used this tool in a grounded theory approach (see later in this chapter). I developed my open and axial coding more in detail and decided on overarching concepts and categories.[61] The use of HyperRESEARCH facilitated coding in many ways. It served, first of all, as a vehicle for organising my verbal data, and secondly, it was very well suited to systematically compare categories and store comments (annotations) and bits of theory, which evolved during the coding process. When coding I took great care to maintain a holistic approach to my analysis, developing the following procedure: 1) always to consult my field notes about the process in question before staring; 2) always to play the video on my video-machine along with my coding on the computer of verbally described actions, events and categories.

My fifth stage consisted of comparisons between my coding of different group processes. Strauss and Corbin (1998) maintain that coding for process occurs simultaneously with coding for properties and dimensions and relationships among concepts. (p. 167) Additionally, at this stage, I listened to my audio taped versions of performances belonging to the special group process I was working with and consulted audio or transcribed versions of interviews. I also consulted annotations and patterns of theory beginning to become established.

A sixth stage could be described as the "revisiting" stage. This stage took place whenever I felt the need to revisit sequences of video or verbal transcriptions to test ideas for theory development against an empirical experience, and "to search the corpus of recordings and field notes for further instances" and "patterns of generalizations within the corpus". (Erickson, 1992, p.220)

Moving through the different stages of analysis brought me very close to my data. Even so, I never ended up feeling that I knew every detail of what happened on the video screen. On the contrary I was amazed that it was possible to experience each viewing in different ways and to discover important details of interaction and discourse, which could serve to alter as well as develop my theorising. This effect could also be the result of my

[61] My use of different types of equipment, including software programmes, and its role in the present study will be discussed later in this chapter.

own process of reviewing literature and comparing it to my own evolving theorising. Strauss and Corbin describe this feeling as an effect of what they call "theoretical sensitivity". In grounded theory studies, they write:

> …the conversation is centred on theoretical analysis, so the shaping is also related to the process of becoming increasingly theoretically sensitive. During or at the end of the study the researcher may give information back to the actors, in the form of a final theoretical analysis or framework or, more frequently, through observations informed by an evolving theory. In turn the theorist, over the course of the research project, may be much affected by the experience of analysis itself (contributed to in some sense by the respondents). Also, the theorist is affected by experiences with the respondents, who may not incidentally be contributing ideas, concepts (including in vivo concepts), and enduring perspectives to the analysis. In short, the researcher-theorist is becoming increasingly theoretically sensitized, including, as noted earlier, scrutinizing the literature for received theories that might possibly be relevant to the emerging theory developed largely through the continuing conversation with "the data". (Strauss and Corbin, 1994, p. 280)

Empirical, interpretative and analytical cycles

In this chapter I account for my use of ethnographic microanalysis and grounded theory as a vehicle for generating theory about the phenomena I have studied. As stated above, in both these approaches, the close and repeated interaction with the data are prime and significant characteristics. These approaches are very similar to what Van Manen—from a hermeneutic phenomenological position—describes as a way of doing research as "close observation". "Close observation", he writes, "involves an attitude of assuming a relation that is as close as possible while retaining a hermeneutic alertness to situations that allows us to constantly step back and reflect on the meaning of those situations" (van Manen, 1990, p. 69). His description characterises very well my experience as a theorising, empirically based, researcher in the present study[62]. This experience can also be described as a *cyclic* experience where the progress of findings and theory develops in empirical, interpretative and analytical cycles. This cyclic interaction between my classroom experience, my research conversations and interviews, what I observed on my video screen, my reading and my reflection and interpretative reasoning moved the process forward. [63]

[62] In phenomenology van Manen's description of "close observation" can be ascribed to Husserl's concepts of *epoché* and *reduction* (see Husserl 1959). According to Husserl, to behave and act scientifically, it is necessary to reflect on and overcome our *natural attitude*, which can be described as the belief that there is a reality, which we and other people are a part of, and that this reality has characteristics and a form of being, which is quite independent from us. When van Manen writes about the need to "constantly step back and reflect" at the same time as being "as close as possible" to what is being examined, he refers to Husserl's concepts of epoché and reduction. Zahavi (2003) underlines that Husserl's approach to scientific inquiry requires a number of methodological preparations. To avoid the natural naivety", he writes, "as well as different speculative hypothesis about the metaphysical qualities of reality, it is necessary to suspend our acceptance of the natural attitude. We keep the attitude (in order to be able to examine it), but we bracket its validity. This maneuver, where we abstain from following our natural inclination, is what phenomenology describe as *epoch*é and *reduction* (Zahavi 2003, p. 21, my translation).

[63] The English philosopher David Best introduces the term "interpretative" reasoning in his book "The Rationality of Feeling" (1992). He maintains that there are three different kinds of reasoning, the first two being deductive and inductive reasoning. The third kind of reasoning, he says, is even more important than the first two. Interpretative reasoning, he writes, "can give an interpretation, evaluation or picture of a phenomenon and situation, and it is central not only to the arts, but also to scientific and other forms of knowledge." (pp. 34/35).

During this process I benefited greatly, as mentioned above, from the use of a computer software for qualitative analysis; HyperRESEARCH. It assisted me in my interpretative and analytical "cycling" in the sense that I repeatedly could easily come close to a very important part of my empirical data as well as to aspects of theory and reflection. As such it proved to be a tool, which could be helpful in creating order out of a mass different sorts of verbal data. HyperRESEARCH is merely one out of several software packages especially designed for qualitative analysis.[64] It can be used to analyse verbal data as well as video and pictures. I have only used the software as a tool to generate and systemise verbal data. HyperRESEARCH allowed me to code and categorise my verbal material across different situations and processes very easily, and to rename, alter and change my coding as the theorising process moved on. The software was also very useful for my theorising in terms of the annotation function. This function allowed me to reflect and comment continuously on what I observed on the video screen there and then, or as a reflection on something I had observed during participant observation or in interviews. In this way my own thinking and reflections in terms of my own writing could easily be stored in close proximity to a very important part of my empirical data. This part of my annotated reflections proved to become a very valuable set of data gathering in itself.

It is important however to underline, as Strauss and Corbin (1998) do, that computer software of this kind in itself is absolutely incapable of doing even the simplest analytical work. In a grounded theory approach, they say, the strength of computer software of this kind lies in its usefulness for creating order out of field notes, interviews, codes, concepts and memos and:

> ..in visualising the network of concepts and relationships in the emerging theory; and in keeping systematic track of the developing theory beginning with the very first data and their preliminary coding, documenting all intermediary steps and ending with the final research report. (ibid, p.276)

Even so, one should be very aware that the technologies[65] we use, may shape and discipline our ways of approaching phenomena in numerous ways, not least in a researcher's dealings with a complex reality, such as the micro cosmos of group processes. Whether my theorising would have been different with no access to such computer software or even with a different kind of software, we shall never know because my particular experience in this particular research project cannot be replicated.

Transcription and analysis of music

The compositional group processes I videotaped, transcribed and analysed contain a wide array of different types of information. Embedded in the complex micro-cosmos of compositional group processes are contextual information, events, actions and sequences of events and actions unfolding through the pupils' different modes of articulation in terms of verbal, bodily and musical expressions. To transcribe all of this fully into a verbal

[64] In their 1998 book, Strauss and Corbin, mentions NUDIST and ATLAS as the programs with which they are "the most familiar" (p. 276). Other software packages especially designed to assist in qualitative research are, e.g. BEST, ETHNOGRAPH and TRANSANA (see e.g. www.scolari.com)

[65] I use the concept "technology" in its common usage here, i.e. referring to a special kind of software for computers. However, I am aware that that the point of view presented here also is relevant with regard to other meanings of "technology", e.g. Foucault's "technology of self" (Foucault, 1988).

medium is impossible. Every transcription therefore means a selection as well as an interpretation of information.

The music created and produced by the pupils in group processes and in performances,—and by "music" I here refer to any intentional act of making music (see Chapter 2)—represented a special challenge and problem in terms of transcription. Should all kinds of music making, in processes as well as in performances, be transcribed, and in what way and to what ends? I could work satisfactorily with the coding process with regard to musical expression without transcriptions by watching the videos and listening to the audiotapes, but hardly document my findings in a good way within the framework of a verbal discussion. Moreover, a full micro analytical transcription of all the "music" in the group processes represented a huge challenge in terms of work load, for listening and interpretation, as well as for deciding what kind of "musical" notation to apply. These kinds of challenges are well known in fields other than education, such as in musicology and ethnomusicology.

In a discussion about Charles Seeger's introduction of the "melograph" in the ethnomusicology of the 1950s, Alan P. Merriam, in his classic "Anthropology of Music", points out that the nature and use of technology in transcription practises raises "a whole new series of questions revolving around the central problem of how accurate a transcription should, can, and must be" (Merriam, 1964, p.59) [66]. By using the melograph, which was considered to be the most accurate transcription device presently available, Seeger argued that the accuracy of this instrument was necessary to use because of the shortcomings of conventional notation. Merriam, however, does not reject using conventional notation in ethnography because:

> The question arises whether conventional notation does not tell us enough about music structure to allow a reasonable precise description and analysis of outstanding structural patterns. In other words, it may be that conventional notation simply gives us one kind of information while the melograph gives us another, and that each of these is equally important. (ibid, p.59-60)

Accepting Merriam's argument I have chosen to use conventional notation in this study and supplement it with other relevant information. I have transcribed what Merriam calls "outstanding structural patterns" of music in the different group processes. I have not, however, transcribed all musical expressions. As mentioned above, in the coding processes I compensated for this "shortcoming" by playing the videos simultaneously as coding the verbal transcription.

The pupils' compositions, their end products, were audio recorded during performances. I transcribed the seven compositions in their entirety using a conventional score and added comments where conventional notation could not account for important parts of the music. In this transcription process I used a colleague as a co-transcriber to make sure the notation would be as accurate as possible. The "scores" were transcribed using a computer software, "Finale" (Finale® 2002), and scores are enclosed in the Appendices. I have also enclosed on a CD the pupils' compositions as audio recordings and video excerpts of the pupils' final rehearsal of their compositions towards the end of the group processes. When analysing the pupils' compositions, my starting

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[66] Charles Louis Seeger (1886-1979) was a pioneer of ethnomusicology at the University of California (Los Angeles), where he invented and developed the melograph, an electronic means of notating music.

point was to treat their compositions as meaningful objects of art as well as outcomes of educational processes. An extensive sequence of arguments for and discussion about such a position can be found in Chapter 9.

Issues of trustworthiness

In Chapter 2 I discussed Lincoln and Guba's (1985) substitution of the conventional trustworthiness terms "validity", "reliability" and "objectivity" with their own terms "credibility", "transferability", "dependability" and "confirmability"[67]. I will not repeat this general discussion here, but use some of Lincoln and Guba's terms in order to discuss some central issues concerning the trustworthiness of the present study. Strauss and Corbin address these questions as "evaluation" questions. According to Strauss and Corbin the trustworthiness terms listed above, whether belonging to something "conventional" or "naturalistic", only represent one set of criteria by which a study can be evaluated. They list three other sets of criteria as equally important for the evaluation of a study; 1) judgments about the theory itself, 2) the adequacy of the research process through which the theory is generated and 3) questions about the empirical grounding of the research. (Strauss and Corbin, 1998, p. 268) Their emphasis on theorising and the empirical grounding of this activity is especially relevant for the present study.

In any kind of study based on microanalysis, the researcher's interpretative ability and creativity is crucial with regard to the quality and relevance of the theory that is generated. According to Strauss and Corbin the evaluation of the empirical "grounding" of a study should be guided by eight criteria formulated as questions: 1) Are concepts generated? 2) Are the concepts systematically related? 3) Are there many conceptual linkages, and are the categories well developed? Do categories have conceptual density? 4) Is variation built into the theory? 5) Are the conditions under which variation can be found built into the study and explained? 6) Has process been taken into account? 7) Do the theoretical findings seem significant, and to what extent? 8) Does the theory stand the test of time and become part of the discussion and ideas exchanged among relevant social and professional groups? (ibid, p. 270-272) A number of these questions cannot only be, and should not only be, answered by the researcher. They can only be fully answered by the test of time. In the present study, and for the present researcher, they have served as a reminder and guidelines for a systematic approach to systematically build and generate a conceptually dense empirically based theory in response to my research questions. Even if readers are not "actually present during the actual analytical sessions", as Strauss and Corbin point out (ibid, p. 269), they should, in my view, be entitled to know something about the actual and situational framework for theory generation, and not only about measures taken to deal with bias in the data sources or obtrusiveness in data collection.

Obtrusiveness in data collection

Conventional ethnographic practice tries to minimise obtrusiveness as a research presence, and obtrusiveness is usually considered a methodological flaw in ethnography. (see e.g., Harrington, 2002) A video camera permanently placed within five or six meters of a group activity of primary pupils in a room over a period of approximately sixty minutes surely has the potential to be regarded as obtrusive. When researching the activities

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[67] In later writings (Lincoln and Guba, 1989) they have modified their initial set of criteria and added a second set called "authenticity criteria". I will not go into a discussion of these criteria here. I just want to mention that according to Schwandt, Linclon and Guba in their modified version point out that "trustworthiness criteria" should be considered as methodological criteria. (Schwandt, 2001, p. 259)

of a special group of people, such as groups of pupils in a classroom, not only can a video camera be looked at as obtrusive but other recording instruments as well,- and not least, the adult researcher himself.

In general, ethnographic research in education tries to overcome these difficulties by 'prolonged engagement' (Lincoln and Guba, 1985, p. 301) 'Prolonged engagement' has been a consciously chosen technique also in this study. By being around the pupils over a long time, occasionally teaching them a song or two, they got used to me and seemed to accept my presence. Quite consciously, and because of the obtrusiveness issue, I chose to rely on participant observation in the classroom situations and used audio recording techniques, e.g. such as a minidisk recorder discretely placed when interviewing and at performances, in other situations. I deliberately chose to avoid moving around with a camera.
In the group processes, however, a camera was an absolute necessity, because of my focus on compositional processes understood as a series of actions evolving over time. The obtrusiveness question was of vital importance in this part of my data collection.

In ethnographic microanalysis of education video recording is the main vehicle for data gathering. Erickson refers to a considerable debate about the relative merits of shooting video footage with a fixed or moving camera, but he advises very clearly in favour of a fixed camera. He seems not so much concerned with the potential obtrusiveness of situations as long as one has been given access to the field and takes some precautions with regard to confidentiality and research ethics, e.g. in terms of preventing harm coming "to those studied through the processes by which they are studied" (Erickson, 1992, p. 212). He maintains that the best way is to make it simple and that "including within the visual frame as much as possible of all the bodies of all the participants in the interactional event that is recorded, makes for the most comprehensive research documents" (ibid, p. 215). I have chosen to follow this advice. In the present study the camera with an extra microphone would be started when or immediately before the group entered a well prepared room with space for composing right in the middle of "the video frame", and shut down when the group had left the room. I never entered the room during group processes, but the teacher did occasionally in the same way as in other forms of group work.

Studying the video footage I soon realised that the potential obtrusiveness of the camera seemed to be less of a problem than expected. True, pupils would occasionally make direct remarks about the camera, but this took place very infrequently and seemingly only in situations where discussions and disagreements among the pupils reached an activity level which threatened to move the compositional process towards destruction and disintegration.
However, I am not saying that the camera did not affect the processes. It was a part of the context, in much the same way as I was part of the context, and whether the same group process without a camera would yield substantially different sets of data we shall never know. What I do believe, however, is that obtrusiveness would have been a much greater problem with the researcher present in the room during a group process simply because the presence of an adult human being, whether accepted by the pupils or not, is so much stronger than a small video camera on a tripod in the corner of a room.

Member checking and interviews

Obtrusiveness was felt by the researcher to be a problem in other situations in this study, notably group interview situations. In these situations I realised that my presence and actions (interviewing), the recording equipment (minidisk and video player) and the interview situation itself with members of the group being interviewed about a situation no adult had access to except via video, were met with some scepticism and even in some cases apprehension, especially if the group process contained serious tensions and disagreements. On the whole, however, the group interviews yielded very valuable information, especially when using the stimulated recall methodology I applied. When watching video excerpts from the actual group process some pupils responded by giggling, some by showing great interest by wanting to watch everything and some by making comments as they watched. I chose the video excerpts very carefully and had prepared my interview questions well in relation to the research questions. The stimulated recall technique seemed to serve well with regard to reducing the obtrusiveness problem, probably because the pupils felt they could supply me with answers to questions they were the only one to know. And maybe also because they suspected I had access to the "secrets" of the group process anyway.

In addition to group interviews I also prepared and carried out "formal" individual interviews and one interview with the whole class—the latter conducted more or less like a classroom dialogue. All of these interviews were audio recorded. Although all interview situations yielded valuable information, the group interviews and individual interviews where I used the stimulated recall technique, were more focused than other interview situations. For all formal interviews I used an interview guide—specially prepared for each situation—which served to keep me and the pupils on track in the interview situation. I tried to make this as open ended and informal as possible. The interview guides contained questions about a number of aspects I was curious about, e.g. the way pupils experienced their composition process, how the composition evolved and who did what and why, how their musical ideas were created and what happened to them, what it actually *meant* to compose music, how decisions were made, and how they planned their performance. An example of such an interview guide is enclosed in the Appendices.

Interviews also served as a sort of member checks. My interviews of the pupils and teacher were frequently informal—more or less like conversations— and sometimes more formal using a minidisk recorder and a stimulated recall methodology[68]. After such incidents I always took field notes, whether "informal" or "formal". With regard to formal interviewing of the teacher I did one in-depth interview, which included her reactions to video excerpts from the group processes and the first sketch of my Findings chapters. All formal interviews were audio taped and transcribed verbatim.

Lincoln and Guba (1985) describe 'member checks' as "the most crucial technique for establishing credibility". They also underline that member checking is a process carried out with respect to "constructions" (p. 314-315).

[68] Donald A. Schön's (1983) concepts of "reflection in action" and "reflection on action" and his reference to "tacit knowledge", (Polanyi, 1967) are very relevant for the theorising process of the present study. Schön points out that "knowing-in-action" refers to the sort of knowledge we reveal in our intelligent actions—publicly observable. "We reveal it", he writes, "by our spontaneous, skilful execution of the performance; and we are characteristically unable to make it verbally explicit. Nevertheless, it is sometimes possible, by observing and reflecting on our actions, to make a description of the tacit knowledge implicit in them" (p. 25). My experience in the present study with interviews and video observation of pupils is that Schön's observation is particularly relevant for young people.

This is especially relevant for a study using a grounded theory approach where the developed theory is a tentative construction aiming at explaining certain aspects of multiple realities.[69]

Triangulation

In the Anglo-American research literature on educational research, 'triangulation' is often ascribed to the sociologist Norman Denzin's 1978 book "The research act: A theoretical introduction to sociological methods". (e.g. in Graue and Walsh, 1998, p. 102) Denzin suggested four ways of avoiding bias in research by triangulating as follows: a) using many data sources; b) using multiple methods; c) using different investigators and d) using different theories. In later writings Denzin describes 'triangulation' as "the use of multiple methods" which "reflects an attempt to secure an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon in question". He goes on to say that the use of triangulation "…is best understood as a strategy that adds rigor, breadth, complexity, richness, and depth to any inquiry (Denzin and Lincoln, 2003, p. 8)[70]

In the present study 'triangulation' is mainly used as a frequent strategy for cross checking many data sources and for using multiple methods of data collection. To some extent I have also used other investigators. By combining different methods for observation, data collection and theory building as accounted for previously in this chapter, I tried to be as systematic as possible when describing and analysing the phenomena I was looking for. Triangulation is, as I have experienced it, a useful strategy to do what van Manen (1990) describes as the task of phenomenological research: "To construct a possible interpretation of the nature of a certain human experience". He underlines that the researcher must recall the experience in such a way that essential aspects, the meaning structures of the lived experience are brought back, as it were, "and in such a way that we recognize this description as *a possible experience*, which means *as a possible interpretation* of that experience." (van Manen, 1990, p. 41)

In the present study, to create "a possible interpretation" had hardly been possible without triangulation. In "grounded theory" as developed by Strauss and Corbin (1998) the researcher's repeated interaction with many different sources of data is the very core of the methodology. 'Analysis' is actually defined as "the interplay between researchers and data" (Strauss and Corbin, 1998, p. 13).

Graue and Walsh (1998) argue that triangulation extends beyond the field. "Often ignored", they write, "is the importance of interaction with others, not only with other researchers in team efforts but also other researchers who are working in related efforts" (p. 103). Even if the researcher of this study has spent hours and hours in isolation interacting with my data, I have also during the research process been enjoying and experiencing the opinions of peers with regard to my research. This has taken place in several ways: As short peer debriefing

[69] I feel inclined to mention here that some times my interactive and repeated work with the video material with regard to consulting the pupils felt like a member checking technique as well.

[70] Lincoln and Guba underline that the use of multiple theories for the sake of triangulation "is a formulation that the naturalist cannot accept" Lincoln and Guba, 1985, p. 307). I will not go into this discussion here, but point out that in the present study triangulation is only considered in relation to multiple methods, sources and investigators.

sessions (Lincoln and Guba, 1985, p. 308), in presentations at research networks and conferences, in meetings with my research adviser and as conversations with research colleagues and in my reading of literature[71].

According to Lincoln and Guba (1985), the use of different investigators who investigate a phenomenon on an equal footing, "runs into some problems in the naturalistic context". If the design is emergent, as in the present study, and its form depends on the particular interaction that the investigator has with the phenomena, something that also is the case in this study, then "one could not expect corroboration of one investigator by another". They do, however, recognise the possibility of using multiple investigators as part of a team" (p. 307)

Contextual considerations and problems

The present study took place within a framework that can be characterised as an environment for "normal school activities" in a Norwegian primary school. In Chapter 1, the Prelude, I referred to this environment and the musical activities embedded in it as a genre called "school music" (Bresler, 1998), pointing out that any kind of music is inseparable from the conditions under which it is generated and experienced. The activities researched in the present study were not planned because of the research project, and the research took place in a setting that was "natural" in the sense that no manipulation on the part of the inquirer was implied (Lincoln and Guba, 1985). This does not mean, however, that the research activity might not have influenced the music activity of the pupils I have studied. It is very likely that it did.

However, in a naturalistic research paradigm this is not a very interesting question to discuss. Naturalists do not believe that studies can be time and context–free. As the researcher I was a part of the context[72] of those I studied, and this applies to the teacher as well as the pupils. It is very likely that my presence, or even potential presence, had some consequences with regard to what was planned and what happened even if I tried to influence as little as possible throughout the research process. In Chapter 8 I describe how a Foucaultian perspective on "influence" can explain the relational dynamics of group processes in terms of how "power" exists in relations and actions. The same perspective can be applied to analyse the relationship between the present researcher and the other participants of this study. Krüger (2000) maintains that such a self-reflection "challenges the researcher to reflect upon how aspects of power are always embedded in research practise" (p. 43, see also Chapter 8).

In ethnographic studies the contextual aspects of any study has as one of its implications a preference for 'thick descriptions' (see Chapter 2). In grounded theory Strauss and Corbin prefer to label "context" as 'contextual conditions'. Rather than trying to identify which conditions are contextual, they say, the analyst should focus on:

> …the complex interweaving of events (conditions) leading up to a problem, an issue, or a happening to which persons are responding through some form of action/interaction, with some sort of consequence. In addition, the analyst might identify changes in the original situation (if any) as a result of that action/interaction. (Strauss and Corbin, 1998, p.132)

[71] The feedback I have received by participating in the Nordic Network for Research in Music Education, and from my research adviser, professor Frede V. Nielsen at Denmark Pedagogical University, has been particularly useful.
[72] My use and understanding of the term "context" is discussed in-depth in Chapter 6.

True as this may be, there are some vital contextual conditions and problems connected to the present study that need to be discussed with regard to issues of trustworthiness.
One of the problems can be addressed as the "medium problem".

In all group processes in the present study the pupils had access to a selection of typical Orff-instruments such as xylophones, glockenspiels, drums and percussion instruments.[73] All group processes were part of a wider context, which included composition assignments, introductions to assignments and performances planned and designed by the teacher. In his study on computer based creative music making", Gøran Folkestad (1996) (see Chapter 3) underlines that every choice of medium implies "its own limits and biases". The limits of the instruments and other conditions in the design, he says, thus become the limits of the validity of the results. And he continues:

> Choosing instruments that call for too much performing experience and motor development involves the risk of ending up investigating and evaluating the *ability* to play. (ibid, p. 96)

Folkestad seems to focus on the "medium problem" in order to produce arguments for designing his own study on creative music making using computerised tools, the argument being that computer assisted tools are more convenient for studying the creativity of musically untrained persons. He critiques Swanwick and Tillman's well-known study (1986) (see Chapter 3) and their viewpoints on Orff instruments as easy to manipulate and thus natural to use in their study. Hence, Folkestad writes, when evaluating the compositions, there is a risk that "the product might not be what the child most of all wanted to do, but what was possible to execute on the instruments offered" (Folkestad 1996, p. 97).

Folkestad's focus on the media problem is an important focus. However, a problem with his critique and argument is that it could be seen to imply the presupposition that musical ideas as a rule can be conceived of as disconnected from the socio-cultural context and tools that may or may not produce the idea. The "media" of the present study is, generally speaking, the same as in Swanwick and Tillman's study, and Folkestad is right, of course, that this particular contextual element defines and influences the music making of the pupils in a number of ways. However, from a socio-cultural point of view so do all kinds of musical "media" in all contexts, computer-aided compositional contexts included. My solution to the "media problem" in the present study, therefore, is to underline that the study takes place in a particular "media" context, one of many possible. Additionally I use socio-cultural lenses in my "thick descriptions", which include a focus on the relationships between agents as well as those between agents and the particular "tools" in this special context. The scope and focus of the present study is not to research creative abilities as a context-independent phenomenon. This does not mean, however, that my findings are irrelevant for compositional and other practices in other contexts.

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[73] There can be no doubt that the educational ideas connected to "Orff-Schulwerk, including the musical instruments and music scales, e.g. the pentatonic scale, used, have been and still are a dominant characteristic of music education on many continents (see e.g. the internet home page of AOSA, "American Orff Schulwerk Association", http://www.aosa.org/). This influence is quite evident also in the music classroom serving as the empirical field of the present study.

Referring to Stake (1995), Lincoln and Guba (1985), and Denzin (1989), Thomas Schwandt tries to summarise a discussion about transferability and generalisation in qualitative research. He points out that all of these scholars seem to mean that transferability of findings from one context to another is possible provided that the inquirer provides sufficient detail about the circumstance or situation that was studied so that readers can decide for themselves "whether findings are applicable to other cases with similar circumstances" (Schwandt, 2001, p. 107).

A much bigger problem than the "media problem" in the present study is the "language problem". This problem is in many ways self-inflicted as I chose, as a non-native English speaker, to gather my data in the Norwegian language environment and to document my research in English. With regard to my data collection, as well as to my analytical practice and documentation thereof, this has created some major problems and challenges. A major part of my data—in interviews as well as in video footage—consists of everyday verbal exchanges of pupils. Other researchers with similar problems, (e.g. Krüger, 2000) report that this is a very relevant credibility issue where the problem:

> …is exacerbated when phrases are to be translated into a language where the corresponding terms actually do not exist and especially where their cultural references and context within which terms and phrases gain their meaning are different. (p. 165)

In the present study I have tried to limit the problem by completing all my analysis of my verbal data in Norwegian. I have only translated the texts I use to document and argue for different aspects of my theory. However, as I produce "thick descriptions", including a considerable amount of pupils' dialogues, the amount of text being treated this way is substantial. Every "treatment" of this kind involves special challenges in terms of interpretation. To assist me in this part of my research work I was assisted by a native speaker. As soon as I had decided which text(s) to use for documentation I made a first attempt to translate them into English and described the situation to the assistant. The assistant modified my text and I compared the two texts, consulting my original data source, and I made a second attempt. The following example in a) and b) below may serve to illustrate some of the challenges involved:

a) Verbal transcription from video in Norwegian:

Helge: Eg har noko eg kan spela!
Linda: Spel veldig seint….B-delen kan vera sein"….
"Stopp,stopp!". høyr! seier H igjen, (og så spelar han eit roleg tema med einskildtonar og store sprang.)

b) Translation into English:

Helge: I have something I can play! (In a loud voice)
Linda: Play very slowly…the B-part is supposed to be slow…. (She continues experimenting on
her instrument)
Helge: Stop, stop!- listen! (in a more insistent tone and then he plays a quiet motif with separate notes and big leaps.)

In this case I made a first attempt to translate the text, which did not include the comments in the parenthesis. To account for the tone and atmosphere of the exchange, it was necessary to consult the video and discuss the

situation with a view to modifying the text by using small comments. This brought the two versions as perceived by me, closer in similarity, but even with the version that appears in this text (Chapter 7), it is possible to argue that the two versions are not identical in terms of "recreating" the situation. For example, the expression " kan vera sein" in Norwegian could be translated in several ways in English, e.g. "may be slow" or "should be slow" or "should be quiet and slow". Even the words "sein" and "slow" might mean slightly different things in the two languages depending on the situation, the intention of the speaker etc. It might even be difficult to say which one of the language versions is closest to "reality" or the meaning of the situation as the two texts attempt to include not only the words and sentences, but also the way it was said and the atmosphere surrounding it. In discourse analysis this is a well-known problem and challenge. Lemke (1998) maintains that discourse forms do not, in and of themselves, "have" meanings, but represent a variety of possible meanings. He writes:

> Discourse forms do not, in and of themselves, "have" meanings; rather they have a range of potential meanings. Words, phrases, sentences are tools that we deploy in complex contexts to make more specific meanings, to narrow the potential range of possible meanings down to those reasonably or typically consistent with the rest of the context. Even in context, at a moment, an utterance or phrase may not have a completely definite meaning. It may still express a range of possible meanings, differently interpretable by different participants or readers. This is very often the case at the point where it occurs. The context needed to specify its meaning very often at least partly follows its occurrence. So it may seem to have a more definite meaning retrospectively than it has instantaneously. In fact, depending on what follows, its meaning, as participants react to it, can be changed radically by what follows (retrospective re-contextualisation). (Lemke, 1998, electronic source)

This part of the research process challenged my interpretative abilities considerably, a challenge I could only respond to by working in empirical, analytical and interpretative cycles as described earlier in this chapter.

Summary

I started this chapter by describing the immediate context for the study, my relationship with the teacher and class of pupils and the reasons for deciding on sampling in this location. Sampling took place in a natural setting at certain times over a period of four school years and consisted of field notes, interviews and audio tapes, and video footage of seven group processes, everything guided by a naturalistic and ethnographic research approach. In keeping with the emergent design of the present study, final research questions were formulated somewhat later in the study.

This chapter also accounts for and discusses procedures and challenges connected to data analysis and the development of theory in great detail. The methodology of the present study with regard to analysis and theorising is described as a mixture of grounded theory techniques and those of ethnographic microanalysis in education. A special characteristic of this part of the present study, is the evolvement of theory in empirical, interpretative and analytical cycles. I also discuss certain aspects of and problems connected to transcriptions with regard to verbal transcriptions as well as transcriptions of music.

An important part of the chapter deals with issues of trustworthiness and researcher bias. A number of techniques, such as triangulation and member checks, are discussed in general terms and specifically for their uses in the present study. Obtrusiveness in data collection, which often is considered to be problematic in ethnographic studies where video is used, is considered to be a smaller problem than expected in this study. I conclude the chapter by discussing some contextual problems of the study especially emphasising what I label as the 'media problem' and 'language question.'

SECTION II

FINDINGS

Chapter 5

INTRODUCTIONS TO FINDINGS

Decorative factional vignettes

Vignette # 1

From his position in the small orchestra, 10- year old Helge takes a quick look at the audience. His family are there too. He can see his little brother eagerly talking to his best friend. He is pretty sure they are talking about him and his drum—the big African one which he can barely manage to hold in his lap and which he is about to play his part on in a few seconds. It is his group's turn now to play their own composed overture and perform the play about "The Little Red Hen" that they have been working on for some time. To compose was quite difficult this time. So many ideas and strong opinions—and they had to accomplish everything in 60 minutes! How could Mrs L put such a group together! He knew at the outset that with Lisa, Sigrun and Irene in his group it was going to be difficult. Martin was ok though. Strange, however, that he put so much effort into getting the big xylophone as his instrument in the beginning. Now, having the African drum seemed much better, and he had to admit that Sigrun's opening part on the big xylophone was quite catchy. Some of the other groups wanted to know how she had made that up. But, never mind, his drum part had become really important too after Mrs L had listened to them the first time—a real solo part! He had to make sure to be ready for that one now.....Ah, here we go…….

In the vignette above, Helge is taking part in an event that is important to him. He is about to show parents, family and classmates his part in the final musical outcome of a school project where the class had dramatised fairytales and composed an overture for their plays—in Helge's case "The Little Red Hen". Those present could easily observe that Helge enjoyed this performance and my research interview with him confirmed that he remembered it with joy (P-Interview- H). What I was more uncertain about at the time of this performance, was the extent to which Helge enjoyed the whole *process* of composing the overture. This included the ongoing discourse and interactions of many kinds that took place during this process, how the group managed to put the piece together, whether he recognised the piece created and performed as *his,* and how he contributed to it. As I re-examined the videotape from the performance event and connected it to my scrutiny of the videotaped compositional process of the group (GP3) and my research interview with Helge, what struck me was how proud he seems when performing, in spite of the tensions, disagreements and power play I observed during my transcriptions of the video and analysis of the compositional process.

Introducing the findings section of this study with a non-fictional vignette like the one above might seem somewhat speculative in this setting. However, given that my analysis of research data is built on phenomenology (Merleau-Ponty, 1962; Van Manen, 1990), grounded theory (Strauss and Corbin, 1994 and 1998) and the procedures of ethnographic microanalysis of interaction (Erickson, 1992) (see Chapters 2 and 4), it feels right, because this research-based vignette brings us directly into the very core of the story that I wish to understand and communicate: i.e. the secrets of small group compositional processes and what it is that

determines the specifics and qualities of the musical pieces created. As such the vignette above is ”faction” as well as fiction. Using ”factional” vignettes this way is an attempt to recreate verbally events from the "phenomenological life-world" and resembles van Manen's description of using "anecdotes" as a methodological device in research. In "Researching Lived Experience" (1990) he writes:

> Anecdotes, in the sense that they occur in the phenomenological writings of, for example, Sartre, Marcel, Merleau-Ponty are not to be understood as *mere* illustrations to "butter up" or "make more easily digestible" a difficult or boring text. Anecdote can be understood as a methodological device in human science to make comprehensible some notion that easily eludes us". (van Manen, 1990, p. 116)

Van Manen cites the Oxford Dictionary to explain the etymological meaning of "anecdote" (p.116). One aspect of anecdote is that it speaks of the *narrative* of an incident or event as "being in itself interesting and striking". This is an important and relevant aspect also for the vignettes I have chosen to create, although vignettes[74] are more decorative and photographical by nature than narrative. To me this seems quite logical as the majority of my direct observation time is based on an extensive and repeated use of video, which on a micro level perhaps is more photographical than verbal and narrative. When writing this I am reminded of a comment made by a colleague who was asked to be part of a peer debriefing session for this study. In her comments she writes:

> ….and while I marvel at the stats in large scale studies, I often feel that there is ‘real’ story going on in parallel, a kind of subculture, that is often overlooked. And it’s great to see that being unearthed. (Murphy, 2002, personal communication)

The different chapters and the research questions

The following chapters, then, aim at some kind of "unearthing" of some secrets of compositional processes. In Chapter 6 I start to do this by presenting and discussing some basic components of the compositional process. A major part of the chapter accounts for my attempts to understand the considerable complexities in the web of discourses and interactions going on in the compositional process. When studied at a micro level, even seconds of interaction might hold the key to better interpretation and deeper understanding of the phenomena, which are taking place in the processes. I try to solve this "complexity challenge" by developing a model for understanding small group compositional processes as relational and circular activity. In doing this I refer to the empirical evidence of my study as well as to relevant literature. The analysis and theory development in this part of the study is based for the greater part on my findings in relation to what Strauss and Corbin (1998) refer to as the "core or central category". In grounded theory a core category represents the main theme of the research. “In an exaggerated sense”, Strauss and Corbin writes, “it consists of all the products of analysis condensed into a few words that seem to explain what this research is all about” (p. 146). Chapter 6 builds on Chapter 2 where I have discussed the theoretical foundations for basic concepts used in this study.

[74] The etymological origin of the concept “vignette” is described in Online Etymology Dictionary as having a decorative design, "originally a design in the form of vine tendrils around the borders of a book page, especially a picture page, from Fr. vignette, from O.Fr., dim. of vigne "vineyard" (see vine). Sense transferred from the border to the picture itself, then (1853) to a type of small photographic portrait with blurred edges very popular mid-19c. Meaning "literary sketch" is first recorded 1880, probably from the photographic sense” (Harper, 2001d)

In Chapter 7, I examine more closely the different elements and phenomena which are taking place in the compositional processes of seven group processes (GPs). Chapter 7 builds on Chapter 6 in the sense that my attempt at describing the compositional process as highly relational underpins my understanding and theory development in the following chapters. Chapter 7 connects more directly than Chapter 6 to my first group of research questions:

What are the main elements of compositional processes in a school context?
What characterises these elements and the relationships between them?
In what ways do compositional processes develop and how are they structured and constructed?

Throughout Chapter 7 I try to present evidence for my theory development with reference to video transcriptions and interviews. It is important to underline that this massive production of "evidence" is not primarily meant to be regarded as "proof" or even be a suggestion that there is only one right way of understanding the complexities of composing processes. Rather, I prefer to see the many excerpts from video transcripts as opportunities to present a sense of Geertzian "thick descriptions" of processes in motion. [75] It can also be regarded as a triangulation process within video observation, interviews and my own "enlightened eye". [76] In any case, my presentation is accompanied by a substantial worry that I have overlooked things, that I have over-interpreted things and that readers may not take into account the lenses I am wearing. Graue and Walsh (1998) describe this kind of worry the following way:

> Good researchers should worry a lot. As human beings, we are easily fooled by appearance; ask any journeyman magician. We are remarkably adept at fooling ourselves. We need to worry when we are generating data. If we are fooling ourselves, eventually we will be fooling others. The only research sin is arrogance, particularly arrogance of method - the arrogance that one's method puts one above worry. No method does. (Graue & Walsh, 1998, p. 128)

As described in Chapter 2 and 4, I have been working with these research questions wearing socio-cultural lenses and basing my inquiries on a phenomenological, ethnographical and grounded theory approach. My main research instrument has been ethnographic microanalysis of videotapes, classroom observation and interviews.

It is important at this point to underline again that the grounded theory I am trying to develop is "conceptually dense" (see Chapter 2). Strauss and Corbin (1994) explain this as theory that has many conceptual relationships, which are embedded in a thick context of descriptive and conceptual writing. They remind us about what theoretical conceptualisation means in a grounded theory approach in the following way:

> ...Theoretical conceptualisation means that grounded theory researchers are interested in patterns of action and interaction between and among various types of social units (i.e. actors). So they are not

[75] see Chapter 2 for my references to ethnography and the work of Clifford Geertz.
[76] Elliott Eisner has dealt extensively with the discourse of the "enlightened eye" in educational research (Eisner, 1991).

> especially interested in creating theory about individual actors as such.....They are also concerned with discovering process—not necessarily in the senses of stages or phrases, but of reciprocal changes in patterns of action/interaction and in relationship with changes of conditions either internal or external to the process itself... (Strauss and Corbin, 1994, p.278)

The approach to theory generation described above is particularly relevant for the findings as presented in Chapters 7 and 8. In both chapters I hope my findings will contribute to a richer and more appropriate set of concepts in terms of describing and understanding compositional processes in school contexts.

The next chapters, Chapters 9 and 10, build on and refer to the concepts and findings I have presented in earlier chapters, but focus more directly on the connections between the music being created and the contextual field of its creation. This part is connected to my last research question:

What are the connections between the musical piece being created and the process of its creation?

In Chapters 9 and 10, the focus is to a much greater extent on the compositions being created, in other words more on musical products and their relationship to the process. In these chapters, the analytic focus shifts somewhat from human actions and relevant contexts to the musical object itself. Consequently, my theoretical basis shifts somewhat from socio-cultural theory to musicology to explore the "artistic" meaning of the pupils' compositions. The "artistic" aspect of my inquiry of the compositional products and processes leads, probably not very surprisingly, to a closer look at "creativity" and its role in this kind of products and processes. In my view, there are few valid reasons to treat pupils' compositions with less analytical rigor than those of "real" composers of music when it comes to interpretation of their meanings. My analysis of the pupils' compositions therefore, is in keeping with recent trends within the so-called "new" musicology, which seeks to demonstrate that music and discourse about music is filled with social, cultural and political meaning - and that it is irreducibly worldly (Cook & Everist, 1999, pp. viii; Kramer, 1995, p.5).

Throughout the Findings section of this thesis I try to view and discuss my findings in the light of relevant theory. Chapter 11, therefore, which is the concluding chapter, serves as a Postlude with a summary and some reflections on the most important findings and discussions of previous chapters and a view towards future research in this field. I also open up a more general discussion of the characteristics of compositional processes in school contexts including individual compositional processes and suggest a way forward to more insights into the major and important discipline of music education.

Chapter 6

TOWARDS A MODEL FOR UNDERSTANDING COMPOSITIONAL PROCESSES

Introduction

Observing and listening to Helge as an active and concentrated co-performer of his group's overture to "The Little Red Hen" gives some, but limited, insight into the story behind the work. Being present at the event as a member of the audience showed me that Helge plays a very visible and audible solo part on his big African drum and that he performs with a good sense of rhythm and pulse. But it does not tell us why he plays the drum instead of a different instrument, or why his part is not the opening part instead of as a solo part in the middle of the piece. Viewed from the socio-cultural perspective accounted for in Chapter 2, information about this kind of knowledge is hidden in a complicated web of interactive and mediational actions and events constituting the compositional process. To gain access to this knowledge, we need to observe and closely examine these mediated actions and events to try to understand what is going on. In socio-cultural theory, as well as in hermeneutic phenomenology, *wholeness* is a major priority when seeking to understand complicated webs of mediated actions (Van Manen, 1990). However, to analyse and understand the phenomena of compositional processes, it is vital to identify and describe isolated elements of mediated action. James Wertsch (1998) acknowledges this necessity and maintains that:

> First, many of the analytic strategies for examining mediated action are made possible by the fact that one can isolate its elements. Among other things, such isolation allows various specialized perspectives to bring their insights to bear, and it also is often the key to understanding how change occurs in mediated action. Of course any analytic exercise involving the isolation of elements in mediated action must be carried out with an eye to how the pieces fit together in the end, but it cannot really get off the ground if mediated action is treated as an undifferentiated whole (Wertsch, 1998, p.27).

Basic components of the compositional process

I suggest that small group compositional processes and the outcomes of such processes best can be understood and analysed with *Compositional Actions* and *Personal Actions* as two fundamentally different sets of mediated actions and basic components. The concepts "compositional actions" and "personal actions" reflect the importance of what Kenneth Burke referred to as *agents* and their actions in his 1969 pioneering work (Burke 1969, p. xv). In my analysis, these two sets of mediation actions are exclusively associated with the main agents of the process: the pupils.

Compositional Actions (CAs) in the compositional process are:

- actions that can be characterised as focussing directly on the creation of the musical piece in question.

Personal Actions (PAs) in the compositional process are:

- actions that can be characterised as focussing more on private intentions, motivations etc., concerning a person's social role rather than the task at hand.

This basic division between CAs and PAs stems partly from my initial experience with micro-analytic observation accounted for in the Prelude (see Chapter 1). Studying the episodes described here made me realise the importance of phenomena in a compositional process that *cannot* be categorised as task-oriented actions. Overviews on social psychology theory allude to similar considerations. In an article about moods and emotion in groups, Janice Kelly cites the 1950 pioneering work of R.F Bales and colleagues who:

> …proposed that, in fact, group progress involved alternating attention devoted to two sets of concerns—instrumental, or task-related concerns and expressive or socio-emotional concerns. (Kelly, 2001, p. 166)

Later in the same handbook article, Kelly accounts for more recent models of group development and refers to other theorists, notably Poole (1983) and McGrath (1991) who maintain that group development cannot be characterised by phases or stages, but that:

> …sets of activities, including activities devoted to both group locomotion and group maintenance, occur simultaneously. Poole's contingency model (1983), for example, suggests that groups engage in three intertwining sets of activities involving task, relational and topical focuses. Thus, group emotional work occurs simultaneously with group task work. (Kelly, 2001, p. 166)

This way of thinking is to some extent similar to my CAs and PAs. I find it difficult to identify a category of what is NOT instrumental (here: not compositional) in terms of something that is generally "social", "expressive" or "socio-emotional" as these phenomena in my view not only occur simultaneously but are present and integrated in task-oriented activities. To label something that is NOT directly compositional, I have chosen the concept *personal*, and I relate this directly to mediated actions where the promotion of personal wishes are in focus *rather than* the task at hand. In his book "Researching Lived Experience" van Manen points out that hermeneutic phenomenology is a human science, which studies *persons,* not individuals or subjects (van Manen, 1990, p. 6). [77]

My choice of the term "personal" also rests on my phenomenological basis for this study of being-in-the world. In "Phenomenology of Perception" Merleau-Ponty writes that "all my knowledge of the world, even my scientific knowledge, is gained from my own particular point of view…" (Merleau-Ponty, 1962, p.ix) This does not mean, however, that we cannot study and reason with *others* about "events":

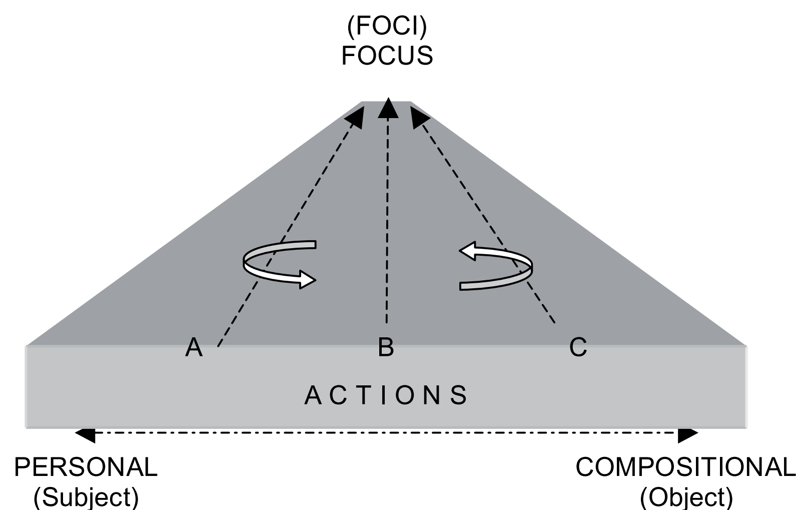
[77] Van Manen refers to the writer W.H. Auden who once said that "individual is primarily a biological term to classify a tree, a horse, a man, a woman; while the term "person" refers to the uniqueness of each human being." (van Manen 1990, p.6. The term "personal action" is used in other fields, notably in organisational theory and in areas of philosophy. In organisational theory for example, it is connected to "initiative and personal virtues" (see e.g. Little, 1999) and in philosophy to "personalism", an ethics-based approach to philosophy (see Monsen, 2000) None of these meanings should be associated with my use of this concept.

