Arts education in music classes
An exploratory study of current music education in Dutch secondary schools

Diana Codreanu
Arts education in music classes
An exploratory study of current music education in Dutch secondary schools

Master Thesis - Arts, Culture and Media
July 2015

Author: Diana Codreanu
Student Number: 2314649
Telephone Number: 06-29850708
Email Address: d.m.cojocaru@student.rug.nl

Master: Arts, Culture and Media;
Rijksuniversiteit Groningen
Arts Subject: Music
Specialization: Arts Education
Supervisors: prof. dr. B.P. (Barend) van Heusden;
           dr. J. (Jeroen) van Gessel
Table of Contents

1. Introduction ........................................................................................................................................................................... 5
   1.1 Motivation .......................................................................................................................................................................... 5
   1.2 Background & Problem ..................................................................................................................................................... 7
   1.3 Research question & Hypothesis ...................................................................................................................................... 10
   1.4 Relevance ......................................................................................................................................................................... 12

2. Theoretical Framework ............................................................................................................................................................ 13
   2.1 Central concepts ................................................................................................................................................................. 13
   2.1.1 Defining Art .................................................................................................................................................................... 13
   2.1.2 Art and Cognition ........................................................................................................................................................... 18
   2.1.3 Arts Education .............................................................................................................................................................. 23
   2.2 Music Education ................................................................................................................................................................. 28
   2.2.1 What do we mean by “music”? ....................................................................................................................................... 28
   2.2.2 Music Education as Arts Education .................................................................................................................................. 37

3. Methodology ........................................................................................................................................................................... 45
   3.1 Research Design ................................................................................................................................................................... 45
   3.2 Selection of the respondents ............................................................................................................................................... 48
   3.3 Measuring artistic education ............................................................................................................................................... 49
   3.4 Questionnaire design and pilot phase .................................................................................................................................. 53
   3.5 Reliability of the measuring instrument ............................................................................................................................ 54
### 4. Results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Results for Metacognition, Imagination and Medium</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comparison among teachers and their students</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Qualitative Data Results</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussion</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 5. Conclusion and Recommendations

| Acknowledgements            | 79   |
| Bibliography                | 80   |

| Appendix 1: Semi-structured interview                               | 83   |
| Appendix 2: Teachers Questionnaire                                  | 84   |
| Appendix 3: Students Questionnaire                                  | 90   |
“The ultimate value of life depends upon awareness and the power of contemplation rather than upon mere survival.”

(Aristotle)

1. Introduction

1.1 Motivation

The central idea behind this thesis was born out of my interest in cognition, music and music education in particular, drawing from the knowledge acquired on these subjects from the “Arts, Culture and Education” course that I attended during my Master’s degree studies, coupled with my personal experience in studying music and piano in school. The problems that I have noticed while studying the literature on the topic of arts education have fueled my interest in better understanding what is and what should arts education be, what are its inherent characteristics, how it can be identified, and on what grounds it could be assessed. The choice for focusing on music and music education derives from purely personal reasons that have to do with the fact that music is the art form which I am most familiar with, since I have studied music and piano myself (in both school and university, but also outside school) and it remained my hobby and passion to this day.

What I have noticed both from my school experience and from the literature on past research conducted in the field is that the main focus of music education is most of the times directed towards the acquisition of theoretical knowledge and the mastery of a particular musical instrument, be it violin, piano or the human voice itself. From what I have experienced, the assessment and examination usually focus on these same aspects as well, while neglecting to a notable extent the artistic dimension and value of this particular art subject. Thus, my general impression is that music education, at least at school level, is predominantly focusing on the
medium¹, the subject matter and the specific technical skills that are required for reading and performing music, and only to a very small extent on the art of music itself. Past research like that conducted by Harland and his colleagues (2000) on music education in UK secondary schools is one of the studies that supports this claim by indicating that the effects most often perceived in the case of music education are revolving around skill-based outcomes and knowledge specific to the art form (Harland, 2000, pg. 269). Another study conducted by Harland and Hetland (2008) on the effects of arts education in schools shows that 60% of the skills that students and teachers think are being acquired in arts classes is related to the medium (the specific art discipline, technique and practical skills), while 30% are associated to creativity and imagination and only 10% to meaning-making and metacognition.² Having experienced a similar approach to music teaching in Romanian education, I became interested in investigating whether the same situation is to be found in Dutch schools and to ultimately find out the extent to which Dutch students receive an (balanced) artistic education from/in their music classes. This research endeavor is therefore directed towards finding out whether the situation in Dutch secondary music schools is similar to those in UK as reported in Harland’s study. That is, if music classes are overly focused on theoretical knowledge and the development of skills specific to the art form to the detriment of other dimensions considered intrinsic to artistic education such as creative thinking and appreciation skills, the ability to explore and express meaning in art and/or through art, the use of imagination and self-exploration, reflection etc. In order to find an answer to this query we will proceed with investigating the teaching methods used by music teachers, the reasons for choosing them, the specific items and activities comprised in the curricula and the aims and expectations that motivate a particular chosen curriculum, teaching method or set of methods.

In conclusion, to put it in a nutshell, the central aim of this study is to determine whether school music classes indeed offer students an artistic education and not just some form of theoretical and technical training within an art field. In other words, this research aims at finding

¹ The word “medium” is used here with the sense of medium of communication (transmission and expression) that comprises tools such as the musical instruments (including human voice), the musical scores and other adjacent elements
² Metacognition is to be understood as cognition of cognition; the human cognitive capacity of self-reflection or self-consciousness
out to what extent music classes are offering secondary school students education in and through music. However, to be able to determine this we will first have to set up a clear and complete definition of what art(s) and arts education are and formulate a sound theory on the relationship between art and cognition³ that can be further used as a solid foundation for understanding and assessing arts education in schools. Building on this cognitive theory of art, we will be able to propose a model, or at least a set of guidelines, on what arts education should mean and should imply, particularly in the field of music, and subsequently develop an instrument for assessing it.

1.2 Background & Problem

What initially triggered my interest for this particular research subject and the study presented in this paper was the conclusion that I came to after a thorough overview of recent literature on music education, music education advocacy, and the effects that musical training appears to have on the cognitive development of individuals. What came to the fore was a strong emphasis on the cognitive skills fostered by music instruction, such as language skills (Koelsch 2004; Patel 2008), listening/reading abilities (Gromko 2005; Moreno et. al 2009), numeracy (Vaughn 2000), second language acquisition (Slecv 2006), visual-motor (Schlaug 2005) or mathematical and spatial-temporal abilities (Hetland 2000; Rauscher et. al 2000). The prevalence of scientific research studies that report positive effects of music instruction on performance in other academic subjects or on results in SAT or IQ tests (Schellenberg 2004) have turned out to be the main arguments used nowadays for justifying the place of music classes in the school curriculum. In fact a utilitarian approach towards music in relation to learning and education seems to be an old issue: more than 2500 years ago, Plato claimed that “music is a more potent instrument than any other for education, and children should be taught music before anything