> When an event is considered at close quarters, at the moment when it is lived through, everything seems subject to chance: one man's ambition, some lucky encounter, some local circumstance or other appears to have been decisive. But chance happenings offset each other, and facts in their multiplicity coalesce and show up a certain way of taking a stand in relation to the human situation, reveal in fact an *event* which has its definite outline and about which we can talk. (ibid, p. xxi)

Merleau-Ponty's comment on "our particular point of view" and what may happen when "an event is considered at close quarters" seems particularly relevant for the present study with its emphasis on *microanalysis* of discourse and interaction.

It is not my intention to argue that there are very clear-cut division lines between Personal Actions and Compositional Actions. However, they can be observed as fundamentally different components of the group process in terms of what seems to be the actional*focus,* or rather, *foci* of participants in their different forms of actions. This is illustrated in Fig. 6.1 below.

Fig.6.1 Pupils' actional foci in compositional processes



My introduction of two different categories of actions in an analysis of compositional processes is inspired by the basic claim from phenomenology that the first person perspective is *always* included in our orientation towards the life-world. As Merleau-Ponty points out, the world is indistinguishable from the subject and the subject indistinguishable from the object (cited in Zahavi, 2003, p. 19).

Considered in terms of *focus, or foci*, moving along a continuum, personal actions may be considered as closer to the "subject" and compositional actions as closer to the "object". As shown in Figure 6.1 above it is possible for pupils taking part in compositional processes to have a focus, which is more personal than compositional, as in position A, and to have other foci, B or C, which are equally or more compositional than personal[78]. It is even possible to move between these different positional foci in cycles during the compositional process. As I will

[78] Bo Nilsson (2002), in his study of children's creative music making, has a different, but still to some degree similar, approach in terms of descriptive categories. He characterises a child's approach to composing by the way they put something "in the foreground of the activity", such as playing an instrument, the music itself, or even "the task" itself (p.224).

show later in this chapter, the relationship between compositional and personal actions is a dynamic one that influences all aspects of the compositional process.[79]

Observation of Compositional Actions

CAs and PAs are broad categories that require a set of subdivisions.[80] When developing and elaborating on the ethnographic microanalysis of the seven compositional processes (GPs) of this study, I identified, defined and observed what I will describe as three different categories of Compositional Actions (CAs):

Category I: CAs connected to invention [81]

Category II: CAs connected to planning, structuring and leadership

Category III: CAs connected to appropriation, evaluation and revision.

Table 6.1 Categories of Compositional Actions- Category I

Category I	*CAs connected to invention*
Ia	*CA – creating musical ideas (melody, rhythm, texture, timbre and dynamics*). Actions where the creation of musical ideas can be of any sort and involve any musical element. To be identified the ideas must sound and be meaningful in the present compositional context
Ib	*CA – experimenting with musical sounds and ways of producing sound* Actions where pupils are trying out sounds and ways of producing sounds, and also experimenting with musical ideas and the effect of musical ideas in a larger picture. Compared to inventing musical ideas, experimenting means more random and continuous musical activity
Ic	*CA – imitation of musical idea(s)* Actions where pupils are imitating musical idea(s) that have been presented by others.
Id	*CA – expanding rhythms, melodies and sounds* Actions where it is evident that a musical idea is being enlarged into something more than the original idea
Ie	*CA – improvising* Actions that imply improvising in a musical sense, i.e. the creation of new music in the course of some kind of performance.[82]

[79] The model in Figure 6.1 does seemingly not account for the problem of 'inter-subjectivity'. Questions about experience and inter-subjectivity are especially relevant for a study of pupils working in groups. According to Zahavi (2003) a classic objection to phenomenology has been its "inability" to account adequately for the philosophical problem of inter-subjectivity. However, referring to Husserl (1973), Zahavi maintains that phenomenology does not in any way regard 'inter-subjectivity' as irreconcilable with 'subjectivity'. Quite to contrary, writes Zahavi, the inter-subjective dimension is merely a richer and more correct understanding of what subjectivity really is. (Zahavi, 2003, p.79, my translation)

[80] In his work on compositional process, John Kratus (1994) writes about sub-processes and compositional strategies. To some extent, this is similar to my *Compositional Actions*, but his categories are narrower and linked to operations on musical elements like pitch and pattern and defined primarily as internal thought processes.

[81] The term "invention", from Latin "inventionem", denotes "a finding, discovery", from *inventus,* pp. of *invenire* "devise, discover, find," from *in-* "in, on" + *venire* "come." (Harper, 2001e) The way I use it here is in keeping with its original meaning. My use of the concept is wider than definitions emphasising the originality of what is invented.

[82] I am aware, of course, of the many meanings associated with the concept "improvisation". See for example Bruce Ellis Benson (2002), who lists 11 different types of musical improvisation. My use of the concept is based on the Norwegian National Curriculum for Music (NNCM), which accounts for "improvisation" as an integrated part of "Composition",–one out of four main subject elements. The NNCM description is very close to the definition of improvisation given in the "New

Several of the different CAs in Category I are closely related and to some extent overlapping. They represent categories of musical *invention* as developed through grounded theory on the basis of microanalysis of a number of GPs. They do not represent a *normative* notion of what musical invention means in a larger compositional context. [83] A general and common characteristic of these actions is that they are *generative* by kind in the sense that something is born, created, added or brought forth for the first time in this particular process. [84]

Frequency count is not among the most central characteristics of ethnographic microanalysis. But in my study, it gives meaning to say something about the quantity of occurrences of the different CAs in the compositional processes. First of all it should be noted that the CAs connected to *invention* manifest themselves abundantly in the data. Observations of *CAs creating musical ideas* (melody, rhythm, texture, timbre and dynamics) especially, are numerous throughout the material. *CAs experimenting with musical sounds and ways of producing sound* and *CAs expanding rhythms, melodies and sounds* are less frequent. The first of these two is quite frequent in the observation of the 9 year olds (GP1), whereas the *CAs* e*xpanding rhythms, melodies and sounds* occur more regularly when the pupils composed as 12 year olds (GPs 4 through 7). The two remaining subcategories: *CA imitation of musical idea(s)* and *CA improvising*, are represented in the material to a much lesser extent, and are found not in every GP.

Table 6.2 Categories of Compositional Actions- Category II

Category II CAs connected to planning, structuring and leadership

IIa	*CA – applying perceived or invented methods and strategies* Actions where a. there is a clear connection between the teacher's repertoire of methods and strategies for composing and what the pupils actually are doing b. the pupils clearly invent new ways of working as their methods and strategies in approaching a task
IIb	*CA – planning and structuring the compositional work and the piece* Actions where pupils plan their work with the musical piece (what to do…) and where they talk about and/or demonstrate the structure of the piece they are composing
IIc	*CA – leading collective development* This means pupils' actions where on-task leadership of the whole group or a majority of the group can be clearly observed. It may include an element of administration in that the person applying leadership can make things happen through the competence of others.

Harvard Dictionary of Music " which says: "The creation of music in the course of performance", (Randel, 1986, p. 392) -see also Chapters 2 and 3.

[83] See Chapter 4: *Research Design and Data Analysis* for a more general discussion of coding and use of grounded theory in this study. I rely, of course, consciously or unconsciously on my background as a music educator when I code and interpret.

[84] I base my use of the concepts generative and generation on Latin, *generationem* (nom.*generatio*), from *generare* "bring forth", and Welsh *geni* "to be born (Harper, 2001f)

This group of compositional actions is different from the previous group of actions in the sense that communication between group members is a key aspect. As such they can be labelled as *communicative* compositional actions.

Two CAs stand out as easily observable throughout the data within this group. *CA - planning and structuring the compositional work and the piece* (IIb), and CA - *leading collective development* (IIc) are quite evenly distributed among the GPs observed. There is no doubt that the 9-12 year olds of this study spend time and energy on planning and leadership. As we shall see later, the quality of these actions are sometimes very decisive for group locomotion in terms of bringing the group process forward towards the completion of a composed piece. CA IIa - *applying perceived or invented methods and strategies* can also be observed in all GPs, especially with regard to the teacher's repertoire of methods and strategies for composing. As we shall see later in this chapter, particular aspects of the teachers methods and strategies seem to be adopted more widely than other aspects, something that seems to be vital to the characteristics of the musical outcomes, that is the compositions.

Table 6.3 Categories of Compositional Actions- Category III

Category III CAs connected to appropriation, evaluation and revision[85]

III a	*CA – appropriating parts and the whole piece* Actions mainly referring to situations where the pupils repeat parts or the whole piece in order to rehearse and appropriate the music with regard to a performance of some sort.
III b	*CA – trying out parts of the piece* Actions that differ from IIIa above in that structural experimentation is intended and the repetitive aspect weaker or even absent.
III c	*CA – evaluation of invented musical ideas, parts and the whole piece* Actions that show evaluation of separate musical ideas, parts of the whole piece or the whole piece.
III d	*CA – revising ideas and structures* Actions where pupils focus on the revision of musical ideas and/or structural aspects of the composition.

This category of actions is vital to the actual *production* of the musical piece. As such they are *productive* actions. Labelling them as *productive* compositional actions means that the immediate focus of these actions is to make the composition sound in the best possible way and to make it happen. There is also one other very good reason for grouping appropriation, evaluation and revision together. In this study they often *appear* together or in close proximity to each other. But their division throughout the data is slightly different. Whereas *evaluation*

[85] Appropriation is a concept borrowed from James Wertsch (1998). He refers to Bahktin (1981) for the use of this concept. The etymological meaning comes from "appropriatus, pp. of appropriare, from Latin. ad- "to" + propriare "take as one's own," from proprius "one's own" (Harper, 2001g). My use of the concept is restricted to appropriation of something musical and includes musical exercise and rehearsal aiming at mastery.

can be only moderately observed with the 12 year olds, it is more frequent with the 9 and 10 year olds. Revision is rare with the 9 and 10 year olds and slightly more frequent with the 12 year olds. *Appropriation* on the other hand takes place very frequently in all groups.

The three groups of compositional actions described above are findings based on repeated and numerous observations of the seven GPs in my study. They constitute the constructive actional aspect of what I call the compositional process. As I explain in greater detail in subsequent chapters, they demonstrate that compositional processes are not only *generative*, but also *communicative* and *productive* by nature.

Observation of Personal Actions

It should be noted at this point that this is not a study in social psychology. The focus is on *composition* as a discipline in general music education. All subdivisions of the second basic component in this model, *Personal Actions*, therefore, are in some or other way related to, and thereby instrumental in, the overall act of creating or not creating a composition.

I have observed the following Personal Actions in this study:

I. PA – positioning oneself/others in relation to something

Actions where it is obvious that what takes place is mainly connected to the *positioning* of oneself or others in relation to something (that has to do with the compositional task at hand) rather than musical and compositional aspects.

II. PA – negotiating musical and /or structural ideas and personal roles simultaneously

Actions involving negotiation where there is a clear and simultaneous element of making personal ownership as important as the idea or creation itself.

III. PA – counteracting compositional actions

Actions where what takes place is connected to, and motivated by, challenging or interrupting with compositional actions in constructive motion.

IV. PA – off-task, but meaningful musical activity

Actions that involve an activity that is musical and meaningful, but not a compositional action in the actual context

V. PA – off-task and/or undisciplined work

Actions where it is obvious that the activity has no direct connection whatsoever with the compositional task

Personal Actions of this kind can be observed throughout the different GPs, but some of the personal actions, e.g. PAs connected to something "off-task" differ a great deal from group to group. It should not be surprising to anyone used to working with children that actions like the ones described above can be observed in group processes connected to on-task activities. The interesting part of this observation, however, is not so much if these actions exist, but *how they interact* with the compositional actions. But to understand how PAs and CAs

interact in GPs, we have to include a third main component of a model for understanding compositional processes in small groups—cultural tools.

Cultural tools in the compositional process

As discussed in the chapter dealing with the theoretical and methodological inspirations for this study, Chapter 2, analysing the actions of compositional processes means analysing *mediated* actions. This means that neither Compositional Actions nor Personal Actions should be observed and interpreted as individual actions in isolation. Even if Wertsch—as he describes it—tries "to live in the middle" (Wertsch, 1998, p.17) of the methodological individualism of cognitive science and social embedded theories, he explicitly points out that:

> ...for now the point is that even when one focuses primarily on the individual agent's role in mediated action, the fact that cultural tools are involved means that the socio-cultural embeddedness of the action is always built into one' analysis. (ibid, p. 24-25)

In the concept *cultural tools,* Wertsch refers to signs and other cultural artefacts and focuses on the individual performing actions in a socio-cultural setting.[86] I have a similar, though not quite identical, focus in this study. *Cultural tools* is a third basic component in the model I am about to introduce as a basis for understanding what takes place in small group compositional processes. When involved in ethnographic microanalysis, I study the actions of pupils as they interact with each other and the tools they use. This obviously means their interactions with musical instruments, but it also includes their use of language and non-verbal expressive means. Not only do I study the written transcriptions of the videotapes and what they are playing and saying to each other, but by constantly collating transcriptions, field-notes and the videos, I also repeatedly study their body language and the way they speak, move, sing and play.

In a study of musical composition, I find it relevant to specify and distinguish more clearly than Wertsch between signs and artefacts. Instead of calling pupils' singing, playing, moving etc "signs", I prefer Danish Kirsten Fink Jensen's concept of "modes of articulation". Her concept includes musical articulation: vocal and instrumental, as well as verbal and kinaesthetic, and underlines the aspect of different meanings given by each mode of articulation (Fink Jensen, 1997).[87] I also find it relevant to be more specific than Wertsch about the concept of "artefacts" with regard to this particular study. In the model I am about to introduce, "artefacts" are in effect "musical instruments" and the equipment needed to make them sound. Cultural tools then, refer to the use of musical instruments as well as to the pupils' different modes of articulation during the compositional process. [88].

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[86] See Chapter 2 for a discussion of Wertsch's position. See also Engestrøm (1999)

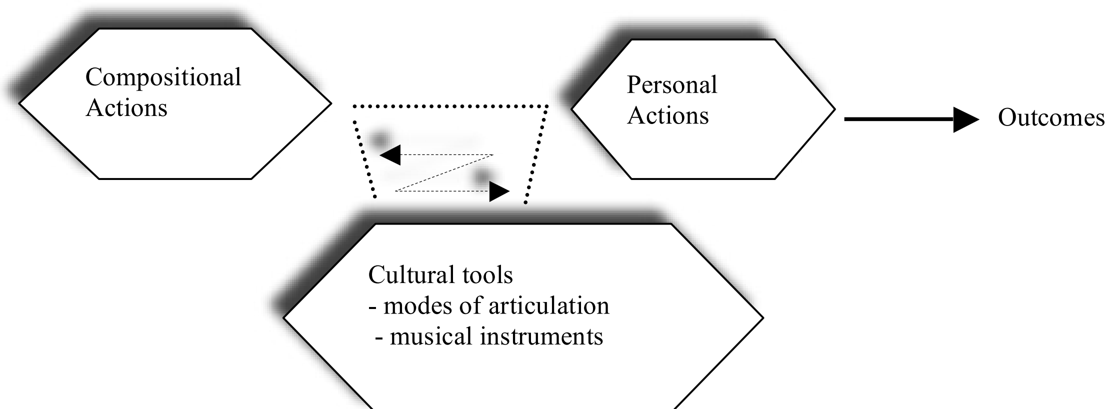
[87] Referring to Fink-Jensen, Nielsen lists the following as different modes of articulation: "(a) verbal (spoken language), (b) Non-verbal, i.e. musical, sounding; iconic, pictorial; kinaesthetic (movement), (c) Combinations (multi-modal)". (Nielsen, 1997, p. 168, my translation). See also Chapter 3.

[88] I am aware that social cultural theory normally operates with a very broad definition of concepts like artefacts and cultural tools. In an article about the birth of L.S. Vygotsky's psychological ideas, Russians Leontjev and Luria describe how Vygotsky repeatedly returned to Francis Bacon's assertion that neither "the empty hand" nor the intellect as such means much for the realizations of actions. According to Leontjev and Luria, to understand Vygotsky's contribution to the research

A major point in Wertsch's (1998) approach is to focus on what he calls the "irreducible tension between agent and mediational means" (p.26). According to Wertsch, to recognise the irreducible tension between agent and mediational means is not to conceptualise “mediated action as an undifferentiated whole. Instead it is to conceptualize it as a system characterized by dynamic tension among various elements”. (p 27)

This way of approaching a complicated web of actions is, in my opinion, well suited to describing, analysing and interpreting what is going on in compositional processes. By focusing on the interaction and discourse going on between some basic components in the compositional process, it is possible to unearth, understand and explain some of the secrets of GPs. I suggest, therefore, that a compositional process, and the outcomes of such a process can be understood and analysed with *compositional actions*, *personal actions, cultural tools* and the interactions between these as basic components. In fig 6.2 below the dynamic character of the relationship between these components is indicated by the lightening-shaped arrow.[89]

Fig 6.2 Basic components of the compositional process



The relationships and interactions in compositional processes between personal actions, compositional actions and cultural tools create *outcomes* of many kinds. The outcomes we are concerned with here is the creation of pieces of music, i.e., the compositions. As outcomes of compositional processes, compositions can be preliminary or final. Although there is a very close connection between actions and outcomes, I distinguish clearly between compositional actions and compositional outcomes. In this study, the latter is an attempt by the whole group to realise in sound what they have ended up composing together.

A major and general finding in this study then, is that in a small group compositional process, we find important knowledge about the musical piece itself as well as the creation of it hidden in the dynamic relationship between personal actions, compositional actions and cultural tools.

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on the development of consciousness, it is vital to realise that he based his research on the view that human beings very early enter into a world of human relations where they manipulate objects, created by society, and that they communicate their relationship to these objects through contact—practically and verbally—with other humans. (Leontjev and Luria in Vygotsky, 1982, p.14)

[89] Engestrøm (1999) uses a similar “arrow” to describe the interactive dynamics between the different elements of his “activity system”.

Relational activity in the compositional process

To understand the nature of this dynamic relationship, let us for a moment go back to the research-based opening vignette of Chapter 5. Studying the process leading up to the performance of the overture for "The Little Red Hen" convinced me that Helge's role in the performance of the overture is highly dependent on interactions between compositional actions, personal actions and cultural tools taking place during the compositional process. Some of these interactions proved to be very decisive for the final outcome. The research-based opening vignette of Chapter 5 indicates that Helge is too "slow" to get access to the musical instrument he wants—the base xylophone. Looking into this situation by means of a video-transcription of Group Process 3 (GP3), it is possible to communicate the essence of what actually happens. In this group Helge, Irene, Lisa, Sigrun and Martin are busy composing an overture for the theatre version of their play "The Little Red Hen". Helge's priority here, it seems, is to get access to the big African drum which Irene has been able to choose for herself:

Example 1: GP3 10768- middle

Helge is leaning towards the piano looking at the others….

Irene: Which instrument do you want Helge?

Helge: Well….nothing (he says this slowly while touching the keys of the piano)

Irene: But what do you want to play…? (more impatiently now.)

(It is quite evident that Irene understands they will get no further before they have solved the problem of Helge's choice of instrument…. He seems rather depressed and unwilling to contribute).

Irene: We have to start now….take the guitar!

Helge: That is not the sort of guitar we can use in this piece…

Sigrun: Go and find a triangle then….

Lisa: ...Or you could take this (Lisa points impatiently to the piano).

Helge: Piano? We can't take the piano with us…!

Irene: Ooh, choose <u>something</u>. (Irene balances herself on the African drum) we have to get going…come on!

Lisa: We're never going to make it! (Lisa shouts, seemingly in despair)

Irene: OK! (Irene is shouting now as well) ...take this drum then. I will use this one (She mumbles this to herself as she picks up the soprano xylophone)

(Helge walks slowly and seemingly reluctantly over to the African drum while gesticulating with his arms. He sits down slowly saying nothing.)

Irene: Now we have to co-operate! (She says this firmly)

Lisa and Sigrun: "Yes! (following what Irene says and everyone gets ready to play their instruments.)

The episode above occurred after 20 minutes of group work where an important compositional action preceding this episode had been "planning and structuring the piece".

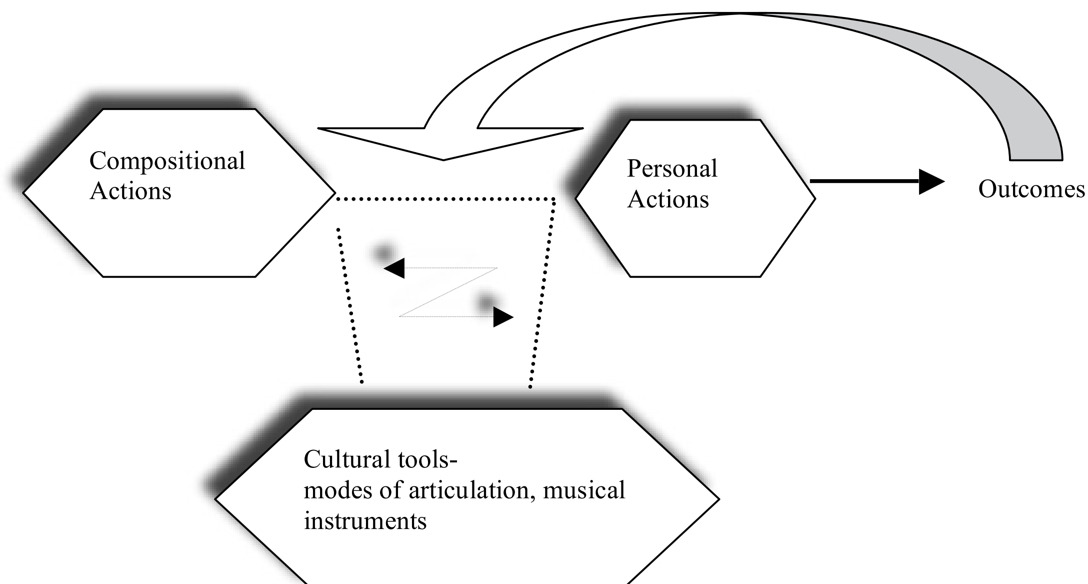
Helge's personal action of *positioning* with regard to the instrument he wants for himself is counteracting the ongoing compositional action of planning. This starts off another compositional action, however, initiated by Irene that can be categorised as "planning and structuring the *work*". Her initiative brings the constructive compositional action on track again and leads on to another compositional action we could label "trying out parts of the piece". As Helge succeeds in obtaining the African drum, he now finds himself in a position with potential of controlling and producing music on an instrument that is obviously attractive to other members of the group.

Irene is well aware of this and uses her knowledge to contribute to a solution.

The episode where Helge obtains the African drum clearly shows the *relational* nature of actions and cultural tools. In this small drama the relational nature can be observed in actions as well as in verbal and non-verbal discourse, e.g. when Helge, even after he has gained access to the drum, expresses his feelings through gesticulation and slow movements. This episode shows how actions are mediated in that the "tools", the musical instrument and modes of articulation, are involved in the actions and thereby becomes important to the compositional process itself, as well as to the outcomes of this process. This episode also demonstrates how CAs and PAs interact, how this creates tension, and how cultural tools (musical instruments and modes of articulation) are an integrated part of it all. As shown in the excerpt from the video-transcription above, Irene is willing to sacrifice personal gain—her possession of the drum—to find solutions. She also demonstrates another CA, namely that of leading collective development (CA IIc). This is something she shows when she leads the group to engage in another compositional action: "trying out parts of the piece" (CA IIIb). Compositional Action IIIb leads to a musical *outcome*, even if it is a preliminary one. As a preliminary outcome it influences the interactions and thereby the personal and compositional actions to come.

The fact that Helge now is in possession of the djembe, African Drum [90], influences the rest of the process. As shown in the opening vignette of this chapter and as we shall see later, the African drum is a visible and audible part of the final musical outcome. It is there and played by Helge because he posesses it, and through a number of interactions of CAs, PAs and use of cultural tools, his use of it is included in the final outcome. This shows how a compositional process is constituted by a number of recurring sub-processes, not only defined by the ongoing interactions of compositional actions, personal actions and cultural tools, but also by a number of outcomes that recurrently influence these interactions—as is indicated by the big arrow in Figure 6.3 below.

Fig. 6.3 Outcomes as a an integrated part of the compositional process



[90] During the research process I presented a preliminary version of my analysis of compositional processes as a chapter in a book (Espeland, 2003). The chapter is called. “The African Drum: The Compositional Process as Discourse and Interaction in a School Context”.

The question of context

The African drum, a djembe [91], which seemed to fascinate Helge and several of the pupils became an important and influential part of the mediated actions of Compositional Process 3 (GP3). The African Drum is also a part of the *relevant context* of this particular GP as the teacher placed it among the instruments available to the pupils. Sometimes socio-cultural theory of mediated action is criticised on the grounds that it seems problematic when considered as an attempt to understand context. The essence of this critique is that the whole context of any human process has to be taken into account to understand mental functioning and the *hows* and *whys* of human activity. (Engestrøm/Miettinen, 1999, p.11/12)

In my view this cannot be the case with *any* kind of context at all times, historical as well as object-oriented, as the proponents of activity theory seem to advocate. [92] Contexts have to be sufficiently *relevant* for the phenomena being observed and analysed. Relevant context for composing in schools has a special relationship to music, to music education and to learning. Such contexts can be of different kinds and exist on a macro, meso or micro level (Bresler, 1998). In the present study there is no doubt that I have been paying more attention to the micro level than to a meso or macro level. On the micro level, special attention has been given to that part of contexts that constitute the immediate surroundings of the pupils during school-time and in their compositional activities. In a study based on ethnographic microanalysis of education, the micro context is bound to have a prominent position. In a micro-analytic study the micro contexts of only a few minutes of educational life can be a huge gathering of informational data. Much as one would have liked to gather data and have access to "every" contextual element, not least the individual and personal background of every pupil taking part in the study, one has to focus on the immediate *situation*.

Van Manen (1990) points out the importance of the "situation" in phenomenological research. He writes that this kind of research finds "its point of departure in the situation, which for purpose of analysis, description, and interpretations functions as an exemplary nodal point of meanings that are embedded in this situation" (p. 18). Erickson and Schultz (1997) signal a similar view on what relevant contexts are. They describe contexts as *situation* definitions:

> …contexts are not given, they are mutually constituted, constantly shifting, situation definitions that are accomplished through the interactional work of the participants. (p.6)

Even if I agree with Ericsson and Schultz that situation definitions on a micro level are a crucially important part of a concept called "relevant context", I will also argue that it can be important to look elsewhere to understand the nature and context of small group composition in a Norwegian school, e.g. at the discussion about and contents of the national curriculum for music (Espeland, 1998 and 1999), the background of pupils and teacher and the educational ethos of the particular school or teacher. I will also maintain that even if I agree with Erickson and Schultz that dynamism, interaction and shifting are basic characteristics of relevant contexts for

[91] A djembe is a grail-shaped hand drum, known to various tribes in West Africa as the "djembe," (jem-bay)
[92] see also Chapters 2 and 4 for a discussion about "context".

composition in schools, some contextual elements can also be quite static, e.g. the organisation of a music classroom and in many cases teacher input[93]. This might even be the case in connection with educational reforms. In a recent review of the research on the effects of the 1997 reforms of Norwegian schools a major viewpoint is that classrooms and schools represent a world of stability as well as development and change (Haug, 2004).

In this study, the contextual elements I have considered most relevant have evolved as a part of my pre-conceptions and initial observations of the school environment, the teacher and the pupils. However, these elements have also been an important part of my analysis of the seven GPs. During the micro-analytic coding and grounded theory process, observations of actions took place with a number of contextual elements as an important background. Some of these are *physical* by nature, like room and space and musical instruments available; others connected to the *organisation of teaching,* such as time available and teacher input; and others again relate to different *pupil aspects,* such as their backgrounds and organisation into groups[94]. The most relevant contextual elements for this study appear to be:[95]:

- Situation - including physical setting and instruments available
- Teacher general input - established methods and strategies
- Teacher specific input - in terms of the compositional processes
- Instructions and assignments - specifically for the
- compositional processes
- Teacher expectations - specifically for the compositional activity and generally
- Pupil perceptions of teacher input - specifically for the
- compositional activity
- Pupils habitus - understood as personal background and dispositions
- Participants' sense of time - during compositional activities

Several of these elements are no doubt of vital importance when I try to explain the characteristics of the compositional processes. The situation itself: composition in a small group within a time span of 60 minutes, the room and instruments available, the video camera, the teacher input, i.e. in terms of the assignment or teacher visits during the process, the pupils' perceptions of established methods and strategies, e.g. of how to make up a melody, the pupil habitus[96] - i.e. in terms of previous experience, and last but not least, the pupils' sense of lived time available during the process (van Manen, 1990). All of this is part of a very relevant context. Even if it is possible to say *when* a particular contextual element can be observed, the position of 'relevant context' in the compositional process is of a different kind to the relations between actions, and actions and cultural tools. Instead of viewing relevant context as a main component in the same way as we have dealt with actions, tools and outcome, I prefer to adopt Kenneth Burke's notion of "scene" (Burke, 1969 cited in Wertsch, 1998). I will,

[93] In his description of the music teacher Hannah, Krüger (2000) writes about a "discourse of stability" and how "Hannah operates within a discourse that tends to conceive the music pedagogical world as relatively fixed in position; for example, it tends to give primacy to stable aspects" (p. 91).
[94] During the coding process, I developed a Master Code list, which evolved and changed during the different stages of interpretation and analysis. This approach is described in Chapter 4.
[95] See Chapter 4 for a full account and discussion of the design of the empirical study.

[96] "Habitus" is a concept introduced by Pierre Bourdieu (1977). In the context of this discussion I use the concept "habitus" as defined in Wikipedia: "In post-structuralism thought, **habitus**, a concept defined by Pierre Bourdieu, is the total ideational (or, better yet, existential) environment of a person. This includes the person's beliefs and dispositions, and prefigures everything that that person may choose to do" (Wikipedia-b 2005).

however, change it slightly and think of it as "locomotional scenery" rather than a static background. Relevant context as locomotional scenery is a metaphor for something that is shifting and stable at the same time.[97]

Relevant context conceived in this way suggests that contextual elements are always present as a background for understanding what is going on. But it also accounts for the shifting and dynamic nature of contexts and the fact that context is an inseparable part of actions and tools. Relevant contexts continually influence actions, interactions and outcomes. "Pupils' sense of time" is one such contextual element that very often is underestimated when explaining compositional processes and products [98]. During my observation of some of the GPs of Helge and his classmates I noticed their recurrent reference to the limitations of time and observed how this awareness speeded up the number of compositional actions (GP3, 4 and 5).

One of the contextual elements that played a decisive part in all the compositional processes proved to be that of "pupil perceptions of teacher input". Even if the teacher explained and had prepared a written assignment with a number of suggestions, the children often interpreted their task quite narrowly[99]. In the GP leading to the overture for "The Little Red Hen", some of the pupils, including Helge, refer directly to the teacher's established methods and strategies, whereas others seem more or less unaware of this. In the beginning of the process, the group turned to Helge asking for his advice:

Example 2: GP3 - 1421- early

Sigrun: How are we going to make this…? Helge, you know how to do this.

Lisa: Yes, Helge, you know this. (Helge clearing his throat)

Helge: Let's see, let's see, let's see… What we need is to get something that fits in with the words…but you do understand tha……the question is what, and then we have to think about what fits…

The others: Yes…

Irene: "Who will mow the corn, who will mow the corn…?" (Irene chants rhythmically while at the same time Lisa chants: The little red hen, the little red hen…)

Irene: Martin, you have to join in too.

Martin: Me? I don't know what to say….

When creating melodies later on, they followed the idea of defining the text first and then using this as the rhythmical foundation for melody making. As we shall see later in this chapter, they even started using the text to decide questions about the form and structure of the piece and the progression and relationship between the rhythms and melodies before they had played a single note. This technique is only suggested as one of many possibilities in the assignment, but comes through very strongly in Helge's interpretation as well as throughout the process, probably because this way of working was something they were used to in class. [100] As such,

[97] Metaphors from theatre and dramaturgy are also used by influential sociological theorists in connection with the study of interaction, e.g. Erwin Goffman (1959), (see Chapter 2).

[98] Barrett lists "time allocation" as one of several limitations in her review of John Kratus' laboratory research on compositional process (Barrett, 1998). Kratus has studied compositional processes lasting between 1 and 10 minutes (Kratus, 1989).

[99] For a complete overview of assignments see Appendixes.

[100] This is confirmed in interviews and stimulated recall sessions. See later in this chapter

"student perceptions of teacher input" remained a significant influence throughout the making of the overture for "The Little Red Hen". When listening to the final *outcome* as part of an audience described in the opening vignette of Chapters 5, 6 and 7, I knew about the existence of this contextual element and its relation to actions in the process and this was crucial to my understanding of what I heard, saw and perceived. Contextual elements will often change as a result of a process and its outcomes. Helge's evaluation of the whole composition project as something enjoyable and to be proud of seems to stem from his enjoyment of performing for an audience, something he confirmed when interviewed.

Helge: ...and in the meantime I played with the drumstick because then I could remember my rhythm and when to play my new solo part... (Helge demonstrates the rhythm)
Me: It filled a space in a way…..
Helge: Yes, I filled my space …to be able to remember my rhythm
Me: Yes it was a great composition. You performed several times too…?
Helge: Yes, that was fun… (P-Interview H-p.2)

Helge's somewhat mixed reactions and feelings observed in the early part of the composition process seemed to give way to pride during and after the performance event. His compositional habitus could very well be changed with regard to future compositional processes.
Me: Have you learnt to compose somewhere…?
Helge: ...you mean composing?
Me: Yes. H: Hmm., yes…(thinking for some time) we had, when I was small, we had certain play instruments like tambourines and other things which I used for percussion or rhythm-making on my own. I liked that. And then there is Mrs. L of course, she has been teaching us a lot about composing…so I think, composing is something I can manage quite well now…" (P-Interview H-p.3)[101].
With Helge's relationship to the African drum in mind, it is worth noting in this interview that he not only refers to Mrs L's teaching of composition, but also to his own skill with "instruments …and other things". This underlines the relevance of physical contextual elements to knowledge, to the acquisition of skills and to changes in attitude; phenomena that are often considered to be connected to internal processes of the mind. James Wertsch is quite clear in his view about the relevance of material things for mental changes in the individual. He points out that external properties have important implications for understanding internal mental processes. He explains the connections between cultural tools, actions, outcomes and changes in the individual agent the following way:

> In the view being outlined here, the use of material objects as cultural tools results in changes in the agent. …At this point, however, I would simply point out that the external, material properties of cultural tools have important implications for understanding how internal processes come into existence and operate. Such internal processes can be thought of as skills in using particular mediational means. The development of such skills requires acting with, and reacting to, the material

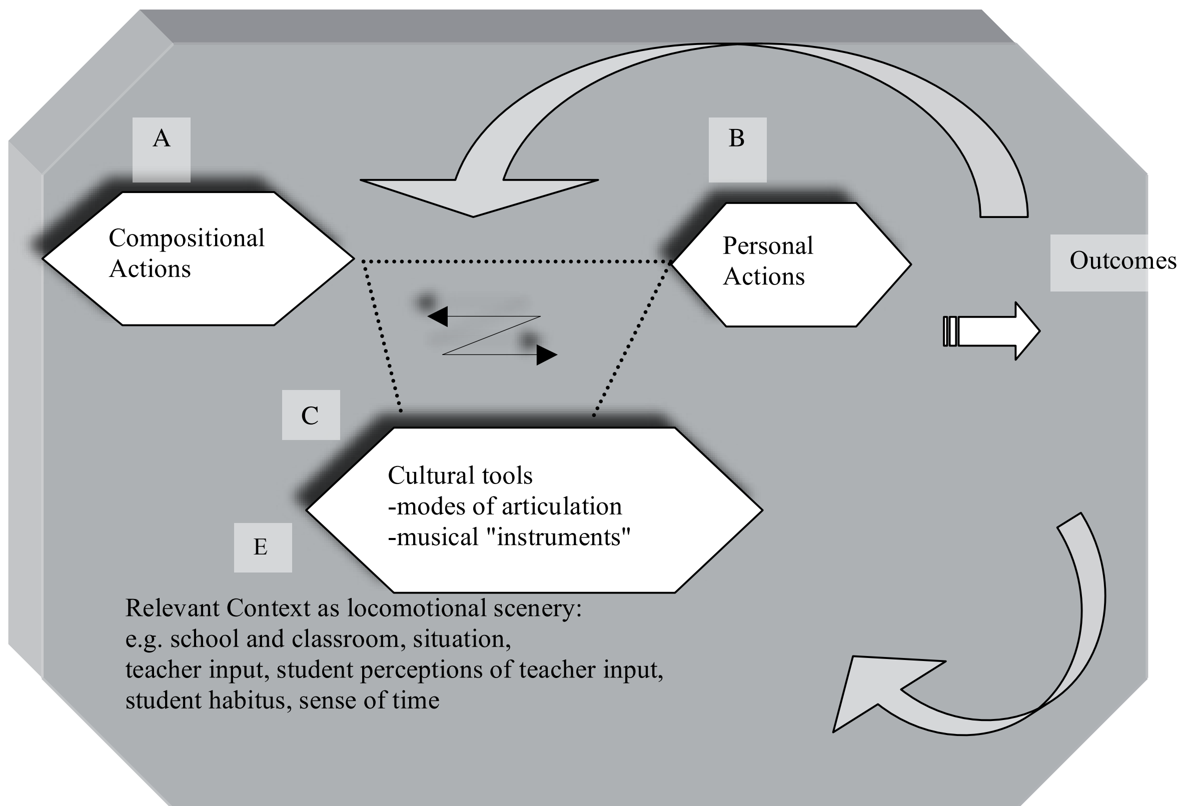
[101] Helge is one of four pupils interviewed individually in-depth. The rest of the class took part in group interviews in a stimulated recall setting. (see Chapter 4)

properties of cultural tools. Without such materiality, there would be nothing to act with or react to, and the emergence of socio-culturally situated skills could not occur. (p. 31)[102]

Compositional process as relational and circular activity

My conception of group composition in schools then, is characterised by the belief that such processes are highly relational and circular by nature. Building on my analysis, arguments and the models presented earlier in this chapter I can now present a more complete model, as in Figure 6.4, which serves as a framework for my understanding of compositional processes in schools:

Figure 6.4 A model for the understanding of compositional processes in small groups



The main components of a model for understanding the compositional processes of small groups are: Compositional actions (A), personal actions (B), cultural tools (C), and outcomes (D). Relevant context (E), is an important element in such a model and is conceived of as a locomotional scenery that can be stable as well as changing.

Findings in this study suggest that relations are all important during the creation of a composition, and the dynamic nature of relations between actions, outcomes and contextual elements create a kind of circulation driving the process. This holistic conception of a compositional process, however, does not mean that it is

[102] I will return to this discussion in later chapters.

meaningless to focus on aspects of the different components. In the next chapter I will examine more closely some of the specific phenomena, which are taking place in this web of relations and actions.

Summary

I start this chapter by discussing two basic kinds of actions, which serve as the core of a model designed to understand the complexities of compositional process. The two kinds of actions, Compositional actions (CAs) and Personal actions (PAs), evolved during my initial ethnographic microanalysis of group processes. They are underpinned and inspired by theory and observations from phenomenology and social psychology. The two kinds of actions are fundamentally different by nature as well as by actional 'foci'. However, they can also be characterised as having the potential of moving along a continuum where personal actions may be considered as closer to the "subject", the person, and compositional actions as closer to the "object", the composing of music. Grounding theory in my data, I continue by introducing three different categories of Compositional Actions connected to: a) inventions, b) planning, structuring and leadership, and c) appropriation, evaluation and revision; and a number of Personal actions.

Inspired by socio-cultural theory I discuss the use of cultural tools, such as modes of articulation and musical instruments, in the compositional process arguing that a compositional process, and the outcomes of such a process best can be understood and analysed with *compositional actions*, *personal actions, cultural tools* and the interactions among these as basic components. I identify contextual elements in the processes and discuss the basic question of how contexts discipline and shape such a process. I conclude the chapter by arguing that my conception and understanding of group composition in schools, is characterised by the belief that such processes are highly relational and circular by nature. Important findings at this stage suggest that relations are all important during the creation of a composition, and that the dynamic nature of relations between actions, outcomes and contextual elements creates a kind of circulation driving the process.

Chapter 7

CHARACTERISTICS OF COMPOSITIONAL ACTIONS

Introduction

Vignette # 2

> *...Helge remembered... As he was waiting for his next part listening to Lisa, playing in the repetition now, he suddenly realised that she was the one who had come up with most of the ideas for melodies on her glockenspiel, ...except for Sigrun's...and his own of course. And her ideas about who should play at the same time, and when to come in with the new parts were good too, even if he did not realise that at first....*
>
> *But the solo part on the African drum was his! Even if Mrs L had made it possible by suggesting that they might want to repeat it all and then have a Coda. There was no time for trying other ways of doing it by then. No one protested when she suggested Helge could make a "bridge" as she called it to the repetition. Some kind of bridge! Helge smiled to himself....*

A study within the field of music education has to account for, describe and analyse in depth the phenomena connected to the essence of what constitutes *music* education, namely music and music making. As pointed out in Chapter 3, the domain of music education in schools described as "composition" or "composing" involves pupils in a broad array of educational and artistic activities. Studying compositional processes, therefore, means describing and analysing actions, events and activities, which are generative as well as productive by nature. In the "factional" vignette above, which is a continuation of Vignette # 1 in Chapter 5 and based on the same events and interviews, Helge suddenly becomes aware of the fact that *invented musical ideas* lie at the core of what he is in the middle of performing.

Musical invention

As I have accounted for earlier, CAs connected to 'invention' are different by type as well as in terms of frequency from other CAs. They also appear in many different ways and demonstrate how the "coming about" of compositional ideas can take many forms in a group process. Ethnographic microanalysis also includes systematic search for patterns of generalisations within the corpus being analysed. According to Fred Erickson:

> Strips of interaction within major constituent phases of whole interactional events may exhibit functional relationships of interest (e.g. a particular way of persuading or explaining....) These activities within events may be identified and searched for across many different interactional events.... (Erickson 1992, p. 221)

Findings in this study suggest that important aspects of musical invention in a group process can be described

and characterised within three major and different forms of inventive activity, namely: musical invention as *transient activity,* musical invention as *individual conceptions*, and finally musical invention as *dialogic activity*. All forms are fundamentally *generative* by nature and as such they provide the very basis upon which the musical compositions unfold. They can be observed across the whole range of CAs of invention.

Musical invention as transient activity

Examples of musical invention are very rich in my data. There is no doubt that pupils in this age group, as shown by other researchers (e.g. Wiggins, 1994: Folkestad, 1996: Barrett, 1998: Burnard, 1999), are very capable of inventing music of some sort[103]. The findings in this study indicate that this inventional activity often is not part of a carefully planned and structured procedure.

The example below is taken from GP1**.** In GP1 the 9 year olds, working on their own in a small room, have just started their process of composing. The assignment is based on a poem called "The Sun" (see Appendices). Two boys, Helge and Alexander and two girls, Linda and Cathy, have just chosen their instruments from the instrument table and settled down to work:

Example 3: GP1- 4549-early

(Finally they are ready. Helge has a bongo drum, Alexander has a hand drum, Cathy a soprano xylophone with a beater and Linda an alto xylophone.)

Cathy: I have an idea! First you play one note on yours…(addressing Linda) and then I take….(and then she demonstrates one note and a swift movement with the mallet across the xylophone…and then you play something light. (She looks at Linda again when saying this. At the same time Linda is about to launch her own idea.)

Alexander: No-one must play now. (He attempts to take the lead, but everyone goes on playing their own things….)

In the example above, Cathy comes up with a very brief and simple idea very fast. She links it to a personal action of positioning with the other girl, Linda (*I play…you play*). Linda is busy, however, thinking of her own thing, and she does not respond in the way Cathy seems to want. As there is no response, the idea, which is quite clear, is discarded. Alexander tries to organise the situation, but gives up, seemingly because everyone is busy trying to find his/her own idea. Most of this activity does not happen in the form of ordered sequences, but more or less as some kind of individual and transitional experimentation with the instruments often taking place at the same time. The activity is *transient*, because none of the ideas suggested verbally or musically stay as easily observable and established elements in the web of actions. This transient activity is even more obvious in the next example taken from the same group.

Example 4: GP1-7812- early

Alexander: Yes, we need to practise that…

Cathy: We need more instruments inside …sort of (…. isn't satisfied)

---

[103] See Chapter 3 for a review of research on children and composing.

Linda: We have to play all the time...(and starts immediately to experiment on her xylophone using two beaters)
Cathy. Yes…
(Helge looks at his instruments.)
Helge: I can play here for the dark part and here for the light part…
Cathy: I can play a little on this one and then on this one… (In the meantime, Alexander and Cathy experiment on their instruments, while Helge gets up to examine the available instruments on the table. Linda who has been playing all along with her two beaters trying out some text rhythms interspersed with glissandi, is joined by Cathy towards the end of this.)
Linda: Yes, look! Me and Cathy play this all the time. (She plays a double beater motif now.)
Cathy: No, not now, (Cathy walks to the instrument-table) because I'm going to use this one (waving the maracas. In the meantime Alexander experiments on his xylophone and in a short sequence he plays together with Linda. Helge replaces one of his instruments on the instrument-table and says:)
Helge: This is too much for me…

In this example, the pupils are all searching for something that can be used, instrument- or idea-wise, but it is not an organised search in terms of a joint group effort. It is individualistic and parallel, interspersed with small attempts at initiating dialogues to have their idea accepted. Helge's final remark, "This is too much for me….", is seemingly a comment on the chaos of the situation, but viewing it repeatedly on the videotape, it seems more like resignation on his part at not being able to handle as many instruments and ideas at the same time as he would like to.

Individual ownership and positioning in relation to musical instruments and the musical ideas produced are quite common in this web of personal and compositional actions. This seems to be more characteristic of the 9 year olds compositional processes than those of the 12 year olds, but there is not a big difference. The example below is taken from GP5 where three girls, Linda, Inga, and Turid and two boys, Roy and Helge, are composing “Rhythm Music” together.

Example 5: GP 5 – 3255- early
Linda: Everyone must find something to play! (and everyone starts playing on their instruments. Inga tries wooden beaters on the base-xylophone and plays loudly. Roy has a glockenspiel and experiments with different sounds. Helge is still searching for instruments to play.)
Linda: Quiet! (calls out)..is everybody going to play this together?
Turid: It sounds a bit chaotic really….. (In the meantime Inga continues to play with two beaters on the base-xylophone. She has found an interesting motif that she keeps repeating.)
Linda: We can start with the glockenspiel playing, right? (Roy responds by playing fast notes all over the glockenspiel.)
Linda: Well, yes, something like that...(she laughs a bit) and then...
(For some time nobody says anything and they all keep playing…)
Even if situations like the ones illustrated above might seem very unstructured and chaotic, they appear to be important to inventive activity. Unstructured situations allow a lot of experimentation and give the pupils an

opportunity to get first-hand lived experience and try-outs with what it means to create something on a musical instrument. These kinds of situations, often characterised by the existence of a number of personal actions, are most common in the early part of compositional processes but they also occur later in the processes. Musical invention as transient activity therefore, seems to exist as a meaningful generative activity in its own right, as well as being preparatory to more planned and structured approaches to musical invention. The physicality and first-hand experience of musical invention as transient activity is meaningful also in relation to consciousness, especially if one considers consciousness as something that is ”in the first place not a matter of ’I think that’, but of ’I can’ ” (Merleau-Ponty, 1962, p 159)

Musical invention as individual conceptions

Traditionally, musical invention is viewed as something that is typically *individual* even in a school and group context (Sloboda, 1985; Swanwick and Tillmann, 1986; Kratus, 1994; Webster, 2002). My findings suggest that this is not necessarily the case in small group composition. Musical invention as clear examples of individual conceptions can be observed throughout the data, but it is not, as we shall see later, the most typical characteristic of inventive activity in small groups.
Nevertheless, it is very much present and observable. In many cases the musical quality of the individual input or idea is so convincing that the idea is accepted immediately by the rest of the group as in the example below. This example is taken from GP3 where the pupils are working on their overture for "The Little Red Hen".