³ By cognition we refer to all the mental processes involved in acquiring and manipulating information or knowledge (e.g. perception, analysis, remembering, problem-solving, etc.). In our future references to human cognition we will also consider the fact that its key characteristic which clearly distinguishes our species from other organisms consists in humans’ capacity to experience a difference between memory and actuality which allows them to decouple from the “here and now” and retrieve information (memories) outside the situation or reality they are facing at a certain moment in time (Donald 2001).
In fact, I have noticed that not only music education, but arts education in general is facing this same problem of apparently lacking the means to justify and impose itself as a core subject within school curricula because of this focus on its utilitarian or catalytic character among the other curriculum subjects. While this badge suffices to some extent advocacy demands by providing valid and sometimes quite captivating arguments and reasons for securing arts’ place (and that of music in particular) in the general school curriculum, this still doesn’t do justice to arts education. Arts education has for a long time been regarded as less intellectually demanding than the scientific curriculum subjects (mathematics, physics, biology, etc.) and thus of a lesser status, inferior or low standing within general education, a Western bias that Efland (2002, ch. 1) has opposed to in his book on integrating visual arts in the curriculum. However, after various theories of cognitive development like those of Piaget, Vygotsky, Gardner or Bloom have succeeded in establishing the fact that all school subjects are cognitive in nature and the arts make no exception, the problem shifts to another area: what are the specific cognitive potentials of each subject and what does each of them have to offer in terms of cognitive development? Moreover, maybe the most important question here is: What could be the unique contributions that a particular curriculum subject can make to cognition, contributions that cannot be acquired from any of the other subjects? What is missing in music education advocacy is the identification of the unique importance and contribution of music itself- and this may be extended to all other forms of arts (artistic) education like the visual arts, dance or drama- as a specific and essential part of children’s education. In the end, what do students become good at, or in, because they study the arts and not something else? What are the benefits of educating young people in the arts and then, what is arts education? A partial answer to this question can be derived from the research undertaken by Harland, Kinder, Loord, Stott, Schagen and Haynes (2000) in the UK, which has brought a substantial contribution to the understanding of the outcomes, effects and benefits that arts education seems to exert on pupils within the secondary cycle of education. We will use their research as an inspiration and a starting point for devising the methodology for our own research by looking at their findings and conclusions on what

---

“good/effective arts education” is in order to formulate a basic definition of arts education and subsequently music education for our theoretical framework.

Summary

In the context of a global economic crisis the governments’ attempts at cutting funding for arts education call for a more concerted and convincing advocacy for the place of art subjects in the school curricula. As far as music is concerned, we have previously illustrated that much of its current advocacy relies on findings provided by studies from neuroscience and psychology that point to the aforementioned cognitive abilities developed through musical training and their transfer to other domains. Music is therefore promoted rather as a catalyst for the development and enhancement of certain cognitive skills required and targeted by other curriculum subjects. However, it should be acknowledged that this emphasis on the effects of musical training on the overall academic development of children and students isn’t in fact supporting music education as a particular and unique branch within arts education, but rather as some kind of an aid within general education. I believe this weakness or difficulty in promoting and advocating music education (and arts education in general) for what it actually is—based on what it means and what it can offer to human beings that is unique compared to other disciplines like science, sports or linguistics—is rooted in an underlying, more acute problem: the lack of a clear understanding and definition of both concepts of art (and music respectively) and arts education (and music education) that can be generally agreed upon.

Therefore, providing a relevant definition for art that would take a cognitive perspective in the same time would help us shed some light on what arts education actually aims at. Since, in the end, education operates with cognition (learning itself is a cognitive function) and its underlying processes, a cognitive perspective seems a reasonable approach towards a better understanding of what arts education actually involves in term of thinking processes and how it is functioning at the level of the human mind. By focusing on how the human mind works and addressing it according to its “laws” in what our teaching practice is concerned, we could design more efficient educational strategies. Moreover, looking at arts education in terms of its
underpinning cognitive mechanisms will further offer us a much clearer perspective on how to evaluate arts education within music classes and decide whether the music taught in schools is in accordance with the established goals and standards of arts education.

1.3 Research question & Hypothesis

Having stressed the importance of identifying the unique contribution that studying the arts (and music in particular) has to bring to general education, we have proceeded with addressing the issue of defining the concept of art(s) (and subsequently music) education in the second chapter of this thesis, concerning the theoretical framework. After researching the existent theories and cognitive approaches to these topics, we have set out a general definition of the arts that further allows us to understand what arts education should ultimately be about. Defining art(s) as the unique combination of three specific elements—imagination, metacognition and a medium of expression— we were able to conclude that arts education should have to offer education in each of these subjects. The question that follows is whether this is also what happens in schools. If we look at music, one of the arts subjects studied in schools, what type of education are students receiving in music classes? Is it also arts education? This is what we are setting off to examine in this research.

In the end, the purpose of our research comes down to finding the answer to the following main research question:

*Do music classes offer arts education to students?*

As previously outlined, we will first have to shed some light on what is actually meant by art(s) and arts education and what are the main goals and standards of this particular type of education. After establishing these “coordinates”, we will be able to proceed towards an empirical investigation of the way in which music, as a particular form of arts education, is being taught now in schools, touching upon the main strands comprised in the music curricula and the main teaching methods used at the moment in music classes within Dutch secondary schools. We
will also explore music teachers’ views and understandings of arts education and music education in particular. Moreover, we will also touch upon the subject of teaching and learning to play an instrument and what this means and involves, whether the way it is currently taught reflects the parameters of arts education, or represents, rather, a form of training in certain technical or dexterous skills as Ronald Thomas (1970) calls them, skills that are in the end similar to the type of training offered by other curriculum subjects, such as sports classes for example.

We will finally try to formulate an answer to the research question mentioned above by analyzing the answers obtained through quantitative and qualitative research on several secondary questions like:

a) Is there a balanced focus on the three main components of arts education as established in our theoretical framework?

b) Are the “medium-specific” elements more present in the teaching practice than metacognition- and imagination- specific dimensions?

My expectation (hypothesis), based upon personal experience and a review of the relevant literature (see pg. 6) is that music courses are predominantly, if not exclusively, focusing on teaching students music literacy, theoretical knowledge and craftsmanship (Regelski 2002) – what would be considered in this thesis as coming under the umbrella term of “medium-specific” elements– instead of equally addressing and instructing students on matters that belong to the artistic side of music, a side that encompasses cognitive processes like imagination and metacognition. In order to be able to test the hypothesis mentioned above, we have to determine first the meanings of the variables that it comprises. Therefore, it is of primary importance to establish a common ground regarding what is understood by art and arts education. Since ultimately education is in fact dealing with cognition, particularly the cognitive mechanisms that underlie learning and thinking in school, it turns out that a useful approach would be to address and define art from a cognitive perspective.
1.4 Relevance

1. **Scientific**

This research offers a comprehensive, clear and up-to-date picture of the current praxis and aims of music education in Dutch secondary schools. It provides an overview on how efficient music classes are in offering students arts education. It also offers an instrument for assessing the level of balance among the basic components of artistic education applied to music instruction that could be used as a starting point and further refined within future research. This study can also add up to the previous findings of the research conducted by Harland et. al (2000) on artistic education in secondary schools, its effects and effectiveness; their findings with respect to music education in UK schools could eventually be corroborated with the situation observed in the Netherlands and thereby contribute to future insights on this subject. Moreover, based on the findings brought out by this research, we will hopefully contribute to filling in the gap between artistic formation and technical instruction, which can subsequently assist in raising the quality and status of music education. Hence, this research could be used as a tool for improving the music curriculum within general secondary education, but it could also serve as a tool for the empirical study of arts education practices.

2. **Social**

On a social level, this research can contribute to a better understanding of what music means to our children’s education and personal development, to their cultural awareness and broad-mindedness in relation to other cultures. Based on the results of this study, we can understand how far our current music education still is from accomplishing these objectives which seem to be essential for an education in the arts. Such skills are becoming increasingly important for the development of the 21st century individual who, in our contemporary globalized era, is inevitably expected to understand and embrace his global citizenship and his place in this increasingly multicultural environment.
2. Theoretical Framework

2.1 Central concepts

Before embarking on an exploration of the concept and meaning of art and its relationship with cognition, we should first establish from the outset that the concept of art will be used in this thesis as encompassing not only the visual arts (drawing, painting, photography, sculpture, architecture) as it is usually used, but also the so-called performing arts (music, theatre, dance). Thus the term art can, and will also refer to music. Moreover, the term art will be used here interchangeably with the term arts. In other words, we will not take into account the distinction that is usually made between these two concepts and terms, since we will instead be focusing on, and referring to the distinction between the artistic and non-artistic domains.