Example 6: GP3- 16022 middle

Then Lisa plays: "Who will mow the corn, who will mow the corn?" She uses two beaters and has a major third (C-E) sounding on the first beat and plays a melody -EDCAC EDCAC - and this is exactly as it ended up in the final outcome.)

Irene: Yes, yes !

Lisa: …the way I just did? (She sounds somewhat surprised)

The others (eagerly): Yes!

Lisa: ..if I can remember it…. (and then she plays it again exactly the same way)

Irene: Yes, you must practise that….. Practise! (She seemingly doesn't want the motif to be forgotten and Lisa plays it over again several times.)

Sigrun: Yeah! That's great!

Irene: That's it!

In this example Lisa invents her music as a direct response to another motif that is already established in the group. This motif goes like this:

Lisa creates her music as a response to this motif. She uses the text rhythm, (kven skal slå kor-net) [who will mow the corn], they have decided on and the glockenspiel. The motif she comes up with goes like this:

Lisa's music is heard here for the first time. She plays it directly on the instrument and is able to repeat it exactly the way it was presented the first time. Although Lisa is a very competent performer she seems to need confirmation from the other group members to believe in her own input even if her melody is a fine response which suits the text very well. Her input must be considered as her own individual conception as it is so new that she doubts that she can "remember it".

Sometimes, however, pupils will announce their own new input loudly and clearly as shown in the next example: this time from GP5 where Turid, Inga, Linda, Roy and Helge are busy composing Rhythm music.

Example 7: GP5 19493 - middle

(Then they start talking about the B-part.)

Turid: Are we using the same instruments?

Linda: Yes.

Inga: We need some other instruments too. (She picks up the eggs. In the meantime Helge has been trying out ideas on his xylophone. He has not taken part in the discussion about the B-part)

Helge: I have something I can play! (in a loud voice)

Linda: Play very slowly…the B-part is supposed to be slow…. (She continues experimenting on her instrument.)

Helge: Stop, stop!- listen! (in a more insistent tone and then he plays a quiet motif with separate notes and big leaps.)

Linda and Turid: Yes, you can play like that! (and then Helge and Turid start playing the motif together with Turid playing two notes where Helge plays one.)

Linda: Yes, yes!

(Inga plays along with the eggs and one beater on the base-xylophone and Linda comes in with some regular heavy beats on the djembe, really slow ones. Roy plays the same rhythm as Turid on his woodblock and it lasts for a little while…)

In this example Helge announces his new idea before playing it. He seems convinced that he has something really relevant to contribute. The first reaction from his peers is moderately positive, probably because it was a problem earlier in the group process to find something Helge could play. This reaction changes, however, as the other group members start playing along and develop Helge's idea into something that is generally accepted by the whole group. As such, it shows how new individual musical conceptions can be expanded by peers and how this process of inclusion leads to confirmation and acceptance of the musical idea presented.

At other times however, individual conceptions of good musical quality can be too radical to be immediately accepted by peers. This seems to be the case in the example below from the same GP:

Example 8: GP5- 6153- early

(In the meantime Inga is trying out a motive on the base-xylophone with two beaters. She is playing thirds quite evenly in semiquavers. This is the first time this motive appears and it is the same motive that ended up in the final outcome. Linda is listening and watching, and comments.)

Linda: Yes, you can have that….

(Roy has become interested as well and tries to imitate Inga on his glockenspiel, but succeeds only in parts.)

Linda: Yes, and that you can have…first Inga plays and then you, ….and then they (pointing her finger at Helge's and Turid's xylophones.)

In the meantime Helge is re-reading the assignment and tries one of the text-rhythms he finds there on a maracas very briefly. He sits down at his xylophone and starts imitating Inga's motif on the maracas, but gives up. Suddenly he takes a beater and plays a fast, syncopated and very contrasting motif up and down on the xylophone. Roy is still playing his motive on the glockenspiel and Helge comments.)

Helge: Yours is too light….

(then Inga starts playing her base-xylophone motive again and Helge joins in with his contrasting motif. This is actually very close to what ended up in the final outcome. The others are watching and look very sceptical. They do nothing to encourage Helge's idea. Helge throws away his beater and plays something with the maracas again. But he stops as Mrs L enters the room….)

In this episode, Inga has her contribution accepted without protests. At this point in the process, Linda is trying to lead collective development in her group, but she is having problems with Helge who does a number of things seemingly to oppose her leadership (i.e. he re-reads the assignment and plays more or less meaninglessly on a maracas). All of this can be regarded as personal actions (PAs). When Helge finally comes up with his new radical motif on the xylophone, Linda and the others seem to believe this is yet another PA from Helge. This might very well be the intention, but as it turns out Helge's new idea also becomes a valuable compositional action (CA), something that is not recognised by Linda and the others. As this process develops however, it is recognised by Helge himself who sticks to his idea. His idea is accepted by Mrs. L. and eventually by his peers who after a while came to regard Helge's idea as something "cool" that enriched the group composition.
In the group interview, the pupils confirm this interpretation of the situation. It appears that Helge's new idea is indeed conceived of as a Personal Action.

Me: Do you ever think some of the ideas suggested are too far out…?..that you consider them as nonsense or just kidding and not as genuine and serious input?

Several: Uummmm (seem to be thinking)

Me: For example Helge's idea, the one he had quite early….did you think he was joking?

Girls: Ehhh…well yes.

Me: But you accepted the idea in the end?

Roy: That was after Mrs. L came in. She said it was ok…and then they gave up.

Me: I think Linda walked over to Helge to take a closer look at his idea..is that so?

Linda: Well….yes (smiling)

Me: Did you then still think it was sabotage?

Linda: Hhmmmmm….well it started to be quite good…
Me. And you Helge, you meant it to be a genuine input from the very beginning or what?
Helge: No, not from the start. I just played wildly to protest and sabotage, just like Roy did….
Me: Because you had not quite got the instrument you wanted? Is that so?
Helge: Welll…yes, I did not want to play the xylophone…
Inga: He wanted the drum!
Helge: Everyone wanted the drum…..
(Group Interview-GP5, p. 3)

This episode demonstrates that individual conceptions of good musical quality can be rejected by the group, but also that it can be included if the conceiver or someone else is willing to fight for it.

In most of the examples above, individual conceptions do not just happen spontaneously and unprepared. Often there is some sort of individual preceding experimentation with instruments leading up to it, but the distance between such physical experimentation and the appearance of the musical idea seems to be short. As Merleau-Ponty describes it:"… the process of grasping a meaning is performed by the body" (Merleau-Ponty 1962, p 177)

In some cases, however, experimentation of this kind takes a little longer time and can be studied in detail. This is shown in my next example, this time from GP7 where Irene, Alexander, Sigrun, Mary and Todd are busy composing Rhythm Music.

Example 9: GP7-16766- middle
(In the meantime Irene is leaning over to Alexander's xylophone and plays two notes, A and C, a minor third. She repeats this several times playing on Alexander's instrument. Alexander is watching.)
Alexander: Don't play my instrument….(Irene continues to experiment very carefully on her own instrument with the minor third expanding it into a full minor triad (ACE) and then she adds a D' and establishes a rhythmical motif. She sits up and plays it more convincingly and strongly. She practises it while the others are preparing to start from the beginning and as Sigrun and Mary are playing their parts, she says to Alexander who nods his head)
Irene: I go first…

In this example it is obvious that Irene's idea grows out from her experimentation on the instrument with the minor third A and C'. It becomes a musical idea that she wants to present when she expands it into a triad (ACE) and adds the D' realising that the D' establishes a pregnant rhythm. Her conviction can be observed in her face as well as in her body language as she prepares her input. An interesting part of this picture is her relationship with Alexander who is the only one in the group watching her at this time. Even if he does not want Irene to play on his own instrument, he seems to encourage Irene's initiative by allowing her to "go first". As such, it is very close to what is typically observed in musical *improvisation*, namely a demonstration of individual competence in a clearly defined social and musical framework.

In improvisation, musical invention often is a mixture of individuality and something shared, as seen in example 10 from GP7 below.

Example 10: GP7-25368- late
(Sigrun counts to four)
Sigrun: 1 2 3 4
(And then they all start. It develops as planned to begin with. The ostinatos establish themselves. Sigrun plays the drum motif. Irene plays her minor mode motif. Alexander has invented a new motif, which is quite parallel to Irene's. He improvises around this motif, but keeps the same rhythm as Irene and starts playing in a complementary rhythm to Irene. He looks at Irene before starting this. This is a new motif in this process. Mary plays her eggs after she has finished her intro part and which she returns to after a while. Todd starts the rhythm he played earlier but with completely different notes. He does not find his motif at first and says)
Todd: No…. (shortly after this he plays again and invents something new..)

Compositional Actions as musical *improvisation* are not observed very often in my data, but it happens occasionally, especially with the 12 year olds. In the example above Alexander as well as Todd create new motifs through improvisation. The other group members play an established system of ostinatos and Alexander, who does not have a special part to perform, creates something entirely new. Todd does as well, even if his starting point is the fact that he is not able to recreate his original music.

Summing up, it is obvious that individually conceived ideas play an important part in small group compositional processes. Sometimes such ideas seem to be convincing in themselves through their musical, aesthetic or structural qualities and sometimes they have to be argued for to become accepted. Sometimes individual ideas are rejected because of poor quality or other reasons, and sometimes because they are too radical and not understood by peers. Sometimes they are the results of individual experimentation; more rarely they appear as an individual initiative in a group improvisatory setting. However, in all cases individual conceptions need confirmation and acceptance either from peers or from the teacher, to become part of the final musical outcome.

In small group composition then, musical invention as individual conceptions seem to be individual only in a limited sense. As soon as the individual ideas are out in the web of interactions between personal and compositional actions and cultural tools, the ideas are often modified. In turn they create new actions and are confirmed or rejected. Another important characteristic of musical invention in small group composition is the fact that invention often is conceived of and developed through different modes of articulation and dialogues with a peer.

Musical invention as dialogic activity

In several of the examples we have been looking at so far, there is an element of some sort of dialogue between peers when musical invention takes place. This is true for musical invention as transient activity as well as for some of the instances of musical invention as individual conceptions. In this study, musical invention as dialogic

activity seems to be the most common way of inventing musical ideas.[104] This can be observed throughout the data, but is more advanced and frequent with the 12 year olds than the 9 year olds. With the 9 year olds musical invention as dialogical activity often appears to be the *intention* of the pupils, but it often leads nowhere musically speaking. This seems to be the case in the following example from GP1 where Alexander, Linda, Cathy and Helge are composing something called "The Sun".

Example 11: GP1- 6191-early

Cathy: I have to put the xylophone on the floor because it is so big… (Cathy brings maracas as well. Meanwhile Alexander experiments on his glockenspiel. Cathy and Linda have placed themselves on the floor just opposite each other with their instruments)

Cathy: Maybe we can play like this facing each other…? (Linda nods. Helge has found a woodblock, which he plays consistently. Alexander returns his glockespiel to the instrument-table and the two girls practise the rhythm of "The- Sun" with two notes taking turns on their xylophones. Meanwhile Alexander and Helge examine the instrument-table again playing several instruments)

Cathy: Ssshhh…come here now….

Helge: This is going to be difficult….(everyone except Linda now returns to the table)

Cathy: Who will start with "The Sun"?

Cathy and Linda obviously have the *intention* of entering a musical dialogue as they sit down facing each other, but not much happens and they all go back to the "start". With the 12 year olds, however, the invention of musical ideas is strikingly often a result of cooperation and dialogic activity. Very often one person starts something that someone else picks up, changes it a little, and while exercising it a new motif is born. In the following example, group members Siri, Harriet, Iselin and Martin are in the middle of their task of composing Rhythm Music in GP4.

Example 12: GP4- 1798- early

Siri: Can we change beaters? (…turning to Harriet. She crawls over to Harriet and tries two different beaters on Harriet's metallophone and then on her own instrument. In the meantime Martin finds a mallet and bangs the cowbell quite close to Iselin's ear)

Iselin: Don't! (She exclaims and laughs.)

Siri: Look! (She plays a small motif on Harriet's instrument, C-E-D-A,- now Iselin becomes interested as well and pays attention. Siri plays her motive again and now she keeps each note a little longer and Harriet nods her head. Siri walks over to her own instrument, the alto xylophone, Iselin counts to 4 and then Siri and Harriet play together. Siri repeats the notes in a special rhythm CCCCCC C-, EEEEEE E-, DDDDDD D-, AAAAAA A-, whereas Harriet plays the original idea with single notes on her metallophone. Martin laughs …and starts swaying.)

Siri: We need to have a certain sequence……If we start with this and then this one…

[104] The concept "dialogic" stems from the word "dialogue". "Dialogue" derives from two Greek roots: "dia" which means "through" and "logos" which can be explained as "reason, idea, word" (Harper, 2001h). The way that "dialogue" is understood and used here includes "musical ideas". My use of the concept is close to that of Bakhtin's (1981) and his followers (e.g. Dysthe, 1999), but more focused on "discourse" (see Chapter 2) than on verbal language.

Harriet: ...and then this one (she points to Iselin's instrument. Sigrun tries to play the motif with two beaters in thirds…)
Siri: We can have two notes at a time…..(She is interrupted by Harriet)
Harriet: We'd better start now don't you think?

Musical invention as dialogic activity is well demonstrated in this example, even physically. Siri even *moves over to* Harriet's instrument and finds the first notes of the motive there. The first motif is probably born as a result of Siri trying out the sound of new mallets on Harriet's instrument and Harriet likes it and imitates it. Then Iselin helps to create rhythmical shape to the motif by counting to 4, and Siri varies and expands the motive making it into an accompanying rhythm. She adds a third below every note because she fancies using two beaters instead of one. Harriet is now settled and wants the others in.
My interpretation of the situation is confirmed in the group interview, and what is more, even the pupils themselves are not quite sure *who* created the motif except that it all started out with Harriett's experimentation with the sound of her instrument:

Me: Do you remember any of this…? What is happening here?
Siri: Don't quite remember..
Me: It looks like the birth of a musical idea to me. First time I heard that….was it your idea (to Siri) or was it yours (to Harriett)
Both: We did it together….
Me: I can see Siri is playing on your instrument Harriett. You seem to bend over and play….as if you have an idea to show her.
All: Yes.. (smiling)
Me. But do you remember how it appeared….? (Siri smiles again)...you must have liked it Harriett, because you used it afterwards…?
Harriett: Yes.
M: Did you imagine playing it together?
Both: Well, yes….
Me: It seems that you, Siri, come in with an idea that you give to Harriett: she receives it and tries to play it; you helped a bit, Siri, then Harriett took over the idea and you, Siri, made an accompaniment to it…is that what happened?
Both: Well…yes.
Me: But you, Siri, you don't quite know how the idea came into your head…?
Siri: No…. (she sounds a bit surprised..)
Me: Did it come from your head or did it come when you took the beater and started to play?
Siri: I think it came along because Harriett tried out her instrument and then I wanted to try too…so it was actually Harriett who started playing her instrument…
Me: ….and then you wanted to join in?
Siri: Yes, but I can't quite remember…..
(Group interview- G4 p.3)

In addition to being dialogic, this example also shows how different CAs are chained together during this activity. A significant musical melodic idea emerges from experimentation with sound. It is obvious that sound is the focus of interest in the beginning, because they start being attentive to the sound of wooden beaters on a metallophone and whilst exploring the use of softer beaters together, the melodic idea is generated by Siri. It is difficult to say exactly where the idea comes from, as the pupils themselves confirm, but it shows how one compositional action leads to and is related to another CA in a dialogic activity. It all starts with experimentation of sound on her instrument by Harriett, then moves on to the generation of a short melody by Siri, then on to imitation of this melody, and finally on to some sort of musical expansion.

In my next example showing musical invention as dialogic activity, the origin of the musical idea is more obvious. This example is taken from GP7.

Example 13: GP7-7777- early
Irene: Kaikakofima! (she chants this word rhythmically and then tries to play it with two beaters, but changes to one in a descending movement on the xylophone starting up high.
Irene: Look… (turning to Alexander who looks and then he imitates the motif on his xylophone but a little higher up)
Irene: <u>You</u> can play this (turning to Todd now)…like this..(and demonstrates the motif..)
Todd: Nooosh.. (Todd ignores her and keeps playing his own thing. And now Alexander plays the motif again and succeeds repeating it regularly on his second try. Todd answers with the same rhythm but ascending. And now Irene plays Alexander's variant on the base-xylophone many times and finally Todd joins in with this too. He fails in the beginning, but after some time it goes just fine.)
Alexander: Yes! (He has stopped playing and listens to Todd)..do like that!
Irene: Yes!

In this example, Irene starts her invention with an established and teacher recommended strategy. As soon as the rhythm of the word "kaikakofima" becomes a melodic motif she turns to her peers and suggests that this motif is something Todd can play—something he refuses to begin with. The playing continues throughout this time and after a short while it becomes a musical dialogue rather than a verbal one. As Alexander joins in by playing something slightly different, and Irene shows her acceptance by adjusting her original idea, Irene's initial argument is strengthened as Todd agrees to play what Irene and Alexander want him to play. He is convinced by musical arguments in a generative, musical, dialogic and discursive activity.

This example also shows how the compositional actions move from melodic creation to imitation, and from here towards improvisation and expansion. Moreover, it shows how compositional actions interact with Todd's personal action of positioning and trying to keep to his own thing, and how the "happy" outcome of this interaction becomes another step in the locomotion of the compositional process.

In many instances musical invention as dialogic activity comes very close to examples of what is described as

”distributed cognition” (see e.g. Salomon, 1993). Distributed cognition is sometimes described as very different from traditional cognitive science. Instead of focusing on human activity in terms of processes acting upon representations inside an individual actor's head, this position seeks to apply the same cognitive concepts, but this time, to the interactions among a number of human actors and devices for a given activity. As such it seeks to highlight the complex interdependencies between people and between people and artefacts in their collaborative activities. It is distributed— across minds, persons, and the symbolic and physical environments, both natural and artificial” (Pea, 1993, p. 3). The phenomenon that intelligent processes in human activity (here: musical invention) transcend the boundaries of the individual actor is seemingly the case in the following example from GP7.

Example 14: GP4-12916- middle

(In the meantime Siri has started to hum a small pentatonic melody. She hums hesitatingly for a couple of times and tries it on the xylophone as well as on the glockenspiel, while the others pay close attention. Then she finds the first note for the melody and says:

Siri: Look now… (She tries on the glockenspiel) ….No..(shaking her head)

Harriet: Yes! (encouraging)

Siri: Yes, I can try it on mine…(She changes to her xylophone)…listen now!

(In the meantime Martin tries to find the notes of the melody on the glockenspiel.)

Martin: ...that one, and then that one…

Siri: Be quiet! (She keeps trying on the xylophone. And then Iselin wants to try as well. She puts her djembe away, takes a beater and tries on Harriet's xylophone. In the meantime Siri has trouble finding the first note. They all seem to know what they are looking for now. Iselin finds the first note and the next few ...

Harriet: Yes!! (She exclaims loudly, while paying close attention. Siri and Martin stop searching and watch Iselin who keeps trying.)

Harriet: No, that note goes there… (she points her finger…… and then the melody comes out, - EGEDCDEGEDCDE)

Harriet: Yesss! (excited… and all of them sit up and Martin applauds…)

In this example there is no doubt that Siri is not able to realise her idea on a musical instrument without the help of her peers. The dialogic activity in this case is not so much about inventing the melodic idea. Melodically speaking, the invention is for the main part Siri's individual conception[105]. However, in this context, it is vital that the idea is realised on a musical instrument other than the voice and thus it is not a fully relevant idea until it is sounded on one or more of the instruments in use. As such, it becomes a musical idea generated by and belonging to the group. This example, as well as some of the others, shows how invention is achieved as the outcome of interactions among cultural tools and a number of human actors engaging in dialogic activity.

Summing up, a major finding in this study is that musical invention as dialogic activity plays an important part in small group compositional processes. It is different by nature from invention as transient activity, and

[105] There is no doubt that this melody resembles the central melody in Grieg’s well-known “Morning Mood” from “Peer Gynt”. The class had been introduced to that piece earlier. I have found no other reference to Grieg’s piece in my data, and Siri and the group might be unaware of the similarity. Of course, Grieg’s melody might be a part of their musical habitus.

invention as individual conceptions, in that it involves the participants in a structured process of creative participation between peers who contribute in different ways to the evolving invention. In this dialogic activity, different CAs of invention are often chained together involving experimentation, the creation of melodic and rhythmical ideas, imitation, improvisation, revision and expansion. In many instances, musical invention as dialogic activity is a direct musical dialogue rather than a verbal one. It can be argued that this form of musical invention transcends the borders of the individual and that it highlights the complex interdependencies between people, and between people and artefacts, in such a way that a discussion about the location of the cognition and intention connected to the musical invention, is relevant and meaningful. And as such, it places musical invention in small group composition within the characteristics of the dialogical perspective of Bakhtin (1981) and his followers. According to Dysthe (1999), Bakhtin views existence itself as fundamentally dialogical: "Life is dialogical by its very nature. To live means to engage in dialogue, to question, to listen, to answer, to agree etc. " (Bakhtin, 1978, p. 318 quoted in Dysthe, 1999, p. 79).

Planning and structuring

One of the most interesting questions throughout my observations of the different forms of musical invention, is the way in which musical invention is related to my second group of compositional actions, namely those of planning, structuring and leadership. We shall take a closer look at this aspect of compositional activity in the next paragraphs.

A debated issues in research on children's composing is the question as to whether children work in a holistic manner, step by step, or just work out their music more or less randomly. Barrett reviews this discussion referring to Kratus (1989), Davies (1992, 1994), DeLorenzo (1989), Wiggins (1994) among others. Barrett maintains that:

> Until more information regarding the compositional processes of children in natural classroom settings is available, it may be wise to reserve judgment on the applicability of the findings of such studies to the design of music curricula.
> (Barrett, 1998, p.21)

In the present study, the question of*whether* the pupils plan and structure their compositions is not an interesting issue. They do. The way they do this, however, is not only just interesting but also a complex issue to investigate.

Instead of examining the question concerning a holistic or "step by step" approach, I think it is more productive to consider the extent to which pupils plan and structure their compositions with a *linear* or *lateral* approach. I have borrowed these two concepts from the Norwegian composer Bjørn Kruse[106]. In his book "Den tenkende kunstner" (The Thinking Artist), he argues that composers may plan and structure composing with two different approaches, a lateral and/or a linear approach. Kruse maintains that both approaches are useful and productive in different ways, alone or in combination. He defines the in two approaches the following way:

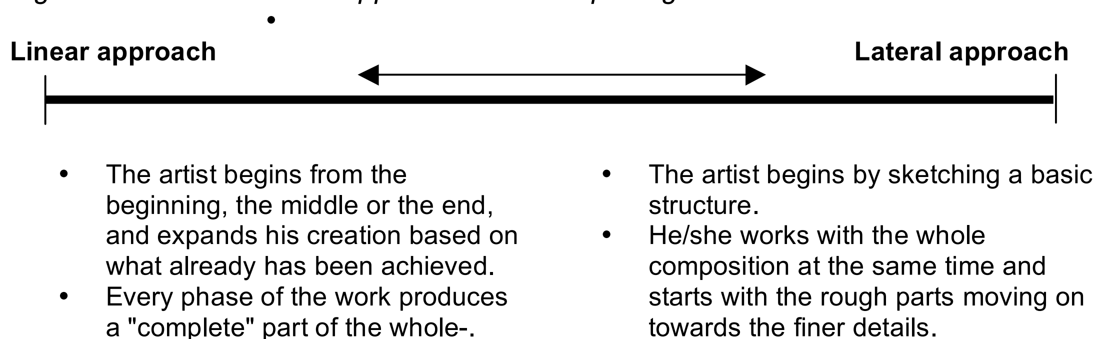
[106] Professor Kruse is professor of composition at the Norwegian Academy of Music in Oslo.

A *linear approach* is when the artist begins from the beginning, the middle or the end, and expands his creation based on what already has been achieved. Every phase of the work produces a "complete" part of the whole. The artist has a fairly clear idea of how the final result will appear in the end. The process is productive rather than creative. But, there can also be an unconscious creative process which is highly creative, if the whole unfolds organically based on already existing elements, and without this wholeness being preconceived.

A *lateral approach* [107]is when the artist begins by sketching a basic structure. He/she works with the whole composition at the same time and starts with the rough parts moving on towards the finer details. The details always come towards the end. The material dictates its own development and a tension exists between the dynamics of the material and the desire of the artist. The different elements of the composition are conceived of as main elements and ornaments: a basic form and decorations. The artist does not know how the final result will appear until it is finished. He/she is only aware of the basic form. The composition unfolds as it is being created (Kruse, 1998, p.37- my translation).

In my study of "pupil-artists" it seems possible to distinguish between a linear and lateral approach to composing as described by Kruse. I find it meaningful and relevant to describe the extent to which the pupils in this study approach their compositional activity by way of a linear or lateral approach. Linear and lateral approaches as described by Kruse are presented as opposites and quite different ways of approaching a compositional process. In my view, the division between the two approaches are not discrete enough to be used as contrasting categories for analytic purposes on practical composing activities. Rather, I prefer to consider them as opposites on a continuum. This allows for the inclusion of borderline cases, something which as we will see, is very relevant in this study:

Fig 7.1 Linear and lateral approaches to composing



[107] Kruse borrows the concept "lateral" from Edward de Bono's concept "lateral thinking" connected to the notion of creativity (see: http://www.edwdebono.com/debono/lateral.htm). De Bono's involvement with creativity theory is considered by parts of very influential scientific scholars to be damaging to the scientific study of creativity, e.g. by Robert J. Sternberg. In his "Handbook of Creativity" (Sternberg, 1999) Sternberg claims that de Bono is perhaps the "foremost proponent" of what is labelled the "pragmatic approach". According to Sternberg his concern is "not with theory, but with practice". Sternberg's critique suggests that people like de Bono "have been concerned primarily with developing creativity, secondarily with understanding it, but almost not at all with testing the validity of their ideas about it" (Sternberg, 1999, p. 5) As pointed out above, Kruse's approach is theoretical as well as pragmatic, and linked to a very specific practical and personal knowledge in the domain of musical composition. To me, practical and pragmatic involvement is a strength, not a weakness, when developing theory as well as practice.

- The artist has a fairly clear idea of how the final result will appear in the end.
- The process is productive rather than creative.
- But— there can also be an unconscious creative process, which is highly creative, if the whole unfolds organically based on already existing elements, and without this wholeness necessarily being preconceived.

- The details always come towards the end.
- The material dictates its own development and a tension exists between the dynamics of the material and the desire of the artist.
- The different elements of the composition are conceived of as main elements and ornaments: a basic form and decorations.
- How the final result will appear the artist does not know until it is finished. He/she only is aware of the basic form.
- The composition unfolds as it is being created.

In the following section of this chapter, I will present some of my observations of pupils' compositional actions involving planning and structuring, and discuss the extent to which these activities can be described as a linear or a lateral approach.

In GP3 the 10 year olds are in the early part of their working process composing an overture for their play about "The Little Red Hen". Below I present three transcribed examples from their planning and structuring activity early in the process.

Example 15-I: GP3 2303 Early

Sigrun: But can it start like this…? (She sounds rather sceptical)

Lisa: No, but we will see this later……now the thing is to write down the ideas…

Martin: And then we can repeat it..(He looks at what Irene is writing down).. three times?

Lisa: Never mind what she is writing….

Helge: The hen, maybe that has to be in the beginning…?

Sigrun: Helge, is this supposed to be a musical composition?

Lisa: Yes, because when we play it, right, then it is different from saying it…everything can't be repeated two times (looking at Irene writing down texts)..How many times are we going to have this…?(pointing at one of the texts)

Irene: Two times,..it suits…

Sigrun: Yes…

(In the meantime Helge is chanting words and small melodies)

Helge: No, of course we can't take the whole fairytale….

Example 15-II: GP3 4520 Early

Sigrun: "Maiuuo…. no we can't have that…"who will eat the bread, who will eat the bread" (She chants this several times in succession)

Martin: Will we say it many times?

Sigrun: No, I am just trying it out… (for some time everyone is busy saying and chanting several of the texts)

Martin: Are we making music out of this..? (In the meantime Helge gets up and walks around.)

Sigrun: We don't need more than this do we..?

Irene: Yes, for the ending, we do.

Sigrun: But we are supposed to make melodies…

Example 15-III: GP3 5203 Early

Sigrun: We really need something about the bread (chants "the bread is now ready" while trying to sing it as a melody.)

Lisa: We don't need to have the same words as in the fairytale do we?

Sigrun: We have to figure it out later…. I am so tired.

Irene: Will we only have that two times for the ending?

Martin: We only need it once….

Sigrun: We need something when the animals come in….

Helge: We have to think about the length of it, maybe it will be too long…

Lisa: We have only written down ideas, (pointing at what Irene has been writing), and they are only on paper….

Irene: Is there something we can use here...?

Lisa: Let's have a go!

All of the examples from GP3 above suggest that the pupils for the most part are approaching their planning and structuring laterally. In Example 15-I above they are concerned with sketching a basic structure, talking about the whole and very roughly the different parts. After that, as we see in Example 15 -II above, they are mainly preoccupied with what they consider to be the main elements of the composition. Finally, (in Example 15-III) they postpone working with the details until later in the process and demonstrate clearly that they don't know much about what the final result will be. With the 9 and 10 year olds, episodes of this kind can be observed repeatedly and they can go on for some time. To some extent, it resembles what I observed with my own children in free play who often were able to discuss and plan certain aspects of an activity even if the activity in question remained unrealised.

However, the compositional processes of the 9 and 10 year olds also demonstrate a more *productive* approach to composing, especially if time is running out and they have to come up with a result as in the following GP3 example, late in the process:

Example 16: GP3 -20597 -Late

(Lisa suddenly exclaims:)

Lisa: You can do this all the time and then, then (eagerly) when the two of you have started, then Helge can come in and do his Oink, oink, …and then Sigrun and me can play the rest of ours and then change (shouting now.)

(Irene likes the idea and walks over and plays the rhythm on Helge's djembe saying:)

Irene: Watch your drum hands…..

Helge: That's for you to say (he retorts angrily and beats his drum loudly)..this is what your idea sounds like in my ears.

(Lisa is still eager.)
Lisa: Then I can play, then the two of you, and then you can go on playing and then me and Sigrun come in again.
Helge: Yes, because now there're only two minutes left.
Sigrun: Will Helge go on or is he only playing once? (She talks to Lisa and everyone starts talking about this)
Sigrun: Let's try! (She calls out, and counts to 3.)

In this example Lisa is sketching most of the whole composition rather roughly, but she bases her ideas on what has already been achieved, and plans as if the whole can unfold organically based on already existing elements; in other words; she applies a more linear approach than earlier in the process.

My two next examples are from GP 4 where the 12 year olds are busy composing Rhythm music. Let us have a look at their work somewhat towards the middle of the process:

Example 17-I: GP4- 17445 Middle
Iselin: 1234..(She counts and starts playing the djembe, and now it works for everyone, even for Martin…There is some hesitation about the ending of the A-part, but they continue directly to the B-part.)
Siri: Four times and then Martin comes in…(the djembe and the rainsound play continually and they talk a little bit whilst playing. Siri comes in with her melody on the glockenspiel and Harriet imitates it a couple of times on the xylophone…)
Iselin: And again…! (She is not quite happy with the others and keeps up the djembe ostinato. Harriet needs a little help to make her rhythm work.)
Harriet: That makes it three times over and back.
Iselin: And then I begin at… (She starts playing the A-part again)
Harriet: Remember the piece has to last 2 to 3 minutes (fearing they don't have enough. Iselin stops playing.)
Iselin: Is this going to be OK? (obviously referring to the whole piece.)
Siri and Harriet: Yess… (nodding)

Example 17- II: GP4 18256 Middle
Harriet: How will we play that melody in the B-part? When you have played three times I start?
Siri: Yes, but look…(she plays the melody over 4 bars and then makes a break—lasting 3 beats—before repeating it)
Siri: We play it with this stop (and she goes on to demonstrate what she means.)
Harriet: Ok, let us try it once, just you and me.
Siri: Yes.
Harriet: You start (and Siri plays the melody again and Harriet joins in the second time, but she goes wrong…)
Harriet: No!..again, 1234…, Nooo……., shit! (It goes wrong again)
Siri: OK, from the beginning once more, I start.

In (Example 17- I) and (Example 17- II) above the pupils seem to be thinking and working a much more linear

way than in the previous examples. Here the pupils are concerned about what they already have achieved, when and where to stop and begin and what comes next. They seem to focus on a certain part more than the whole. Some of the pupils seem to have a fairly clear picture of what the result should be and try to help other pupils to make this happen, e.g. Iselin and Siri. The process seems to be more productive than generative.

However, there are elements of a lateral approach as well in that there seems to be a tension between the desire of a pupil-artist (e.g. Harriet) and the material, the musical instrument. Harriet cannot play what she intends to play. And there is some uncertainty as to what the composition will become as it unfolds.

The following three examples are taken from GP6. This group is in the process of composing Rhythm Music as well. The examples illustrate how pupils in the same group can have *different* approaches to planning and structuring. When reading it, note the difference between Lisa and Eric.

Example 18-I: GP6 5715 Early

Eric: But how are we going to play in the A-part; who will play first?

Lisa: Carol is, because she has the bluuuuuuuu sound (She makes a sound and demonstrates with her hand.)

Carol: But how…?

Lisa: You can do like this …(and plays glissandi with an imagined beater in the air, but Carol does not like it and sticks to her double-beater motif moving it up and down on the xylophone.)

Eric:…and how many times will she play it before the next player comes in? (Eric continues asking)

Lisa: One time here (pointing at the xylophone) and one back again (she refers to Carol's motif.)

Eric: Twice?

Lisa: Yes.

Example 18-II: GP6 7234 Early

Lisa: You start (pointing at Carol), you must start! Sigrun, you come in at the very end (and now eagerly) Listen! first Sigrun plays, than Ingvald and me and then Eric. Then Eric stops, then me and then Ingvald. Then Carol plays again and THEN you play Sigrun (She waves her beater towards Sigrun) Then Eric, then Ingvald and then me…..(weak protests by this time from Ingvald)….eh,….I don't know what I am talking about (Lisa shakes her head.)

Eric: Yes you do! (He seems very pleased) we should have written it all down….

Example 18-III: GP6 11359 Early

(In the meantime Lisa is trying out her motif to find out where the drum fits in.

Lisa: You just go BOOOOOM (she talks to Carol) and then the drum comes. (She has turned to Sigrun now.)

Eric: All instruments must play in both parts…not at the same time, but everyone must have something to play.

Lisa: Yes, first Carol starts playing that one (pointing at the sound maker) then Sigrun plays the drum and then Carol and then the B-part.

Sigrun: Yes, and then Eric stops and then…..

Eric: Yes, but we need to sort out WHAT. It can't just be who comes first and who comes next, something must happen! Even when the first part is finished, something must happen, for example a break or something.
Lisa: Yes, look…. I continue upwards to here (pointing at a tone on her xylophone), then Carol comes in and you continue playing and me and Ingvald stop and then Sigrun plays the drum…..
Eric…and that is the A-part, right?
Lisa: Yes, when Carol starts, the B-part comes.
Eric: Yes.

Throughout the episodes above, Eric seems to be preoccupied with details and a secure knowledge about what the final result will be. On the whole, he is more concerned with *production* than *generation* and wants to know who is playing what and when, what constitutes the B-part and the A-part and when they start etc. In Kruse's terms he seems to be working with a linear approach. Lisa, on the other hand, seems to have full control of the rough parts of the piece. She is able to move on from there to the finer details. In response to Eric's questions she comes up with numerous, creative ideas for performance to such an extent that she almost is overwhelmed by her own creativity ("I don't know what I am talking about."). In this respect she has a lateral approach to the task she is involved in. She improvises and develops details and solutions based on some main elements. Eric is so impressed with Lisa's achievement that he wishes he could have "written it all down".

Somewhat later in the process we can observe this difference in approaches in even greater detail. What is interesting to notice is that Lisa's lateral approach seems to give her a leading position in the group. In the following episode she seems to be in complete artistic control of this particular compositional process.

Example 18-IV: GP6 22724 Middle/Late
Lisa: Hello! Just start like this. Now Carol sort of begins (Lisa takes the cowbell and plays the crescendo motif.)
Carol: I always have to begin….Is this in the A-part or the B-part? (and then Carol starts playing and this starts off the others as well. Eric comes in with his ostinatos and after a short while Lisa starts playing her syncopated rhythm. This is close to what the B-part sounds like in the end. While playing, Carol plays the same rhythm as Eric using two tones on Lisa's xylophone.
Lisa: That does not fit there, (Lisa keeps playing. After a while they start experimenting a bit with the ostinatos..)
Lisa: Hello!!
Sigrun: How do we stop?..Do I play softer and softer?
Lisa: You just start on that one (pointing with her beaters) and then you swirl around higher and higher and then softer and softer and (eagerly now) Carol goes higher and higher and then softer and softer. And then she beats the drum and then we take the A-part backwards! No, no…. (she laughs and stops playing.)

In the episode above not only does Lisa give away musical ideas, she also seems to be able to direct and inspire her peers who seem to depend on her creativity. In this group then, there seems to be a mixture of linear and lateral approaches connected to different individuals with Eric as the most "linear" individual and Lisa as the most "lateral" one.

My last example is taken from GP7. This group is composing Rhythm Music too, and the example given below shows a very typical planning and structuring situation for the 12 year olds. In their group processes, the distance is short between a more or less laterally conceived way of planning and a linear approach with an emphasis on production.

Example 19: GP7 26048 Middle

Sigrun: We were supposed to stop playing ..(She stops after having played continuously for about a minute)
Mary: First Irene stops.
Alexander: Yes.
Irene: I play "akulele".
Sigrun: Look here, Mary, after Todd you wait once and then you do this five times (she plays the eggs), and then you stop one by one, right...(turning towards the others now). Let us try this…
Irene: When do I stop then? (She has been poking fun at Alexander and not paid attention.)
Sigrun: After me and Mary have stopped. You will notice...you can hear it.
Irene: But if I stop there I will only get to play my part once...(Irene protests)
Sigrun: Yes, but you....
Todd: We have a B-part coming up too ..(he interrupts Sigrun and counts 1234 and they start playing)

In this episode, the compositional actions of planning and structuring happen as the pupils are playing music and trying out their ideas. In this sense every phase of the work produces a "complete" part. The process is productive rather than generative, and creation is based on what already has been achieved. As the participants of small group compositional process also have to *produce and perform* their compositions, it is to be expected that a lot of attention is given to the realisation and appropriation of their inventions. In this sense, composition in a school context *invites* pupils to use linear approaches. On the other hand, processes like the ones above (Examples 18 and 19) clearly show that the composition unfolds as it is being created, that details fall into place towards the end, and that pupils, like Todd in (Example 19) above, seem to keep an eye on the whole at the same time as they are working hard to finish special parts.

Findings in my study show conclusively that the pupils' approach to planning and structuring seldom can be characterised as purely linear or lateral approaches. In most compositional actions involving planning and structuring, both approaches appear intertwined.
However, it is fair to say that linear planning is the most common of the two in that pupils are concerned with the "completeness" of different parts, that the planning often is concerned with productivity rather than being generative, and that the pupils very often plan to begin from the beginning, the middle or the end, and expand their creation based on what already has been achieved. This finding is more consistent with the 12 year olds than the 9 and 10 year olds.

However, pupils also show elements of lateral approaches in that they are able to plan how the end result should appear, they are aware of and experience the tension between the material and their own musical ideas, (e.g. in terms of difficulties in appropriating and performing), that the composition unfolds as it is being created and that

they sometimes only towards the end of the compositional process realise the wholeness in what they have been composing. It should also be noted that pupils can have different planning styles in the same group, e.g. a lateral approach as in Lisa's case or a more linear approach as in Eric's case.

Leadership in processes

In some of the glimpses from the GPs given above, pupils emerge as leaders of collective development, e.g. Lisa in Example 18-IV. In her case, her role as informal leader in the group seems to rest on her ability to come up with musical ideas and solutions. It is interesting to notice in this particular process how the generation of ideas seems to rest so much on the shoulders of one person. And this is clearly recognised by the others. Lisa is so convincing that even if she can be direct and impatient, her ideas are given attention. This can only mean that her leadership is accepted and that the other pupils seem to recognise her "compositional" qualifications in this particular field. Lisa's case tells us that the existence of compositional qualities in an individual person can dominate a group process, especially if that person is able not only to generate and produce musical ideas, but also to see how they can be structured in a larger picture. Leadership, however, is seldom so consistent over time and easy to observe as in GP6. Sometimes leadership is opposed within the group, even if it appears to be a necessity for progress. This seems to be the case in the following glimpses from GP1 where the group works on the composition assignment called "The Sun":

Example 20- I: GP1 3322 Early

Alexander: Hold it, hold it, hold it….(Alexander calls out)

Cathy: You always think you are the boss, don't you…………Alexander (She says this with very special and mocking intonation on "Alexander" and grabs a xylophone.)

Helge: Yes. (Helge agrees as he is taking hold of a big bongo drum.)

Alexander: Yes, but……..

Example 20- II: GP1 4795 Early

Alexander: No one should play anything now…..(He is trying to take the lead again………and this seems to result in everyone trying out the text "warm and good" on their instruments until Cathy interrupts.)

Cathy: Shhuuush!

Alexander: OK, come on then….We start on "the Sun" and then everyone can play from there…

Example 20- III: GP1 12310 Middle

Alexander: Come on then ..(with resignation in his voice) and Linda counts to 4, but it breaks down.

Alexander: Ok, let us start again..1,2,3,4, (and everyone starts playing together for the first time in this process. Everyone keeps on playing, but there is no structure. They all play individual parts more or less improvised. Linda uses two beaters and two instruments. Cathy plays her glissandi. Alexander shifts between the drum and the glockenspiel and Helge uses his finger cymbals. There seems to be a certain musical logic and structure with regard to playing "dark" and "light" sections and the placement of texts.)

Alexander: Aaaaahhhh….! (Groaning) this was terrible….

Helge: Yes!

Alexander, who is a very competent pupil musically and in other ways, is having a hard time in this group. He obviously sees the need for leadership and wants his group to make progress, but his leadership is thwarted. Even so, he tries again and again to make his group focus and work together. At the end of the episodes from GP1 above, he seems to be rather frustrated with the outcome.

In the cases referred to above, Lisa's and Alexander's, leadership is dependent on one individual over some time. Their leadership is recognised or opposed (for Lisa and Alexander respectively), and contributes to produce progress in the group in terms of musical outcomes. More typically, however, are incidents of leadership involving more than one pupil, i.e. episodes where leadership seems to be shared between pupils over certain periods of time. This seems to be the case in the following example from GP2 where the pupils compose an overture to their play "the Fox Widow":

Example 21: GP2 9684 Middle

(Linda counts 1,2,3,4)

Linda: You have to play in pulse… (turning to Sigrun, she gets up to show her. She then plays the ostinato nicely and in pulse on Sigrun's djembe. Sigrun imitates and makes progress…)

Linda: Don't touch that one all the time…. (turning to Cathy when saying this and then she counts again 1,2,3 and they start playing. When it comes to Linda's own turn, she gets a little confused and fails to come in. She stops playing and makes a suggestion.)

Linda: We were supposed to have something else in between… (This is probably an attempt to cover up her own mistake. Then they try again and Linda makes the same mistake. She consults her written notes and explains.)

Linda: Hold on, I made a mistake….let us take it again (But now the others won't join in. Linda repeats that they have to play in between and that they should start again and play it twice.)

Sigrun: But I am supposed to play 4 beats in the beginning and at the end….

Alexander: (He and Sigrun take over)..Yes, ok you play 4 beats and then we play and then you play 4 beats again..

Sigrun: Yes, we play it twice.

Alexander: Ok, and then everyone takes…(Linda suddenly demonstrates how to do one finishing beat with two beaters and Roy joins in too. He has been practising this for some time).

Alexander and Sigrun: OK, 1,2,3…..

In this episode, Linda is assuming leadership from the beginning. She starts the activities and gives musical directions to the others that seem to work well. However, as soon as she begns to lose musical control, her authority is weakened and Alexander and Sigrun take over. Towards the end of the episode, Linda tries to assume the leadership role again with her little demonstration of how to do one finishing beat with two beaters. In this group, no clear leadership seems to be emerging. From the start, Linda tries to go into this role, but she reveals that she has difficulties practising it. Instead other members of the group take over and the leadership role revolves from time to time and from pupil to pupil.

In such a group process, compositional actions, even well intended ones, may contradict each other or give way to personal actions. Progress and musical outcomes may suffer. One important finding in my data is that leadership of collective developments is an important compositional action in terms of group progress, but only when this leadership is based on an adequate musical and social competence. The musical competencies of the pupils seem to be of basic importance. This is well demonstrated in my next example where we can study Lisa leading collective musical development in a compositional process of creating "Rhythm Music".

Example 22: GP6 12320 Early

Sigrun: OK, but I don't know quite know where to come in…(Everyone gets up and is ready to play.)

Lisa: You come in when Carol hits the…..(she touches Cathy's cowbell)

Sigrun: OK.

Lisa: You just do this when I play…….(turning to Cathy and playing the ending of her own melody.)

Cathy: OK, then I have to put this away (She means the sound maker. Now Mrs L, the teacher, comes by and asks:)

Mrs L: Do you need anything…..?

Several pupils: No. (Mrs L leaves the room.)

(Lisa talks to herself repeating the agreed sequence of music and players and then they start. Cathy starts with the sound maker.)

Lisa: Ingvald, look at me when we start, right. (and after a very short while) just start….(Lisa is a very clear musical leader and shows this in may ways, in the way she sits, the way she uses her eyes and how she uses her beaters as if they were conducting sticks. Ingvald starts with his pulse rhythm played on "sticks". Then Eric comes in with his xylophone ostinato and then Lisa with her own melody. But Cathy suddenly stops playing the sound-maker and beats her cowbell.)

Lisa: No!! I have to finish my melody first …I am supposed to play down here and then up here...and now I had just…(There is a bit of improvisation in what she is doing…)

Cathy: Oh… yes….

Sigrun: Let us start again…. (Everyone laughs and the atmosphere is positive. And then Cathy starts again. She pays close attention to what Lisa is doing. After a while she puts away the sound maker and takes up the cowbell, but picks up the sound maker again saying,)

Cathy: Oh.. yes I must continue with this.