2.1.1 Defining Art

“It is self-evident that nothing concerning art is self-evident anymore.” (Adorno 1998, p.1)

Defining the complex concept of art has turned out to be a thorny and controversial issue throughout the ages. Though philosophers, scholars and art theoreticians have proposed many definitions over the course of time, it seems that this concept continues to be very difficult to capture in theory and particularly to define through an all-inclusive formula that could be universally agreed upon. However, taking a closer look at the various types of theories and definitions that were attributed in the past to art, would certainly help us get a firmer grip on this concept and better understand its elusive nature.

Starting with the very early definitions, both Plato and Aristotle, two of the greatest philosophers of ancient Greece, characterized art as imitation (mimesis) of reality, everyday experiences and objects (Torres & Kamhi 2000, pg. 28). Thus, based on its mimetic nature, art can be defined as a form of representation that employs various media (e.g. color, clay, sound etc.). From this perspective, the first impression that a work of art makes to the observer is that it
resembles reality to a great extent (it looks real). While Plato considered art as an imperfect copy of reality, Aristotle looked deeper into the expressive function of art and stated that “the aim of art is to represent not the outward appearance of things, but their inward significance”. In this sense, art is to be seen as more than a mere imitation of aspects from reality based on the dexterity or craftsmanship\(^5\) possessed by the artist, but rather as an activity of the soul. The work of art offers a unique view or experience of reality, capturing the essence of things and bringing to the fore a different, transformed and richer content. Therefore art is not limited to the contemplation of an artefact but expands into a reflective experience that is enabled by the specific way in which an artist or viewer is positioning himself or herself in relation to the artefact (be it an experience \textit{with} or achieved \textit{through} the artefact). As American philosopher and psychologist John Dewey (1934, p. 298) put it many centuries later (19\(^{\text{th}}\) century), the work of art forms “an experience as an experience”\(^6\).

Moving from the ancient Athenian view to modern\(^7\) philosophy, we encounter the philosopher Immanuel Kant who characterized the aesthetic judgment as “a kind of representation that is purposive in itself and, though without an end, nevertheless promotes the cultivation of the mental powers for sociable communication” (Kant 2000, pg. 185). Kant separated art from the work of art, its content and subject matter and related the concept of art to the aesthetic experience it generates. His perspective emphasizes the intentional nature of the act of creating art and points to the characteristic communicative purpose of art that stems from the artist’s motivation of expressing his emotions, thoughts, and observations of the surrounding world. Kant is also considered to have initiated the formalist theory of aesthetics and art according to which the form (e.g. the rhythm and harmony in music, the color and lines in visual art) is what is relevant in understanding art and not necessarily its content or its practical significance. Although Kant (2000, pg. 106) argues that the judgment of beauty is enabled by the

\(^5\) Craftsmanship stands here for the use of skill to achieve an artistic result

\(^6\) Or according to philosopher-novelist Ayn Rand’s aesthetic theory, “art is a selective re-creation of reality according to an artist’s metaphysical value-judgments” (Torres & Kamhi 2000, pg. 27).

\(^7\) In the period sense
"mere form of purposiveness in the representation through which an object is given to us" and stresses that the beauty of an object should concern its form and not its matter, it is still not clear if Kant should be considered a formalist or not. Nevertheless, his philosophy outlined in the third Critique in which form is identified as the essential aspect of beauty and beautiful or fine art has been seen as the originator of the formalist aesthetic movement. These types of theories and definitions that are mainly based on one particular property—be it the expressive, formal, representational or mimetic dimensions of art—are commonly known as traditional definitions of art.