Lisa: Yes (she is playing now and communicates with her whole body to suggest when Cathy should hit the cowbell - and she just about makes it! This starts Sigrun off with her drum….Cathy is relieved and looks at Sigrun smiling…then Lisa signals to Ingvald to stop playing and says to Eric:

Lisa: You can continue playing….

(Then Lisa plays upwards and downwards on her xylophone while Cathy tries out a few percussion instruments along with it for about 20 seconds. Lisa laughs a little when they stop and so does Sigrun.)

Eric: That was pretty good!

Sigrun: When will we stop?

Lisa: When Cathy beats that one…(pointing at the cowbell)…and then we can start the B-part….

Lisa is a very competent musical leader and she demonstrates this quite naturally. She is also able to lead with a sense of humour and a supportive attitude, and her achievement is recognised by the others, not as Lisa's personal achievement, but as an achievement for the group. When Eric says "That was pretty good" he is obviously referring to the whole group and not to individual achievements. The above episode from GP6 also illustrates how CAs of leadership can, in effect, become a form of teaching, not from teacher to pupil, but from peer to peer, or from one pupil to a group of peers.

Leadership as peer teaching

Mrs L, the class teacher of Cathy, Eric, Lisa and the others, enters the room during the episode in Example 22 above and leaves almost immediately as she realises that she is not needed. So far I have not focussed on the role of the teacher in connection with the group activities. We shall return to this aspect somewhat later. My point in mentioning the teacher's visit to this group in connection with the phenomenon we call peer teaching, is to underline the fact that the processes I am studying are processes taking place in an *educational* context. In the literature, peer teaching is often referred to as systems of instruction and teaching explicitly organised by a professional teacher (see e.g. Goodlad and Hirst, 1989) [108]. This is not the case in any of the group processes I am studying. All GPs were left free to organise the work and processes themselves. Nevertheless, there is no doubt that "peer teaching" occurs. In this study I have labelled as "peer teaching" something that happens between pupils without the direct or indirect interference of the teacher. Peer teaching seems to be an important characteristic of compositional actions in small groups and it is particularly intertwined with CAs of leadership. In the immediate example from GP6 above, Lisa performs a number of the classic methodologies of teaching, e.g.:

- demonstration:

Lisa: You just do this when I play...(turning to Cathy and playing the ending of her own melody.)

- instruction:

Lisa: You can continue playing….

- corrections:

Lisa: No!! I have to finish my melody first …

- encouragements:

Lisa: Yes! (She is playing now, nodding and communicating with her whole body to suggest when Cathy should hit the cowbell.)

- answering questions:

Sigrun: OK, but I don't know quite know where to come in…(Everyone gets up and is ready to play.) Lisa: You come in when Carol hits the..(she touches Cathy's cowbell)

Sigrun: OK.

Similar situations involving peer teaching can be observed throughout the material of this study, not as clearly and consistently as in the episode from GP6 above, but nevertheless to such an extent that it can be said to be a significant characteristic of compositional processes in small groups. This is an important observation, especially if we keep in mind that composition in a school context is an *educational* activity.

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[108] Peer teaching, also called peer tutoring, is described by Goodlad and Hirst (1989) as a system of instruction in which learners help each other and learn by teaching.

Some times peer teaching has a direct influence on the development of the musical motifs being created. This is definitely the case in the following example from GP3.

Example 23: GP3 14642 Middle

(Sigrun is playing her motif on her xylophone based on the text (the little red hen) several times. She is using two beaters and the first notes sounding together are an E and a G. Irene leans over to her ready to assist while Helge watches....)

Helge: You must say it in pulse when you play it...THE little red hen (he underlines THE...)

Sigrun: Oh...I keep coming in on "little"... (she tries a couple of times but fails.....)

Irene: Try playing it without saying it..you must, sort of, have THE into it......(pointing at a note on Sigrun's xylophone and playing it) that's the THE.....

(Sigrun tries again, but fails)

Sigrun: I can't do it when I do that.....but if I take THE on this note first.. (she points to the low C with the beater she has in her left hand and plays with a regular upbeat on the THE . It then becomes:

Irene: Yes, that's it, that's it! (Sigrun plays it very well two times and continues playing...)

Irene: Yes like that, uumm.. but only two times....

In the episode above, Sigrun has invented a musical motif for her xylophone using two beaters. The motif is based on a text with an upbeat, but Sigrun has difficulties playing this on her xylophone at the same time as keeping the double-beater idea, an idea she cherishes. Helge's, and notably Irene's, peer teaching and careful leadership and suggestions help Sigrun to find a way where she can keep the double beater at the same time as she can do the upbeat the group wants. This changes the musical character of the motif and also the whole composition as it turns out to being the very opening melody of the final composition.

Peer teaching can have many forms and expressions–from direct verbal instruction and demonstration as seen in some of the previous examples–to subtle and careful musical support. In the following example from GP4 Harriet is having a performance problem.

Example 24: GP4 18799 Middle

Siri: "Ok, let us try the beginning again, I start" (Iselin and Martin watch carefully what happens. Iselin has started to play the melody rhythm carefully and softly on her djembe while Siri is playing. She plays slightly louder when Harriett comes in, and now it seems to work for the first time. Martin puts his hand on to Iselin's djembe and signals that she should stop playing, but Iselin turns him away with a stern look and keeps playing.

This example shows another aspect of peer teaching and leadership. Iselin senses that Harriet needs support with the rhythm and she acts accordingly without using any verbal instruction, just supporting playing the rhythm of Harriet's melody. Martin does not quite understand what Iselin is doing. His way of evaluating the situation

probably has to do with whose turn it is to play, rather than what is needed to help Harriet. Iselin acts very skilfully here, and she also has the musical and social authority and competence to reject Martin's reaction as misguided. It is interesting to notice that all of this happens mainly through musical and kinetic dialogue rather than verbal discourse and interaction. As a learning activity it is a good example of the fact that scaffolding, and situations that can be described as examples of Vygotsky's zone of proximal development, also seem to be present in peer teaching (Vygotsky, 1978).

In compositional processes in small groups, peer teaching seems to be a very efficient form of teaching. In the majority of my observations I see direct change and progress as a result of peer teaching (Goodland and Hirst, 1989). The "teaching items" can be of almost any kind. In the examples I have been looking at that relate to "leadership" it is possible to detect the following teaching points:

- meter, pulse and the relationship between text and rhythm/melody

Linda: You have to play in pulse… Irene: Try playing it without saying it..you must, sort of, have THE into it….

- musical form

Sigrun: Yes, we play it twice. Lisa: You come in when Carol hits the………

- how to perform on instruments

Alexander: Ok, and then everyone takes…(Linda suddenly demonstrates how to do one finishing beat with two beaters.)

-concentration and how to behave in an orchestra

Lisa: Ingvald, look at me when we start, right? Linda: Don't touch that one all the time!

It is interesting to notice that episodes of peer teaching in the context of a compositional process very often seem to lead somewhere, e.g. to some kind of appropriation and learning in the sense that something not known or mastered is becoming known or mastered after a very short period of peer teaching and rehearsing.

However, findings also include episodes where peer teaching fails to succeed or leads to solutions other than that those originally intended. This seems to be the case in my last example of peer teaching taken from GP4. Harriett and Martin, whom the reader should know by now, are having difficulties playing a melody that the group has agreed should be played on xylophones and glockenspiel by everyone. They are about to get assistance from peers.

Example 25: GP4 14480 Middle

Harriett; Yes, at first everyone can be silent and then all of us can play it. When I play it I always play up to here.... (Harriett realises that she makes mistakes as Iselin demonstrates the melody playing with her finger nails on Harriett's xylophone.)

Harriett: But why can't we play in this direction all the time? (She keeps playing her variant many times)

Iselin: No it suits better to do it the other way. (She shows her again... In the meantime Siri has been trying to teach Martin how to play the melody on the glockenspiel. Martin tries, but plays in the wrong direction.)

Siri: You must start on that note....(impatiently and pointing)

Martin: Ok, this one, that one, that one (chanting and trying to make a joke out of it. In the meantime Iselin

demonstrates the melody for Harriett, and Siri and Martin stop their activity and watch. Martin plays one note in resignation, but Harriett tries. She cannot quite get the rhythm right.
Harriett: Hey! How do you play just that part? (Trying repeatedly but only coming up with new variants of the melody.)
Iselin: Well! We cannot spend all our time on just that..(while Harriett keeps playing her own variants, Martin gives up and picks up his cowbell again.)
Martin: Me, I can play a little on this one instead....

This is an example of peer teaching that does not lead where it is intended to lead. This aspect should not be forgotten. Peer teaching does not always lead to the intended change.
In this case Martin is not willing or able to play the melody and Harriet has difficulties playing it the correct way. This puts the decisions they have been making about form and content at risk, but the leaders in the group, Siri and Iselin, accept the incompetence of their peers and are eager to move on to finding other solutions. Viewed as a community of practice, this particular group activity can be an example of legitimate peripheral participation (LLP) where the "masters of the trade", Siri and Iselin, apply leadership and peer teaching to achieve the goals of the community. However, they have to accept that "not so competent" participants must do something else other than what was originally intended for the time being. (Lave & Wenger, 1991; Wenger, 1998)

Appropriation, evaluation and revision in processes

In the majority of the illustrated examples from GPs up until now pupils are playing and/or rehearsing in order to be able to *perform* their compositions. I have introduced the concept "appropriation" to categorise as compositional actions the part of this activity that is directly aimed at performing compositional outcomes. The essence of appropriation as a compositional action is not its relationship with "invention" or "planning and structuring", but with the process of rehearsal and mastery of something that eventually is to be performed.

The need for rehearsal and mastery

An important part of composition as educational activity, especially small group composition, is to have the piece performed for someone, normally the rest of the class, teacher and in some cases others. The pupils know this of course. For them, composing also means performing. As I have underlined in the Prelude and Chapter 3, composing as an educational activity within the framework of schools is fundamentally different from musical composition in other contexts. In schools the pupil-composers must do "everything" themselves—from the first idea to performance, to being a composer-artist, to being part of an audience. To perform the piece or be part of performing group, pupil-composers not only will have to be able to sing or play their own invented musical ideas but realise it as an ensemble. They might also end up performing music not invented by themselves, but by other members of the group. In any case, they have to make the music *their own* in terms of mastery of musical and contextual meaning.

In the examples from GPs presented above, it is easy to see the obvious connections between performance and personal roles. Instead of saying this motif or theme should start, they say: "YOU start and then ME". In this

process, individuals are suggested on the basis of what they are playing or what they are expected to play. Pupils often end up performing in the final outcome what first appeared as their own individual conceptions. This might be explained by contextual elements, such as time limitations and the nature of the assignments, but a more obvious reason seems to be the pupils' conception of what a small group assignment means in terms of meaningful activities for every individual person who is a legitimate member of the group. This is evident in what they do as well as in what they say:

Linda: Everyone must find something to play!

and

Helge: I have something I can play! (announces it!)

and

Eric: All instruments must play in both parts…not at the same time, but everyone must have something to play.

The attitude expressed by Eric (above) is prevalent in all GPs in this study, and as such it influences appropriation as well as invention. This attitude is confirmed by the pupils as expressed in group interviews:

Eric: I think we find what to play first and then we put it together. We find something each of us can play….
Me: Uummmm….everyone must have something to play before you….?
Eric: ...put it together
Me: It is important that everyone has something to do?
Several: Yes.
(G-Interview, GP6, p.6)

If the final performance will not have an acceptable role for every legitimate member of the group, there is a problem. And the easiest way to ensure this, is to have as many as possible perform their own musical ideas. Logically that should make the necessary appropriation an easier task. An important question remaining to be answered is to what extent this "democratic" attitude influences the *artistic* processes in the group and finally, the artistic product—the final musical piece. We will return to this issue in more depth later. Here I would simply like to mention that even if a pupil is asked to play at a certain point in an emerging composition, it might be because that pupil controls the rain-sound the group wants, e.g. as an introduction. Or, she might be suggested in order to enlarge her role in the composition, e.g. if she has been allowed very little playing so far or because she is a close friend of someone. This means that compositions will emerge as a result of a mixture of reasons, some are social ones and some suggestions musically and aesthetically motivated.

As I have shown earlier, the music that is being created is very often the result of dialogic activity between peers. Even if music is created as individual conceptions this does not mean that the music that ends up as parts of the final outcome are based on individual *decisions*. In the same way as in a small professional music ensemble, decisions about the performance are often social and dialogic by nature and belong to the whole

group[109]. Appropriations of parts and/or of the whole piece are therefore, necessary and important compositional actions for all members of a group.

Evaluations, revisions and decision-making

Decision-making is an interesting phenomenon to investigate in small group composition processes. In the Australian study discussed briefly in Chapter 3, Margaret Barrett seeks to identify and describe children's *aesthetic* decision-making as evidenced in their musical discourse as composers, that is, in their original compositions (Barrett, 1996, p.2). Barrett argues that the best way to understand children's aesthetic decision-making is to study the musical compositions or products, because they reflect what children do and think music wise when they compose. She thinks such an analysis "…demonstrates the ways in which children's aesthetic decision-making may be evidenced in their use of form and structure as evidenced in their compositions" (Barrett, 1998, p. 78)

Findings in the present study do not confirm Barrett's view that aesthetic decision-making is best understood when observing and listening to the music children have composed. I will argue that analysing the final compositional products is not necessarily the only and best way to understand this phenomenon. In my study I find important information about aesthetic decision-making in my observations of the *process* behind the product.[110]

Evaluations are often a prerequisite for decision-making in much the same way as revisions are consequences of decision-making. Pupils express their evaluations recurrently and directly, verbally and via other modes of articulation, e.g. as facial expressions and body language. They do this in connection with inventions, planning and structuring, and with leadership, and they do it in peer teaching. In the majority of these actions, I find that their decision-making is socially *as well as* aesthetically grounded.

Observing compositional actions of appropriation are particularly interesting with regard to the nature of pupils' aesthetic decision-making. In these types of compositional actions there is a very close link between the pupils' immediate musical experience, their aesthetic evaluations, decision-making and their musical revisions. When I look closely at some of the appropriation episodes from GPs where evaluation, decision-making and revision can be clearly observed the following characteristics seem to appear:

- when the whole composition or a complete part is being realised musically and appropriated by the group members, personal actions and sometimes social conflicts can be marginalised;
- the enhancement of a musical product influences the evaluation of the whole compositional process in a positive way;
- when the framework for the composition is beginning to fall in place musically and performance-wise, pupils engage more willingly in aesthetic evaluations and in

[109] Readers who are familiar with Vikram Seth's famous novel, "An Equal Music", will recognise this viewpoint. Seth describes the integration of the social and professional life of a London based string quartet (Seth, 1999).

[110] I will return to the discussion about the relationship between process and product later.

organised rehearsals. They are concerned about musical quality in performance and in musical details;

- suggestions for revisions and/or new ideas are accepted more readily during appropriation then in other parts of the compositional process, but only to the extent that they seem to enhance the final composition within the structure that has already been established;

- musical revisions may establish themselves during appropriation without a prior verbal discourse. Aesthetical decision-making sometimes just happens while the pupils are playing as a result of musical discourse.

I have chosen an episode from GP5 to illustrate some of the points made above. Linda and Helge are the main actors in this episode. It is important to know that Linda (with her friend Turid) decided to call for Mrs L because of a conflict with Helge shortly before the situation we are going to study below. As we enter the situation, Mrs L has left and they are seemingly on the track again.

Example 26: GP 5 20343 Late

And then they start to play again. Linda is the one starting with her djembe and the others join in. Roy is playing the eggs now. Helge has changed his motifs somewhat. He is swaying and playing his recent single- notes motif.

Linda: Hey..you guys (suddenly stops playing) is it possible to just SAY something, or something like that?

Helge: OK, I can say something. Okiallsakiba okialla…..(He chants this rhythmically on one note while playing single notes on his xylophone) I already have the text ready! (He says this very convincingly)

Linda: OK, say those things of yours a little faster and then we can hear how it works….but you must not start quite yet (She starts her djembe again and the others join in and Helge comes in with his new idea and revised xylophone-playing; it lasts for a while and they seem quite happy with it….)

Linda: The ending, how…?

Helge: Hen-yo-hoy! (He calls this out as if performing.)

Turid: Ok, you say henyohoy (she turns to Helge saying this.)

Linda: Ok, say a lot of nonsense. That was quite cooool actually……. (For the ending they decide on "henyohoy" with the voice and one beat on Linda's djembe.)

Linda: ..and then it begins again (She starts with the first part of her motif again. She repeats it for everyone and they are ready for the beginning .)

Linda: Ok, we start from the beginning ……. (And they all play……….This time the A-part stretches a bit out and they go directly to the B-part. Helge is concerned about the ending.)

Helge: We have to say "henyohoy" as the ending….

Linda: Yes, but then you have to say it louder.

Helge: Yes, but maybe I have to say…..maybe I have to speak for a minute or so..

Linda: Yes, but at the end you just call out loud, and then….(showing what she has decided to do on her djembe)

Linda: Let us take the B-part once more (and they play again and it works just fine with the ending.)

Linda: It sounds almost German…let us take the B-part again

Helge: Ok... now! (says this as if he is leading now and they all start. Towards the end of their playing Mrs L

enters the room, but they keep going and finish the piece.)
Mrs L: Yes, this sounds exciting…..
Helge: Yes, in the middle here I am sort of using my voice..(he looks excited too…)
Mrs L: It's all working better now?
All: Yes!

In this episode Helge has just been in opposition to others in the group over some time, notably Linda. Even so, Helge and Linda are able to co-operate meaningfully and creatively almost immediately, probably because they are dealing with valuable ideas in sound and real music making. They sense that the musical framework of the composition that only has been partly established so far, is being enriched. Personal actions seem to give way to compositional actions. Suggestions for revision are accepted for the same reasons.

It is interesting to notice the different aspects of evaluation, decision-making and revisions in this episode. It starts with Linda's evaluation (while they are playing) of what they have come up with so far. She senses that something is missing and launches an idea:
Uumm....you guys (she suddenly stops playing) is it possible to just SAY something, or something like that?
Helge gives a response which he might be thinking is pretty radical:
Helge: OK, I can say something. Okiallsakiba okialla
If so, it might be considered as a personal action made to sabotage Linda's compositional action, but the response he gets is an inclusive one. Linda and the rest of the group like his idea once it is realised in sound and put into the already existing musical framework. Helge's input is considered to give a higher quality to their piece, is accepted and the piece somewhat revised. This starts off another chain of compositional actions developed along with their appropriation. The piece is being slightly changed as it adapts to the new ideas introduced. Small changes are evaluated, decided on and included as the group is playing. Helge is no longer an outsider to the group, but a valuable member who through his input during appropriation is very close to emerging as a group leader. Group members evaluate the whole piece in a new way:
Linda: It sounds almost German………
and they show an increased willingness to practise and focus on musical details. The improvement of the product improves the flow of compositional actions and changes the group members evaluation of the compositional process:
Mrs L: It's all working better now?
All: Yes!

Summing up, findings in this study suggest that compositional actions of *musical* appropriation are vital to the quality of the compositional process. Observing compositional actions of appropriation are particularly interesting with regard to the nature of pupils' aesthetic decision-making. In these types of compositional actions there is a very close link between the pupils' immediate musical experience, their aesthetical evaluations, and their decision-making and musical revisions. Pupils express their evaluations of ideas and outcomes recurrently and directly–verbally and via other modes of articulation, e.g. in musical discourse.

In the majority of these actions I find that their decision-making is socially as well as aesthetically grounded. It is easy to see the obvious connections between performance and personal roles. If the final composition and performance will not have an acceptable role for every legitimate member of the group, there is a problem.

In appropriation, personal actions seem to give way to compositional actions more easily. Once the framework for the composition begins to fall in place musically and performance-wise, pupils engage more willingly in aesthetic evaluations and in organised rehearsals. They are concerned about musical quality in performance and about musical details. The enhancement of the musical product influences the evaluation of the whole compositional process in a positive way.

A final note on Compositional Actions

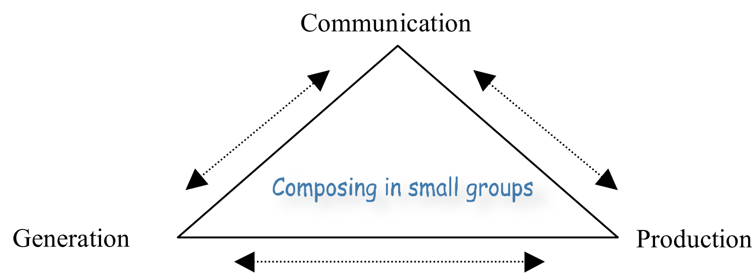
The three main types of CAs described in this study can be observed in different ways in the different processes. It should also be noted that all three categories of CAs:
(1) invention; (2) planning, structuring and leadership; and (3) appropriation, evaluation and revision, appear in all processes and are divided throughout the 60 minutes of each process. However, it *is* fair to say that CAs connected to invention are most numerous in the early and middle part of the processes, that CAs connected to planning, structuring and leadership are most common in the middle and early part and that CAs connected to appropriation, evaluation and leadership most typically appear in the middle and late part of each compositional process.

As I have pointed out in Chapter 3, compositional activities are sometimes discussed in the research literature with reference only to musical experimentation and the creation of musical ideas. In Chapter 7, I describe how experimentation with sounds and the invention of musical ideas, in my view, merely are one aspect of a broad range of compositional actions taking place in small group compositional processes. Pupils—in many cases unlike professional composers—have to take overall responsibility for the whole compositional process including invention and planning as well as performance. Compositional actions then, in compositional processes in schools, seem to be characterised not only by what can be labelled as *generative* activities, but productive and communicative activities as well. Generation of something is crucial in any kind of creativity, but it operates alongside and in close relation to other important phenomena.

Composing as generative, productive and communicative activity

I Chapter 6 I argue that *relations and relational activity* is all important during the creation of a composition, and that the dynamic nature of relations between actions, outcomes and contextual elements creates a kind of circulation driving the process. This can be viewed as a general and basic characteristic of compositional processes in small groups. In this chapter I have tried to show that in all three main categories of Compositional Actions accounted for in Chapter 7, generative activity, productive activity and communicative activity, are major and equally important aspects of such processes. As such, the integration and interaction of generation, production and communication throughout the processes can be viewed as a second general and basic characteristic of compositional processes in small groups. The nature of this basic characteristic is illustrated in Figure 7.2 below:

Fig. 7.2 Generation, production and communication as basic characteristics of small-group composing



To argue, as some researchers do, (e.g. Swanwick and Tillman, 1986; Barrett, 1996) that a meaningful understanding of compositional processes in schools can be based *primarily* on a cognition-centred interpretation and analysis of the musical compositions pupils create, disregards the centrality of the process as the prime observational target and source for interpretation and understanding of compositional processes. Such a point of view seems to me, at best, to be speculative by nature to such a degree that it runs the risk of being irrelevant to the discipline of compositional practice in school contexts. Any investigation of the nature of compositional processes has to take the process itself as the main target for scrutiny and any interpretation of such processes should pay attention to the two main characteristics of compositional processes accounted for in Chapters 6 and 7.

Summary

In this chapter I have looked more closely into the characteristics of compositional actions. Findings in the study suggest that "Compositional Actions" (CAs) connected to 'invention' can be described and characterised within three major and different forms of inventive activity, namely: musical invention as *transient activity,* musical invention as *individual conceptions*, and finally musical invention as *dialogic activity*. A major finding in this study is that musical invention as dialogic activity plays an important part in small group compositional processes.

As for the second category of compositional actions—CAs connected to planning, structure and leadership—findings show that the pupils' approach to planning and structuring seldom can be characterised as purely linear or lateral approaches. In most compositional actions involving planning and structuring, both approaches appear intertwined. However, it is fair to say that linear planning is the most common of the two. One important finding in my data is that leadership of collective developments is an important compositional action in terms of group progress, but only when this leadership is based on an adequate musical and social competence. In this study leadership can be frequently observed as a kind of "peer teaching", which here is denoted as something that happens between pupils without the direct or indirect interference of the teacher.

An important finding in this study is that compositions will emerge as a result of a mixture of reasons, some are social ones and some suggestions musically and aesthetically motivated. Observing compositional actions of appropriation are particularly interesting with regard to the nature of pupils' aesthetic decision-making. In the majority of these actions, I find that their decision-making is socially *as well as* aesthetically grounded. In this

third group of compositional actions—appropriation, evaluation, and revision—there is a very close link between the pupils' immediate musical experience, their aesthetic evaluations, decision-making and their musical revisions. In terms of considering this category of CAs in relation to the model for understanding compositional processes, which I introduced in Chapter 6, it seems that when the whole composition or a complete part is being realised musically and appropriated by the group members, conflicts can be marginalised, pupils engage more willingly in aesthetic evaluations and in organised rehearsals and suggestions for revisions and/or new ideas are accepted more readily. Musical revisions often establish themselves during appropriation without a prior verbal discourse. Aesthetical decision-making sometimes just happens while the pupils are playing as a result of musical discourse.

It should also be noted that all three categories of CAs: (1) invention; (2) planning, structuring and leadership; and (3) appropriation, evaluation and revision, appear in all processes and are divided throughout the 60 minutes of each process.

In this chapter I have tried to show that Compositional Actions imply generative activity, productive activity and communicative activity and that these aspects are major and equally important characteristics of compositional processes. As such, the integration and interaction of generation, production and communication throughout the processes can be viewed as a second main finding in my study.

In Chapter 8, I will continue a scrutiny of aspects of the process of composing in schools. In this chapter I will take a closer look at the construction and sometimes hidden dynamics of small-group composition.

Chapter 8

PROGRESS, PROFILES AND THE DYNAMICS OF COMPOSITIONAL PROCESSES

Introduction

Vignette # 3

Sigrun's opening melody really is a good one! Helge recalls how flattered he had felt at the beginning of their composition work when Irene and Sigrun asked him to tell them how they were going to compose the piece. He really had tried to explain! But they caught him by surprise. Suddenly they ran out of the circle to choose their instruments. And of course they headed for the big xylophone. He was too slow….and Martin even slower. When Sigrun suggested he could play the triangle he really got mad! He decided to stay out of it then….If it had not been for Irene offering him her African drum he probably would have complained to Mrs L.
Irene was playing the small xylophone right now…he did not quite remember who found that melody or when …very clever, she was. And now her duet with Martin. Martin would never have been able to do it if it had not been for Irene playing with him and himself whispering….
His own part was rather boring to begin with. But then he had added the stuff with the drum brush which really made it something….He still remembered Irene's and Lisa's eager nodding when he improvised that…
….His turn now with Coda and all together !

Understanding the relationships and characteristics of the different actions and elements of a compositional process also includes considerations about what it is, or rather, what kind of actions and events it is that moves, or does not move, the group process forward towards the completion of the compositional task. How is the process being constructed? Social psychology theory proposes questions like these as questions about group *locomotion*. (Kelly, 2001 p.166) In the vignette above, which is a continuation of vignettes #1 and #2, Helge, from his position in the orchestra, performing the composition created in GP3, is considering these questions too.

In earlier chapters, we have looked into GP3 situations where Irene and Lisa showed leadership and creativity that proved to be crucial to group locomotion. Irene gave up her possession of the djembe, the African Drum, and gave it to Helge (Example 1). This changed the whole composition process in a dramatic way, and Lisa and others came up with structural ideas that eventually proved to be vital for the composition process as well as the final composition that Helge (above) is in the middle of performing. At this point, however, it becomes important to remind the reader that the term "progress" in connection with an analysis of group processes can mean different things and be considered from different perspectives.

The question of progress

To the pupils, "progress" seems to be connected first and foremost to their evaluations of what seems "to work", and the extent to which they are in the process of completing the task given to them. This is evidenced in their ongoing evaluations of musical ideas and different parts of the emerging composition as well as how well the music is appropriated and performed, e.g. in Example 6, GP3 (p. 150):

Sigrun: Yeah!! that's great!

Irene: That's it!

This attitude is to be expected, as they know they will have to perform their composition for the teacher as well as for their peers. As an outsider and researcher with access to video recordings, I have a slightly different perspective. Unlike the pupils, I will know the final outcome as well as the whole process from repeated viewings of videotapes when I build and develop my viewpoints and theory. To me "progress" can be considered in relation to several aspects of the group process. I can reproduce the pupils' perspectives of progress in terms of their ongoing evaluations during the process, but I can also disregard their evaluations and focus on other qualities of the process itself, e.g. how well they work together and how much that seems to be achieved after a certain amount of time. Or I can focus on the musical and aesthetical qualities of the final musical outcome and talk about progress if and when musical ideas and structures appear that prove to be important elements of the final musical composition. In any case I apply a form of interpretation in keeping with my hermeneutic phenomenological research approach (see chapters 2 and 4). In my use of the term "progress" I try to include several of these perspectives. First and foremost, however, I use the term in relation to the completion or non-completion of the final musical outcome since this also appears to be the most important perspective for the pupils themselves.

Significant events in the compositional process

Within the intricate web of relations and actions in a composition process it *is* possible to identify some events, which are more important than other events. I will call these *significant* events. These kinds of events have a *significant* relationship to the overall act of getting or not getting a composition together and are as such vital in an investigation about the secrets of group locomotion. Significant events can be constructive or destructive.[111] They can speed up the compositional process or they can slow it down, even stop it. In light of the seven GPs I have been scrutinising in this study, I have found and labelled four different kinds of significant events that can add to our understanding of group locomotion. Such events can be:

Circle episodes, e.g.;

- a period where actions are moving in a "circle". Actions lead nowhere in terms of completing the task. The pupils approach the same compositional challenge over and over again.
- episodes characterised by no progress or focus in relation to the given task
- episodes dominated by a number of personal actions and /or parallel compositional actions with no direction

Focus episodes, e.g.;

- a period of peer teaching and leadership from a competent participant

[111] I am aware that the use of the concept "constructive" has a different meaning to "construction" used earlier in this chapter. Here "constructive" is used as an antonym to "destructive".

- a period of intensive and collective focus on moving on
- a period of constructive pupil- teacher dialogue

Breakthroughs, e.g.;

- when a convincing musical or structural idea comes forward
- when the performing of parts or the whole piece works well

Blockages, e.g.;

- when no musical ideas are around
- when no-one sees any solutions to a compositional problem
- when personal actions hurt someone
- when compositional actions are counteracted by personal actions

Circle episodes

Observing and coding the video-footage, I sometimes had the impression that nothing important happened. There was no progress. As discussed above *progress* is a concept that always has to be considered in relation to *something.* In my case this "something" was the fact that after some time of observing and coding, I knew the outcomes, how it all went in terms of the rest of the process as well as the final compositional outcome. The concept of "Circle episode" is an attempt to denote these parts of the compositional processes where the lack of progress seems to be particularly dominant and easy to observe. In this study these kinds of episodes occurred very rarely, but they were present, especially with the 9 and 10 year olds. In the following episode from GP1 where the 9 year olds are composing "The Sun", we can observe Helge, Alexander, Linda and Cathy being involved in a Circle episode, which is not characterised by lack of activity, but by lack of meaningful progress in relation to the assignment and the task they have been given.

Example 27: GP1- 8829- early/middle

(Linda and Cathy are negotiating about beaters, while Alexander and Helge are discussing the instrument Helge has taken from the instrument shelf. It is a glockenspiel, but he has chosen a very special beater.

Alexander: You need a proper beater. That one sounds too Metallica….

Helge: It is a nice one!

Alexander: Yes, but we don't like it..

Cathy: We have to agree on that…(she is now seated at the playing table again. In the meantime Linda is experimenting with the art of playing two instruments simultaneously)

Helge:…because I don't quite agree with you

Alexander: You really need a proper beater (saying this as he is playing on Helge's glockenspiel with his own beater.)

Helge: Ok (seemingly in resignation. He brings the glockenspiel back to the instrument shelf. He finds a big drum and a beater)

Helge: I'm going to use this one for the light part….(He demonstrates playing the drum as he walks slowly back to the playing table.)

Cathy: Oooooohhhhh, no!

Helge: You asked for it…

Cathy: No, we didn't ask you to play a drum on the light part… (In the meantime Linda as well as Alexander are

busy playing their instruments. Helge touches Alexander's shoulder and whispers something to him….)
Alexander: Yes (..in a irritated tone. And then Helge walks back to the instrument shelf and places the drum there.)

What we witness here is a number of personal actions focusing on individual priorities as to what instruments to play and what to play with. This is not a discussion about the piece they are going to compose, but what kind of mallets they personally like, what and how many instruments they can choose for themselves, and how they can play them. The episode is characterised by negotiations and discussions as to personal roles rather than discussion about the musical piece they are supposed to compose. Helge is being challenged by Alexander who wants the working process to take place in a more constructive way with "proper" means. Helge responds with what looks like a compositional action in terms of inventing something on a *dark* drum for the "light part". This is nothing but a personal action in disguise and an apparent provocation. Cathy, who has been busy finding instruments for herself too, is frustrated, and Helge who has reached his goal, completes the "circle" by returning his drum to the instrument shelf.

Focus episodes

In Vignette #3 above I try to imagine some of Helge's thinking as a participant in GP3. Example 1 from this GP shows us how Helge got hold of the African drum. This example
(p. 133) is also an example of a *Focus episode*. Irene was leading the activity prior to Helge's access to the drum and she showed great social competence in the way she judged the situation. At the same time this episode is very close to becoming a *blockage* through Helge's personal action of refusing to move forward in the process until he has gained possession of the drum. In Example 22 we have seen Lisa in action in peer teaching and as a musical leader:

Lisa: Yes. (She is playing now and communicates with her whole body to suggest when Cathy should hit the cowbell– and she just about makes it! This starts Sigrun off with her drum….Cathy is relieved and looks at Sigrun smiling…then Lisa signals to Ingvald to stop playing and says to Eric:
Lisa: You can continue playing….

Both episodes can be categorised as Focus Episodes because they show a period of peer teaching and leadership from a competent participant and they contribute more than many other events to the locomotion of the group process in terms of finishing the task and finding acceptable solutions to compositional challenges. Progress is being made.

In Example 17-I we looked at how the pupils demonstrated a linear approach to planning and structuring. This example is yet another example of a Focus Episode where *all* of the pupils, even Martin, are engaged in a period of intensive and collective focus on moving on.

Iselin: 1,2,3,4..(She counts and starts playing the djembe, and now it works for everyone, even for Martin…)

Focus episodes can also very clearly involve the teacher. I have already pointed out that teacher input and student perceptions of teacher input are very important parts of the context. Group processes in a school context normally mean that the teacher is all over the place, either directly or indirectly as someone who is around *if*.… However, most group processes manage quite well on their own, in the sense that the pupils know they are the ones supposed to deal with the task and whatever problems and opportunities the process confronts them with.

In this study there are several examples where the teacher is an important part of Focus episodes, especially with regard to solving a personal or compositional problem and/or being a part of a constructive pupil-teacher dialogue. There is no doubt that this is the role of the teacher in the following episode.

Example 28: GP3-27609-Late
Should we only be repeating and repeating here?" Lisa asks
"What you can do", Mrs L answers," is to keep what you have got, because that is a very nice part…" "And how can it end then….?", Lisa interrupts, " and then", Mrs L continues, "You can play it twice or three times",
"Two!" Lisa and Irene call out together, "...And then you can find a new small part to end it with", "Yes" the two girls still chanting together, ". For instance a Coda…and then", Mrs L ends her counselling, " You, Helge, could do the interplay as a drum solo. Would that be OK?"
Helge nods his head.
And then there is some discussion about the Coda. Everybody is searching for a suitable melody for this part for a while. "I don't know how to do it," says Irene, but then Lisa comes up with a melody on the glockenspiel and Sigrun joins in singing it.

Maybe everyone can play that melody together as an ending", Mrs L says, "Because there isn't much time…"

It is important to know that the group was having a compositional problem when Mrs L entered the scene. They did not know how to finish their composition. The teacher's guidance solves this problem and the two girls who have been most active in the preceding compositional actions support her suggestion. Almost unknowingly, the teacher also restores Helge to a stronger position in the group, probably not for a social reason, but a musical one, as Helge is in possession of a special quality instrument well suited to having a solo and interplay. During this episode, teacher input becomes more than an underlying element in the context. She enters into the web of interaction through a compositional action of leading a *collective* development towards a better outcome. In this regard, it is a *Focus episode* and also in my view, a classical example of what Vygotsky calls the zone of proximal development (Vygotsky, 1934). Focus episodes seem to be very important for group locomotion. Their common characteristics are the *focus* on the task at hand, a common wish to make progress and the role that is given to compositional competence in the form of leadership and constructive dialogue.

Breakthroughs

A similar effect on group locomotion can be achieved through actions that can be characterised as *breakthroughs*, e.g. when a convincing musical or structural idea comes forward. This can, e.g. be an individual conception that is so convincing that it is acclaimed by the group and thereby speeds up group progress. In Example 29 below a breakthrough can be observed in GP3:

Example 29: GP3-20199- Late

(...and then they try again from the beginning. Martin comes in at the right place, but stops saying,)

Martin: No, it doesn't…

Lisa: Yeeeeeeeessss! (shouting) we have to play it together or it won't be music!

(In the meantime Irene tries an alternative melody for Martin's part, seemingly just in case Martin will not be able to play his rhythm. And then Sigrun asks Martin to join in with the rhythm on Irene's alternative motif. Then Lisa, gesticulating, suddenly says:)

Lisa: The two of you can do this all the time, and then, then, then, (very eagerly now) when you have started, then Helge can come in with his part…and then Sigrun and I can come in again and then…, (shouting now) we can change back and forth!

What Lisa is doing here, with some help of the other two girls, is to sketch the structure of an important part of the composition. This idea was immediately accepted and can easily be identified in the finished composition and as such it is quite clearly a *breakthrough.* What is interesting to notice is that this breakthrough and the artistic and aesthetic decisions that go with it, seem to be the result of the interaction of compositional actions and Martin's personal action of withdrawing and being passive.

Another type of breakthrough seems to be episodes where the compositional actions connected to performance work well. The well-known feeling from jazz music of "making it swing" seems to be what takes place in the example from GP4 below.

Example 30: GP4- 6913- early

While Siri and Harriett are rehearsing a rhythm challenge, Iselin is experimenting on her djembe. Suddenly she starts playing "donkidonkido"…

Siri: Yess! (and then to Harriett) Start now! (and Harriett joins in with her part and now there is no problem with the rhythm.

Martin: Donkidonkido (He joins in with his voice, and then Siri joins in with her two beaters on the xylophone and it works together…)

Siri: Ummmmmm …(and she laughs kind of surprisingly)…that was fun!

Harriett: Yess...it was.

This is a breakthrough since it is the first time Iselin introduces this way of playing the djembe. The others join in with the ideas they have been rehearsing for a while, but have not quite been able to deal with so far. The djembe gives a basic rhythm to the musical ideas previously tried out and the combination works. The effect is

obvious. Suddenly they have a new platform to move on from. There is no discussion about including or not including the djembe and this common experience becomes an important part of their final composition. It works performance-wise and feels good.

Blockages

Just as *Focus episodes* and *Breakthroughs* can speed up a group process, *Blockages* can slow it down. Pupils in this study seemed very aware of the fact that a group process in a school context is meant to be in motion. When the work on the task stops something is wrong and in some cases, if the problem seems to be a really serious one, they would bring in Mrs L. In this study, *Blockages* did not take place often. Pupils called Mrs L into groups by three times. Even so group locomotion seemed to be fluctuating between a high degree of constructive activity to almost a standstill.

In the following episode—this time the example is taken from GP6—we can see examples of different aspects of a *Blockage*, from a halt in the production of ideas, to someone being hurt. Carol is having problems appropriating what has been decided and rehearsed. She is not comfortable with her role in the ensemble. The others think she should be.

Example 31: GP6- 14359- Middle

Carol: But I don't know what the A-part is like… (and then there is silence for quite some time. It looks as if there are no more ideas around. Lisa plays a little on her glockenspiel, but otherwise nothing happens….. Sigrun laughs a little and has a remark about the camera…

Ingvald: This is not what his research is about… (and everyone laughs…)..at least we have the A-part.

Carol: But I don't know what the A-part is like… (and now obviously frustrated)

Sigurn: You just play your part (laughs a little)

Carol: Ok, (obviously concerned about not having control) but is there something for me to do after the fist thing I did…in the B-part.

Lisa: Yes, you have to do something you too, sort of…you can't just sit there and (and then they laugh again and they discuss a little about the B-part, but it passes quickly and there is silence again.)

Linda. Let us take the A-part again so Carol can pick it up. (She says this in friendly way)

Carol: When am I supposed to beat on this again? (referring to the cowbell)

Lisa: Bruuffffff.(resignedly) You must do it when I have played up to here..

Carol: Yes, but you stopped.

Lisa: (rolls her eyes) Carol, I don't think you'll ever be any kind of a teacher or anything! (shakes her head)

Carol: I don't ever think I will…(laughs, but appears to be a bit hurt…)

Ingvald: Oh, well, come on…. (he wants to move on ….)

For the main part, it is the appropriation of the A-part of the composition that comes to a halt in this situation. The majority in the group want to move on and are impatient with Carol. No one seems willing to come up with solutions that can solve her problem, except Lisa, who suggests another rehearsal of the A-part. When Carol demonstrates her insecurity again in her response, Lisa's patience is lost. She gives way to her own strong desire

of getting on and she says things that seem to hurt Carol. The effect on the compositional process of the conflict between Carol's insecurity and reservation, and Lisa's impatience and urge to get on, is obvious. Nothing happens for some time; the idea suggested to solve the conflict is nothing but a repetition of what already happened, and the actions are about to change from being compositional to becoming personal. In this case, however, the process is only slowed down for a little while as the atmosphere generally is quite good.

A good atmosphere is not the case in my next example taken from GP5. The initiative resulting in a *Blockage* in this episode comes from Linda who challenges Roy to come up with something, i.e. musical ideas. She does this probably knowing that Roy very seldom comes up with musical ideas. Roy reacts emotionally and directs his anger onto the glockenspiel. He is hurt and is supported by Helge who develops it all into an emotional conflict over leadership in the group. As a result, compositional actions cease to take place and the flow of the compositional process comes to a halt.

Example 32: GP5- 4671- Early

Linda: Roy, you must come up with something….(She says this suddenly)

Roy: Why don't you come with something yourself.. ! (Roy sounds angry. He protests by playing angrily and meaninglessly on his glockenspiel. And then it is quiet for some time. Helge has been watching and says after a few moments.)

Helge: Yes, if you're sort of supposed to be the leader, you have to come up with something.

Linda: I am not the leader! (in indignation)..I just made a proposition (and then stillness again. The process has come to a complete halt. Helge whistles throwing his maracas from hand to hand and Roy looks at the camera.)

Turid: Do you want to be the leader? (talking to Helge and sounding somewhat angry too)

Helge: I am not the leader...

Irene: We were supposed to co-operate…..

The identification of circle episodes, focus episodes, breakthroughs and blockages can be vital to understanding the nature and characteristics of group locomotion in compositional processes. The extent to which the different GPs possess episodes of this kind defines the character of the process and determines to a great extent its *profile*.

Process profiles

A major finding in the study is that the seven GPs seem to be quite different from each other in terms of process profiles. Even if CAs of different types are distributed throughout the process, *significant events* in the form of *Circle episodes*, *Focus episodes*, *Breakthroughs* and *Blockages* do not take place in the same way or at certain times in the different processes.

In some of the processes, findings show that *significant events* appear to a great extent in the early part of the process and in other processes *Focus episodes* and *Breakthroughs* take place towards the very end. In three of the processes, GP4, GP6 and GP7 *significant events* are frequent in the early part of the process whereas in GP1 and GP5 some of the most important of these events take place towards the very end. The other processes show variations of these two process profiles. In GP7 there are constructive *significant events* in the form of

Breakthroughs almost from the very start but also towards the end. A characteristic of this particular process is an emphasis on evaluation and peer teaching throughout the process.

One interesting finding is that *Focus episodes* and *Breakthroughs* often seem to take place in connection with CAs of invention and CAs of appropriation and evaluation in combination. In GP2, which contains many examples of CAs of planning and structuring, but few CAs of appropriation, there are very few significant events until the very end when the pupils *have to* rehearse and play to achieve an outcome.
GP2, however, also contains a number of PAs and *Circle episodes* that can throw light on the scarcity of constructive significant events in this particular GP.

To fully understand the nature of construction and progression in such a process, however, it is not enough to identify and understand the importance of actions, cultural tools, relevant context, and significant events such as *Focus episodes*, *Breakthroughs* and *Blockages*. It is also necessary to understand some of the underlying, inscribed and seemingly hidden aspects operating whenever human beings are involved in the production of knowledge. These aspects have to do with authority, legitimacy and power relations in the composition process—in short what can be labeled as the *dynamics* of group compositional processes.

Power/knowledge in the composition process

Composing in schools operates primarily within the broad concepts of learning and education. But composing is clearly also production of knowledge. The process and the final outcomes are expressions of a pupil's knowledge that can be observed, appreciated and discussed (Reimer, 1992). In his study on music teacher practice, Krüger (2000) maintains that what seems to be simple acts of classroom practice in fact contain certain profound and complex principles of authority, legitimacy, and power relations. And he continues:

> Power/knowledge aspects are implicit in the ways authority relationships are constituted, in the way positions are established with regard to who should regulate the discursive space, and in ways of communication and negotiating.
> (Krüger, 2000, p.178)

Krüger builds his analysis on Michel Foucault's theory on discursive practices and power/knowledge. Some basic ideas in Foucault's theory link power quite closely to knowledge. According to Foucault there is a close relationship between certain aspects of power and the development and production of knowledge. Knowledge is the basis for power and power produces knowledge and these two cannot be studied separately (see Foucault, 1980; Ball, 1990; Marshall, 1996).
Foucault's concept of power is not the traditional negative and suppressive one, but might just as well be regarded as positive and constructive. According to Foucault, power has no essence, cannot be measured, but exists in relations and actions across a broad range, e.g. in institutional practices as well as in everyday life. It is everywhere, in the infrastructure and in systems of democracy, in discourse, in co-operation, in processes and strategies, in chains of events and in the lack of events.

> Power must be analysed as something, which circulates, or rather as something which only functions in the form of a chain. It is never localised here or there, never in anybody's hands, never appropriated as a commodity or piece of wealth. Power is employed and exercised through a netlike organisation. And not only do individuals circulate between its threads; they are always in the position of simultaneously undergoing and exercising this power. They are not only its inert or consenting target; they are always also the elements of its articulation. In other words, individuals are the vehicles of power, not its point of application.
> (Foucault, 1980, p. 98)

Power relations and their connections to knowledge can easily be identified in the small group composition processes we are concerned with here as well as in other fields of education (see also Espeland, 1998 and 1999). It is most obvious if we take a closer look at issues connected to group leadership, peer teaching, group locomotion and participation in the compositional process. These issues will directly or indirectly be decisive for the speed of actions and events in the process and consequently for outcomes such as a piece of music.

In the following episode from GP3, a compositional process the reader should know somewhat by now, we shall take a closer look at how power/knowledge may operate in pupils' compositional processes. In this particular episode we find examples of a number of the phenomena I have presented up to now; compositional and personal actions, leadership, peer teaching, and focus episodes and in the middle of it all, power issues:

Example 33: GP3- 18892- Late

Irene: ....and then we have to have "No, not me, no, not me " (She leans over to the African drum playing the rhythm of the text on the drum with her beater.) You have to take this part Helge.

Helge: I don't want to play that! (in indignation)

Irene: OK, then Martin can play it. (Irene continues and looks at Martin. She has moved closer and in front of the two boys now. Irene plays "No, not me, no, not me" on Martin's hand drum and then moves back to her place in the ring.)

Sigrun: Martin, can I borrow your drum? (Sigrun says this suddenly and Martin hands her the hand drum. Everyone is playing a little bit now. Irene looks at Sigrun and plays the "No, not me- rhythm" with her beater on the floor. Helge has turned away from the rest of the group, seemingly quite uninterested in what is going on.)

Sigrun: I think you can do like this Martin. (She demonstrates Irene's rhythm)

Three times and not very hard (as she hands back the drum)

Martin: In the middle of the drum? (asks for confirmation)

Irene: Yes, you have to play it two times.

Martin: Two times…?(Martin asks again and then does as he is told)

Irene: That's it, a little softer. You must stop complaining (Irene turns towards Helge)

Helge: "Complaining?" (questioningly).

Irene: Come on Martin, play it (Irene says and Martin tries)

Martin: ....two times?

Lisa: "Yeeees! Lisa shouts, she has been watching with increasing impatience….
Sigrun: Let's try everything again… and then you have to be ready. (Sigrun says this to Martin.)
(Helge ignores it and does something for himself.)
Sigrun: "Never mind him…." (mumbles and starts playing)

In this episode it is evident that Irene is trying to exert leadership. She acts according to a plan (*Irene: You have to take this part Helge).* Helge is the only one not accepting her leadership (*Helge: I don't want to play that!* -in indignation).
The others accept and support Irene's leadership, even though Martin seems a little confused and uncomfortable as he is sort of *stuck* in between the power exchanges of Irene and Helge. The situation is not a happy one. In fact Lisa finds it frustrating. It is easy to point to Helge as the "villain" here as he is the one who refuses to be directed. But then one has to remember that Helge was looked at by the others as "a knower" of composing in the beginning of the GP3 process (see Example 2, p. 140). In addition, Irene is so eager to make progress that she invades *his* territory by playing a rhythm on *his* instrument, a rhythm he does not want to play.

The power aspect of this act of producing knowledge, i.e. making progress in the creation of a piece of music, is evident in the relationship between Irene and Helge. It can only be understood, however, if it is looked at beyond this particular event itself. To a great extent it is the dynamics of the relationship between Helge and Irene, which define what happens and what does not happen. The power relation between Helge and Irene in this episode prevents efficient peer teaching from taking place with regard to Helge. As we have seen earlier in this chapter peer teaching can be observed recurrently in compositional processes. But it is a delicate thing, in the sense that personal actions and power issues can prevent it from happening. Even in the rather tense atmosphere of this episode, however, it takes place between Sigrun and Martin.

Participation and power

The episode in Example 33 also illustrate certain aspects of learning and composing as *participation*. Lave and Wenger introduced the concept "legitimate peripheral participation" (LPP) into learning theory and they suggest that learning is a process of participation in communities of practice; participation that is at first legitimately peripheral, but that increases gradually in engagement and complexity (Lave, 1991; Wenger, 1998). In viewing the episode above as a process of learning, it is evident that some of the children are participating more fully than others, and that one participant in particular, Helge, at certain points in the composing process is quite peripheral when it comes to taking part in compositional actions. Lave and Wenger see connections between LLP and power issues and explain the relationship of the two in the following way:

> Furthermore, legitimate peripherality is a complex notion, implicated in social structures involving relations of power. As a place in which one moves toward more intensive participation, peripherality is an empowering position. As a place in which one is kept from participating more fully- often legitimately, from the broader perspective of society at large, - it is a disempowering position. (Lave, 1991, p. 36)

LPP has been criticised for being a description of a one-way movement of learning from the periphery to full participation (Engestrøm and Miettinen, 1999, p. 12). It *is* indeed possible to regard Helge's travel through the process of composition in GP3 as a travel towards different levels of participation in the making of a composition, but it is certainly not an even, quiet one-way journey. Rather, it can be described as a movement in opposite directions, from full participation in the beginning to very peripheral participation at certain times in the middle of the process; then to full participation again towards the end and in the performances of the final outcome, the overture.

In this particular compositional process, a power/knowledge aspect connected to Helge and his relationship to his peers and artefacts can add to our understanding of this journey and a number of the other interactions going on. This kind of knowledge about power aspects of group activity seems to be an important part of what can be called professional "teacher knowledge" (Schulman, 1986). Sometimes it is probably just as important as knowledge about the pupils' *musical* habitus for teacher planning, as well as for organising and understanding the compositional process in small groups. The teacher in this study, Mrs L, seems to be very conscious about the importance of power issues:

Me: What is your opinion about power issues in the groups, ...that someone likes to dominate, how important is this for what happens and how progress is made....?
Mrs L: Well, it is....in any compositional process it is very important that there is someone who WANTS TO, someone with initiative. Because I notice about myself that I take initiatives and responsibility, but I also know I can be dominating, because I get eager...so I think in general in this kind of cooperation it is extremely important that there is someone who in a way..dominates; it is dangerous too, but if there wasn't, that would have been wrong too, ...so one has to find some kind of balance.
Me: So you think there must be some kind of leadership to secure progress?
Mrs L Yes, I believe there must be someone who takes the initiative, who makes it move and who becomes the leader.
Me: Do you think about this when setting up groups?
Mrs L: Yes, there must always be someone in the group who knows how to.....I very seldom put pupils together whom I know have little initiative, or boys who are indecisive and weak or unstructured, I never put these together in a group or leave them alone. There must always be someone who can make things move. ..I am always very conscious about those things, even if groups change a lot. (In-depth Interview , Mrs L, p. 8)

What Mrs. L reveals here, is that not only is she aware of the power issues in group- composing, but that she actively uses this knowledge when groups are set up. She also believes that power issues may make compositional processes "move" in the right direction; that initiative, leadership and even domination are integrated aspects of compositional processes; and that they mean something with regard to what is created, or as Foucault would articulate it, with respect to the production of knowledge (Foucault, 1980).

It also quite evident that Mrs L has a very special position in terms of influencing the compositional processes and their locomotion, even if she is only present for a few minutes of the 60 minutes approximately that each

process takes. [112] As part of the relevant context, she is always there—before, during and after. In the next few paragraphs I will take a closer look at some aspects of the relationship between the processes I study and the role of the teacher.

Teacher inscriptions in the compositional processes

In Chapter 6 I argue that the teacher and everything connected to her should be defined as a part of the relevant contextual elements in the compositional process and that elements of this type can be conceived of as locomotional scenery. As such, contextual elements are inseparable from actions and cultural tools when used as explicative evidence for the characteristics of small group composing. In the micro-analytic treatment of the videos of the GPs, I identified a number of actions and episodes where the influence of relevant context seemed obvious with regard to process as well as the musical product. I have already argued that some of them, e.g. "pupils perception of teacher input" in the form of established methods and strategies for composing are important clues to understanding the specifics of processes as well as musical products. I will deal more with this issue in my analysis of the pupils' compositions in chapters 9 and 10.

As the teacher in this study is such an important part of the context it becomes necessary to include her relationship to the compositional process as part of my investigation. It is important however, to underline that the main actors of this study are the pupils, not the teacher. Graue and Walsh (1998) underline the need to keep the focus on the child in educational child research.

> One difficulty that people who work with children have when they begin to study children is that they focus on the adult's actions toward children; what was intended to be a study of children becomes an evaluation of adults' interactions with children. Adults are unquestionably part of the children's context, but the research is about the kids. (Graue and Walsh, 1998, p. xvii)

In the preceding chapters we have seen how teacher input becomes something more than an underlying contextual element when she enters the web of interaction. In several instances, she influenced group locomotion directly through her contribution towards creating *Focus episodes* and her role in Vygotskyian-like zones of proximal development (see e.g. Example 27, p. 197). Generally her intrusion into processes was expected and accepted by the groups even if it sometimes could appear to be unnecessary in terms of contributing to a constructive flow of compositional actions. When interviewed, the pupils in GP4 confirmed this observation:

Me: When Mrs. L comes in and she sometimes arranges things, e.g. changes your instruments, do you notice what she is doing? (everyone laughs)
Me: Harriet, you were, happy to have the metallophone right? And Mrs L changed it into a xylophone. How did you react to that?
Harriet: I don't know, I think I accepted it….
Me: Does your teacher interfere unnecessarily, or is it sometimes needed?

[112] Mrs. L, the teacher, visited each group on average one or two times. Pupils were required to work on their own during the compositional processes and they did this for approximately 90 % to 95 % of the time.

Several: Yes. (they laugh again)
Me: Is it right to say that you managed well on your own in this situation?
Several: Yes. (nodding)
(G-interview GI, p. 3)

In the situation referred to in the interview above, Mrs L evaluated their choice of instruments when she entered and decided she wanted something more African. The pupils were perfectly happy with their instruments, especially Harriet who very much wanted the metallophone. Harriet, however, followed the teacher's directions willingly and this changed the chain of actions as well as the sound of the composition.

Even if the episodes where the teacher is directly involved are important events in themselves for the group in action, there are other aspects of the teacher's role that probably are equally, if not, more important for the evolvement of group processes. These aspects are only indirectly present in the compositional processes and are connected to concepts like "teacher expectations" and "teacher ethos".

Let us have a closer look at what Mrs L has to say about this.

Me: From what I observe it looks like you, even if not present, influence the compositional situation very much. What do you think about this?
Mrs. L (thinking)……Yes, I think that over the years I have been very consistent in expecting things from the pupils…..and that can be an explanation, because I show my expectations clearly before starting anything..I signal what I want to happen, how I want them to behave as well as giving them models for how to work,….and last but not least because of all the evaluations we have been having after final performances…our dialogues.
Me: Yes…
Mrs L: …and then I focus on what I would like to see happen…..that is, I have praised what has been good and especially what they have found that I did not think of. I think I have signalled my expectations pretty clearly over the years. And I think they know well what I wanted them to achieve….
Me: That is my impression as well….
Mrs L: So I think it really means something when I enter the room; they are always very eager to show me what they have achieved; because I believe,–no boasting!–that they felt I really cared about it and took it seriously. And I believe it is important for them to succeed, because I think that all of those things we have been doing together, composing or other activities, gives them a sort of feedback and a kind of self-picture which they really have to rely on to grow and develop. And that's why it is important for the whole group to achieve, and I think they used this as a help…because they realised it would be wise to do this, because I knew what I would like to see happen and then I helped them achieve and work seriously towards this….and then I believe I have helped them clear personal problems between group members and I have tried to be open and fair. So I think they trusted my judgement…
Me: Oh yes, because sometime they came to fetch you…..
Mrs L: Yes, yes (In-depth Interview , Mrs L, p. 3)

What Mrs L gives us here is to some extent her basic teaching philosophy, her teaching ethos. She refers to teacher expectations, the pupils' previous compositional experiences, her long term relationship with them, her practice of giving models for how to work, frequent evaluations of processes and dialogues in class, her willingness to take their work seriously and her assistance in solving personal problems. She is in no doubt that she influences the compositional processes even if she is only present for five percent of the group process time. In addition to this, she is of course very much present before the group process begins, and afterwards, e.g. during the final evaluations and performances. Her presence, then, can be described as direct as well as indirect.

In any case, it is possible to see the teacher's role in a light of Foucaultian power exertion, where the role of power is closely connected to the production of knowledge, i.e. composing music, and where this power exertion can be direct as well as indirect, and productive as well as repressive. Foucault comments on "power" and the relationships between teacher and students in the following way:

> Power is not an evil…Let us….take something that has been the object of criticism, often justified; the pedagogical institution. I don't see where the evil is in the practise for someone who, in a given game of truth, knowing more than others, tells him what he must do, teaches him, transmits knowledge to him, communicates skills to him. The problem is rather to know how you are to avoid in these practises- where power cannot notplay and where it is not evil in itself- the effects of domination which will make a child subject to the arbitrary and useless authority of a teacher, or put a student under the power of an abusively authoritarian professor. (Foucault, 1988, p. 18)

Compositional processes in schools then, and the generative, productive and communicative activities they consist of, seem to be inscribed by a number of contextual elements. As such it is fair to say that these processes take place in situations that produce *constraints.* Some of these constraints are obviously connected to the teacher's role, but they need not be negative in any way, especially if the constraints are paired with a considerable amount of *freedom*.

Margaret Barrett underlines that it is when we acknowledge these constraints as a natural part of composing activities in schools that we may begin to explore the freedoms of creative experience:

> The dialogic process of meaning-making that is composition is bound by freedoms and constraints. These constraints include the musical problem that is assigned, the skills and the knowledge the child brings to the task, the child's perception of the task, and the larger sociocultural context that constitutes the child's world. When we acknowledge these constraints, we may then begin to explore the freedoms of creative experience. (Barrett, 2003, p. 24)

As pointed out in this and earlier chapters the teacher is an important part of what Barrett calls the "larger socio-cultural context", in my view perhaps *the* most important part. As such the teacher, being directly or indirectly present in the compositional processes, leaves her inscription on the construction of the processes and, as we shall see in the next chapter, also on the musical products.

Summary

In this chapter I have explored the relationships and characteristics of the different actions and elements of a compositional process in terms of what it is, or rather, what kind of actions, events or phenomena it is, that moves, or does not move, the group process forward towards the completion of the compositional task. How is the process being constructed and in what ways do compositional processes develop?

In light of the seven GPs I have been scrutinising in this study, I have found and labelled four different kinds of significant events that can add to our understanding of group locomotion; *circle episodes, focus episodes, breakthroughs and blockages*. All of these can be vital to understanding the nature and characteristics of group locomotion in compositional processes. One interesting finding is that *focus episodes* and *breakthroughs* often seem to take place in connection with CAs of invention and CAs of appropriation and evaluation in combination. The extent to which the different GPs possess episodes of this kind defines the character of the process and determines to a great extent its *profile*.

In this chapter I have also discussed how composing in schools, even if operating primarily within the broad concepts of learning and education, also can be considered as production of knowledge. In particular, I have explored and discussed how such a production of knowledge can be considered in relation to the Foucaultian concept “power/knowledge”. One of the findings presented in this chapter is that this kind of power relations exists among pupils working in groups and that power aspects can be vital in terms of our understanding of the complex relationship between Personal and Compositional Actions.

Knowledge about power aspects of group activity also seems to be an important part of what can be called professional "teacher knowledge" (Schulman, 1986). It is possible to see the teacher’s role in the light of Foucaultian power exertion, where the role of power is closely connected to the production of knowledge, i.e. composing music, and where this power exertion can be direct as well as indirect, and productive as well as repressive.
As such the teacher, being directly or indirectly present in the compositional processes, leaves her inscriptions on the construction of the processes and, as we shall see in the next chapter, also on the musical products.

Chapter 9

PUPILS' COMPOSITIONS AND THEIR MEANINGS

Introduction

Vignette # 4

Irene knew it! Of course Sigrun had to get the flu today, of course something had to happen. She had been looking forward to this evening for days now. Performing was great actually, especially for family, even if she had her doubts this time. With Helge in the group, composing their piece had not exactly been easy. And then Sigrun chose to stay in bed and who else but Irene had to step in and play her part—the very opening of their piece. As if she did not have enough to look after! "The tiny little red hen"- she liked the melody spinning inside her head and repeated the words to herself, and it was fun to play Sigrun's part, but two mallets and then her own part shortly afterwards? And they had only practised once the bowing to applause Mrs. L had told them to do……….She knew how to do it though even though they hadn't practised bowing since the class performed their "fox" music at the big music festival in the city. That felt like a dream now and a long time ago. And what was an overture actually?

When preparing to perform the overture to "The little red hen", Ingrid and the other pupils appearing in the vignette above[113], behave more or less like real adult artists and performers. They have a real and specially invited audience, they are the composers and organise themselves as a musical ensemble, they are introduced by Mrs. L, they introduce their music as an overture, they are getting nervous, they bow and receive applause, and they have practised for a long time.

In this chapter, then, I will look more closely into the pupils' compositions as *objects* of "school art" (see Chapter 1). The research question I have as my starting point for writing this chapter is:
What are the connections between the musical piece being created and the process of its creation? - *and* what shapes and determines the musical piece being created?
The focus of my analysis now changes somewhat from earlier chapters: from a description and analysis of the events in the process to an analysis of events in the music; from a focus on activities and agents to a focus on the music that has been created. This means that the compositional process is still with us, but in this chapter and the following one it is more directly used to explain or modify a description and analysis of the pupils' compositions as seen through musicological lenses. In this chapter I try to do this by analysing compositions with two different approaches. In the first approach I look at the composition of the 9- year olds (GP1) and focus on the artistic and educational meanings of the composition. In the second approach I present a comparison analysis of meanings in two overtures created by the 10 year olds and focus on questions linked to quality, value and assessment. In both approaches the overarching question remains how it is possible to connect the phenomena that I am researching, to our knowledge and understanding of product as well as process. Before embarking on this endeavour however, it is necessary to discuss some basic questions linked to my position as a researcher and analyser.

[113] Vignette #4 is based on the same event as previous vignettes, but this time the perspective and point of view is Ingrid's.

Pupils' compositions: artistic expressions and objects of art?

Even if the situation described in the opening vignette of this chapter has obvious resemblances with ' artistic' situations, we might hesitate to regard the pupils' compositions as proper pieces of art. However, if we, as discussed in Chapters 1 and 3, accept the pupil's activity as composing and performing within the genre of 'school art' (Bresler, 1998), it is reasonable not only to reflect on the compositional final outcomes, the products, educationally, but also artistically and aesthetically. As outlined in Chapter 1, "School Art" to me, is a genre based on two different life-worlds; that of 'school' and that of 'art'. The questions to ask *initially* are: *Can* pupils' compositions be analysed as expressions of art? And if so; what should a researcher or analyst be looking for and what kind of analytic procedures should be applied?

As discussed in Chapter 3, a number of researchers on musical composition in education refer to pupils' compositions as aesthetic objects or artefacts that demonstrate some kind of "meaning". Some base their theory development almost entirely on the analysis of "compositions", e.g. Swanwick and Tillman (1986) others base their analysis on products as well as processes (e.g. Barrett, 1996; Davies, 1994; Burnard, 1999).

Davies examined children invented songs with regard to details of melodic organisation (Davies, 1994). Barrett argues that she discovers children's meanings "through the examination of children's musical discourse as composers *rather* than their verbal discourse as listeners", and that "their aesthetic decision-making may be evidenced in their use of musical structure and form in their compositions" (Barrett, 1996, p.2). Burnard refers to what she calls "analysis of the observational data (i.e. each musical performance)" and set out to look for:

> Parameters relating to i) contextual issues: choice of instrument, performance setting, setting of goals, preparing and planning, ii) mode of intention: how the activity is oriented, the focus and direction of actions and acting out the course of events and, iii) musical process: use of musical elements, choice of formal structures. (Burnard, 1999, p. 114, 115)

In the research literature referred to above, then, there seems to be consensus about the fact that musical products (or what some refer to as "aesthetic objects", or "musical performance") can give researchers important information about different aspects of children's lived experience. However, there seems to be a range of different opinions about what these "products" actually are, –e.g. whether they are finished artistic compositions, improvisations, performances or observational data–, what they can tell us, what one should look for, and how one should go about analysing them. Davies looks for details for melodic organisation, Barrett for decision-making about musical structure and form, and Burnard for contextual issues, mode of intention and the musical process.

None of the above mentioned researchers seem to have an analytic approach towards the music they analyse based on the way musicologists carry out musical analysis of *artistic* expressions in the form of a musical work or piece of art. Not surprisingly, their approach seems closer to that of ethnomusicologists studying an oral

tradition or music in a special culture. [114] In ethnomusicology researchers of so-called “oral traditions” don’t refer to ‘compositions’ but to ‘performances’ and their focus is normally on the context of the performance, the how and where, how they are organised etc. However, even within this scientific research tradition there seems to be a growing interest in the musical “event” as such. For instance, Finnegan claims that:

> 'Performance' is also used to refer to a concrete event in time: another sphere for investigation, which in recent years has extended beyond just a general look at performance attributes and setting to focus more directly on the communicative event itself. (Finnegan, 1992, p. 92)

In modern musicology the borderlines between the different scientific traditions such as historical musicology and ethnomusicology seem to be loosening up. In an article in Cook and Everett’s impressive volume “Rethinking Music”, Bruno Nettl addresses the question of what musicology is. He advocates what he calls “ the comprehensive view” referring to Alan Merriman who meant “that all music was equally worthy of study, and that it should all be done” (Nettl 1999, p. 307). Nettl summarises his analysis of what the field and discipline of modern musicology has become in the following way:

> I detected a tendency towards unification, more evident in the flow of ideas than in the development of organisations. Music historians refer increasingly to anthropological literature, and even to ethnomusicology, in finding models for research and interpretation; ethnomusicologists are more inclined to include Western art music in their publications and courses. Whether this is a definitive closing of ranks or a faddish diversion is yet to be seen. Nevertheless, it is an indication that musicology–in North America and in Western Europe–continues as a discipline claiming all types of research on music. (Ibid, p. 309)

Coming from the field of ethnomusicology it is not surprising that Nettl, and in my view rightfully so, advocates a comprehensive view of what musicology is. His observation of what others seems to think about ethnomusicologists is also interesting. He maintains that ”….everybody has thought of them through most of their history as students of the world's strange music, the music of the downtrodden and those outside the establishment. (Ibid, p. 301) This observation is highly relevant also for researchers of music as ’school art’. Maybe it is time to include pupils’ musics created and performed in schools in this comprehensive view of what musicology should deal with. As argued for in Chapters 1 and 3, schools should be regarded as sub-cultures that are constituted by and characterised through a number of uniquely lived experiences. ‘School art’ with its dependence on art as well as school is in my view therefore worthy of being studied musicologically as well as a part of education. This means that researchers need to apply methods of analysis that can be defined and discussed musicologically as well as educationally. To conceive pupils’ compositions as expressions and objects of art is part of such thinking.

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[114] Bruno Nettl maintains that “…in fact, ethnomusicologists do not regard themselves simply as students of all musics outside Western art music. They define themselves (though they have dozens of published definitions) as students of music in culture, or as students of music from an anthropological perspective, or of music in oral tradition, or of music from an intercultural comparative perspective (Nettl, 1999, p. 301).

What is a 'composition' within the genre of 'school art'?

The pupils of the present study have no doubts about what their compositions are. This is evident from direct observation as well as from interviews. Their compositions were performed and in many cases also recorded and listened to beyond a first performance. Cathy (10) for example, can distinguish between the different overtures composed by different groups, she remembers them clearly and states which one of them she liked best.

Me: Which ones do you remember?
Cathy: I remember the "The Three Bears" and "The Three Billy Goats" and.....
Me: Do you remember them right away when you think about them; it's quite some time ago.....
C: I don't remember all of them....
Me: But if you had to choose, which one did you like best?
C: "The Three Bears"
(Interview Cathy, p. 3)

Alexander identifies with the music of his group and prefers group work to individual work because it is in a group that there are ideas enough to make a good composition:

Me: Do you find it easiest to be in a group or on your own when you compose?
Alexander: When we are a group.
Me. How come?
A: That's when everyone gets ideas. (Very clear about this) You get lots of ideas at a time.
(Interview Alexander , p. 5)

Among the pupils in this class I never found any doubts about the fact that they were practising 'composition', that they made or created compositions more or less like real composers, and that the different pieces belonged to the group and individuals who had created them. This was part of the whole concept of composing as introduced to them by the teacher, Mrs L. and other influences on class life.[115] Composing meant to create a piece of music which had to be performed and was owned by those who made it.

Examining compositions as a part of education, researchers, myself included, often tend to emphasise the importance of the process rather than the final compositions.[116] My position is clearly that of being within music education, but in this study I find it highly relevant to listen to musicology when one has to decide what the

[115] I am aware of course that this might be different in other educational settings, especially if the practice examined is based on voluntary participation, e.g. as in Burnard's study, (Burnard, 2000). The pupils and class in the present study had previous to my fieldwork been part of compositional project involving professional performers.

[116] It is beyond the scope of this study to go deeply into this sort of analysis, but I find it tempting to suggest that such an attitude can be explained as part of a tradition within child-cantered or progressive education. To focus on the product can more easily disclose individual weaknesses and give pupil's negative feedback, something that is out of keeping with the ethos of progressive and child-cantered educational programmes.

object of analysis should be. In an article on "Ontologies of Music", Philip Bohlman states very clearly that claiming music as one's own recognises music as an *object*. He goes on to say:

> The object, music, is bounded and named by self-ness, if indeed by nothing else. Music that is truly 'my music' could not, by definition, be a process, for then it might become someone else's. Although 'my music' may be embedded in other activities—dance for teenagers, gospel hymns in the Protestant American South—it is ontologically separable from those activities—inscribed on records, anthologized in hymnals. To become 'my music', it must assume a *form* one can own.
> (Bohlman, 1999, p. 20)

Bohlman's point, the connectedness of ownership and an aesthetic and artistic object with a form, is in my view a very important criteria for deciding what the object for analysis should be. To make such a decision is, as we have seen above, not an easy task when researching children's lived musical experience. To distinguish between process and product, or between activity and outcome can in many cases appear to be meaningless because the different parts are so to speak indistinguishable. This can be argued in the case of improvised music for example, or even more relevant in our setting, for experimental music making in a music classroom (see e.g. Burnard, 1999).

Even so, the difficulties involved in this kind of distinction should not stop researchers from applying it, especially when it seems to be highly relevant. Referring to the ontological question of music as a multi-stratified universe of meaning (discussed in Chapter 2), Nielsen maintains that it is an absolutely fundamental point that music acquires object character, even in improvisation.

> Secondly, it is my impression, which corresponds, I believe, to the experience of many people, that the moment a piece of improvisational music comes into being, we - whether active participants or just listeners - have the same basic sensation of the music assuming the character of an object in our consciousness as when we perform or listen to other music. Especially for the listener I would insist that in principle it is quite immaterial whether the music listened to is created at that particular moment or is a performance of previously composed music, if it is a case of listening to it for the first time. In many cases the listener will not even know whether it is one or the other. But it is obvious that the difference between the two situations gains importance in repeated listening. The absolutely fundamental point is that the music acquires object-character, and that this forms the basis for experiencing it as an object with a multi-spectred structure of meaning of the kind that has been described. (Nielsen, 2004, p. 53)

Nielsen's phenomenological approach to what music is and how we experience, interpret or analyse it, underlines the importance of 'subjectification' as well as 'objectivication' in our dealings with the world of lived experience (ibid, p.3)[117]. It follows from this position that any research on the lived experience of children in music education, even if activity and action dominated, must take into account the 'object' aspect of such an

[117] see Chapter 2 for a presentation of Nielsen's theory

experience. An example of such a position is Holgersen's kindergarten study, where he focuses on "meaning and participation" in children's musical activities. Referring to Merleau- Ponty (1995), Dufrenne (1973) and Nielsen (1998), Holgersen examines how music activities become "manifold aspects of meaning" to the child and how the "musical phenomenon" comprises acoustic, bodily, tensional, emotional as well as spiritual and existential aspects. In his analysis he chooses to deal with this "phenomenon" in view of "participation" and "perception". As a whole, he says:

> …" the musical activities may, both to the observer and to the participant, assume the character of *aesthetic* objects, which are completed only in perception. (Holgersen, 2002, p. 237)

In my view, Holgersen's observation seems reasonable and logical in relation to the setting as well as the focus for his research. In the present study, however, the setting and focus of research is a different one and consequently my analytic approach can legitimately be different. In this part of my study, therefore, the *objects* of study will primarily be the seven group compositions which can be clearly distinguished from each other, and which can be clearly defined in terms of ownerships as well as in sound and transcriptions in music notation.[118] This does not, of course, mean that I want to look at the compositions in isolation from their contexts. Even if the focus in this part of the study will be on the final compositions, the research questions asked look for answers far beyond the scope of analysis and descriptions of the individual compositions per se. What remains to be answered before embarking on this analytic endeavour is what to look for in the compositions and how to go about looking for it.

Artistic/aesthetic and educational meanings in compositions

"Because we are in the world, we are *condemned to meaning* and we cannot do or say anything without it's acquiring a name in history" (Merleau- Ponty, 2002, p. xxii). As pointed out in Chapter 2, Merleau-Ponty's reminder of the fact that wherever we go and turn we cannot escape meaning making, and this is very relevant and appropriate when confronted with a musicological and educational task of analysing pupils' musical compositions. The question of what kind of meaning to look for and how this meaning can be discovered is a complicated one. As we have seen in the research literature on children's composition (Chapter 3 and above), this is dealt with in different ways, and even if we have touched on some fundamental questions, it is far beyond the scope of this text to deal with all the philosophical aspects and rationale for such an analysis.

I will approach this analytic task by building on Nielsen's view of music "as a theory of music as a *multi-spectral* (also: *multi-dimensional*) universe of meaning and of its *correspondence* to us, our consciousness and *Befindlichkeit* (cf. Heidegger)" (Nielsen, 2004, p.43). Nielsen's phenomenological position was presented in Chapter 2 and I will only repeat the essence of it here. Nielsen maintains that all musical objects contain several

[118] The compositions have been transcribed with standard notation. The scores are included as appendices and include verbal comments in brackets adding information about the music that is difficult to communicate through music notation. The compositions were performed on more than one occasion with minor differences between the different performances. The sounding sources for the transcriptions are audiotapes and video. In most cases there are minor differences between these sources. The transcriptions are based on listening to the audiotapes. The sounding compositions are included on an accompanying CD-rom as mp.3 files as well as QuickTime videos of performances towards the end of each process.

layers of meaning ranging from the acoustic and structural layers to spiritual – existential layers. [119] According to Nielsen these dimensions of meanings are “object-characteristic” as well as “act-characteristic”:

> Seeing that these other dimensions of meaning, as well as the structural features, are perceived as object qualities, they must phenomenologically be viewed as qualities adhering to the musical object itself. They are object-characteristic. Despite this, the qualities in question cannot be asserted to be present in the object in a material sense. They only manifest themselves by dint of our perceiving, acting and comprehending musical experience and consciousness. Thus they are not only object-characteristic but also act-characteristic. (Ibid, p. 3)

Nielsen’s emphasis of the fact that the dimensions of meaning are object-characteristic as well as act-characteristic is fundamental when it comes to account for the rationale for analysing pupil’s compositions. This dual characteristic does not only have bearing on the relationship between the pupils and the compositions, but also on my role as a researcher of the lived experience of music composition in a music classroom. Nielsen goes on to write, “…hence the musical object cannot be understood at all without some kind of aggregate thinking encompassing the object and the actively experiencing subject. This suggests a peculiar kind of object-subject relation. (Ibid, p.3)

When composing, pupils express themselves meaningfully through their compositions and compositional activities. When they perform or listen to their compositions they experience layers of meaning in different ways depending on their background, the situation, their relationship to the process etc. When I listen to and try to analyse the pupils’ compositions, I do it as a researcher with a special background in music education and musicology as well as with a special relationship to the very compositional processes that have brought the compositions about. Hence I will have to deal with and look for a number of layers of meaning that can be connected to the world of education as well as to the world of ’art’. To explain connections between the musical piece being created and the process of its creation, I have to deal with, relate to and interpret the structure of the piece as well my knowledge of events in the process.[120] To explain what it is that shapes and determines the musical piece being created I have to deal with and interpret the pupils’ artistic intentions as well as the context in which the creation took place.

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[119] Nielsen seems to be critical of the current praxis in the scientific discipline of “musical analysis”. He maintains that his theory can be viewed as a critique of existing praxis in this field. He says: “However, my interest is also motivated in terms of musical analysis. It is widely experienced that musical analysis is apt to focus attention solely on 'outer' structural features, which can be identified and conceptualized in a technically oriented professional terminology, and to refrain from an analysis of the 'inner' musical dimensions which, according to our experience, may have a profoundly radical impact on us. It is seldom that analyses of music attain to clarifying what it is in music that is capable of bringing that about” (Nielsen, 2004, p.3).
I would like to comment that the praxis Nielsen critiques has changed considerably the past 15 years especially within what is commonly referred to as “the new musicology”. The proponents of the new musicology, e.g. Lawrence Kramer and Nicholas Cook, (see Kramer, 2000 and Cook, 1999) deals to a much greater extent than traditional musicological analysis with the context and inner meanings of musical works.

[120] In the field of music analysis, questions about meaning and value are closely linked to structure and “form”. In his classic volume “Musical form” (first edition 1911, Berlin) Hugo Leichtentritt makes this very clear in his very opening sentence. “This book is intended for all those who are interested in the problem of musical structure. It is based on the aesthetic premise that a mass of sound gains artistic value primarily by a sensible, rational form, a certain method of construction, which is closely allied to what we call style in art and which in fact is the main element of style” (Leichtentritt, 1951, p. v).

In some cases I will compare the musical pieces with regard to similarities or differences, in other cases not. All through the analysis I will use my notational transcriptions as concretisations. Readers who want to listen to the actual sound of the compositions, can find all seven pieces on the accompanying CD-rom. As accounted for in Chapter 4, the complete transcriptions in music notation can be found in the Appendices. An account of the different compositional tasks and the context given is also accounted for in Chapter 4 as well as in the Appendices. Throughout the analysis I will include viewpoints from literature and discussions where appropriate.

First approach:
An analysis of ”The Sun”- The composition of Group 1

”The Sun” is a composition lasting 17 minutes. The task given by the teacher required the nine-year old pupils to make a composition starting from a reading of the poem ”The Sun”. They were asked to choose suitable words in the poem as musical building blocks, encouraged to replace words with music and asked to put words and sound together to make a composition. The task was accomplished in sixty minutes and then performed for the rest of the class. The poem they used goes like this:

(Norwegian)	(My English translation)
Sola	**The Sun**
Eg er verdens største	I am the world greatest
atombombe,	atom bomb,
eksploderer	exploding
gjer eg	as I do
heile	all
tida,	the time,
men	but
for deg	for you
kan eg vera	I can be
varm og	warm and
god	good
(Poet: Per Olav Kaldestad)	

The pupils had a number of instruments at their disposal. They chose to use the following when performing their piece: Voice (chant), alto xylophones, tambourine, hand drum, and cymbal.

Artistic meanings

”The Sun”, as composed and performed by the pupils in GP1, starts with everyone chanting the text of the poem rhythmically from the beginning including the poem’s title ”the Sun”. The title is accompanied rhythmically by tambourine and cymbal. There is a break (two beats) before they continue with the next line of the poem a capella. (see Example 34 below)

Example 34- CGP1-1

This is followed by a hand drum (HD) solo, which is played fortissimo, and a cymbal solo played forte with a crescendo. The rhythm in both instruments follows the next lines of the poem (a-tom-bom-be) and (eks-plo-der-er).

Example 35- CGP 1-2

The piece continues with the pupils chanting the next part of the text accompanied by one xylophone playing a third (c'-e'). There is strong dynamic contrast between the first part of the chant (gjer-eg-hei-le-tida, [as-I-do-all-the-time]) that is spoken firmly and with a strong voice and the last part (men-for-deg-kan-eg-ve-ra, [but-for-you-I-can-be]), which is piano and soft.

Example 36- CGP 1-3

The piece closes somewhat surprisingly with three notes played very softly (pianissimo) and divided between the two xylophones. These notes correspond to the rhythm of the closing text (mild-og- god,[mild-and-good]). Xylophone 1 plays the first two notes and xylophone 2 the last and concluding one.

Example 37- CGP 1- 4

What should be further noted in the closing of the piece is that the very last note is the first and only one played by xylophone 2, and that there is a break lasting 4 beats from beat 3 in the preceding bar before the xylophones conclude the piece. The overall form of the piece follows to a great extent that of the poem. There is a division of text between the instruments and the chant. The instruments appear soloistically as well as in accompaniment and there are great contrasts in dynamics. Dynamics are closely linked to the meaning of the text.

The pupils seem to have made some dramaturgical and artistic choices to make sure the ”message” is communicated. The easiest to observe are perhaps the choices of instruments and dynamics, which texts to play or chant and the balancing of rhythm and time. The effect of introducing extra empty space before the closure of the piece, and the choice of using pianissimo on ”soft” instruments also seems artistically well grounded. By using a sequence of dynamic contrasts and introducing space in the music, the pupils build tension as well as introducing a surprising release. This solution is very much in keeping with the artistic essence of the poem they started out from.

As seen above the pupils seem to be transposing aspects of both structure and content from the poetic medium into a musical medium. The German musicologist Siglind Bruhn calls this phenomenon ”musical ekphrasis”. Referring to literary theory (e.g. Clüver, 1997) she claims that:

> Correspondingly, what must be present in every case of what I will refer to as ”musical ekphrasis” is (1) a real or fictitious ”text” functioning as a source for artistic representation; (2) a primary representation of that ”text” in visual or verbal form; and (3) a re-presentation in musical language of that first (visual or verbal) representation (Bruhn, 2000, p.5/6)

To me it seems that Bruhn’s definition of ”musical ekphrasis” describes quite adequately what the pupil composers of ”The Sun” have been doing. They started out with a poem, a real text, supposed to be the source of artistic representation; they integrated the text, or rather parts of the text, in their composition and re-presented parts of it in musical language. Bruhn makes a point of distinguishing ”musical ekphrasis” from that of ”program music”. ”Program music”, she says, narrates or paints, suggests or represents scenes or stories (and, by extension, events or characters) that enter the music from the composer’s mind. ” And she continues:

> Musical ekphrasis, by contrast, narrates or paints stories or scenes created by an artist other than the

> composer of the music, and in another artistic medium. Furthermore, musical ekphrasis typically relates not only to the contents of the poetically or pictorially conveyed source text, but usually also to one of the aspects distinguishing the mode of primary representation—its style, its form, its mood, a conspicuous arrangement of details, etc. (Bruhn, 2000, p. 2)

In summary then, the composition ”The Sun” seems to exhibit artistic and aesthetic meanings that not only demonstrate aesthetic decision-making and dynamic, rhythmical control of musical language as artistic expression, but also has significant similarities to compositional techniques applied by real and modern composers in the adult world.

It may also seem from the analysis above that it is possible to identify phenomena in the music that can indicate certain qualities in the composers. As discussed in chapter 3, this form of analysis is frequently applied in research on composition in education. (e.g. by Swanwick and Tillman, 1986). Such qualities may be for example, the ability to create structural surprises and the ability to have a sense of music's affective power. Both qualities or ”abilities”, it can be argued, seem to be present in the composition analysed above and consequently be a part of our ”evidence” of what children can accomplish at the age of nine. Swanwick and Tillman describe phenomena of this kind as belonging to what they call different ”developmental modes” in children's musical development. (ibid 1986, p.332) According to Swanwick & Tillman structural surprises integrated into a particular style is a typical characteristic of ”the idiomatic” mode. Another characteristic of this mode is that ”any contrast is frequently at the end of a phrase or piece when a pattern has been clearly established from which there can be deviation”. The idiomatic mode belongs to ages 10-15. At the symbolic level or mode, ages 15 +, there is ”a growing sense of music's affective power ….” (ibid, p. 333)

It is possible to argue that certain phenomena disclosed above in the composition ”The Sun” could suggest abilities in the composers, which to some extent would place them in Swanwick & Tillman's idiomatic and symbolic levels or developmental modes.[121] However, it is also possible to argue that such a conclusion is an example of speculative psychologisation, which disregards the complexity of the mechanisms involved and the contexts of the creation of this piece of 'school art'. Going back to my analysis and knowledge about the *process* of composition and the educational scene where it took place, I hope to show that the layers of musicological meaning we have been looking at through the analysis of ”The Sun”, can only be truly understood when based on processual and contextual knowledge.

Educational meanings

In Chapter 8 I suggested that the process profile of GP 1, the group process that has generated ”The Sun”, is characterised by an absence of constructive significant events in the form of *Breakthroughs* and *Focus episodes* until the last part of the compositional process. In this process (GP1) there is a lot of tension between personal and compositional actions and long negotiations over the choice of instruments. Some of the pupils fetched the teacher, Mrs L, to help solve this tension. Looking back at the video of the process and my transcription of it, it

[121] I recognise that this comparison between Swanwick &Tillman's (1986) analysis of over 700 compositions and that of “The Sun” above has limitations, e.g. in terms of the question of analysing compositions of individuals or small groups. Swanwick & Tillman seemingly do not make this distinction. (“Each child was recorded individually or in a small group…” [p.311]). To me this seems to be very problematic in terms of developing a theory aligned to the age and ability of the individual child.

is interesting to notice my annotations written down during the video analysis of the part of the process when the visit of Mrs L. took place. I have chosen to quote my thinking about this visit here because it throws contextual light on the artistic and creative aspects of ”The Sun”.

Table 9.1 Annotation from transcript of GP 1-early

In this passage it is obvious that the teacher and the pupils approach the situation from very different perspectives. The teacher comes into the situation without any prior knowledge of the tension between personal and compositional actions. She is focused on the task and the different aspects of creating a good composition. Her advice is coloured by this approach. She listens to the first preliminary outcome and concludes that this is of poor quality (without saying it directly of course). Then she goes on to advise how to make it more meaningful in terms of planning better and not letting everyone play at the same time.
Some of the pupils may share her concern. Others in the group, especially Helge, is INTO the tension of the situation and feels that his personal need has not been fulfilled in terms of getting the instrument he wants or getting his idea accepted. To some extent this is the case with other group members as well. His interest is not focused on the aesthetics of composing at all. What he hopes is that whatever the solution is, it should give him the position he wants, especially in terms of playing what he wants to play on the instrument, or even instruments, (notice that quantity becomes relevant here) that he wants for himself. The task of the teacher is difficult. She deals with this by keeping the focus on the aesthetics (everyone playing or just a few at a time, and the combination of words and instruments) and leaves the group to build on her advice. In this particular case this strategy is not immediately successful...Normally this teacher interference could have been a Significant Event and a Focus episode with student/teacher dialogue. But it is not, because the Personal Actions are too prevalent.

My observation as expressed in the annotation above reminds us about the existence and importance of social and contextual elements in the compositional process. In the GP1-process, the focus on the aesthetics had to be repeated by the teacher because it seemed to be absent. And the artistic solutions as evidenced in the analysis of ”The Sun”, e.g. in terms of instrumental choices might seem to be based on the outcome of social negotiations and what I have labelled as ”Personal Actions” rather than aesthetic decisions and choices. However, a close scrutiny of the GP1 process reveals that there are passages where the focus *is* on the aesthetics and where compositional actions prevail. When entering the process towards the very end, it shows us how some of the major artistic aspects of the composition find their way into the piece:

Example 38: GP1- 22296- late
”Wait!” Alexander exclaims, - ”ok then, one, two, three…” (and then they start again with fewer instruments and playing only the words they have chosen, while chanting the text, even though Helge barely takes part.)
”Now, it was fine”, Cathy says.
”Yes, but maybe we need to find a new drum for Helge” Alexander says (and goes over to the instrument table and finds a big bongo drum.)

”Yeah”, says Helge, ”that is something…” (Ironically)

”Ok, come on then” Alexander resorts (and they play the piece again twice.

They change it a little while playing by not using the text on ”warm and good”. Cathy suggests this.)

”Protest, protest!” Helge exclaims, ”Alexander has two instruments to play (but he is kidding and Alexander laughs)

Now it’s really going fine! Alexander exclaims……

Helge negotiates the idea that more than one can play at the very beginning, on “The Sun”

”Ok”, Cathy says, Helge can do a little on his drum, like this” (and she demonstrates) ”Yes, go on…”

Alexander continues, ” just remember the beat So-la” (and then they play again and Helge comes in nicely and rhythmically)

”Yeah, that is fine, Alexander says, ”very good!”

(And then they play again from the beginning. Helge is fully into it now. He plays very eagerly and expressively on ”exploding”. Linda plays her xylophone with two beaters and the text rhythm on part of the text, very softly, and brings her idea in this way. And now they take away the text at the end where the two xylophones are playing. This time real progress is being made.)

”Yeaaahhh”, Alexander exclaims, brilliant!” (And the others laugh and look relieved.) ”Ok, now we can fetch Mrs L to come and listen”

”No”, Linda resorts, ”let us play once more” (and they play it over again)

”Yeah”, says Alexander, (and seems pleased and then they laugh again. The atmosphere is good)

From my scrutiny of the video it appears that:

- the choice of instruments is to a great extent the result of personal preferences for instruments rather than aesthetic decisions regarding the piece;
- the decisions as to who is playing where and what, are a matter of personal negotiations, but are also grounded in aesthetic considerations;
- several of the artistic phenomena pointed out in the analysis of ”the Sun” come about during appropriation and playing;
- some of the artistic ideas appear to be individual conceptions not openly discussed, just included during appropriation;
- the teacher serves to keep the focus on the aesthetics in the compositional process, both indirectly via the tasks and directly in her visit by underlining the importance of this aspect.

The ”educational” layers of meaning as summarised above belong to the *process.* They explain and modify some of the artistic layers of meanings disclosed in the analysis of the ”product”. To some extent it weakens the impression of the pupils as enablers of the art of ”musical ekphrasis” (Bruhn, 2000). The choices of instruments seem artistically less intentional, the replacement of words by music come about after teacher intervention, and some of the ideas come about without any apparent reflection. On the other hand, the dynamics of the piece seems to be generated through musical rehearsal and appropriation. It develops through musical praxis and is increasingly appreciated, as it is getting better, by all participants in terms of artistic value.

Second approach:
Comparison analysis of "The Fox's Widow" and "The Little Red Hen"- Compositions by Group 2 and Group 3

I have chosen to present the analysis of the compositions of Group 2, "The Fox's Widow" and Group 3, "The Little Red Hen" as a comparison analysis. This is due to the fact that both compositions start out from the same assignment and take place in very similar contexts. Quite surprisingly, the similarities between the two compositions are far less striking than the differences, e.g. in terms of musical and structural qualities. The assignment of this compositional process was a part of a larger educational topic about fairytales.[122] The class worked on this topic for three weeks and assignments included a study of fairytales, stage dolls productions of fairytales with performance for parents and family, and a compositional assignment, which consisted of the composition of overtures, supposed to precede the performance of the stage productions. (For more contextual details, see Chapter 3). The assignment given to the pupils by Mrs L was worded as below (Table 9.2):

Table 9.2 Wording of "Overture" assignment- fairytales (my translation)

"Compose a piece of music that should be an introduction to your fairytale. We can call it an "Overture".
The piece should be no more than 2 minutes long. You can choose your instruments and music freely, but it should suit the fairytale. What is new today is to try and create a composition with several melodies in it.
Suggestions:
- You could start with text (words, sentences, title, dialogues…)
- a melody - upwards or downwards, step by step, or jumping, repetition also important, repetition of phrases
- you can make melodies as question/answer
- the pentatonic scale is easy to use if you want accompaniment, but you can use any notes

Special advice: Discuss what texts could be your starting point. Try making small melodies and put them together. If you like, write them down in some way so you can remember. Use instruments you feel are suitable. Remember to make a composition, which should be interesting to listen to. Practice before performing."