In contrast to the aforementioned traditional views that define art according to one specific property or function that is considered to be definitive to art, there were also formulated the so-called conventionalist theories that distinguish themselves by denying art’s essential connection to aesthetic, formal, expressive or other specific properties. Among the conventionalist theories we can distinguish a synchronic view first enunciated by George Dickie in 1969, which later became known as the institutional definition of art. According to Dickie, “a work of art in the classificatory sense is an artifact a set of the aspects of which had conferred upon it the status of candidate for appreciation by some person or persons acting on behalf of a certain social institution (the artworld)” (Davies 2001, pg. 172). However, this highly controversial definition limits art to whatever a certain group of privileged people or authorized members of the “artworld” choose to consider as being art, ruling out everything else that stands outside an institutionalized context. Moreover, it fails to tell us on what grounds these select few judge and decide to qualify certain works as art. Such conventionalist theories were however challenged by modernist artists that pushed these theories to the limits, while completely defying the aesthetic and other traditional dimensions that have been for so long attached to art and artworks. An illustrative example is Marcel Duchamp’s urinal entitled ‘Fountain’ and exhibited at the dawn of the 20th century within a public exhibition in the U.S (Torres & Kamhi 2000, pg. 13).

8 In the case of the visual arts, Kant attributes beauty to design rather than to color; in music he claims that beauty is derived not from particular agreeable tones, but from the spatial and temporal arrangement of tones perceived in the composition

9 The verb “to challenge” is used here with the sense of provoking (through appeal to exaggeration or reductio ad absurdum), testing or pushing the limits of something
Duchamp had deliberately chosen this porcelain urinal for its lack of aesthetic features and thereby tried to suggest that in the end art is what the artist chooses to display as such in an institutionally accepted environment (a museum, exhibition or venue).

A decade later, criticizing the institutional theory of art, Jerrold Levinson proposes in fact a similarly controversial and problematic definition: his historical theory of art rests upon the idea that, in order for something to be(come) art, it must relate to other existing works of art. For Levinson, "a work of art is a thing intended for regard-as-a-work-of-art: regard in any of the ways works of art existing prior to it have been correctly regarded" (Davies 2001, pg. 174). Here, the historical element is supposed to replace the concept of artworld. In other words, an artwork has to stand in an appropriate art-historical relation to some set of earlier artworks, its status of artwork being thus dependent on the authority of its artistic forebears. Similar to Duchamp’s challenge to conventionalist definitions of art, a famous dilemma regarding the definition of music confronts Levinson’s historical theory through John Cage’s famous composition titled 4'33". The written score has three movements and gives indications to the performer(s) as to when to appear on stage, to indicate by gesture or other means when the piece begins without making use of any sounds and also mark the sections and the end of the “musical piece” by gestures. (Torres & Kamhi 2000, pg. 220). Besides Cage’s experimentation with silence, more experimental and challenging artistic practices have continued to defy traditional and conventionalist definitions of music and art in general by the turn of the 21st century onwards. Movements like conceptual art and minimalism along with the emergence of various new media have pushed the limits of these theories and definitions and questioned the already established essential attributes of the arts.

The limitations of the early definitions have obviously entailed a large number of critical reactions among theoreticians and philosophers in the field, thereby bringing even more confusion to the delicate issue of defining art. Moreover, a lot of uncertainty regarding this concept derives from the lack of clear delimitation between its various facets when engaging with such definitions. In this sense, art is used in common language with multiple meanings: it is sometimes used to designate the process of creating a work of art (by an artist), while other times to designate the artifact itself which is in fact the result of that process.
There is however also the perspective in which art is considered to be the very process or experience enabled by the artwork in the receiver (viewer, reader or listener) and in this case we are probably dealing with yet another process of creating but on a rather different level– we could call it “co-creation”: the process of deriving meaning from an artwork while the artwork is merely fulfilling the role of a stimulus meant to enable certain emotions, thoughts and ideas in the receiver by engaging his imagination. In this case art becomes what the receiver makes or creates out of or with the artwork in a very personal and unique way that combines the individual’s own experiences, perspectives and imagination with the material created and put forth by the artist. Such a perspective on the nature of art attempts to go beyond the ambiguities resulting from the various aforementioned aspects that it encompasses or seems to be reduced to, such as boiling down the concept of art to the mere process of producing or creating artistic experiences and artworks, or reducing art to its communicative dimension or to the very status, attribute or quality conferred to certain objects or phenomena. This perspective is rather oriented towards the cognitive foundations of what we call art. Moreover, exploring art by adopting a cognitive perspective can bring us closer to the underlying mechanisms of what we call and what we want to teach as art. In the next section we will therefore take a brief look at some of the existent cognitive perspectives on art that were offered by distinguished scholars like Arthur Efland and Merlin Donald, while the focal point and theoretical foundation for this research will be based on Barend van Heusden’s cognitive theory of art.
2.1.2 Art and Cognition