Artistic Meanings
The Fox's Widow

The overture to "The Fox's Widow" is composed by the pupils of GP2, Alexander, Linda, Roy, Cathy, Turid and Siri, and is a piece lasting approximately 80 seconds. The 80 seconds includes a repetition. There are slight differences in rhythms and timing in the different versions I have access to on tape and video. The composition opens with a continuous metal sound (played on "Chimes" by Linda) that serves as a beginning as well as a background sound throughout the piece. The other instruments playing are two alto xylophones, one soprano xylophone and one base xylophone, and a djembe. The djembe, played by Siri, plays throughout the piece with a steady crotchet pulse rhythm. (See Example 39)

[122] The fairytales used belong to the classical repertoire of children's fairytales. "The Fox's Widow" (Norwegian: Reveenka) appears in Asbjørnsens & Moe's classical collection of Norwegian fairytales. The story is about the fox widow and how she turns down a number of wooers (the bear, the wolf etc) until one with the right colour (another red fox) turns up. "The Little Red Hen" is another classic international fairytale appearing in a number of versions, e.g. "the Tall Book of Nursery Tales", Racine, Wisc., USA, 1944 and in Walt Disney's classic film "The Wise Red Hen". The story celebrates the wisdom of the little red hen, which gives priority to hard work over leisure. Both tales are widely used in schools.

Example 39: CGP 2-1

The chimes and the djembe serve as a sort of stable background for the inputs from the other instruments, which come in turns, and which are sometimes played with a pulse of their own. The first one, in bar 5, is the soprano xylophone, played by Roy, which presents a two-crotchet motif D'-C':

Example 40: CGP 2- 2

This motif is not repeated until the whole piece is repeated. In bar 7 one of the alto xylophones, played by Turid, presents a motif with 4 crotchets starting from E'.

Example 41: CGP 2- 3

This motif is also a one-time presentation. Immediately following this motif two more motifs are presented, the first in bar 8, the base xylophone played by Camilla, and the second one in the other alto xylophone, played by Alexander, in the middle of bar 9.
Both motifs sound like syncopations compared to the steady beat of the djembe:

Example 42: CGP 2-4

After his presentation of the very first motif (Example 40 above), Roy, the soprano xylophone player, plays two notes at a time twice, alternating between G'-E' and A'-E', more or less as a rhythmical input at beat 1 (and later beat 2 as well) of every bar from bar 6. The whole piece is repeated after 14 bars. After the repetition there is a Coda where the rhythmical soprano xylophone motif plays with the djembe and chimes leading towards a closure where all instruments play a s*fortzando* on the first beat of the last bar.

Example 43: CGP 2- 5

Structurally, the overture to “The Fox’s Widow” is characterised by a clear division between the background sound of the djembe and chimes, and the melodic instruments. Worth noticing is the fact that the motifs are presented only once, and in turn, and repeated only in the repetition of the whole piece. There is a very clear introduction and closure of the whole piece and some contrasts in dynamics, especially between the beginning of the piece and the ending.

The Red Hen

The music of Group 3, the overture to “the Little Red Hen”, is composed by Helge, Irene, Lisa, Sigrun and Martin, and is a piece lasting two minutes and ten seconds. The group chose to use one alto xylophone, one glockenspiel, one base xylophone, one tambourine and one djembe as their instruments. Like “The Fox’s Widow” “The Little Red Hen” is characterised by a number of short motifs, but a major difference is the way the pupils of GP3 use repetition. In this piece too, some motifs are presented once and repeated only when the whole piece is repeated, but other motifs are repeated many times, more or less like ostinatos, and whole sections of the piece are repeated. The music opens with a motif in the base xylophone, played by Sigrun, which is followed directly by a responding motif in the glockenspiel, played by Lisa:

Example 44: CGP 3-1

The two motifs put together can be described as a classic four bar musical motif with a question and answer character and with what Leichtentritt (1951) calls antecedent and consequent phrases. [123] The half-close and close feeling in C-major tonality given by these two motifs is coloured by a very typical pentatonic melody structure. This phrase is immediately followed by a motif on the alto xylophone that goes on for 12 bars and which strengthens the pentatonic feel of the music. Irene is the player here.

Example 45: CGP 3-2

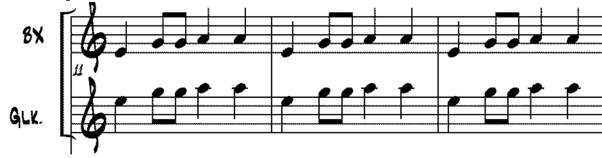
In the first 3 bars Irene and Martin (on the tambourine), play the same rhythm. Then the AX goes solo for one bar before a new rhythm motif, consisting of five crotchets and a 3 beat break is introduced on the djembe, played by Helge. The two instruments play together for the following 8 bars.

Example 46: CGP 3-3

[123] According to Leichtentritt “Periods are classified according to the kind of cadence or close used in the antecedent and consequent phrases. The types of period most frequently used are: 1. Antecedent with a half-close (chord progression I, V): consequent with full close (V, I)” (Leichtentritt, 1951, p. 10).

In the next part the base xylophone (Sigrun) and the glockenspiel (Lisa) play another motif for three bars.

Example 47: CGP 3-4



This is immediately followed by the djembe (Helge) repeating the rhythm from bar 10 (see Appendix no. 3). This motif is repeated twice and expanded a little bit from bar 17 onwards. A drum brushis used in addition to hand drumming for the expansion. After the repetition, which does not include the above mentioned djembe solo, the base xylophone (Sigrun) has a new motif (Example 48), which she plays solo and which is different, but related to the other motifs:

Example 48: CGP 3-5

The piece concludes with what sounds like a Coda from bar 23 where everyone plays a new motif very decisively and very forte (*ff*).

Example 49: CGP 3-6

When comparing the two overtures there are several similarities but, perhaps even more noticeable, differences. Both groups have created music with very clear beginnings and closures, both groups have contrasts in their use of dynamics, both groups have codas and both repeat the piece twice. Both pieces seem to have picked up very clearly suggestions in the assignment concerning the use of "melodies" and the pentatonic scale:

> "What is new today is to try and create a composition with several melodies in it.....
> • the pentatonic scale is easy to use if you want accompaniment, but you can use any notes"
> (extract assignment, see above Table 9.2)

But the way the two groups have responded to these suggestions seems very different. Whereas Group 2 (The Fox's Widow) only repeats motifs when the whole piece is repeated, Group 3, (The Red Hen) repeats motifs in a number of different ways. Whereas I have problems identifying a common, shared and steady pulse in Group 2, there is no such problem in Group 3. Other major differences are the length of the compositions and the sense of

whether the pupils actually make music together or play more or less on their own. The Red Hen is almost twice as long as The Fox's Widow, and whereas one can detect several sections where two or more players are closely linked musically in The Red Hen, only one section, the closure, can clearly be characterised this way in The Fox's Widow.

Compositional "products" and the question of quality and value

My way of comparing the two overtures (above) with regard to similarities and differences borders on questions about 'musical critique' or 'musical quality and value', both of them well known within the disciplines of musicology[124]. It may seem that the two pieces we are looking into here, not only are different, but that they also exhibit great differences in musical and aesthetic *quality*. Going deeply into the complicated questions of quality and value is far beyond the scope of this text. I find it interesting and relevant, however, to take a look at the question of 'quality' here, simply because it may shed light on the research question we are dealing with: *What are the connections between the musical piece being created and the process of its creation?* If there is a difference in quality, how can this difference be described and argued for, and how can it be explained in terms of references to contexts, actions and events in the compositional process?

In an interesting text on "Quality and value in the interpretation of music from a phenomenological point of view" in "Zeitschrift für Kritische Musikpädagogik", Frede V. Nielsen presents a first draft for dealing with these questions. After having discussed some principal positions concerning quality and value in music he refers to Carl Dahlhaus (1970) and presents three kinds of general criteria for quality assessment of music: criteria which are a) externally functional, b) historicising and c) aesthetic (Nielsen, 2002, p. 11).
I find two of Nielsen's sets of criteria especially relevant—the aesthetic and the externally functional—in the particular analysis we are dealing with here. Nielsen's aesthetical criteria are linked to his theory of music as a multi-stratified universe of meaning, which I introduced in chapter 2 and also referred to earlier in this chapter. In terms of what decides the quality or value of a piece of music measured by aesthetical criteria Nielsen maintains that:

> …the more multispectred, 'deep', cohesive and authentic the object is in its volume of meaning, and the more multi-spectred, deep, cohesive and authentic experience and perception it accordingly conveys and thus also can give rise to, the more valuable and 'rich' we can consider the object to be by the standards of phenomenological aesthetic thinking. (Ibid, p.16)

Nielsen admits that a quality assessment based on this kind of criteria is a difficult task, and that not all aesthetic objects possess the attributes described in his model and in any case not to the same extent. He also suggests that there might be different qualities in what he calls the "inward layers" and the "outward layers" of the music. However, he goes on to say that:

[124] In his little book on an introduction to music, Nicholas Cook (1998) makes a strong point of showing how the very basis of Schenkerian music analysis is based on the belief that such an analysis would bring forth the essence of something created by geniuses. For Schenker, Cook maintains, "The composer speaks then, but with a voice that is not his own: it is the voice of Nature. For Schenker the authority of the composer—the authority delegated to conductor, editor, and teacher—is itself ultimately a reflection of a higher Author, for the value of music lies (as he puts it) in the evaluation of the spirit...an uplifting, of an almost religious character, to God and to geniuses through whom he works'. (Cook 1998, p. 32)

> “On the whole the structural aspect is central- also from the point of view of quality assessment. It is here that the craftsmanship emerges, but that quality is in various bound up with the inward dimension. (Ibid, p.25)

Nielsen then, appears to emphasise two important aspects regarding quality assessment based on aesthetic criteria. First and foremost he seems to underline the importance of the structural aspect and outward layers of the music, but he also focuses on the inward layers and the way the musical structure is bound up with the inward dimension.

Applying Nielsen’s aesthetical criteria and position in the analysis and comparison of the two overtures in question here, give some answers, but also creates new questions regarding the quality issue of these two pieces. It seems obvious from an aesthetical point of view that “The Little Red Hen” scores higher in musical quality than “The Fox’s Widow”. “The Little Red Hen” is a longer piece, it is performed with a common pulse, it deals with “repetition” in sophisticated ways, it demonstrates solos, duos and tutti more frequently and sophistically, it demonstrates musical question and answers, and it even has variations of motifs. In short, it demonstrates better musical and compositional craftsmanship in a number of ways. As such, then, one can clearly point to differences in quality based on an analysis of the final composition, the product.

However, when applying a similar sort of analysis based on Nielsen’s second group of criteria—the externally functional—it leads us back to the process. The essence of this group of criteria is “functionality”, which Nielsen explains the following way:

> From this angle, quality in a musical work has to be determined on the basis of the question whether it is suitable for achieving this, that or the other functionally determined aim outside music itself. Is the music good for dancing to, for indicating working rhythm, for calming a child, for firing fighting spirit or inspiring the football team, for stimulating purposes, for political protest etc? Or pedagogically: for learning musical form, for forming impressions of tonal (timbral) potential etc? Such external criteria will more or less strongly influence, or be influenced by, the internal musical structure, depending on culture, historical period etc. (Ibid, p.20)

Functionality, according to Nielsen, implies looking “outside of the music itself” and seems to place the musical piece in its immediate context. True, Nielsen’s point of view, seems to be that of the listener, the experiencing receiver, not the creative generator, but in an educational context such a position is also the position of the teacher, the pupils and peers. Going back to our two overtures, it means that one may, e.g. look for how well each piece functions as an overture to the performance of a dramatisation of a fairytale, or even, how well it serves the goal of “learning musical form”. In my opinion this is to look for processual and contextual meanings. Looking for contextual and processual meanings is in keeping with Nielsen’s phenomenological position, a position, which includes the interdependence of the musical object and the context of its creation as well as the corresponding layers of object and experiencing subject.

Quality, value and assessment and the compositional processes

In previous chapters I have used a number of examples from GP 2 as well as GP 3 to illustrate certain phenomena in the respective compositional processes, such as characteristics of compositional actions, the dynamics of compositional processes and more (see Chapters 5 through 8). On revisiting my analysis of these processes in the light of the "product" analysis being undertaken here, it seems very relevant to point out some characteristics of the processes, which can throw light on a seemingly obvious difference in quality regarding the respective musical pieces. GP2, for example, which generated "The Fox's Widow" contains many examples of CAs of planning and structuring, but few CAs of appropriation. In this process there are very few "significant events" until the very end of the process when the pupils *have to* rehearse and play to achieve an outcome. Also, GP2 contains some Personal Actions and *circle episodes* that can throw light on the scarcity of constructive significant events in this particular GP.

GP 3, the process of producing "The Little Red Hen", contains more PAs than GP2, but it also has a great number of compositional actions connected to "invention"—from the beginning and throughout the process—especially with regard to compositional actions categorised as "individual conceptions". Additionally, GP3 also contains a fair number of CAs connected to appropriation early in the process, whereas in GP2, compositional actions of this category are considerably fewer and take place for the main part towards the end of the process. In both GPs, CAs of planning and structuring are evenly distributed. However, it may seem that there is a better balance between generation, production and communication in GP 3 than in GP 2. This may explain some of the differences in quality in the final compositions.

The lack of inventive actions in GP 2 may, of course, be explained by lack of musical background and competence in the individual members. However, there is nothing in my observations of class activity that suggests such an explanation. Quite to the contrary, at least one of the members of GP 2 exhibited extraordinary musical competence for a 9 year old in a class session preceding this particular compositional process (see the Postlude, Chapter 11, for a discussion of the individual versus the group).

However, there are other possible plausible explanations; explanations that can be evidenced only by reference to close observation of the compositional process and insider knowledge of the educational context. These explanations bring us back to the question of how the pupils in these two compositional processes *approached* the challenge of creating a musical form.

In GP2 as well as in GP3 it can be observed how the pupils early in the processes approached their task by taking texts from their fairytales and then use this as the rhythmical foundation for melody making. As pointed out in Chapter 6, they often started using the text to decide questions about the form and structure of the piece before they had played a single note. The main key to an explanation of the difference in quality between "The Fox's Widow" and "The Little Red Hen", therefore, seems to be hidden in this observation, an observation, which rests on an understanding of the inner and deeper meaning of melodies and form of the compositions *as well as* the contextual and processual meanings of how the compositions were created.

If we look again at the compositions knowing that every melodic motif in them has referential meaning, and that

the placement and quality of melodies have obvious connections to the fairytales, our understanding of "the outer" as well as " the inner" meanings of the compositions is enlarged and deepened. The beginning of the overture to "The Little Red Hen" for example, is the beginning of a *story* where the first musical motif is based on the text rhythm of the title of the piece: den vesle røde høna [the tiny little red hen], and the second motif is based on one of the crucial sentences in the fairytale: "kven skal slå kornet" [who will mow the corn] (see Example 50)

Example 50: CGP 3-1

Bass Xyl. (Sigrun)
Glockenspiel (Lisa)
Den vesle røde høna, den vesle røde høna
(the tiny little red hen, the tiny little red hen)
kven skal slå kornet, kven skal slå kornet?
(who will mow the corn, who will mow the corn)

The repetitive third motif on the text ("ikkje eg, ikkje eg" [no not me, no not me]) following this opening represents a musical and artistic expression of the other animals unwillingness to engage in useful and constructive labour. In the overture this unwillingness is expressed by introducing a melody of three notes moving upwards. The motif is repeated many times, played aggressively (as in opposition) and sometimes as counterpoint to other motifs. (See Example 51)

Example 51: CGP 3-2

AX
ikkje eg, ikkje eg (no not me, no not me) ikkje eg, ikkje eg (no not me,no not me) ikkje eg, ikkje eg (no not me,no not me) ikkje eg, ikkje eg (no not me,no not me)

The technique of using text from the fairytale is used in GP 2 as well. In this group the pupils chose to introduce the piece with a background sound suggesting "drama or fairytale". The djembe ostinato that runs through the piece is simply the text rhythm of "Reveenka" [Fox's Widow], the first two notes on the AX is "God dag" [How do you do).

Example 52: CGP 3-

God dag
(how do you do)

The other single musical inputs on xylophones following, is a request, a question and an answer. (Sjå kven det er [See who it is], Er reveenka heime? [Is the Fox's widow at home?] and "Ja, ho er da det" [yes, I think she is]).

Example 53: CGP 3-4

sjå kven er det
see who it is

ja ho er da det
(yes, I think so)

er reveenka heime?
(is the fox's widow at home)

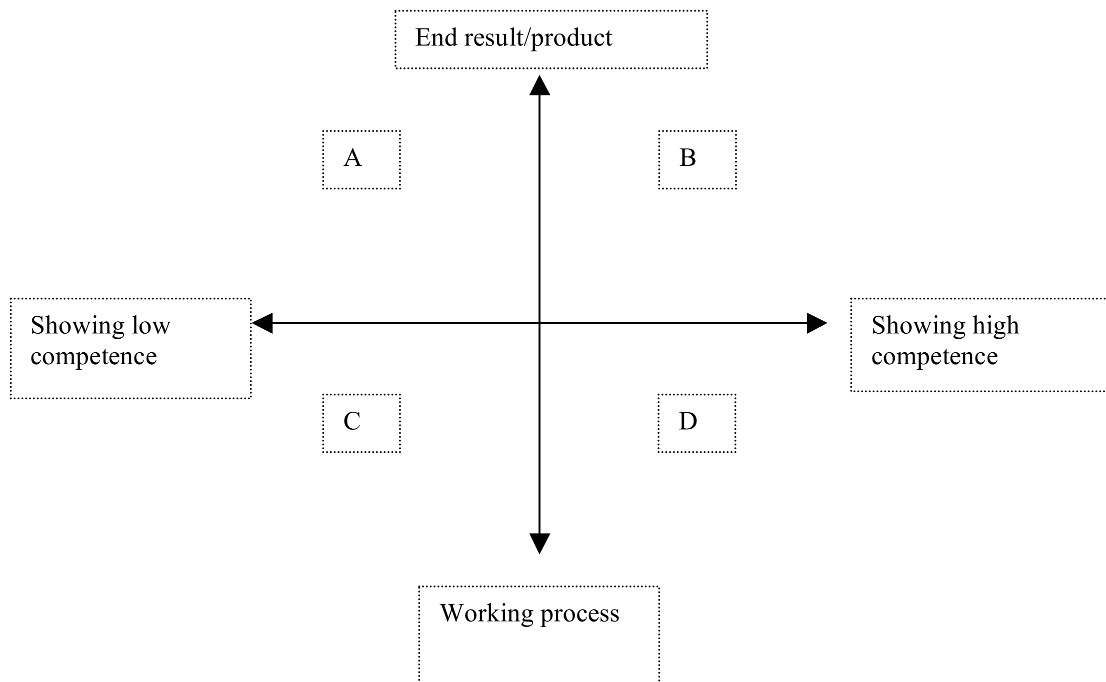
Reveenka
(Fox's widow)
Reveenka
(Fox's widow)
Reveenka
(Fox's widow)
Reveenka
(Fox's widow)

A complete "text map" analysis of the two compositions is enclosed in Appendices no. 8 and 9. A comparison of the two maps illustrates clearly the difference in quality discussed above. "The Little Red Hen" exhibits artistic and musical competence in using the recommended technique of using texts as building blocks. The piece is rich in different layers of meaning and builds a musical story from a beginning to an end well in keeping with the message of the fairytale. The pupils demonstrate musical craftsmanship in the way they invent, plan and produce their composition. The pupils of GP2 do not achieve this in the same way. Even though they have created a piece that functions as an overture and which has some musical qualities, their musical input shows few (if any) repetitions and they do not seem to be able to build their intentions into an artistic and musical form as well as the pupils of GP3.

The technique of applying texts as building blocks is only suggested as one of many possibilities in the assignment, but comes through very strongly in both groups, probably because this way of working was something they were used to in class. In GP3 it seems to help the pupils to create an interesting piece of music, whereas it in GP2 does not have a similar effect. As such the GP2 process is a good example of what happens when teacher input is perceived in such a way that it becomes a mechanistic methodology, which inhibits pupils' *musical* thinking in terms of phrases and what goes together musically. Two phenomena seem to contribute: 1) The isolated work on each motif and 2) the incapacity to break away from a way of working that does not produce *musical* results. In the GP2 process there are many attempts to break out of this harness, because the pupils realise that what they are creating is not good enough. Alexander for example, exclaims "terrible!" after having tried some of their music and Cathy, who relies on what she hears, finds the music they have made "strange". (GP2 middle). But their attempts are not strong enough.

The question of quality and value of the compositions, which I have discussed from a musicological point of view above, has its parallel in education in "pupil assessment". Teachers are often faced with the dilemmas of having to report end results as well as processes when deciding on assessments. Assessing within the music educational discipline of "composing" usually means that the teacher has to find criteria for what is good and not so good in terms a finished composition and/or a compositional process. In most cases it is difficult for the teacher to follow the compositional process and easier to get access to the final result. This was definitely the case for the two groups we are dealing with here. For the teacher it is possible to assess the groups from different positions as illustrated in the model below:

Fig 9.1 Assessment of composing in schools - process or product?



The model above is taken from the guidelines for evaluation in music issued by the Norwegian Ministry of Education (UFD, Eksamenssekretariatet 2000, p. 14). The guidelines underline the necessity of giving pupils a "holistic assessment", which means referring to process as well as product. The Ministry explains the meaning of the model above the following way:

> In this model the pupils can be assessed from different positions. Above the horizontal line in the model (the A- and B- areas) the emphasis in assessment can be on an end result (product), and below this line (the C- and D- areas) the emphasis can be on the working process. Very often there are no clear distinctions between end result and working process, but a teacher who guides and assesses should at all times be conscious of one's own position in this model. It is not unlikely that one and the same pupil can be assessed and decided to belong in area B, - showing high competence in an end result, and in area C, - showing low competence in the working process, even connected to one and the same assignment or topic. A difficult question for the teacher will then be to find the right balance when assessing holistically and deciding on a mark. (ibid, p. 14/15, my translation)

The guidelines above show very clearly the need for teachers to be aware of the connections between the musical piece being created and the process of its creation. It also shows the complexity of pupil assessment and the many positions and points of view being involved in pupil assessment. The two processes being analysed here, GP 2 and GP 3, are good examples. As a researcher I have equal access to process and product and I have just argued, using musicological and phenomenological lenses, that the music created by GP 3, "The little Red Hen", is of considerably better quality than the corresponding piece by the pupils of GP 2. I have also tried to explain the difference in quality be referring to events in the process, to ways of working and to contextual

elements like “perception of teacher input” and more.[125]

Summary

In this chapter I have been looking more closely into the pupils’ compositions as objects of “school art”. The focus of my analysis thus moved from a description and analysis of the events in the process to an analysis of events in the music; from a focus on activities and agents to a focus on the music that has been created. I have analysed compositions with two different approaches: 1) with a focus on the artistic and educational meanings of the composition and: 2) with a focus on questions linked to quality, value and assessment. In both approaches the overarching question has been how it is possible to connect the phenomena that I am researching to our knowledge and understanding of product as well as process.

Based on a discussion as to whether pupils’ compositions can be regarded as artistic expressions and a phenomenological and musicological approach to analysis, I conclude that it is highly relevant to examine pupils compositions as artistic expressions and search for artistic as well as educational meanings. “Artistic” examinations may suggest that compositions exhibit artistic and aesthetic meanings that not only demonstrate aesthetic decision-making and dynamic, rhythmical control of musical language as artistic expression, but also have significant similarities to compositional techniques applied by real and modern composers in the adult world. Educational meanings—as examined in the corresponding compositional process— may explain and modify some of the artistic layers of meanings disclosed in the analysis of the ”product”. An important finding is that a combined analysis of process and product might seem to weaken the impression of the pupils as independent enablers of creating musical art. By examining the processes I find that the choices of instruments seems artistically less intentional, the replacement of words by music come about after teacher intervention, and some of the ideas come about without any apparent reflection. On the other hand, the dynamics of the piece seems to be generated through musical rehearsal and appropriation. It develops through musical praxis and is increasingly appreciated, as it is getting better, by all participants in terms of artistic value.

A phenomenology based musicological analysis of pupils’ compositions is possible and meaningful. It shows that there are a number of similarities between such an analysis, and the challenges given to teachers as assessors of musical composition in schools. In both instances one has to pay similar attention to two important aspects of lived experience: processes and products, music and experience of music, music as objects and music as activities.

In the second part of this chapter I have tried to shed light on the mysteries of the connections between the musical piece being created and the process of its creation by comparing compositions of different quality. I asked: If there is a difference in quality, how can this difference be described and argued for, and how can it be explained in terms of references to contexts, actions and events in the compositional process?

My analysis of pupils’ composition with respect to the question above seems, so far, to suggest some conclusions. First: connections between a compositional process and its “product”, the final composition, can

[125] However, I have not as yet talked about the “quality” of the respective processes and I don’t intend to because of my position as a researcher of *compositional* processes and not of social psychology.

best be decided when scrutinising both through close observation and analysis. What *appear* to be sophisticated aesthetics and decisions can sometimes be the result of phenomena linked to personal actions and contextual "trivialities"[126]. What *appears* to be relatively meaningless juxtapositions of musical notes, can be serious attempts at realising aesthetical intentions. What *appear* to be meaningless discussions about certain isolated elements, can be the pupils' way of implementing a compositional strategy learnt in class and a holistic planning of the whole piece.

Even when scrutinising compositions and processes the way I am doing here, the complex nature of musical composition in education renders questions unanswered. One of them has to do with the field of "creativity". In the next chapter I will focus on creativity as yet another way of researching connections between compositional products and processes. Starting with an analysis of creative products, the pupils' compositions, I ask: To what extent is it possible to throw light on connections between the final compositions and the respective processes by focussing on creativity?

[126] My use of the word "trivial" here does not suggest that some events and elements in a context have greater general value than others. It simply suggests that compositional processes contain a number of events, attitudes and actions that may influence the shaping of the emerging composition and that some of them may have little or no connection to music and art, hence "trivial" in the meaning of "common" or "ordinary".

Chapter 10

LOOKING FOR CREATIVITY IN MUSICAL PRODUCTS AND COMPOSITIONAL PROCESSES

Introduction

In this chapter I will focus on creativity as a way of researching connections between compositional products and processes. Starting with an analysis of creative products, the pupils' compositions, I ask: To what extent is it possible to throw light on connections between the final compositions and the respective processes by focussing on creativity? I will start by describing aspects of the compositions called "Rhythm Music" created by the 12 year olds, and focus on questions about creativity relevant to these compositions. As in the previous chapter the overarching question is to connect our knowledge and understanding of product as well as process to the phenomena that I am researching.

There are several reasons for my looking into creativity as a way of researching connections between compositional products and processes. As mentioned in Chapter 3, "composing" in schools in our western society was a to a great extent a child of what is called "the composition movement" (see e.g. Barrett, 1998). Pioneers, like composer Murray Schaeffer, stated clearly as early as 1965 that: "it is the duty of every composer to be concerned with the creative ability of young people" (Schaeffer, 1986, p. 40)[127]. In Norway, in the pioneering years of the 1970s, what was called "creative activity" in national curricula for music was in effect "composition" (see Chapter 3). The main reason for focussing on creativity in this study, however, has to do with the fact that "creativity" can be linked to the whole field of composition in schools: person, place, product and process to use some familiar concepts from creativity theory (see e.g. Guilford, 1950 and 1967). In creativity research the questions asked have often been a sort of either-or questions, e.g.: "Is creativity a property of products and processes or people? Is creativity a personal or social phenomenon? Is creativity common to all people or a unique characteristic of a select few?" (Mayer, 1999, p. 459) My approach will not be an either–or approach, but rather: How can the *connections* between compositional process and product be understood and explained within in the framework of creativity theory? And my starting point here and now will be the products, the pupils' compositions.

Looking for creativity in pupils compositions on "Rhythm Music"
(compositions generated by GP4, GP5, GP6 and GP7)

The third sequence of compositional activities that I researched consisted of four groups of pupils composing "Rhythm Music". The assignment was given in connection with class work on a topic on Africa. In the assignment we can recognise suggestions towards ways of working that readers should now be familiar with, e.g. suggestions towards using certain texts to support appropriate rhythms, like "kaikakofima" and others. The assignment also includes encouragements to work towards a composition with contrasts between two different parts, and a suggestion to make music that can be used for dancing. On the whole, however, the assignment for

[127] As pointed out in Chapters 1 and 3, composers have at different times played a very active part in shaping western music education. The best known are probably Carl Orff, and Zoltan Kodály, but the list should also include composers like Dimitrij Kabalevsky, John Paynter, Peter Maxwell Davies, Murray Schaeffer and others.

this compositional activity encourages the pupils to compose more freely than in the earlier composition assignments in this study. For more contextual details see Chapter 4 and Appendix no. 10.

According to American Maud Hickey, a *creative* product is “one that is both novel to its creator and appropriate and valuable in the context of a domain” (Hickey, 2003, p. 35).
She refers to Mayer (1999) while seemingly disregarding that Mayer in the very same article argues that …”the classic definition of creativity as the construction of novel and useful products needs to be clarified and broadened..” (Mayer, 1999, p. 459). However, Hickey makes a link from her interpretation of Mayer to music education and expresses very clearly that the criteria she would recommend regarding the *creative* level of “a fifth-grade child’s composition”, is connected to “originality and aesthetic appeal”. In this way she combines “the creative” with “value”, something, which to me appears to be slightly different from Mayer’s concepts of “novelty” and “usefulness”.[128] Hickey writes:

> The context of the domain is relative to the social context and group from which a product emerges. In other words, a musical composition is creative relative to what other composers have done in that social context and time, be it the opera composers of the twentieth century or children in a third-grade classroom. Each context contains a different set of standards, yet each is a place in which more or less creative products can be made. A novel or unique musical composition is one that is exceptional when compared to the norm. A fifth-grade child's composition may stand out because of the surprisingly unusual features for that age and experience level. However, a composition that is only unique—it contains a wide variety of unusual ideas but is not aesthetically appealing or interesting—would not be considered creative under this definition. A unique or original composition must also be interesting or aesthetically appealing, or it would simply be chaotic or nonsensical. The most successful compositions meet both criteria of originality and aesthetic appeal. (Hickey, 2003, p. 35)

It is not difficult to see that Hickey’s criteria—demanding originality and aesthetical appeal—is very close to some sort of “standards”, and that these standards depend on the experiences in the domain and the specific context in question: in our case composing within the genre of “school art” or even composing in this specific school. According to these “standards” the pupils’ compositions can be viewed as more or less creative.

My approach to the analysis of the four compositions in “Rhythm Music” will start by describing the compositions very briefly and then more in depth look into this question: to what extent can some compositions be said to be more or less creative than other compositions?

Characteristics of the compositions: Rhythm Music 1,2,3,and 4

All compositions were performed towards the end of the compositional process and twice in a special class setting. They were recorded in this setting and my analysis of them is based on listening many times to the recordings. The pieces were generally well performed.

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[128] Mayer’s exact wording is: “The overarching definition of creativity seems to favour the idea that creativity involves the creation of new and useful products, including ideas as well as concrete objects”. (Mayer, 1999, p. 450)

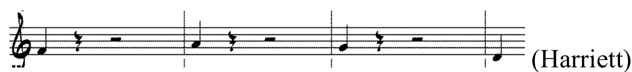
All of the compositions have two different parts (with small variations), and are structured as ABA. They do not differ much in length: from 2 minutes and 21 seconds for the shortest up to 2 minutes and 55 seconds for the longest. All them are played in 4/4 or 2/4 time and are performed in a relatively fast tempo, from X = 110-136. Melodic-rhythmical ostinatos make up a great part of the music. In some cases there are tempo changes between part A and B. The suggested text rhythm “kaikakofima” and others can be recognised in a few cases. All compositions include syncopations of some sort and pentatonic motifs prevail.

Rhythm Music 1

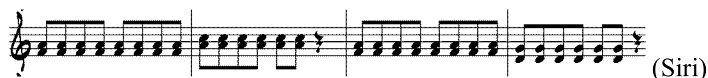
Rhythm Music 1 (RM1), composed by the pupils in GP 4, opens with a djembe ostinato

(Martin).

This ostinato continues throughout part A and is doubled by maracas from bar 10. In bar 5 the first melody is introduced in the alto xylophone (AX):

 (Harriett)

When this melody is repeated (bar 9 and onwards) it is accompanied by another ostinato played on the soprano xylophone:

 (Siri)

This goes on until bar 21 where part B starts. Dynamically part A is played mezzo forte most of the time. Part B starts with a rain sound type shaker solo for 8 seconds, which continues as a background sound for the rest of part B. After 8 seconds the following melody is introduced, very softly on the glockenspiel:

(Siri)

This melody is repeated several times. In the first repetition the alto xylophone (Harriett) joins in with the glockenspiel and plays slightly louder. In the second repetition the djembe, played with flat hands and fingers (Iselin), joins in with the same rhythm. In the next repetition the glockenspiel leaves this company, and in the last repetition the djembe is playing solo and very softly. Then part A is repeated.

Rhythm Music 2

Rhythm Music 2 (RM2), composed by the pupils of GP5, opens with the same rhythm as the opening rhythm of RM1, but the instrument here is a cowbell (Roy). In bar 4 the first melodic ostinato is introduced in the base xylophone:

(Inga).

After 2 bars the alto xylophone (Turid) joins the motif of the base xylophone, but the rhythm is different:

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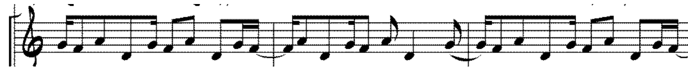
On top of these 3 ostinatos a new and radically different motif is introduced in bar 10. Helge plays this motif on the soprano xylophone. He uses two mallets, hitting D regularly and repeatedly. An approximate notation looks like this:



The djembe (Linda) joins in with the same rhythm as in the alto xylophone (Turid) from bar 14 and for 5 bars. All instruments then play together till the end of part A (bar 20) where the base xylophone and then the cowbell conclude this section (bar 22). Helge plays his motif slightly differently (more or less improvisatory) each of the 4 times he repeats it.

Part B starts with everyone playing the following:

After 3 bars (some times 4 bars) Helge joins in with a voice chant. The text is improvised, in more or less nonsense words like the following: Anja A O Anja Ho, Anja A O, Anja Hei…. He continues for 17 bars, in a second performance somewhat longer, with the same text. The group plays collectively with a strong crescendo and some accelerando towards the end. Conclusively, the A part is repeated.

Rhythm Music 3

Rhythm Music 3 (RM3) is composed by the pupils in GP6. This piece starts with a shaker (Carol) making “rain sounds”, which continues throughout part A. She is joined by the wood block (Ingvald) after a few seconds who plays crotchets in pulse for the whole of part A. After 4 bars a rhythmic-melodic ostinato is introduced in the base xylophone (Eric) playing for 4 bars, and then throughout part A, before being joined by the alto xylophone (Lisa). She plays with two mallets and includes all available notes (staves) in upward sequence.

When she reaches the top she turns her sequence and plays the same ways downwards, thus creating a sort of mirror inversion.

Having finished this, something which is emphasised by Carol’s single beat on the cow bell, she starts a new upwards and downwards sequence, now playing single notes from the lowest to the highest on her instrument. When starting this she is joined by the djembe (Siri) and part A is concluded by another single beat on the cowbell.

Part B in RM3 is quite short. It starts with crotchets being played crescendo on cowbell and djembe for 2 bars. Then a new ostinato in the base xylophone appears, followed by another ostinato in the alto xylophone and a crotchet rhythm in the wood block. This builds during 7 bars from a mezzo forte to forte.

As for the other pieces, RM3 finishes by repeating part A.

Rhythm Music 4

The pupils of GP7 composed the last composition, Rhythm Music 4 (RM4). Their piece starts with a 2 bar ostinato played on wood block (Mary) and djembe (Sigrun), both played decisively and energetically (pulse 126).

The first melodic ostinato to follow, appearing in the base xylophone (Irene), is a one-bar motif with a D minor-pentatonic feel to it. A second ostinato, following after two bars, in the alto xylophone, is a two-bar construction where the rhythm is related to the opening rhythm of the whole piece. Todd adds a third melodic ostinato played on the second alto xylophone in this band. His motif enters the scene in bar 9 together with Mary who is playing the eggs in a slightly contrasting rhythm at the same time as the sharp wood block opening rhythm leaves.

The woodblock reappears after 8 bars and now the eggs leave, and this goes on until bar 22 where the percussion stops and leaves it to the melodic ostinatos to finish part A.
Part B starts with the percussion; first the djembe plays 4 crotchets and is then joined by eggs. Two two-bar ostinatos are introduced simultaneously in the two xylophones before Irene, playing the base xylophone (BX), introduces a new motif moving upwards.

Irene goes on playing this motif 4 times in the B part. The first time she plays together with all instruments, the third time only with the two percussion instruments and the fourth time only with the djembe (Sigrun) who concludes the B-part before they all return to part A.

Evaluation in class

The class setting where all the pieces were recorded and performed twice also included an evaluation session chaired by the teacher, Mrs. L. All of the pieces received praise from peers and the teacher. In the evaluation session the pupils had to say something about the different pieces after they were performed and the teacher summarised these comments. Pupils had short comments focussing on specifics they had noticed during performance.

Two of the pieces received special attention from the teacher as well as peers, RM 1 and RM 2. When summarising the comments on their thoughts about RM 1, Mrs. L said:
Yes very good. I think so too. Such a nice form. Very good shifts from some playing to everyone playing. And very nicely done when the different players started successively, and Martin!: very good maracas playing. Very good indeed,
So many different kinds of sounds! (Field note, F 31, 01, p.2)

RM 2 was received with enthusiasm and some laughter and some favourable comments as well. In her

concluding comment Mrs. L. said:

And then a very special element was used when you Helge came in with your voice (laughing). That gave an original touch; a new way of doing it. Interesting! (Field note F 31, 01, p.3)

The comments and reactions given by teacher and pupils to the compositions, although generally favourable for all four pieces, can be interpreted as suggestions of a certain categorisation with regard to quality as well as creativity. RM1, the music generated by GP4 is tentatively regarded as the "best" composition, and RM2, the music generated by GP5 as the most creative one, but not necessarily one of the best ones. Let us, therefore, have a closer look at those two compositions.

Creativity and value in RM1 and RM2

There is no doubt that Rhythm Music 2 stands out as different from the other compositions. This is mainly due to the combination of ostinatos and rhythms that appear to be rather conventional and more or less standard in this specific setting, and Helge's input in the form of a very contrasting xylophone motif and voice chant in the B-part. The music in the B-part especially, sounds like a piece for solo voice and accompaniment where the accompaniment is quite traditional and the solo voice quite novel and original. Even if the group show that they can control pulse and dynamics quite well towards the end of part B, the overall rhythmical and dynamic balance of the different parts is not particularly good. Roy's cowbell motif is too dominating throughout and at times out of pulse.

According to Hickey (2003) it is not enough to only fulfil the criteria for 'originality'. She maintains that even if a composition may stand out because of unusual features it would not be considered *creative* unless it is also interesting and aesthetically appealing. Hickey seems to define "aesthetic appeal" with her answer to the question: "What does pleasing and valuable mean in music composition?" She answers the question by pointing to the "craftsmanship and musical-sensitivity qualities that we listen for in all music and become used to in our cultures—different cultures have different concepts of pleasing" (ibid, p.35).
In the case of RM2, then, we can suggest that the piece may meet the criteria for originality, but we are not so certain about the aesthetic appeal. Even if the composition received general praise from peers and teacher it also received laughter, and the craftsmanship could have been better. According to Hickey's criteria, then, it is not obvious from my analysis of this "product" that we are dealing with a "creative" composition.

RM1 is a composition that appears to be much more conventional than RM2. It does apparently not contain any surprisingly unusual features for that age and experience level.
But is it less creative than RM2? The two compositions open with the same rhythm played on the djembe (RM1, Iselin) and cowbell (RM2, Roy) respectively. But whereas the RM1 rhythm only continues for part A and is balanced dynamically in relation to the other players, the sharp sound of the cowbell is played all along and dominates the soundscape of RM2. The way the two compositions relate to the assignment is also interesting. Whereas in RM2, the required contrast between parts A and B is achieved mainly through Helge's input and change of instrument, the contrast for part B in RM1 is achieved by using a full stop, an introductory and background soft rain sound, and a completely different character to the whole part. On top of the background of

the rain sound the group introduces a variation and elaboration of the first two bars of a well-known theme (Grieg's "Morning Mood" from Peer Gynt).

The melody snippet as presented here is syncopated, enlarged and slightly changed and is repeated five times, each time differently; the first time very softly and solo on the glockenspiel, an instrument, which is perceived as a strong contrast in timbre to part A; the second time with glockenspiel and alto xylophone together, played slightly louder and creating a variation on the timbre; the third time the djembe joins in with the rhythm of the melody and plays relatively softly with fingers and flat hands; the fourth time the glockenspiel leaves the scene and creates yet another variation on timbre, and the fifth time the djembe plays the melody rhythm solo very softly while the timbre and sounds of the other instruments still ring in our minds. Applying Hickey's criteria it may seem that RM1 displays less "originality" —since the group uses a known melody and conventional rhythms—whereas it seems that RM1 may satisfy Hickey's aesthetic criteria. Hickey maintains that in terms of being categorised as a successful "creative product", the most successful compositions must meet both criteria of originality and aesthetic appeal. My preliminary conclusion, then, analysing the compositional *products* and using Hickey's criteria, seems to be that neither of the two compositions in question should be categorised as "creative".

As it seems difficult to illicit clear cut answers about "creativity" from a study and analysis of compositional products like RM 1 and 2, let us now in our search for "creativity" turn to the respective processes of the two compositions. What can they tell us about this aspect of composition?

Creativity and compositional processes

In my analysis and discussion about creativity and compositional products we have seen how the concept of "creative" in the literature seems to be linked to questions about value. This is not the case when we turn our attention towards creative *processes*. As pointed out in previous chapters, the etymological meaning of the word "process" is connected to course or method of action or a continuous series of actions meant to accomplish some result. As explained and discussed in Chapter 3, in scientific studies of *creativity* in compositional processes, however, the emphasis has been on creative *thinking* rather than *creative agency and actions*. Applied to the compositional processes of the two compositions in question here, Rhythm Music 1 and 2, a study of inner creative *thinking* would mean a study of the *mental* processes involved during the generation and production of the compositions. Applying cognitivist lenses in a hypothetical analysis of the compositional processes behind RM1 and RM2, I would probably search for knowledge about how the pupils' minds work rather than describing and understanding how compositional and personal actions relate, how the compositional process is structured and how music is generated, produced and communicated as actional activity.

As discussed in Section I, with regard to "cognition", my account, in the form of this study, is what the American philosopher Wayne Bowman calls an enactive, embodied account, which construes mind as an activity "emergent from, structured by, and never wholly separable from the material facts of bodily experience". Such an account is not anti intellect or not interested in understanding cognition, but it understands

and explains ‘cognition’ from a different platform than the scientific psychologically based tradition we normally think of as a “cognitivist” position. Bowman explains an embodied account the following way:

> The embodied, enactive account of cognition that motivates this essay, maintains (a) the inseparability of mind and body; (b) the material basis of all cognition; and (c) the indispensability of corporeal experience to all human knowledge. On this view, the bodily-constituted knowledge of which music is a prime and precious instance is not different in kind from intellectual kinds of knowing. Rather, the two are continuous, deeply involved in each other’s construction, and each in turn ecologically situated in the social world. (Bowman 2003, p. 31)

When revisiting the processes of RM1 and RM2 looking for aspects of creativity that may modify my analysis of the compositional products, readers should be aware of my view of cognition as embodied and enactive. This does not mean that I will not pay attention to viewpoints produced by scholars that have different theoretical positions from my own. As often in life, multi-stratified dimensions of issues give the best view.

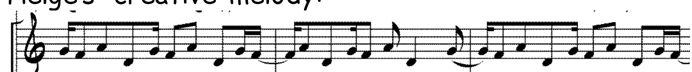
Revisiting the analysis of the processes of RM1 and RM2

In my analysis of Rhythm Music 2 I pointed to Helge’s input as the decisive factor in considering the composition as more or less creative. His motif in the A-part, and voice chant, stand out as novel and different and his novel and seemingly creative contributions work quite well together with the rest of the music. How did his input come about? Is it a result of divergent and /or convergent thinking in the individual (Guilford, 1950 and 1967), or can it be explained otherwise?[129]

Group Process 5 (GP5), where the creation of Rhythm Music 2 took place, contained a number of Personal Actions from the very start. Helge was involved in a number of them, sometimes in partnership with Roy—the second boy in the group—and sometimes not. My observation of this aspect of the process led to the following annotation in my research notes:

“It is amazing how much the selection of a preferred instrument seems to mean to many pupils. It is a sort of fighting for the best starting point. Pupils are used to this, it is a very visible element in their play and it plays a part in these processes as well. Actually children should be experts in dealing with these problems. There is a difference between the pupils in terms of their ages, 9 and 12 respectively, but not in principle. In all instances there are procedures, which are accepted, such as voting, or to be the first to something (even only by saying it). It is amazing the extent to which the outcome of a starting positioning can influence the rest of the process. It seems a bit less important as the pupils get older, but only slightly so”. (Annotation GP5- early)

Helge’s “creative’ melody:



[129] The concepts of divergent and convergent thinking (Guilford, 1950 and 1967) seem to play an important part in modern writings about creativity and music education. Peter Webster explains the meaning and importance of these concepts the following way: “ The concepts of ‘divergent’ and ‘convergent’ thinking are at the heart of much of my writing and thinking about creativeness. Divergent thinking is simply that kind of thinking for which the result has no single goal and a number of products may result—a kind of personal brainstorming. Convergent thinking is work that focuses on a final result.” (Webster, 2002, p.32)

…is a direct outcome of the tensions between personal and compositional actions. It was created as a protest and sabotage of compositional actions going on in the rest of the group (See also Chapter 7). Helge sticks to his motif and refuses to take part in the compositional actions involving the rest of the group. Roy is in a middle position here. He sometimes works with the girls and sometimes engages in personal actions seemingly in sympathy with Helge. To describe what is going on I have to return to my annotations and video analysis of this process. In Chapter 7, in Example 8, I describe this episode where Helge suddenly started to play a fast and completely different rhythm on the xylophone. His motif was met with scepticism and Helge threw away his mallet. My description of what followed shows how his protest is growing into a musical, though at this time rejected idea :

"Turid, Inga and Linda (the girls) keep developing the A-part in spite of the boys. Turid gives Inga's base xylophone motif rhythmical pregnancy and thus establishes an important part of the composition. This is a very good example of how close appropriation, the invention of ideas and the expansion of an idea is. In this case all of this goes on as interaction between the 3 girls. Roy (one of the two boys is also part of it but passively). Helge is still into his PA, but starts experimenting with the xylophone with one hand. The teacher (who is not aware of what is going on comes by and wants to find a different mallet for Helge.) The others stop playing but Helge continues experimenting loudly. When asked he claims that what he is playing is his idea..." (from Example 8, Chapter 7)

What follows is the story of how Helge's "wild idea" is included into the A-part of composition through the wise suggestion of Turid and then the acceptance of Linda.
This takes place as shown in the transcript below:

Example 54: GP5- 7255- early
(Linda stops playing, but the others (except Helge) continue.)
Linda: Make a decision Helge, you don't even know what instrument to play. (Then she continues playing the djembe with the others and now it works well. They play like this for a little while. Helge is doing nothing.)
Turid: Have we the A-part now?(turning to Helge and pointing to his xylophone) Just play what you did.
(Helge starts playing his motif immediately and Roy tries to imitate him on the glockenspiel. Linda gets up and walks over to Helge, holding her djembe tightly, to look at what he is doing.)
Linda: Yes, play that. (She walks back to her place and Turid and Inga start playing their ostinatos and Roy joins them. Helge keeps playing his motif. This is the first time they play this together and it seems to work with the ostinatos and Helge's contrasting motif on top. After a little while Linda starts playing her djembe too…..)

What takes place in the episodes described above shows how Helge's idea is born as a combination of social protest and an original musical idea. The idea grows directly from his experimentation with the xylophone, and gains importance when he realises that the idea is radical. Helge gets the confirmation he needs for believing in this through his musical cooperation with Inga, and after that he sticks to his novel idea. Linda, who is sceptical to what he is doing, is only convinced after the intervention of Turid—who includes Helge, thus proving that the

whole thing works—and a scrutiny of "seeing" for herself. When Linda finally starts playing her djembe she also shows recognition and acceptance.

Helge's contribution in the B-part, his voice chant, comes about in a different way, but the generation of this idea can only be understood if seen in the light of what I have described above. The following is what happens somewhat later in the process. What is at stake now is the B-part of the composition:

Example 55: GP5- 19329- middle

Linda suddenly stops playing.

Linda: Hey you guys, is it possible just to say something or something?

Helge: OK. I can say something… Okiallsakiba.... (he chants this rhythmically while playing single notes on his xylophone). I already have a text for that! (convincingly).

Linda: OK, just say those things of yours a little faster and then we can see how it works....., but don't start just yet (starting to play her djembe. The others join in, and Helge too with his nonsense words, and this goes on for a short while.)

Linda: The ending, how….?

Helge: Henjohoi!, (he calls out loudly)

Turid: OK! You say 'henjohoi'.

Linda: OK, say a lot of nonsense. It was cool actually!

This time the suggestion to introduce another "radical" idea actually comes from Linda, the pupil who most strongly resisted Helge's input for the A-part. She now believes in Helge's input from the very start, probably because Helge now takes part in meaningful compositional actions, but also because she has grown more open to "novel" and radical ideas during the process. However, she still insists on testing the idea in musical experience.

Peter Webster has defined divergent thinking as "simply that kind of thinking for which the result has no single goal and a number of products may result—a kind of personal brainstorming" (Webster, 2002, p.32). To me this does not seem to be an adequate description and explanation of what is going on with regard to the creation of Helge's radical musical idea and "Rhythm Music 2". Helge seems to have a very clear goal in creating his idea, namely that of social protest. He sticks to his idea because it works; first as a vehicle for protest and personal actions and then gradually as a legitimate compositional action and inclusion into the common working community of the group—and as an immediate consequence: improved social status.

It seems to me that rather than explaining this as a result of divergent thinking in the individual, we need to look at explanations that include the social and the contextual aspects of creation. One such theory in the creativity literature is Sternberg and Lubart's *investment* theory of creativity. According to this theory the intention of "buying low and selling high in the realm of ideas" is an important explanation for how creativity comes about and works. New ideas are generated for social as well as for other reasons, e.g. artistic reasons, and the creative individual persists when met with social resistance. They explain this the following way:

> Buying low means pursuing ideas that are unknown or out of favour but have growth potential. Often,

> when these ideas are first presented, they encounter resistance. The creative individual persists in the face of this resistance and eventually sells high, moving on to the next new or unpopular idea. (Sternberg and Lubart, 1999, p. 10)

When looking into the process behind Rhythm Music 2, it becomes clear that Helge's musical contribution in the musical product, although novel and radical, came about and was included for several different reasons. First: the *social* motivation for his contribution is easier to observe than any individual *artistic* motivation; and secondly: his peers are directly involved in the process of bringing his ideas forward (see Chapter 6).

Group Process 4 (GP4), where the creation of Rhythm Music 1 took place, is different from GP5 in that it contains considerably fewer PA's and a greater number of compositional actions more evenly distributed throughout the process. In my search for creativity in the piece based on Hickey's criteria of originality and aesthetic appeal, my preliminary conclusion suggested that even if RM1 may satisfy Hickey's aesthetic criteria there are shortcomings in terms of originality. RM1 seems and sounds more conventional than RM2. The B-part of this piece received much attention and praise during the presentation in class. Is this piece really less creative than that of RM2, and is it a result of convergent thinking or lack of divergent thinking in the individuals creating it? Again we can ask the same question as for RM2. How did it come about?

The generation and use of the pentatonic melody (from Grieg's Morning Mood) in GP4 was described in Example 14, Chapter 7, p.161. Here events from the compositional process are used as an example to illustrate musical invention as *dialogic* activity. The melody was in a way born again and realised on instruments through the joint efforts of several group members. In Example 17-II, a little later in the same chapter, I have shown how the pupils started to focus on *how to* use their melody in the B-part. My final comment here suggests that this part of the process seemed to be more productive than generative. One productive aspect of it has to do with peer teaching where Iselin and Siri try to teach Harriett how to play the melody in the B-part. We looked at this episode in Example 24. Let us revisit this episode here focussing on Iselin's role:

Example 56: GP4-19161-Late

Siri: Ok, let us try the beginning again, I start. (Iselin and Martin watch carefully what happens. Iselin has started to play the melody rhythm carefully and softly on her djembe while Siri is playing. She plays slightly louder when Harriett comes in, and now it seems to work for the first time. Martin puts his hand on to Iselin's djembe and signals that she should stop playing, but Iselin turns him away with a stern look and keeps playing.)

When consulting my annotations for this passage of the process I found an observation that seems to contain the key to understanding why the B-part ended up the way it did. I wrote:

This shows another aspect of peer teaching. Iselin here senses that some sounding support is needed and she does this without saying anything, just scaffolding with the rhythm of the melody that Harriett has problems with. Martin does not sense this since he tries to stop Iselin. His way of evaluating it has to do with whose turn it is rather than what is needed to make things work musically in the situation. His evaluation is in other words more personal than compositional. Iselin acts very skilfully here and also has the musical authority to reject

Martin's evaluation as not relevant for what she wants to achieve. It is interesting to notice that all of this happens mainly through musical and kinaesthetic discourse and not verbal. (Annotation GP4- late)

This observation indicates that there is a very close connection between peer teaching and the artistic outcome of part B. All of the girls want to play this specific melody. To include Harriett she has to be taught, and in teaching and supporting her, another aspect of the B-part is developed, namely the varied repetitions and the playing of the melody rhythm on Iselin's djembe. The final decision on how to realise the B-part is not, however, achieved until the very end of the process.

Example 57: GP4-20239-Late

(And now they start again in a faster tempo. The A part goes very well and then they move into the B-part. Siri has forgotten the rhythm and they have to sing it a little to get her started. And Iselin on the djembe joins in with Harriett as before.)

Siri: And now only Iselin! (And Iselin goes solo) Yess! (loudly)

Then they go from the beginning and it works.

I my annotations I have described this as a significant event in the form of a *breakthrough*. Not only in terms of getting it all together, but also in relation to decisions about form and a complex form of instrumentation:

This episode is a breakthrough as the performing works so well and it convinces them that this is good. In many ways it is a kind of expansion going on here, perhaps not in terms of new musical material but in terms of structuring and timbre, and decisions of what instruments should play together and when. Actually what they are doing here is a complex form of instrumentation. (Annotation GP4-late)

To decide whether a composition is creative or not based on the extent to which it is the result of divergent thinking is not unanimously accepted among music educators. Even Peter Webster, who maintains that convergent thinking in music education is "..work that focuses on a final result" —as opposed to divergent thinking, for which "the result has no single goal" and a number of products may result—underlines that: "…creative work involves both kinds of thinking many times and in many complex ways" (Webster, 2002, p. 32).

As shown when examining the process behind the creation of Rhythm Music 2, creativity is, to use Peter Webster's words, something that takes place in many complex ways. The creativity shown by the members of GP4 is not so much connected to the appearance of novel melodies, but to the complex and yet simple way they deal with these melodies, to the way they develop ideas about form and instrumentation and to the way all of this is integrated into a social context. A melody is reproduced and altered through musical invention as dialogic activity; it is being appropriated through inventive peer teaching and careful scaffolding; it is being coloured by decisions that include considerations about who should play together and who should play solo *as well as* inventive artistic decisions, which focus on form and instrumentation. And finally: as I have looked through the processes of RM1 and RM 2 again, it strikes me how often the musical ideas are direct results of the pupils' direct interaction with musical instruments and musical praxis and the appropriation of ideas on such instruments. The interaction of the material experience of the instrument and the body is seemingly the strongest

indicator for creativity to take place and the most obvious reason for musical ideas to be born, evolved, altered and performed. This interaction can only be observed when looking into processes.

As I have tried to show above, looking closely into the processes through ethnographic microanalysis of interaction modifies my scrutiny of compositional products in a number of ways. However, this does not mean that creativity has nothing to do with intellectual abilities. As Wayne Bowman points out, building on Merleau-Ponty, the bodily-constituted knowledge of music is not different in kind from "intellectual" kinds of knowing (Bowman, 2004, p. 41). Even theories of creativity from cognitivist positions suggest that this phenomenon is so complex that the relatively simple notions of divergent and convergent thinking in the individual are inadequate. Creativity needs explanations that involve the individual as well as the social and the contextual. Sternberg and Lubart's investment theory for instance talks about "intellectual abilities" that are synthetic, practical-contextual as well as analytical by character. When explaining creativity they maintain that:

> Three intellectual abilities are particularly important: a) the synthetic ability to see problems in new ways and to escape from the bounds of conventional thinking, b) the analytic ability to recognize which one one's ideas are worth pursuing and which are not, and c) the practical–contextual ability to know how to persuade others of—to sell other people on—the value of one's ideas. The confluence of these three abilities is also important. Analytical ability used in the absence of the other two abilities results in powerful critical but not creative thinking. Synthetic ability in the absence of the other two results in new ideas that are not subjected to the scrutiny required, first, to evaluate their promise and, second, to make them work. And practical-contextual ability in the absence of the other two may result in the transmittal of ideas not because the ideas are good, but rather because they have been well and powerfully presented. (Sternberg and Lubart, 1999, p. 11)

The investment theory is not developed as a result of a scrutiny of compositional processes in music education. [130] Nevertheless it seems better suited to explain creativity in music education in group settings than theories relying on mystical positions and purely cognitivist paradigms (see Chapter 2). The complexity of the phenomenon of creativity suggests to us that it can only be fully understood when researching the dynamics of lived experience that goes on in the web of actions and interactions between process and product, the individual and the world and between individuals in a social context. James Wertsch suggests a similar view when he maintains that:

> Rather than seeking the key to individual mental processes in sociocultural settings, or vice versa, I have argued that we should employ a unit of analysis that focuses precisely on how these forces come into dynamic contact. (Wertsch 1998, p. 179)

Summary

In this chapter I have tried to show that a central phenomenon in composition as a part of music education, *creativity*, can be meaningfully researched when considering the compositional process as well as the final

[130] However, the research referred to by Sternberg and Lubart (1999) includes the use of a varied set of tasks such as writing short stories with unusual titles, drawing pictures with unusual themes and devising creative advertisements for boring products.

musical products, the pupils' compositions. Findings on creativity aspects in pupils' compositions are modified when the respective compositional *processes* are scrutinised. What appears to be novel and original aspects of compositions created by individuals with artistic intentions, might just as well be the result of personal actions, social interaction and dialogic activity. What appears to be *conventional* invention and compositional actions may be characterised as creative instrumentation and use of form developed alongside inventive and efficient peer teaching.

The complex phenomenon of creativity is well suited to research connections between process and product in the field of educational music composition. However, to do this one has to go beyond the limitations creativity research in music education has imposed upon itself by focussing too much on the concept of creative thinking. In my view, the notions of divergent or convergent thinking are not well suited to explain a phenomenon grounded in action, in creative agency and in embodied accounts of composition in music education.

Chapter 11

POSTLUDE

Introduction

Vignette #5

> *Magne was sitting beside his own father actually, at the very back of the classroom. Martin, a little restless and ready to perform with his group, could see Magne being busy with his recording equipment and talking to his father at the same time. He knew they were colleagues at work. Well, Magne should know something about their way of composing music and playing by now. Why on earth would anyone be interested in this sort of thing? It was fun to see some of the videos from their composing the other day though, but Martin hadn't said anything afterwards. All those questions about nothing! And the rest of the group never listened to his ideas anyway, especially the girls. Even so he was ready to play his part now, boring though it was. Lisa was supposed to help him, as if he needed any help to play the stupid tambourine! A real drum kit would have been something! But performing for family was fun, especially since they were going to have all the nice stuff to eat afterwards. Better get going now!*

Sometimes one is allowed to wonder why one is doing what one is doing. Martin, in the vignette above, represents a kind of wondering probably taking place not only amongst those being researched, but amongst researchers as well. I *have* asked myself similar questions during this research project, and now, by the end of it, it is time to seek tentative answers to some of those questions. In this Postlude, therefore, I will try to look at my findings and experience in light of the following questions: Is there really a need for the present study? What about individual composing in an educational setting—is it the same as composing in small groups in terms of our knowledge about processes and products or is it something entirely different? How should we regard and contemplate small group composing— is it first and foremost an educational 'thing' or can it be regarded as an artistic activity? And finally, what are important limitations of the present study and what could be meaningful themes for future research in the area of compositional activities—in schools and in other related areas?

The need for the present study

In Chapter 3 I referred to Barrett (1998) who maintains that we have still much to learn from the study of children's compositional processes and products (see p. 65). Similar views underlining the importance of 'music composition' in music education in recent publications suggest that the teaching of music composition to children has "recently been of great interest to the music education community" (Hickey, 2003, p. vii), and that teachers who can lead their "student composers through pastiche composition, based on introduced concepts, on to compositions with tangible evidence of self-expression and ownership of the compositional material, offer students opportunities for personal creative satisfaction and empowerment" (Bloom, 2003, p. 96). In light of the 'composition movement' and an increasing number of research reports on composition in education (see Chapters 2 and 3), there seems to be a strong support in the music education community for further development of compositional practices in education and for research on such practices. It is hardly incidental that when the Canadian Music Educators' Association launch a brand new publication series, with a "mandate of focusing on

the connection between research and practice" (Sullivan and Willingham, 2002, p. xiii), the title for the first volume is "Creativity and Music Education".

My contribution to this picture is first and foremost to focus on and scrutinise the compositional process. This is certainly not a new area and target for research in music education. I believe, however, that existing research has not studied the complexities of compositional activity in schools closely enough, and that we lack descriptions, explanations and concepts—in short theory—about what really takes place when young people express themselves creatively in a world that is freedom as well as constraint *at once*. Merleau-Ponty phrases this situation beautifully when he writes that:

> What then is freedom? To be born is both to be born of the world and to be born into the world. The world is already constituted, but also never completely constituted; in the first case we are acted upon, in the second we are open to an indefinite number of possibilities. But this analysis is still abstract, for we exist in both ways *at once* (Merleau-Ponty, 2002, p. 527).

My research then, is an attempt to describe and theorise about what goes on when young people, who like the rest of us 'exist in both ways at once', are facing 'an indefinite number of possibilities' within the discipline of music composition in education. I believe that the theory I have developed is relevant, not only for music educators, but for educators who believe "in the so-called expressive or constructive activities as the center of correlation" as John Dewey put it in his famous "Pedagogic Creed" (Dewey 1897, Article III, p. 79). Very briefly summarised, the present study, starting with my initial wondering as presented in the Prelude and being conducted by a researcher wearing phenomenological and socio-cultural lenses, presents the following findings and theory, suggesting:

- that small group compositional processes in school music are highly relational and circular by nature, that relations are all important during the creation of a composition, and that the dynamic nature of relations between *Compositional Actions*, *Personal Actions*, outcomes and contextual elements create a kind of circulation driving the process (Chapter 6);
- that musical invention as dialogic activity plays an important part in small group compositional processes, that the pupils' decision-making is socially *as well as* aesthetically grounded and that *Compositional Actions* imply generative activity, productive activity and communicative activity, which are major and equally important characteristics of compositional processes (Chapter 7);
- that four different kinds of significant events in the compositional process can add to our understanding of group locomotion: *Circle episodes, Focus episodes, Breakthroughs and Blockages*, and that it is possible to see relations among pupils as well as the teacher role in the light of Foucaultian power exertion. The role of power is closely connected to the production of knowledge, i.e. composing music, and this power exertion can be direct as well as indirect, and productive as well as repressive. As such the teacher, being directly or indirectly present in the compositional processes, leaves her inscriptions on the construction of the processes and also on the musical products (Chapter 8);
- that it is highly relevant to examine pupils' compositions as artistic expressions and search for artistic as well as educational meanings. "Artistic" examinations may suggest that compositions exhibit artistic and aesthetic meanings, which can be

explained and modified by educational meanings as examined in the corresponding compositional process. Connections between a compositional process and its "product", the final composition, can best be decided when scrutinising both through close observation and analysis. What *appear* to be sophisticated aesthetics and decisions can sometimes be the result of phenomena linked to personal actions. What *appears* to be relatively meaningless juxtapositions of musical notes can be serious attempts at realising aesthetical intentions. What *appear* to be meaningless discussions about certain isolated elements can be the pupils' way of implementing a compositional strategy learnt in class and a holistic planning of the whole piece (Chapter 9);

- that creativity aspects in pupils' compositions are modified when the respective compositional *processes* are scrutinised. What appear to be novel and original aspects of compositions created by individuals with artistic intentions, might just as well be the result of personal actions, social interaction and dialogic activity. What appear to be *conventional* invention and compositional actions may be characterised as creative instrumentation and use of form developed alongside inventive and efficient peer teaching (Chapter 10).

I do of course hope that these findings are relevant and useful for practices of teaching composition to young people within the framework of music education. However, I also hope that the findings in my study might be relevant for areas *beyond* music education and the music education community. Teaching music composition, at any level and in any way, is in my view more than offering students 'personal creative satisfaction and empowerment' as Bloom (above and 2003) suggests. It is, in addition, one very important way of enabling young people "to perform those fundamental types of activities which make civilisation what it is" as John Dewey (1897, Article III, p. 80) puts it. Today, more than at any time in history, I believe, *creative* activities are one of the 'fundamental types of activities' that make civilisation progress and survive. Small group composition and the generative, productive and communicative activity it consists of, is well suited to giving pupils and students not only something that is *personally* empowering and creative, but something that is useful and necessary for society at large. Richard Florida (2002 and 2005) in his recent books on the "the creative class" and the future development of society underlines the importance of looking at every single human as creative. With regard to society and economy he maintains that:

> ..what no one really understands is that in the creative economy, what makes us different and yet the same is our creativity. Every single human being is creative. Every single human being has creative possibility. Whether it's a blue-collar worker or somebody who cuts your hair, or somebody who waxes your back, or somebody who works in a high-tech company, or somebody who writes poems. What we all have is our creativity. And we can actually organise people on that basis. We can say, "We're all different yet we're part of the same whole thing." (Florida cited in Dreher, 2005, p. 5)

So, yes, believing that small group composition in music education is part of something bigger, something more important, something that is part of building a "creative society with ecological sustainability and social inclusion" as Florida puts it (Dreher, 2005, p.4), I do think there is a need, not only for this study, but for a number of future studies which can add to our knowledge about creative music education. [131]

[131] I am aware that small group activitites in schools and their relevance to better learning and education in society have been extensively dealt with from a normative and prescriptive perspective and focused on in terms of theories of efficient forms of *learning,* for example co-operative or collaborative learning (Johnson and Johnson, 1994). *Learning,* understood as a process of acquiring knowledge, skills, attitues etc. that leads to changes in the learner, is a relevant topic in connection with the

Limitations of the study

The present study has approached and tried to describe a very small corner of creative music education. This is, of course, one of the limitations of the present study. To base a comprehensive description and conceptualisation of what takes place in the processes of small group music composition on observations of one class, one teacher and one school, might seem daring, perhaps even close to rashness. Even if this might be true, and that it is likely that a wider and more varied sample of observations would have been useful, my main concern about one-sidedness is not connected to the naturalistic and case-study aspects of the study, but rather to concerns and considerations about data analysis and theory development. The use of a multi-method approach with multiple sources of data in addition to a close scrutiny and microanalysis of videos yield a large quantity of data which sometimes might seem overwhelming for the sole researcher. There are limits as to how much data one researcher can control and analyse in a meaningful and constructive way. This was sometimes felt to be the case in the present study. A *group* of researchers would have been of great value in the analytic process, not only because of the great amount of data, but also in terms of the construction of and discussion about concepts, interpretations and theory development. In keeping with my use of grounded theory I realise that what I have produced in the present study, has the limitations of what Strauss and Corbin (1998) call a "substantive theory". They write:

> We are not suggesting that a substantive theory (one developed from the study of one small area of investigation and from one specific population) has the explanatory power of a larger, more general theory. It cannot because it does not build in the variation or include the broad propositions of a more general theory. However, the real merit of a substantive theory lies in its ability to speak specifically for the populations from which it was derived and to apply back to them. Naturally, the more systematic and widespread the theoretical sampling, the more conditions and variations will be discovered and built into the theory and, therefore, the greater its explanatory power (and precision) (p. 267).

Strauss and Corbin points of view above are in my view very relevant for the present study. However, it is also worth noticing that they regard theory development as a continuous process. "If", they write, "the original theory fails to account for variation uncovered through additional research, then these new specificities can be added as amendments to the original formulation" (ibid, p. 268).

Small group composing and individual composing : Same or different?

One of the many questions that could be the subject of future research, is to what extent my actional and sociocultural conception of the compositional process is relevant for understanding all kinds of compositional processes in a school context. Based as the present study is on the observation of small group interaction, it is very relevant to ask whether a description of individual compositional processes in schools should emphasise

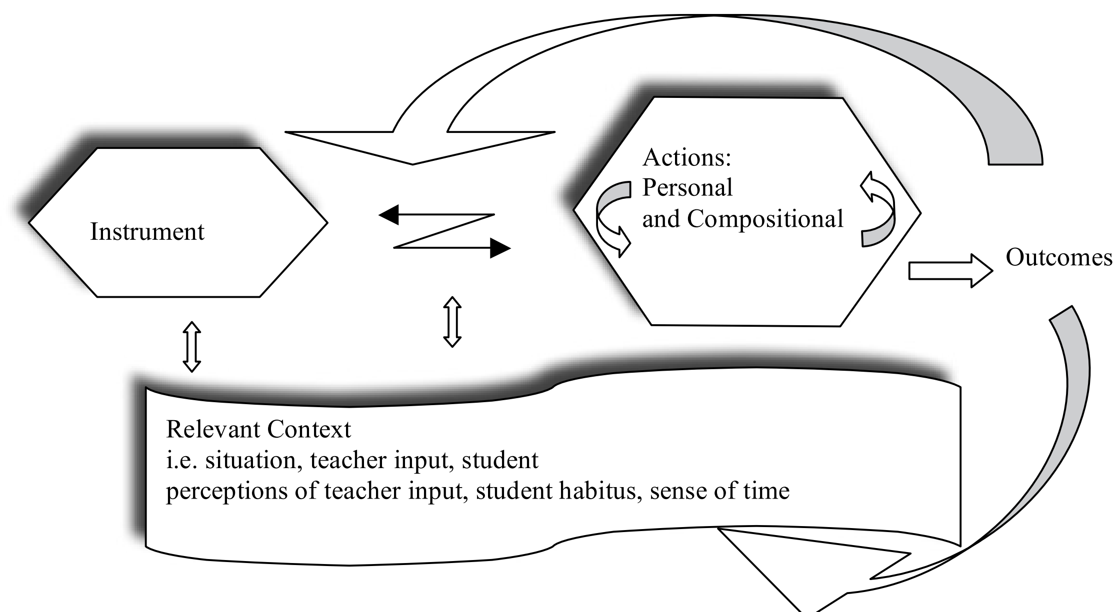
present study, but because of the ethnographic approach of the study, I have chosen to a focus on a description, interpretation and understanding of actions, events and phenomena in compositional processes.

relations, actions and interactions to the same extent as in the present study. In the research literature, very few researchers make clear distinctions between individual composing and group composing (see Chapter 3). My answer to such a question, at this stage, has to be “yes”, and to some extent “no”. Yes—because I believe any compositional process in a school context should be conceived of as a process of learning within a community of practice (Wenger, 1998). Even if pupils compose individually—and they should—in their process they will rely on and interact with their context and their cultural tools, be it a computer, a xylophone, or their voice. And last but not least, they will *act* personally and compositionally and interact with other human beings, teacher, classmates and others. In John Dewey’s pedagogic creed *action* is crucial in any kind of education:

> ….that ideas (intellectual and rational processes) also result from action and devolve for the sake of the better control of action. What we term reason is primarily the law of orderly or effective action. To attempt to develop the reasoning powers, the powers of judgment, without reference to the selection and arrangement of means in action, is the fundamental fallacy in our present methods of dealing with this matter (Dewey, 1897, Article IV, p.80)

However, there is also a “no” to this question—because any theoretical conception of something so complex as a compositional process has to be modified in terms of the actual situation to be analysed or interpreted. With a view to the compositional process of an individual child in a school context, it is, in my view, possible to modify the model I presented in Chapter 6 in the following way:

Fig. 11.1 A model for understanding individual compositional processes



In individual composition in schools as well as outside schools, I would expect the musical instrument to play a more direct and significant role in terms of interaction with the pupil composer than in small group composition. I believe, however, that the nature of the process would still be dynamic and circular characterised by the quality of relations between compositional and personal actions, outcomes, cultural tools and contextual elements. Such

a model of understanding this activity would suit a researcher or teacher who wants to pay special attention to the relationship between agent and "instrument", e.g. as in Folkestad's (1996) study of the interactions of composing students and a powerful cultural tool—a computer. In my view any holistic model of such a process should reflect the relational and dynamic character of creative activity.

The present study should not be regarded as a one-sided contribution in favour of small group composition in the ongoing debate in the music education community as to whether the teaching of composition should take the form of small group or individual composition. British George Odam (2000) argues for a better balance between individual work and small-group work in composing. In British schools Odam observes that far too much time is:

> …invested in poorly conceived small-group activities and wasted by the majority of pupils. Small-group activities can be very effective but need to be prepared in detail with a better understanding of the pupils' point of view. Control of such activities needs to be more vital and urgent. At present there is too much off-task and undisciplined work and this prevents lack of progress. Teachers need to be more willing to take a lead in composing activities with their pupils. They must share the composing experience and become confident enough to model, demonstrate and participate in whole-class activities. (Odam 2000, p. 125)

Australian Diana Bloom (2003) reports from her open-ended questionnaire based study on a student composing programme on minimalist music, that different ways of organising the composing activity should be adapted to previous student experience. I find her advice with regard to this question to be a wise one. She reports from her study that:

> The most valuable composing environment was for the inexperienced composers (of any age group) to work as a class or in groups rather than being offered individual composing tasks only. For older or more experienced student composers, the most valuable composing environment was working as an individual, with group or class composition being used as a workshop impetus to these individual activities. With composing confidence comes a desire to create as an individual at all ages and older students who are more intellectually in charge of the composing process can choose to work by themselves, engaging in group or class composition through workshops when new ideas are being explored. (Bloom, 2003, p.92)

Even if tempted to do so, I will not enter into a comprehensive discussion here about the balance between different ways of organising composition in schools[132]. What I would like to express, however, is that any programme of composing in schools needs to recognise composing as musical *and* social learning as well as a vehicle for artistic *and* personal expression. I would also like to underline that in public education, programmes of teaching composition need to be conceived of and evaluated not only with regard to the characteristics, nature

[132] My advice to the practical field of composing in schools can be found in a 280-page book (Andersen, Espeland and Husebø, 1997). The practical methodology presented in this book has an emphasis on small group composing, but encourages teachers to balance the activity between whole class teaching, individual work and different types of groups depending on the assignments given. The methodology is based on constructivist and socio-cultural learning theory.

and quality of the musical products such processes might bring about, but also in relation to what kind of learning and experience the compositional *process* per se brings. It is in the *process* that the generative, productive and communicative activities first and foremost can be observed; activities, which are invaluable for pupils preparing for a future in "a creative society with ecological sustainability and social inclusion" (Florida in Dreher 2005, p. 4). It is in this perspective that "the arts" and education should be involved in a close partnership aiming to help young people realise John Dewey's vision of performing those vital and fundamental types of activity which make civilisation what it is.

Small group composing: Educational or artistic activity?

In Chapters 9 and 10 I try to approach and interpret the pupils artistic intentions by analysing the musical pieces they created as well as the context in which the creation took place. I also discuss the extent to which the pupils' compositions could be regarded as artistic expressions and try to show that an artistic and musicological approach to an examination of their music is meaningful. My answer to the question of whether small group composing should be regarded as an artistic or educational activity is obviously not an either/or answer. Small group composing is both. However, in a bigger picture this question has to do with the relations between 'education' and other 'fundamental' areas of our civilisation such as 'art' and 'science'. To include educational activities in a conception of what is 'art', and artistic activities in a conception of what is 'education', might seem unnecessary and meaningless to professionals working in both areas. It is, however, in my view exactly what is implied when we regard music composition in schools as operating within the genre of 'school art' (see Bresler, 1998 and the Prelude). In my view, it is in the best interest of both these 'fundamental' areas (Dewey, 1897), and consequently for society at large, to consider music composition in schools as having the potential to be artistic as well as educational, in the same way as it is possible to regard artistic activities in and outside school to be educational. Frede V. Nielsen underlines the importance for educators to consciously and actively relate to other fundamental areas of society like the arts and science. He writes:

> It is my view, that educational thinking about the contents of teaching and learning, which does not in a fundamental way relate to the knowledge, skills and understanding that is systemized and expressed in science, the arts and crafts, will be isolated in a pedagogical "ghetto". This does not mean that the didactology of subjects only should be a product of subject disciplines not considered and reflected upon (which a little condescendingly is called a didactology of percolation), but that it must relate to and consider these areas critically, reflectively, selectively and renewingly based on an insightful understanding. The alternative would be that the public process of education and the production of knowledge and understanding in society would risk to move in opposite directions in stead of engaging in a positive and constructive dialogue…….It is the challenge of subject didactology to always live in the tension between the educational field and that of the basic subject area. If it cannot structure and fill in this specific space, it runs the risk of being overrun by thinking which is either purely educational or purely that of the specific subject area (Nielsen 1998, p. 370, my translation).

I read Nielsen's "warning" above as an encouragement for educators and researchers in the arts and education, including music composition and the discipline of music composing in schools, to actively cross "borders" and

unite in an approach to improve and enhance music in schools as well as in the artistic field of music composition in society. Actually, this is exactly what happened when composers such as Zoltan Kodály and Carl Orff engaged in the musical education of young people (see Chapter 3). Their initiatives certainly have meant a lot to modern music education and probably to musical composition in society as well in terms of recruiting new composers and new audiences. Maybe it is time to renew that effort, and also, to consider opening up artistic processes in society to researchers with a background in *educational* research.

Themes for future research

In this Postlude I have already mentioned a possible theme for future research by arguing that it would be meaningful to find out to what extent an actional and sociocultural conception of compositional processes is relevant for understanding all kinds of compositional processes in a school context. I would, however, to begin with like to draw the readers attention to some aspects of my experience in this research process that still puzzle me. One of these puzzles is connected to my understanding, or rather lack of understanding, of how differently some pupils in the class researched in the present study seemed to act musically in different settings. Observing Alexander for example, I realised that he showed an extraordinary high competence when conducting his peers in musical activities, for example by remembering every musical detail and instructing his peers in the performance of a four-minute piece (which the class had created in cooperation with a professional music ensemble) at a music festival. At the same time Alexander appeared quite ordinary in terms of musical competence as a member of a composing group, and quite helpless when observed doing individual composing. (A video of this event is enclosed on the accompanying CD-rom, see the file "Alexander conducting and composing"). When asked in his in-depth interview, he expressed that he found it very difficult to come up with musical ideas working on his own, but that he could remember every detail of the piece he was conducting. Similar observations were made for other pupils, e.g. Lisa and Eric, who, despite being quite able musically, exhibited very different attitudes and strengths in similar settings in terms of being able to structure, lead and be lead in musical activities. These observations could suggest that individual pupils operate with different 'action or learning styles'[133] in different settings. A research on different 'learning styles' in different forms of music composition could be a very interesting topic to pursue in future research.

In keeping with my last statement about future research on artistic processes in the previous section, it is, in my view, relevant to ask whether findings and theory about small group compositional processes in schools could also be applied to the compositional processes of adult composers and/or college students. Could it be meaningful to describe those processes in terms of 'significant events' in the compositional process? Would concepts like 'breakthroughs', 'blockages', 'circle episodes' and 'focus episodes' be meaningful descriptions of adult composers' processes? Would these kind of processes be possible to describe in terms of 'generative activity', 'productive activity' and 'communicative activity'? And what would the relationship between these three forms of activity be?' And finally, would it be meaningful to describe this kind of process in terms of the relationship between compositional actions and personal actions? In short,

[133] I am aware that the concept 'learning styles' is being used and based on different types of theory, e.g. Howard Gardner's theory on "multiple intelligences" (Gardner, 1983 and 1999). This is not the place to go into a discussion about the concept of "learning styles" and its roots.

what could be described as major characteristics of adult compositional processes and how would this relate to the specifics of the finished compositions?[134]

There is probably no other answer to these questions than trying to find it out. Graue and Walsh label "research" as the very art of "finding it out" and contrast this activity with the art of "making it up". Keeping in mind the spurious and romanticised accounts of Mozart's and Beethoven's composition processes (see the Prelude, p. 18), their remark seems very appropriate for this discussion. The reason we should be finding it out, Graue and Walsh write, is "because the alternative to finding it out is *not* not finding it out, but instead making it up, or, as is more often the case, having it made up for you". However, they continue, (and thinking of research in more general terms as well as the specific findings of the present study, I agree), the "it" found out "will never have the certainty or the universality of the 'it' made up. That is how it should be. The construction of knowledge is a human endeavour. It will never be certain" (Graue and Walsh 1998, p. xiv).

[134] In a very recent book, Jolyon Laycock (2005) describes how the the composer's role has developed from the nineteenth-century Romantic view of a heroic figure expressing his own inner emotional life in music, towards a more socially conscious inspirational catalyst whose role is to stimulate musical creativity in others.

ABSTRACT

Compositional Process As Discourse And Interaction

A Study Of Small Group Music Composition Processes In A School Context

Prelude (Chapter 1)

The focus of the present study is on *compositional processes* of pupils working in small groups in a public school music context. I try to understand and describe what took place over time, what shaped the chain of musical and social actions, how musical ideas were born and what happened to them, whose musical ideas survived and what ideas disappeared, who decided what and why, and why certain things ended up the way they did. The phenomenon researched in the present study then, is, broadly speaking, small group composition as it evolves thorough sequences of action/interaction.

This thesis is organised in two sections. *Section I: Points of Departure* consists of a Prelude, followed by three chapters. In this section I present the research background for the present thesis and the theoretical and methodological inspirations guiding it. The section also contains a chapter on the contextual framework for composing in music education and a chapter on research design and data analysis accounting for my use of ethnographic microanalysis (Erickson, 1992) and grounded theory (Strauss and Corbin, 1998).

Section II is the *Findings* section. In includes seven chapters ranging from an introductory findings chapter to a Postlude. The chapters provide findings and discussions concerning a wide range of aspects of compositional processes and products. Throughout the first six chapters of this section I present my findings with a strong emphasis on theorising and concept development, and with a view to relevant literature.

Theoretical And Methodological Inspirations (Chapter 2)

In this chapter I discuss my research 'mirror' in the sense that I account for and discuss some basic scientific traditions or "schools", which underpin a number of aspects of the present study. Phenomenology, as the huge area of scientific and philosophical theory that it is, constitutesthe basis for my view of how we as human beings perceive the world, including music, and begs the question of what our consciousness really is. Socio-cultural theory appeals to me because it explains the relationships of the individual and culture, and because this theoretical branch of science tries to account for 'cognition' as something more than schemas of mental operations. Ethnography in education, notably ethnographic microanalysis, naturalistic inquiry and grounded theory, do not represent identical approaches to inquiry and knowledge, but they share a common interest in excavating hidden meaning, in studying phenomena in-depth and in evolving theory that is conceptually dense.It can be argued that phenomenology, socio-cultural theory, ethnography in education, naturalistic inquiry and grounded theory, can be regarded as a "family" of theories and as such be considered as a form of "theoretical triangulation". However, I hope to have shown that a description of such a "familiarity" is not my *intended* focus in this chapter. Rather, the illumination of the different specific theories that serve the present study is of far greater relevance.

In this chapter I have also dealt with and discussed some central concepts in the present study and their uses in different theories, such as the notions of 'action', 'interaction', and 'discourse'.

Contextual Framework For The Study (Chapter 3)

I contextualise my own study in what can be labelled as the international and professional macro context of music composition within the genre of 'school music'. I argue that by the turn of the century, a general opinion in Norwegian music education seems to be that composition as a major discipline within compulsory primary and secondary schooling is well established, but still in its infancy.

The major part of the chapter is a review of international literature and research on composing in schools. I have tried to show some of the breadth and scope of the research by categorising studies in accordance with setting and data focus for the particular studies I describe. My categorisation serves to question some researchers who claim to focus on compositional processes as well as products, but who do not always achieve what they intend to do. I have chosen to interrogate some studies that I find especially relevant for the present study and also, given the focus on compositional process, to analyse attempts at developing "models" for how music composition in schools are structured and developed. Last, but not least, this chapter provides a closer look into the connections between theory on creativity and theory on music composition. I conclude this special part of my discussion by suggesting, referring to Wallas' (1945) influence in the field, that some of the research activity I review seems to be rooted in 19th century romanticism and Freudian psychology.

Research Design and Data Analysis (Chapter 4)

I start this chapter by describing the immediate context for the study, my relationship with the school, one teacher and a class of 20 pupils, and the reasons for deciding on sampling in this location. Sampling took place in a natural setting at certain times over a period of four school years (1998-2001) and consisted of field notes, interviews and audio tapes, and video footage of seven group processes, everything guided by a naturalistic and ethnographic research approach. In keeping with the emergent design of the present study, the following final research questions were formulated somewhat into the study:

What are the main elements of compositional processes in a school context?

What characterises these elements and the relationships between them?

In what ways do compositional processes develop and how are they structured and constructed?

What are the connections between the musical piece being created and the process of its creation?

Chapter 4 also accounts for and discusses procedures and challenges connected to data analysis and the development of theory in great detail. The methodology of the present study with regard to analysis and theorising is described as a mixture of grounded theory techniques and those of ethnographic microanalysis in education. A special characteristic of this part of the present study is the evolvement of theory in empirical, interpretative and analytical cycles. I also discuss certain aspects of and problems in transcriptions, with regard to both verbal transcriptions as well as transcriptions of music.

An important part of the chapter deals with issues of trustworthiness and researcher bias. A number of techniques, such as triangulation and member checks, are discussed in general terms and specifically for their

uses in the present study. Obtrusiveness in data collection, which often is considered to be problematic in ethnographic studies where video is used, is considered to be a smaller problem than expected in this study. I conclude the chapter by discussing some contextual problems of the study especially emphasising what I label as the 'media problem' and the 'language question.'

Introductions to Findings (Chapter 5)

I introduce the findings section of this study and several of the findings chapters with ”factional” vignettes. The research-based vignettes bring the reader directly into the very core of the story that I wish to understand and communicate: i.e. the secrets of small group compositional processes and what it is that determines the specifics and qualities of the musical pieces created. The major part of this chapter serves to account for the contents of chapters 6 through 10.

Towards A Model For Understanding Compositional Processes (Chapter 6)

I start this chapter by discussing two basic kinds of actions, which serve as the core of a model designed to understand the complexities of compositional process. The two kinds of actions, Compositional Actions (CAs) and Personal Actions (PAs), evolved during my initial ethnographic microanalysis of group processes. They are underpinned and inspired by theory and observations from phenomenology and social psychology. The two kinds of actions are fundamentally different by nature as well as by actional 'foci'. Grounding theory in my data, I continue by introducing three different categories of Compositional Actions connected to: a) inventions, b) planning, structuring and leadership, and c) appropriation, evaluation and revision; and a number of Personal Actions.

Inspired by socio-cultural theory I discuss the use of cultural tools, such as modes of articulation and musical instruments, in the compositional process arguing that a compositional process, and the outcomes of such a process best can be understood and analysed with *compositional actions*, *personal actions, cultural tools* and the interactions among these as basic components. I identify contextual elements in the processes and discuss the basic question of how contexts discipline and shape such a process. I conclude the chapter by arguing that my conception and understanding of group composition in schools, is characterised by the belief that such processes are highly relational and circular by nature. Important findings at this stage suggest that relations are all important during the creation of a composition, and that the dynamic nature of relations between actions, outcomes and contextual elements creates a kind of circulation driving the process.

Characteristics of Compositional Actions (Chapter 7)

In chapter 7 I look more closely into the characteristics of compositional actions. Findings in the study suggest that "Compositional Actions" (CAs) connected to 'invention' can be described and characterised within three major and different forms of inventive activity, namely: musical invention as *transient activity,* musical invention as *individual conceptions*, and finally musical invention as *dialogic activity*. A major finding in this study is that musical invention as dialogic activity plays an important part in small group compositional processes.

As for a second category of compositional actions—CAs connected to planning, structure and leadership—findings show that the pupils' approach to planning and structuring seldom can be characterised by what I label as purely linear or lateral approaches. In most compositional actions involving planning and structuring, both approaches appear intertwined.

An important finding in this study is that compositions will emerge as a result of a mixture of reasons, some are social ones while others are musically and aesthetically motivated. It should also be noted that all three categories of CAs: (1) invention; (2) planning, structuring and leadership; and (3) appropriation, evaluation and revision, appear in all processes and are divided throughout the 60 minutes of each process.

In this chapter I try to show that Compositional Actions imply generative activity, productive activity and communicative activity and that these aspects are major and equally important characteristics of compositional processes. As such, the integration and interaction of generation, production and communication throughout the processes can be viewed as a second main finding in my study.

Progress, Profiles and the Dynamics of Compositional Processes (Chapter 8)

In chapter 8 I explore the essence of the relationships and characteristics of the different actions and elements of compositional processes, or rather: what are the kinds of actions, events or phenomena that move, or do not move, the group processes forward towards the completion of the compositional task? How is the process constructed and in what ways do compositional processes develop?

In light of the seven Group Processes (GPs) I have been scrutinising in this study, I have found and labelled four different kinds of significant events that can add to our understanding of group locomotion: *circle episodes, focus episodes, breakthroughs and blockages*. All of these can be vital to understanding the nature and characteristics of group locomotion in compositional processes. The extent to which the different GPs possess episodes of this kind defines the character of the process and determines to a great extent its *profile*.

In this chapter I also discuss how composing in schools, even if operating primarily within the broad concepts of learning and education, also can be considered as production of knowledge. In particular, I explore and discuss how such a production of knowledge can be considered in relation to the Foucaultian concept "power/knowledge". One of the findings presented in this chapter is that this kind of power relations exists among pupils working in groups and that power aspects can be vital in terms of our understanding of the complex relationship between Personal and Compositional Actions.

It is possible to see the teacher's role in the light of Foucaultian power exertion, where the role of power is closely connected to the production of knowledge, i.e. composing music, and where this power exertion can be direct as well as indirect, and productive as well as repressive. As such, the teacher being directly or indirectly present in the compositional processes, leaves her inscriptions on the construction of the processes and, as we shall see in the next chapter, also on the musical products.

Pupils' Compositions and their Meanings (Chapter 9)

In chapter 9 I look more closely into the pupils' compositions as objects of "school art". The focus of my analysis thus moves from a description and analysis of the events in the process to an analysis of events in the music; from a focus on activities and agents to a focus on the music that has been created. I analyse compositions with two different approaches: 1) with a focus on the artistic and educational meanings of the composition and: 2) with a focus questions linked to quality, value and assessment. In both approaches the overarching question has been how it is possible to connect the phenomena that I am researching to our knowledge and understanding of product as well as process.

Based on a discussion as to whether pupils' compositions can be regarded as artistic expressions and a phenomenological and musicological approach to analysis, I conclude that it is highly relevant to examine pupils' compositions as artistic expressions and search for artistic as well as educational meanings. "Artistic" examinations may suggest that compositions exhibit artistic and aesthetic meanings that not only demonstrate aesthetic decision-making and dynamic, rhythmical control of musical language as artistic expression, but also have significant similarities to compositional techniques applied by real and modern composers in the adult world. Educational meaning—as examined in the corresponding compositional process—may explain and modify some of the artistic layers of meanings disclosed in the analysis of the "product". An important finding is that a combined analysis of process and product might seem to weaken the impression of the pupils as independent enablers of creating musical art. On the other hand, important musical aspects of pupils' compositions seem to be generated through musical rehearsal and approbation. Compositions develop through musical praxis and are increasingly appreciated, as it improves, by all participants in terms of artistic value.

My analysis of pupils' composition with respect to the question above seems to suggest some conclusions: Connections between a compositional process and its "product", the final composition, can best be decided when scrutinising both through close observation and analysis. What *appear* to be sophisticated aesthetics and decisions can sometimes be the result of phenomena linked to personal actions and contextual "trivialities". What *appear* to be relatively meaningless juxtapositions of musical notes can be serious attempts at realising aesthetical intentions. What *appear* to be meaningless discussions about certain isolated elements can be the pupils' way of implementing a compositional strategy learnt in class and a holistic planning of the whole piece.

Looking For Creativity In Musical Products And Compositional Processes (Chapter 10)

In chapter 10 I argue that a central phenomenon in composition as a part of music education—*creativity* —can be meaningfully researched when considering the compositional process as well as the final musical products: the pupils' compositions. Findings on creativity aspects in pupils' compositions are modified when the respective compositional *processes* are scrutinised. What appear to be novel and original aspects of compositions created by individuals with artistic intentions, might just as well be the result of personal actions, social interaction and dialogic activity. What appear to be *conventional* invention and compositional actions may be characterised as creative instrumentation and use of form developed alongside inventive and efficient peer teaching.

Postlude (Chapter 11)

In Chapter 3 I refer to Barrett (1998) who maintains that we have still much to learn from the study of children's compositional processes and products. My contribution to this picture is first and foremost to focus on and scrutinise the compositional process.

I do hope that my findings in the present study are relevant and useful for practices of teaching composition to young people within the framework of music education. However, I also hope that the findings might be relevant for areas *beyond* music education and the music education community. Today, more than at any time in history, I believe, *creative* activities are one of the fundamental types of activities that make civilization progress and survive. Small group composition and the generative, productive and communicative activity it consists of, is well suited to giving pupils and students not only something that is *personally* empowering and creative, but something that is useful and necessary for society at large.

RESUMÉ PÅ NORSK

Komposisjonsprosessar som diskurs og interaksjon
– eit studium av musikalske komposisjonsprosessar i små grupper i ein skulekontekst

Preludium (Kapittel 1)
Temaet for denne avhandlinga er ein analyse av kva som går føre seg i komposisjons-prosessar slik desse framtrer i små elevgrupper som arbeider med komponering som del av musikkopplæring på ein skule. Eg prøver å forstå og skildra kva som finn stad over tid, kva som formar sekvensar av musikalske og sosiale handlingar, korleis musikalske idéar vert fødde og kva som skjer med desse idéane, kven sine idéar som overlever og kva for idéar som forsvinn, kven som bestemmer kva og kvifor, og kva som gjer at prosessane endar på ein bestemt måte. Fenomenet, eller rettare sagt, fenomena eg har undersøkt i denne studien er difor, omtrentleg sagt, komponering av musikk i små elevgrupper med tanke på korleis ein slik diskurs utviklar seg gjennom ein prosess med sekvensar av handlingar og interaksjonar.