“We need to accept the fact that there are things in life that defy verbal explanation. This is the very reason for the existence of art. These spiritual and powerful forces in life, like love, God, honor, and truth, demand a means of expression that go beyond words. Poetry, art, sculpture, music, all make us more fully human by enabling us to explore human experiences that defy verbal description”.

(Stuber 2000, p.29)

In ‘Art and the Cognitive Mind’ (2006), the psychologist and cognitive neuroscientist Merlin Donald has focused on the link between human cognition and (the concept of) art. He starts with the idea that mimesis played a crucial role in cognitive evolution prior to the development of language and symbolic thought in humans. By mimesis Donald refers to an intentional way of representing reality through nonlinguistic means such as body movements and hand gestures, facial expressions or inarticulate sounds.\(^{10}\)

Further in his book, Donald argues that art is rooted in the cognitive evolution of our species:

“Art is an activity that arises in the context of human cultural and cognitive evolution. Its sources include not only the most abstract integrative regions of the brain but also the communities of mind within which artists and audiences live. The interaction of these sources creates complex cultural-cognitive domains, which are reflected in art. Art and artists are active players in the coevolution of culture and cognition” (Donald 2006).

Moreover, Donald (2006) presents a set of seven principles that according to him govern art. The first principle states that art should be regarded as a carefully engineered cognitive process because of its deliberate aim to influence the minds of the audiences. Secondly, art is always created in the context of distributed cognition, culture representing a massive distributed

\(^{10}\) Donald distinguishes though very clearly this type of representation from either mimicry or imitation, which attempt to literally copy or duplicate things; in turn, he emphasizes that mimesis "re-enacts and re-presents an event or relationship" in a nonliteral way.
cognitive network which provides links between numerous minds. A third principle of art, according to Donald, lies in its constructivist nature: it favors the elaboration of mental models and worldviews, humans tending to integrate their knowledge and experiences into single abstract percepts. Another characteristic put forth by Donald is the metacognitive nature of art, metacognition referring here to the human capacity of self-reflection or self-consciousness at an individual and societal level. In this sense, art represents a collective vehicle for self-reflection; therefore art may be seen as an instrument in defining different cultural periods, such as, for example, the Italian paintings depicting the state of consciousness that dominated in the Renaissance. Furthermore, given that technology determines the type of networks that artists can create, art may be thought of as a “technology-driven aspect of cognition”. This aspect emphasizes the idea that art relies heavily on tools or media for its creation. As a final principle, Donald believes that art differentiates itself from other domains through the cognitive character of its intended outcome. This specific outcome is meant to influence the state of mind of art consumers or receptors, rather than to assure a specific physical or functional use.

Donald (2006, pg. 5) states that “ultimately, art derives from the innate human capacity for self-observation”, being the result of the deepest and most ancient forms of human expression: mimesis. I would add here that music, as a particular form of art, is a defining trait of our species: it is universal to human beings and unique to human minds. The relationship between music and the brain is a very old interest, going back to the time of Plato, a philosopher who manifested a great admiration and interest for music and its effects on people.