Avhandlinga er organisert i to hovuddelar. *Section I: Points of Departure* omfattar eit *Preludium*, og 3 andre kapittel. I denne delen presenterer eg bakgrunnen for studien og dei teoretiske og metodologiske inspirasjonane som har bidratt til å forma forskingsvegen min. Denne delen inneheld også eit kapittel om det kontekstuelle rammeverket for komponering som internasjonal musikkpedagogisk disiplin og forskinga knytt til denne. Eit kapittel om forskingsdesign og dataanalyse, som gjer greie for min bruk at etnografisk mikroanalyse ved hjelp av video (Erickson, 1992) og "grounded theory" (Strauss and Corbin, 1998), avsluttar denne hovuddelen.

Section II er resultatdelen. Den omfattar 7 kapittel som rekk over eit introduksjons-kapittel til eit oppsummerande *Postludium*. Kapitla gjer greie for resultat og omfattar drøftingar knytt til eit vidt spekter av sider ved komposisjonsprosessar og elevkomposisjonar. Eg presenterer resultat frå studien gjennom å leggja vekt på teoribygging og utvikling og drøfting av grunnleggjande omgrep sett i lys av relevant teori i alle dei seks første kapitla i denne delen.

Teoretiske og metodologiske inspirasjonar (Kapittel 2)
I dette kapitlet drøftar eg "forskingsspegelen" min. Dette vil seia at eg gjer greie for og drøftar nokre grunnleggjande vitskaplege tradisjonar eller "skular" som ligg til grunn for viktige sider ved forskinga mi. Fenomenologi—eit stort vitskapleg og filsosofisk teori-felt —utgjer basisen for mitt syn på korleis vi som menneske oppfattar omverda og mi forståing av kva menneskeleg medvit og erkjenning eigentleg er. Sosiokulturell teori inspirerer meg fordi den forklarar tilhøvet mellom det individuelle og det kulturelle, og fordi dette vitskaplege teorifeltet prøver å gjera greie for 'kognisjon' som noko meir enn 'mentale skjema' og 'mentale operasjonar'. Pedagogisk etnografi, særleg etnografisk mikroanalyse ved hjelp av video (Erickson 1992), ein kvalitativ og naturalistisk (Lincoln and Guba 1985) forskingstradisjon i pedagogisk forsking, samt "grounded theory" (Strauss and Corbin 1998), ligg til grunn for forskingsdesignet og teoriutviklinga mi. Desse teorifelta representerer til dels ulike ulike innfallsvinklar til pedagogisk forsking, men dei har ein viktig fellenemnar i ynskjet om å undersøkja fenomena i djupna, og i ynskjet om å utvikla ein omgrepsrik teori som

både er beskrivande og nyskapande. I dette kapittlet drøftar eg også ulike sider ved nokre sentrale omgrep i avhandlinga mi som 'handling', 'interaksjon', og 'diskurs'.

Det konstekstuelle rammeverket (Kapittel 3)

I dette kapitlet kontekstualiserar eg og drøftar denne studien i det som kan omtalast som det internasjonale og profesjonelle makro nivået for forsking om musikk-komponering knytt til musikkfaget og ein musikksjanger professor Liora Bresler (1998) karakteriserar som "skulekunst" (school art). Ein av konklusjonane på denne drøftinga er at musikk-komponering i norsk skule synes å vera alment akseptert både i offisielt nasjonalt planverk og i pedagogisk praksis, men at denne disiplinen av musikkfaget likevel er i ein startfase.

Størstedelen av kapitlet er ein gjennomgang av internasjonal forskingslitteratur om musikk-komponering i pedagogisk samanheng. Eg prøver å visa breidda og omfanget av denne forskinga ved å kategorisera ulike studier etter kva slags rammeverk og datafokus studiene har. Kategoriseringa mi munnar ut i ei drøfting om i kva grad ulike studier fokuserer på det dei eksplisitt intenderer å fokusera på.

Eg har vald å sjå nærare på nokre studier som synes å vera særleg relvante for mitt eige arbeid, og eg presenterer og drøftar også nokre forskingsbaserte modellar av korleis arbeid med musikk-komponering i pedagogisk samanheng synes å utvikla seg over ei bestemt tidsramme, -alt med tanke på mitt eige fokus på komposisjonsprosessar. Til slutt i dette kapitlet ser eg litt nærare på tilhøvet mellom kreativitetsteori og teori om musikk komponering. Eg referer m.a. til Wallas' (1945), og konkluderer denne drøftinga med at kreativitetsteori framleis synes å vera viktig for forskingfeltet komponering i musikkopplæring. Særleg gjeld dette den delen av teorifeltet som synes å vera tufta på eit romantisk nittenhundretals kunstar- og musikksyn på kreativitet.

Forskingsdesign og data-analyse. (Kapittel 4)

Eg opnar kaptilet med å gjera greie for den umiddelbare konteksten for denne studien og tilhøvet mitt til forskingsarenaen—ein skule, ein lærar og ein klasse på 20 elevar—og gjer greie for grunngjevinga mi for val av observasjonstad og datainnsamliing. Datainnsamlinga gjekk føre seg over fire skuleår (1998- 2001) og resulterte i feltnotat, intervju og lydopptak, og videoopptak av sju gruppeprosessar, kvar på ca. 60 minutt. Forskingsprosessen kviler på ei 'kvalitativ' (naturalistisk) og etnografisk tilnæring til forskingsfeltet. I tråd med forskingsdesignet vart følgjande problemstillingar først ferdig formulert eit stykke inn i forskingsprosessen:
Kva er hovudelementa i komposisjonsprosessar i små elevgrupper?
Kva karakteriserer desse elementa og tilhøvet mellom dei?
Korleis utviklar slike prossessar seg og korleis er dei strukturerte og konstruerte?
Kva er samanhengane mellom musikkstykket som blir laga og prosessen det er ein del av?

I kapitel 4 gjer eg også greie for og drøftar prosedyrar og utfordringar knytte til dataanalyse og til utvikling av teori. Forskingsmetodikken i denne studien kan beskrivast som ein syntese av "grounded theory" og etnografisk mikroanalyse. Eit særtrekk ved denne syntesen er utvikling av teori i det eg kallar 'empiriske , tolkande og analytiske sirklar'. Eg drøftar også problem og utfordringar knytte til tekstleg transkripsjon og til transkripsjon av musikk. Ein viktig del av kapitlet dreier seg om truverd i forskinga og utfordringar knytt til

førehandsoppfatningar. Fleire teknikkar, t.d triangulering, blir drøfta, både reint genrelt og med tanke på korleis slike teknikkar blir brukte i denne studien. Spørsmålet om korleis forskaren eller forskingsmetoden påverkar innsamling av data (obtrusiveness), noko som ofte blir sett på som problematisk i etnografiske studier der video blir brukt, blir også drøfta. Min konklusjon på dette spørsmålet er at det vart eit mindre problem enn forventa i denne studien.

Eg avsluttar kapitlet med å drøfta nokre kontekstuelle problem i forskingsprosessen, spesielt med tanke på det eg kallar 'media problemet' og 'språkspørsmålet'. Denne drøftinga munnar ut i synspunktet om at desse problema ikkje er ei avgjerande hindring for analyse av og teoriutvikling om elevane sine arbeidsprosessar, sjølv om elevane synes å vera bundne av rammevilkår for musikalsk og verbalt uttrykk, og sjølv om dette gir spesielle utfordringar i forskingsprosessen.

Introduksjon til resultatkapitla. (Kapitel 5)
Eg introduserer resultatdelen, *Section II*, og fleire av dei påfølgjande kapitla med små narrative vignettar. Intensjonen er at desse forskingsbaserte vignettane skal ta lesaren rett inn i kjernen av dei "forteljingane" eg ynskjer å forstå og kommunisera teori om til andre. Det vil seia visa løyndomane som gøymer seg i komposisjonsprosessar for små elevgrupper i form av kva det er som bestemmer og formar prosessane og musikken som blir skapt. Hovudintensjonen i dette kapitlet er å gje eit oversyn over innhaldet i kapitel 6 til 10.

Ein modell for å forstå komposisjonsprosessar (Kapitel 6)
Eg opnar kapitel 6 med å drøfta to typer 'handlingar' (actions) som er grunnleggjande i ein modell eg utviklar med tanke på å forstå kompleksiteten i komposisjonsprosessar i små elevgrupper. Dei to handlingstypane er 'kompositoriske handlingar' (Compositional actions [CAs]) og 'personlege handlingar' (Personal actions [PAs]). Desse to omgrepa konstruerte eg tidleg i arbeidet med mikroanalyse av gruppeprosessane. Omgrepa 'kompositoriske handlingar' og 'personlege handlingar' er inspirert av teori innan fenomenologi og sosial psykologi. Desse to handlingstypane er fundamentalt ulike med tanke på 'handlingsfokus'. Dei kan kanskje likevel best bli illustrert i form av ei plassering på ei linje med 'subject' og 'objekt' som ytterpunkt, der 'personlege handlingar' er nærare 'subjektet' og 'kompositoriske handlingar' er nærare 'objektet'—sjølve arbeidet med å komponera musikk. Med bakgrunn og basis i mikroanalyse og observasjon introduserer eg tre ulike hovudkategoriar av 'kompositoriske handlingar': a) 'invensjon', b) 'planlegging, strukturering og leiing', og c) 'tileigning, vurdering, og revisjon'. Eg definerer også ei rekkje 'personlege handlingar'.

Inspirert av sosiokulturell teori drøftar eg bruken av kulturelle reidskap og artefakter, så som ulike artikuklasjonsmodi og musikalske instrument, i komposisjonsprosessen. Eg argumenterer for at ein komposisjonsprosess og resultata av ein slik prosess, best kan bli analysert og forstått med 'kompositoriske handlingar', 'personlege handlingar', 'kulturelle reidskapar' og interaksjonen mellom desse som grunnleggjande komponentar. Vidare identifiserer eg kontekstuelle element i elevprosessane og drøftar det grunnleggjande spørsmålet om korleis konteksten disiplinerer og formar slike prosessar. Eg avsluttar kapitlet med å hevda at mi oppfatning av arbeidet med komponering i små elevgrupper blir farga av observasjonar som tyder på at slike prosessar framtrer og utviklar seg med grunnlag i ulike former for relasjonar og sirkelprega sekvensar over tid. Eit hovudfunn i framstillinga mi så langt, indikerer at relasjonar er svært viktige ved skaping av ein

komposisjon, og at det dynamiske aspektet ved relasjonar mellom handlingar, resultat og kontekstuelle element, skapar ei slags sirkelrørsle som driv prosessen framover mot eit bestemt resultat.

Særtrekk ved 'kompositoriske handlingar'. (Kapitel 7)

I kapitel 7 ser eg nærare på kva som særpregar 'kompositoriske handlingar'. Funna i studien peikar mot at 'kompositoriske handlingar' som er knytt til 'invensjon' kan beskrivast innan 3 ulike kategoriar av invensjonsaktivitet: Musikalsk invensjon som 'flyktig aktivitet', musikalsk invensjon som 'individuelle konsepsjonar' og musikalsk invensjon som 'dialogisk aktivitet'. Viktige funn i denne studien er at alle desse formene for 'invensjon' er fundamentalt generative av natur, og at dei slik sett utgjer sjølve basisen for komposisjonsprosessane. Musikalsk invensjon som 'dialogisk aktivitet' synes å spela den viktigaste rolla i komposisjonsprosessar i små elevgrupper.

Når det gjeld den andre hovudkategorien av 'kompositoriske handlingar'—'planlegging , strukturering og leiing'—viser funna at elevane si tilnærming til denne delen av komposisjonsprosessen sjeldan kan karakteriserast som enten ein lineær eller ein lateral tilnærmingsmåte. I dei fleste 'kompositoriske handlingar' innanfor denne hovudkategorien blir begge tilnærmingar brukt om kvarandre.

Eit interessant funn er at førekomsten av den kompositoriske handlinga som eg kallar 'leiing av felles aktivitet', er ei svært viktig handling for framdrift i prosessen, men berre dersom denne leiarskapen er basert på adekvat musikalsk og sosial kompetanse. I denne studien vart leiarskap ofte observert som ' elev-til-elev' undervisning (peer teaching).

Eit anna viktig funn er at komposisjonar veks fram i prosessen som eit resultat av ei blanding av svært ulike årsaker. Nokre årsaker er av sosial karakter, mens andre kan karakteriserast som musikalske og/eller estetiske årsaker. Eg har også funne at elevane sine musikalske avgjerder oftast er både sosialt og estetisk motivert.

I denne tredje hovudgruppa av 'kompositoriske handlingar'—'tileigning, vurdering, og revisjon'—tyder funna på at det er tette linjer mellom elevane si umiddelbare musikkutøving, og deira estetiske og musikalske vurderingar, revisjonar og avgjerder om det som er gjort. Musikalske 'revisjonar' etablerer seg ofte under innøving og musikalsk tileigning utan at dette blir verbalt drøfta. Estetiske og musikalske avgjerder "skjer" ofte mens elevane er direkte involvert i musikalsk aktivitet og musikalske diskursar.

Alle 3 hovudkategoriar av 'kompositoriske handlingar' finn stad i alle prosessar og fordeler seg jamnt, om enn ulikt i kvar prosess, over dei ca. 60 minutta kvar prosess varer.

I dette kapitlet viser eg at 'kompositoriske handlingar' inneber både generativ aktivitet, produktiv aktivitet og kommunikativ aktivitet, og at desse aktivitetane er viktige og likverdige sider ved komposisjonsprosessar i små elevgrupper. Slik sett kan funnet av ein gjennomgåande integrasjon og interaksjon mellom generasjon, produksjon og kommunikasjon i komposisjonsprosessane vurderast som eit av hovudfunna i denne studien.

Progresjon, profilar og dynamiske aspekt ved komposisjons-prosessane.(Kapittel 8)

I kapittel 8 undersøkjer eg tilhøvet mellom ulike kompositoriske handlingar og andre element i prosessen med tanke på kva det er, eller rettare, kva for handlingar, hendingar eller fenomen som fører eller ikkje fører komposisjonsprosessen framover mot ferdiggjering av komposisjonsoppgåva. Korleis konstruerer og utviklar prosessen seg?

I dei sju gruppeprosessane eg har undersøkt, har eg funne og kategorisert fire ulike typar 'signifikante episodar' (significant episodes) som kan tilføra oss kunnskap om korleis prosessane rører seg framover. Desse er: 'sirkel episodar', 'fokus episodar', 'gjennombrot' og ' blokader'. Alle desse kan vera avgjerande for å forstå korleis komposisjonsprosessane utviklar seg fram mot ferdiggjering av eit musikkstykke. Eit interessannt funn er at 'fokus episodar' og 'gjennombrot' ofte ser ut til å finna stad i tilknytning til kompositoriske handlingar med vekt på 'invensjon', 'tileigning' og 'vurdering' i kombinasjon. I kva grad komposisjonsprosessane inneheld slike episodar, ser ut til å vera avgjerande for 'profilen' på dei ulike komposisjonsprosessane.

I dette kapitlet drøftar eg også korleis komponering i skulesamanheng kan bli vurdert som produksjon av kunnskap. Eg ser spesielt på korleis slik kunnskapsproduksjon kan vurderast i lys av Foucault's maktomgrep (power/knowledge). Eit av funna som blir presentert i dette kapitlet, tyder på at maktrelasjonar fins mellom elevar som arbeider i grupper, og at innsyn i maktaspektet kan vera svært viktig for vår forståing av det kompliserte samspelet mellom 'kompositoriske' og 'personlege' handlingar.

Det er også muleg å sjå på læraren si rolle i lys av Foucault's maktomgrep, der maktspørsmålet er nært knytt til produksjon av kunnskap, det vil seia læringsutbyte knytt til oppgåver i klassen om komponering av musikk. Slik maktutøving kan vera både direkte og indirekte og både positiv og negativ for framdrift og kvalitet i gruppeprosessane. Slik sett kan læraren, som i all hovudsak berre er indirekte til stades i gruppeprosessane, prega både prosessar og sluttresultat.

Elevkomposisjonar og deira 'meiningar'. (Kapittel 9)

I kapitel 9 undersøkjer eg elevane sine komposisjonar vurdert som musikkstykke innanfor sjangren "skulekunst". Dette kapitlet flyttar fokuset for undersøkinga frå ei beskriving og analyse av komposisjonsprosessen til ein analyse av "hendingar" i sjølve musikken, og frå eit fokus på aktivitetar og deltakarar i prosessen til eit fokus på musikken som er skapt. Eg analyserar komposisjonane med to ulike innfallsvinklar: 1) med fokus på dei kunstnarlege og pedagogiske meiningane i komposisjonen og 2) med eit fokus på spørsmål knytt til kvalitet, verdi og evaluering. I begge tilnærmingane er det overordna spørsmålet å forstå samanhengen mellom musikalske produkt og komposisjonsprosessane.

Eg startar med å drøfta kor vidt elevkomposisjonar kan bli sett på som kunstnarlege utrykk og vera gjenstand for ein fenomenologisk og musikkvitskapleg innfallsvinkel til analysen. Konklusjonen på denne drøftinga er at eg vurderer det som svært relevant å undersøkja elevkomposisjonar som kunstnarlege uttrykk og leita etter kunstnarlege så vel som pedagogiske meiningar. Analysen av elevkomposisjonane ut frå ein slik synsvinkel tyder på at komposisjonane inneheld kunstnarlege og estetiske meiningar som ikkje berre viser at elevane opererer med og meistrar estetiske avgjerdsprosessar og har rytmisk og musikalsk kontroll av musikk som kunstnarleg uttrykk, men også at dei i arbeidet sitt viser signifikant likskap med komposisjonsteknikkar brukte

av “verkelege” og moderne komponistar i vaksenverda.

Pedagogiske meiningar—som eg har undersøkt i dei respektive komposisjonsprosessane—kan forklara og modifisera nokre av ‘meiningane’ som synes å gå fram av ein musikkvitskapleg analyse av elevkomposisjonane. Eit viktig funn er at ein kombinert analyse av prosess og elevkomposisjonar ser ut til å svekka inntrykket av elevane som sjølvstendige skaparar av kunstnarlege uttrykk. På den andre sida ser viktige sider ved komosisjonane ut til å bli skapte gjennom musikalsk øving og tileigning. Komposisjonar utviklar seg gjennom musikalsk praksis og blir vurderte av elevane etter kunstnarlege kriterier i spørsmålet om kvalitet. På bakgrunn av dette funnet hevdar eg at ein fenomenologisk og vitskapleg basert analyse av elevkomposisjonar er muleg og meiningsfull. Den viser også at det er ei rekkje likskapar mellom ein slik analyse og dei utfordringane lærarar får når dei skal evaluera elevane sine komposisjonar. I begge tilfelle vil ein få best innsyn og kunnskap gjennom å gje likverdig merksemd til to viktige sider ved komponeringsarbeidet: både prosess og produkt.

I den andre delen av dette kapitlet prøver eg å kasta lys over kva samanheng det er mellom musikkstykket som blir laga og prosessen det er ein del av med tanke på musikalsk kvalitet i musikkstykka. Eg spør: Dersom det er skilnader i musikalsk kvalitet, korleis kan denne skilnaden bli beskriven og argumentert for, og korleis kan skilnadene bli forklarde med referansar til handlingar og hendingar i dei respektive komposisjonsprosessane?

Analysen min av elevkomposisjonane med tanke på spørsmåla ovanfor gir grunnlag for nokre tentative konklusjonar. For det første: Innsyn i samanhengane mellom ein komposisjonsprosess og den ferdige komposisjonen får ein best ved å undersøkja begge nøye, både produkt og prosess, gjennom nærobservasjon så vel som næranalyse. Det som *ser ut* til å vera uttrykk for sofistikert estetikk og kunsnarlege avgjerder, kan av og til vera resultat av fenomen som er knytt til ‘personlege handlingar’ og kontekstuelle trivialitetar. Det som *ser ut* til å vera relativt sett meinigslause samanstillingar av noter og tonar, kan vera seriøse forsøk på å realisera estetiske og kunsnarlege intensjonar. Det som *ser ut* til å vera meiningslause diskusjonar i prosessen, kan vera elevane sin innfallsvinkel til å implementera ein strategi som dei kjenner frå tidlegare og ei heilskapleg planlegging av heile musikkstykket.

På leiting etter kreativtet i musikalske produkt og komposisjons-prosessar.
(Kapitel 10)

I kapitel 10 hevdar eg at det er meiningsfullt å undersøkja kreativitet som eit sentralt fenomen i tilknytning til komponering av musikk i lys av samanhengar mellom prosess og produkt. Funn i denne studien tyder på at kreative aspekt ved dei ferdige elevkomposisjonane blir modifiserte når dei respektive komposisjonsprosessane og elevane sine erfaringar blir gjenstand for næranalyse. Det som *ser ut* for å vera nye og orginale sider ved komposisjonane skapt av elevar med individuelle kunstnarlege intensjonar, kan like gjerne vera resultat av ‘personlege handlingar’, sosial interaksjon og dialogisk aktivitet. Det som *ser ut* til å vera konvensjonelle idéar og ordinære ‘kompositoriske handlingar’, *kan* karakteriserast som kreativ instrumentasjon og bruk av musikalsk form utvikla gjennom oppfinnsam og effektiv elev-til-elev undervisning.

Det komplekse fenonmenet ‘kreativitet’ er etter mitt syn veleigna med tanke på ei undersøking av samanhengar mellom prosess og produkt innanfor disiplinen komponering i musikkopplæring. Skal ein koma vidare med slike

spørsmål, vil eg, med grunnlag i denne studien og relevant fenomenologibasert teori, hevda at ein må sjå ut over dei avgrensingane ein del forskarar har påført seg sjølve ved å fokusera for mykje på det fenomenet dei kallar *kreativ tenking*. Eg argumenterer for at analysar som set omgrepa divergent og konvergent tenking i sentrum, ikkje er godt eigna til å forklara fenomen som er tufta i og på 'handlingar' , på menneskelege arbeidsmåtar og i kropps- og fenomenologi baserte omtalar av disiplinen 'komponering' i musikkopplæring.

Postludium (Kapitel 11)

I kapitel 3 refererte eg til Barrett (1998) som hevdar at me framleis har mykje å læra frå studier av barns komposisjonsprosessar og produkt. Mitt bidrag til dette biletet er først og fremst ei fokusering på og ein næranalyse av sjølve komposisjonsprosessen for elevar som arbeider i små grupper. Dette er på ingen måte eit nytt felt innanfor dette forskingsfeltet. Eg trur likevel at forskinga som har vore gjort, ikkje har studert og beskrive kompleksiteten i komponering som disiplin i musikkopplæring godt nok, og at fagfeltet manglar beskrivingar, forklaringar og teoretiske omgrep (concepts)—kort sagt teori—om kva det er som faktisk går føre seg når unge menneske utrykkjer seg kreativt og musikalsk i ei verd som både gir fridom og avgrensingar *på same tid.*

Eg håpar at funna som er gjort i denne studien er relevante og nyttige for praksisfeltet som arbeider med musikalsk komponering blant unge menneske innan rammeverket musikkopplæring. Men eg trur også funna kan vera relevante for område ut over musikkutdanning og musikkpedagogikk. Kanskje meir enn nokon gong, trur eg at kreative aktivitetar og opplæring i dette, er ein fundamental type aktivitet og arbeidsform som gir vår sivilisasjon håp om overleving og framgang. Komponering i små elevgrupper og dei generative, produktive og kommunikative aktivitetane dette omfattar, er veleigna for gje elevar og studentar noko som ikkje berre er utviklande for den einskilde, men også noko som er svært nyttig og naudsynt for samfunnet.

Denne studien prøver å beskriva og utvikla teori for eit svært lite hjørne av det ein kalla 'kreativ musikkopplæring'. Dette er sjølvsagt—med tanke på funna i studien—ei viktig avgrensing med tanke på relevans for andre aktuelle område. Det kan vurderast som dristig, kanskje nær inntil det dumdristige, å basera ei omfattande beskriving og teoriutvikling om kva som går føre seg i prosessar som finn stad innan musikk-komponering i små elevgrupper på observasjon av ein klasse, ein lærar og ein skule. Sjølv om så kan vera tilfelle , og at det er sannsynleg at eit større og meir variert datatilfang ville ha vore nyttig, så er mi bekymring med tanke på studien sitt naturalistiske og kasusprega særpreg knytt til andre sider ved arbeidet mitt. Bekymringa mi knyter seg i større grad til vurderingar som er gjort gjennom dataanalyse og teoriutvikling. Bruken av fleire tilnærmingar for innsamling av data og mange datakjelder i tillegg til bruk av mikroanalyse, produserer store datamengder som til tider syntes overveldande for *ein* forskar. Det finst grenser for kor mykje data ein forskar kan ha oversikt over og analysera på ein meiningsfull og konstruktiv måte. I denne studien ville tilgang på ei gruppe av forskarar vore svært nyttig i analyseprosessen, ikkje berre på grunn av store mengder data, men også med tanke på konstruksjon av omgrep, tolkningar og teoriutvikling. Framtidig forsking innanfor dette feltet bør ta omsyn til slike vurderingar.

Eit av fleire spørsmål som kan knytast til oppfølging av denne studien, er i kva grad mi handlingsbaserte og sosiokulturelle tilnærming til komposisjonsprosessar for elevar i små grupper er relevant for å forstå alle typer

komposisjonsprosessar i skulesamanheng. Sidan denne studien er basert på observasjon av interaksjon i små grupper, er det svært relevant å spørja om beskrivingar av *individuelle* komposisjonsprosessar kan leggja like stor vekt på relasjonar, handlingar og interaksjonar som det er gjort her. Mitt svar på eit slikt spørsmål, så langt, må bli 'ja' og til ein viss grad 'nei'. 'Ja', fordi eg trur at alle komposisjonsprosessar i skulesamanheng bør oppfattast som ein læringsprosess innanfor eit praksisfellesskap som når ut over individet (Wenger 1998) . 'Nei', fordi alle teoretiske analysar av noko så komplisert som ein komposisjonsprosess er nøydde til å ta omsyn til den aktuelle situasjonen som skal tolkast og bli forstått.

I individuelle komposisjonsprosessar—på skular så vel som utanfor skuleverket—vil eg tru at musikkinstrumentet og/eller datamaskinen vil spela ein meir direkte og viktigare rolle med tanke på interaksjonsaspektet enn i små elevgrupper. Eg trur likevel at eit viktig særtrekk ved prosessen vil vera dynamiske og sirkulerande relasjonar mellom 'kompositoriske handlingar' og 'personlege handlingar', førebels resultat i form av utprøvingar, kulturelle reidskapar og kontekstuelle element. Slik eg ser det bør alle holistiske modellar av komposisjonsprosessar ta opp i seg dei dynamiske og relasjonelle sidene ved kreativ verksemd.

I det musikkpedagogiske miljøet er det ein livleg debatt om kva som er den rette balansen mellom individuell musikk-komponering og komponering i små grupper. Denne studien bør ikkje bli oppfatta som eit einsidig bidrag til fordel for ei vektlegging av musikk-komponering i små elevgrupper. Sjølv om det er freistande, skal eg ikkje ta opp denne debatten her. Eg vil likevel gjerne ha gitt uttrykk for at alle program for musikk-komponering i skuleverket bør sjå på denne aktiviteten som grunnlag for både musikalsk *og* sosial læring og som ei viktig ramme for både kunstnarleg, personleg og lærande uttrykk. Eg vil også understreka at ein i ulike program og opplegg for musikk-komponering ikkje berre bør evaluera og verdsetja dei musikalske produkta som veks fram, men også kva slags form for læring og erfaring sjølve prosessen fører med seg.

I kapitla 9 og 10 prøvde eg å undersøkja elevane sine kunstnarlege intensjonar ved både å analysera musikkstykka dei laga og konteksten stykka vart skapte i. Svaret mitt på om musikk-komponering i små elevgrupper bør bli sett på som enten pedagogisk eller kunstnarleg aktivitet er ikkje eit enten/eller spørsmål. Komponering i små grupper er begge deler. Likevel, i ein større samanheng har dette spørsmålet å gjera med tilhøvet mellom 'utdanning' og andre fundamentale område i vår sivilisasjon som t.d. kunst og vitskap. Å inkludera og definera pedagogiske aktivitetar som noko som har med kunstnarleg verksemd å gjera, og kunstnarleg verksemd som noko som har med utdanning og danning å gjera, kan synast å vera unødvendig og meiningslaust for profesjonelle i begge leirar. Det er likevel, slik eg ser det, akkurat det som er tilfelle når ein ser på musikk-komponering i skuleverket som kunstnarleg verksemd innanfor ei ramme og ein sjanger me kallar 'skulekunst'. Eg vil argumentera for—på same måte som Nielsen (1998)—at pedagoar og forskarar innanfor kunstområda og kunstfaga i skuleverket, inklusive komposisjon som profesjonell disiplin og musikk-komponering som del av musikkopplæring, aktivt bør kryssa faggrenser og samarbeida i eit forsøk på å forbetra innhald og status for komponering både som ein del av profesjonell kunstnarleg verksemd og som del av ei skapande musikkopplæring i skuleverket. Det var faktisk akkurat dette som skjedde då komponistar som Zoltan Kodály og Carl Orff engasjerte seg i musikkopplæring for unge menneske (sjå kapitel 3). Kanskje er det på nytt tid for slike prosjekt, og samstundes initiera nye, t.d. å vurdera å opna opp kunstnarlege prosessar i samfunnet

for forskarar med bakgrunn i kunstfaga i skuleverket. På denne bakgrunnen vil eg hevda at eit interessant tema for framtidig forsking kan vera å finna ut i kva grad ein handlingsbasert og sosiokulturell analyse er relevant, ikkje berre med tanke på å forstå og få innsyn i alle typer komposisjonsprosessar i skuleverket, men også med tanke på komposisjonsprosessar hjå profesjonelle kunstnerar.

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APPENDICES

Appendices' list:

Appendix 1: Notation transcription of The Sun (CGP1)
Composed by Alexander, Linda, Cathy, Helge

Appendix 2: Notation transcription of The Fox's Widow (CGP2)
Composed by Siri, Alexander, Linda, Roy, Cathy and Turid

Appendix 3: Notation transcription of The Little Red Hen (CGP3)
Composed by Helge, Irene, Lisa, Sigrun and Martin

Appendix 4: Notation transcription of Rhythm Music 1 (CGP4)
Composed by Martin, Iselin, Harriet and Siri

Appendix 5: Notation transcription of Rhythm Music 2 (CGP5)
Composed by Helge, Roy, Turid, Linda and Inga

Appendix 6: Notation transcription of Rhythm Music 3 (CGP6)
Composed by Lisa, Carol, Ingvald, Eric and Siri

Appendix 7: Notation transcription of Rhythm Music 4 (CGP7)
Composed by Alexander, Sigrun, Mary, Todd and Irene

Appendix 8: Text map analysis of The Fox's Widow (CGP2)
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Appendix 1:
Notation transcription of The Sun (CGP1)
Composed by Alexander, Linda, Cathy, Helge

The Sun

♩= 115

Composition Group 1

Alto Xyl. (Linda)
Alto Xyl. (Cathy)
Tambourine (Alexander)
Hand Drum (Helge)
Cymbal (Alexander)
Chant (All)

mf ff

so - la eg er ver-dens stør-ste

AX
AX
Tamb.
H.D.
Cymbal
Chant

gjer eg hei-le ti - da men

Transcription Me-04

2

The Sun

AX

AX

pp

Tamb.

H.D.

Cymbal

Chant

FOR DEG KAN EG VE - RA

Appendix 2:

Notation transcription of The Fox's Widow (CGP2)

Composed by Siri, Alexander, Linda, Roy, Cathy and Turid

The Fox's Widow

Composition Group 2

♩= 110

Sopr xyl. (Roy)

Alto Xylo (Alexander)

Alto Xyl (Turio)

Bass Xyl. (Sigrun)

Chimes (Cathy)

Djembe (Sigrun)

Cathy's metal chimes is an introduction aand background sound, which is on most of time throughout the piece.

mf

SX

AX

AX

BX

Chimes

Dj.

Notation here is approximate. To some extent they play in their own pulse

11

14

SX

AX

AX

BX

Chimes

Dr.

SX

AX

AX

BX

Chimes

Dr.

fz fz fz fz fz fz

Appendix 3:
Notation transcription of The Little Red Hen (CGP3)
Composed by Helge, Irene, Lisa, Sigrun and Martin

The little red hen

Composition- Group 3

♩= 110

(A)

Alto xyl. (Irene)

Bass Xyl. (Sigrun)

Glockenspiel (Lisa)

Tambourine (Martin)

Djembe (Helge)

mp

4

6

AX

BX

Glk.

Tamb.

Dj.

mf

(B)

10

(C)

AX

BX

GLK.

TAMB.

DJ.

11

14

(D)

16

17

Da Capo al

(using a wisk)

CODA

AX

BX

GLK.

TAMB.

DJ.

MP

FF

21

23

26

FINE

Appendix 4:
Notation transcription of Rhythm Music 1 (CGP4)
Composed by Martin, Iselin, Harriet and Siri

Rhythm Music 1

Composition - GP 4

♩= 132

Glockenspiel (Sigrun)
Soprano Xyl. (Sigrun)
Alto Xyl. (Harriet)
Tambourine (Martin)
Maracas (Martin)
Shaker (Martin)
Djembe (Iselin)

mf

5

Glk.
SX
AX
Tamb.
Mrcs.
Shaker
Dj.

9

mf

13

Glk.

SX

AX

Tamb.

Mrcs.

Shaker

DJ.

17

Fine

Glk.

SX

AX

Tamb.

Mrcs.

Shaker

DJ.

21

Glk.
SX
AX
Tamb.
Mrcs.
Shaker
DJ.

(Shaker solo soft rainsound for about eight seconds- then as background sound till end of the B-part of the piece)

25

mf

30

(Djembe Played With flat hands and fingers on the skin)

31

mf

mf

34

mf

Glk.
SX
AX
Tamb.
Mrcs.
Shaker
Dj.

36

38

(D.C. al Fine)

Glk.
SX
AX
Tamb.
Mrcs.
Shaker
Dj.

41

Appendix 5:

Notation transcription of Rhythm Music 2 (CGP5)

Composed by Helge, Roy, Turid, Linda and Inga

Rhythm Music 2

Composition- Gp 5

♩= 135

Voice (Helge)

Soprano Xylophone (Helge)

Alto Xylophone (Turid)

Base Xylophone (Inga)

(played with two mallets)

Djembe (Linda)

Cowbell (Roy)

Eggs (Turid)

6

Voice

SX

AX

BX

Dj.

C. Bl.

Eggs

(Roy has hos own pulse at times and his rhythm changes somewhat througout the piece)

10

Voice

(The notation of the SX (Helge) is very approximate. He plays with two mallets, his left hand hitting the D)

SX

AX

BX

Dj.

10

C. Bl.

Eggs

Voice

13

SX

13

AX

BX

Dj.

13

C. Bl.

Eggs

Voice
16
SX
AX
BX
Dj.
C. Bl.
Eggs

19
Voice
SX
AX
BX
Dj.
C. Bl.
Eggs

Voice
SX
AX
BX
Dj.
C. Bl.
Eggs

22

mf

FINE

(B)

26

mf

30
CHANT: ANJA AO ANJA HO ANJO AO ANJO HEI..
Voice
(THIS VOICE CHANT GOES ON FROM THIS MEASURE TILL THE END OF PART (B). THERE IS A SLIGT ACCELLERANDO
AND CRESCENDO TOWARDS THE END. THE OTHER PLAYERS FOLLOW THE DYNAMICS AND TEMPO OF THE CHANT)
SX
AX
BX
30
DJ.
C. BL.
EGGS
34
CHANT CONTINUES..
Voice
SX
34
AX
BX
DJ.
34
C. BL.
EGGS

39

Chant continues: Anga ao anga ho Ango ao anga ao anga ho Anga ao anga ho anga ao anga hei

D.C al Fine

Voice

mf

f

SX

AX

BX

Dr.

C. Bl.

Eggs

39

Appendix 6:

Notation transcription of Rhythm Music 3 (CGP6)

Composed by Lisa, Carol, Ingvald, Eric and Siri

Rhythm Music 3

♩= 110

(A)

Composition- GP 6

Alto Xyl. (Lisa)

Bass xyl. (Eric)

Djembe (Sigrun)

Wood Block (Ingvaldo)

Shaker (Carol)

Cow Bell (Carol)

(The pulse is at times on its own throughout the piece)

(The composition starts with the shaker making rainsounds. This continues throughout the first part.)

5

7

AX

BX

Djembe

W. Bl.

Shaker

CB

10

AX

BX

Djembe

W. Bl.

Shaker

CB

15

AX
BX
Djembe
W. Bl.
Shaker
CB

20

AX
BX
Djembe
W. Bl.
Shaker
CB

24

FINE (C)

AX
BX
Djembe
W. Bl.
Shaker
CB

31 mf

AX
BX
Djembe
W. Bl.
Shaker
CB

D.C. al Fine

34

AX

BX

Djembe

W. Bl.

Shaker

CB

Appendix 7:

Notation transcription of Rhythm Music 4 (CGP7)

Composed by Alexander, Sigrun, Mary, Todd and Irene

Rhythm Music 4

♩= 126

Composition Group 7

Wood Blocks (Mary)
Eggs (Mary)
Alto Xyl. (Alexander)
Alto Xyl. (Todd)
Base Xyl. (Irene)
Djembe (Sigrun)

6

W. Bl.
Eggs
AX
AX
BX
Djembe

9

(The notation of the eggs is very approximate)

10

W. Bl.

Eggs

AX

AX

BX

Djembe

14

W. Bl.

Eggs

AX

AX

BX

Djembe

18

W. Bl.

Eggs

AX

AX

BX

Djembe

23

Fine

24

27

W. Bl.

Eggs

AX

AX

BX

Djembe

31

W. Bl.

Eggs

AX

AX

BX

Djembe

34

37

W. Bl.

Eggs

AX

AX

BX

Djembe

40

W. Bl.
Eggs
AX
AX
BX
Djembe

46

W. Bl.
Eggs
AX
AX
BX
Djembe

52

D.C. al Fine

W. Bl.

Eggs

(No repeat in da capo)

AX

AX

BX

Djembe

Appendix 8:
Text map analysis of The Fox’s Widow (CGP2)

Composed by Siri, Alexander, Linda, Roy, Cathy and Turid

The Fox's Widow

♩= 110

Sopr xyl. (Roy)
Alto Xylo (Alexander)
Alto Xyl (Turio)
Bass Xyl. (Sigrun)
Chimes (Cathy)
Djembe (Sigrun)

Cathy's metal chimes continuing.....

Reveenka (Fox's widow) Reveenka (Fox's widow) Reveenka (Fox's widow)

God dag (how do you do)

Reveenka (Fox's widow)

SX
AX
AX
BX
Chimes
Dj.

sjå kven er det
see who it is

er reveenka heime?
(is the fox's widow at home)

ja ho er da det
(yes, I think so)

Reveenka (Fox's widow) Reveenka (Fox's widow) Reveenka (Fox's widow) Reveenka (Fox's widow) Reveenka (Fox's widow)

2

11

14

SX

AX

AX

BX

CHIMES

DG.

SX

AX

AX

BX

CHIMES

DG.

fz

fz

fz

fz

fz

fz

Appendix 9:
Text map analysis of The Little Red Hen (CGP3)

Composed by Helge, Irene, Lisa, Sigrun and Martin

The little red hen

Alto xyl. (Irene)

Bass Xyl. (Sigrun)

Glockenspiel (Lisa)

Tambourine (Martin)

Djembe (Helge)

(A) 4

mp

Den vesle røde høna, den vesle røde høna
(the tiny little red hen, the tiny little red hen)

kven skal slå kornet, kven skal slå kornet?
(who will mow the corn, who will mow the corn)

AX 6

ikkje eg, ikkje eg (no not me, no not me) ikkje eg, ikkje eg (no not me,no not me) ikkje eg, ikkje eg (no not me,no not me) ikkje eg, ikkje eg (no not me,no not me)

(B) 10 ikkje eg, ikkje eg (no not me, no not me)

BX

Glk.

ikkje eg, ikkje eg (no not me, no not me) ikkje eg, ikkje eg (no not me, no not me) ikkje eg, ikkje eg (no not me, no not me)

Tamb.

Dj. 6

10 grynt, grynt, kvakk, kvakk
(oink, oink, quack, quack

Appendix 10: Assignment texts (my translation)

I For the 9 year olds:

"The Sun"

Make a musical composition using the poem "The Sun".

- read the poem to each other
- choose four words that you can use as inspiration or starting point for a composition
- use contrasts in your composition

Think about:

If the words can be replaced by sounds and music

How you will put words, sound and music together in a performance

II For the 10 year olds

"Overture"

"Compose a piece of music that should be an introduction to your fairytale. We can call it an "Overture".
The piece should be no more than 2 minutes long. You can choose your instruments and music freely, but it should suit the fairytale. What is new today is to try and create a composition with more or several melodies in it.

Suggestions:

- You could start with text (words, sentences, title, dialogues…)
- a melody- upwards or downwards, step by step, or jumping, repetition also important repetition of phrases
- you can make melodies as question/answer
- the pentatonic scale is easy to use if you want accompaniment, but you can use any notes

Special advice: Discuss what texts could be your starting point. Try making small melodies and put them together. If you like, write them down in some way so you can remember. Use instruments you feel are suitable. Remember to make a composition, which should be interesting to listen to. Practice before performing."

III For the 12 year olds

Rhythm Music

Make a composition, which could be used for dancing. It should last approximately 2- 3 minutes and should have an ABA form. The A part should be repeated and this part may be a contrast to the B part in terms of using instruments, sounds and rhythms. You can choose your instruments freely and decide who should play what. You may use the pentatonic scale or any notes and start from rhythms like kaikakofima, akulele, jujuabajuaba, but you are encouraged to invent your own rhythms, e.g. ostinatoes., form etc.

Appendix 11: Interview guidelines (examples)

Interview plan:

I have been thinking about conducting formal interviews when meeting the class after Easter. I guess it might be the following:

Show them and let them listen to:

- digital videos of overture compositions
- digital video of Africa performances while in a group setting
- mp3's of Africa compositions
- mp3's overtures

Talk to them in class about:

- their attitude to composing, likes/dislikes
- group work versus individual work
- if asked about what they know about composing, what their answer would be
- what is most important, the process or the product/performance
- what is difficult about composing in groups

Before this, individual in-depth interviews with target pupils in a stimulated recall setting asking them about:

- when they see a video clip or listen to the composition what do they remember; remember to show a clip of the core group
- ask them about the role of experimentation before and now
- ask them about the role of having the "right" instrument before and now
- ask them about whether a composition is being planned in the beginning or whether it happens as they go along before and now
- ask them what they would do if given means and opportunities
- ask them about the role of the teacher

After this, in–depth interview with Mrs L. Start by asking her about the following in a stimulated recall setting:

- what her attitude to composition is. How her work her fits into her music teaching
- what she thinks is important with composing in schools
- what kind of strategies she has tried to teach the children
- what she thinks about when organising groups in music and in composing specifically
- what she thinks about the target children and other children in the class in connection with music and esp. composing
- what she thinks about their performance and group compositions
- her general teaching philosophy esp. in relation to the use of groups

Interview guide for group interview

The interview should be conducted as a group interview with the pupils in the groups as when they composed for the Africa project. Using stimulated recall, video clips from processes

Starting points for open ended interview:

For all groups:

Do you like composing in groups? why? why not?

What part of the whole thing do you like and what do you dislike?

Group 1

How a musical idea is born. Where did it come from? Is it important to have your own ideas? or is it a group thing? Any ideas here that were lost?

How important are instruments and the sound of instruments for the construction of the piece?

What did Harriet think about Mrs L taking away her chosen instrument? Any importance?

To what extent do ideas for sound, melody or structure come whilst approbating, rehearsing.

What gave S. the drumming rhythm? and what did it mean for the piece?

How important is peer teaching? and to what extent is it accepted? What is it most important for: new ideas, developing the piece, appropriating the piece….

Group 2:

What is the importance of the selecting ritual? Explain.

Are conflicts over the choice of instruments important? Why?

Are all ideas acceptable? What are the limits of the ideas? How farfetched can they be?

(Use H's idea as an example..)

Can ideas disappear after some time? Why and how?

Why did L. come up with the idea of speech? and why did H think it was a good idea?

Is everything OK when the end is OK?

Group 3:

How difficult is it to think of musical ideas? Is it ok to be given an idea from a peer?

How important is the teachers guidance? Is she sometimes in the way?

To what extent do they plan the whole piece, when and to what extent. What is important when planning the whole piece?

How important is leadership in a group? What makes a musical idea good?

Group 4:

How important are teacher input and assignment? Allowed to do something else then….

If an idea is suggested what makes it acceptable? What happened to T's idea?

How does a group function? Are some people more dominating then others? To what extent is this a problem for the creation of the composition?

Are you afraid to bring forward ideas? Suggestions?

Appendix 12: CD-Rom Contents (on request)

QuickTime files

Videos towards the very end of each group process containing performance of the piece created:

CGP 1: “The Sun” composed by Alexander, Linda, Cathy, Helge

CGP 2: Overture to “The Fox’s Widow” composed by Siri, Alexander, Linda, Roy, Cathy andTurid

CGP 3: Overture to “The Little Red Hen” composed by Helge, Irene, Lisa, Sigrun and Martin

CGP 4: “Rhythm Music 1” composed by Martin, Iselin, Harriet and Siri

CGP 5: “Rhythm Music 2” composed by Helge, Roy, Turid, Linda and Inga

CGP 6: “Rhythm Music 3” composed by Lisa, Carol, Ingvald, Eric and Siri

CGP 7: “Rhythm Music 4” composed by Alexander, Sigrun, Mary, Todd and Irene

Mp3 files

Audio files of performances for teacher and peers in class:

CGP 2: Overture to “The Fox’s Widow” composed by Siri, Alexander, Linda, Roy, Cathy and Turid

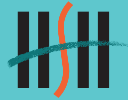
CGP 3: Overture to “The Little Red Hen” composed by Helge, Irene, Lisa, Sigrun and Martin

CGP 4: “Rhythm Music 1” composed by Martin, Iselin, Harriet and Siri

CGP 5: “Rhythm Music 2” composed by Helge, Roy, Turid, Linda and Inga

CGP 6: “Rhythm Music 3” composed by Lisa, Carol, Ingvald, Eric and Siri

CGP 7: “Rhythm Music 4” composed by Alexander, Sigrun, Mary, Todd and Irene



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"Compositional Process as Discourse and Interaction" is a study on *compositional processes* of pupils working in small groups in a public school music context.

The study describes and discusses the main elements of compositional processes, in what ways compositional processes develop, how they are structured and constructed and what the connections are between the musical pieces being created and the process of their creation.

This empirical study – inspired by phenomenological, ethnographic and socio-cultural theory – bases important parts of its findings on the use of ethnographic microanalysis of video footage. Findings suggest that significant events in the compositional processes can be identified in the form of *Circle episodes*, *Focus episodes*, *Breakthroughs* and *Blockages*, that small group compositional processes are highly relational and circular by nature and that generative activity, productive activity and communicative activity are major and equally important characteristics of compositional processes in school music.

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