Similarly, in Art and cognition: Integrating the visual arts in the curriculum (2002), Arthur Efland expresses his view on art by formulating a set of four main features provided by art, namely: cognitive flexibility, integration of knowledge, imagination and aesthetic argument. By cognitive flexibility, Efland refers to one’s capacity to apply prior knowledge to real-world situations, in other words, to use the acquired knowledge in contexts that are different from those

---

11 Cognitive archeologist Steven Mithen (2007) has written a book on this subject called ‘The Singing Neanderthals: the Origins of Music, Language, Mind and Body’, drawing together information from a wide range of fields (from archaeology and anthropology to psychology, neuroscience and musicology) in an effort to support with scientific evidence the theory of humans’ shared musical heritage
in which it was initially learned. He also discusses the so-called ill-structured and complex character of art as opposed to the other curriculum subjects. This differentiation is centered on the very structure of a subject that subsequently imposes a type of either convergent or divergent thinking. When producing and interpreting an artwork, humans engage in divergent thinking which allows them to adopt different judgments and standpoints of which none is the absolutely correct one. On the other hand, well-structured subjects require convergent thinking, which involves solving well-defined, rational problems that have one correct answer. Efland’s second argument, the integration of knowledge, addresses the significant role that the context in which a work of art was created plays in understanding that particular artwork: “the interpretation of works of art draws strength from knowledge in collateral domains, enabling the learner to understand the context of the work” (Efland 2002). The next feature that Efland links to art is imagination, a characteristic which he sees as “essential to our rational capacity to find significant connections, draw inferences, and solve problems”. As an imaginative operation, the metaphor connects objects or ideas that are apparently unrelated and is considered the basis of imaginative thinking. Efland claims that metaphor is the principle object of study in the arts, the only field where “it can be explored in full consciousness” and where it also becomes the object of inquiry. The metaphoric imagination is seen as a cognitive tool that makes possible the generation of strategies for the transfer of domain-specific knowledge into the learner's knowledge base. To Efland, a worthwhile arts curriculum should focus on the transfer of contextual experience into abstract ideas, much of which is usually realized through metaphoric projection. Finally, Efland’s aesthetic argument “establishes the point that perceptually vivid aesthetic encounters in the arts have educative value” but they are certainly not the point of art.

While all these guidelines, principles and characteristics that both Donald and Efland have attached to the concept of art are indeed valuable and obviously contribute to a better understanding of this subject, there is however the need for a concise, clear, comprehensive and unified theory of art in order to come to a firmer grip on its operationalization. Such a theory needs to clarify what arts education should involve more concretely, it should ensure a correct and precise application of its principles in the education practice and facilitate its policy-making. I believe such a theory is already available:
According to Barend Van Heusden, art is not a homogenous entity, but a complex and multifaceted cognitive process, unique in its combination of cognitive strategies. The three constitutive elements that he identifies as defining art are: imagination, metacognition and the expression or representation through a certain medium. Thus, art may be seen as the process of imaginative self-reflection or metacognition that is represented or expressed through a certain medium. In his speech given on the Eurocities conference on October 28th, 2011 in Antwerp, Barend van Heusden explained that while each of these three defining elements is to be found and developed in other domains as well, what makes art distinct is their specific combination.

For instance, imagination is a problem-solving strategy used in almost any aspect of our lives: we have to use our imagination in order to read a book or, for example, to come up with solutions to certain situations or to create new products in general. Therefore, imagination is not unique or specific to art, but it can be also employed and developed in fields like science, technology, medicine and so on. Secondly, the process of metacognition, which van Heusden (2012) defines as “simply a matter of recursivity, of remembering and recognizing”, is also not unique to art, but it is shared with other domains like history, politics, mass media, philosophy or religion. However, what is specific about the metacognitive dimension of art is that the work of art is in fact giving a form to this self-consciousness through the use of imagination and a specific expression within a given medium. The medium that van Heusden refers to is, in this sense, considered a “bearer of culture”, a means of expressing self-reflection on a personal or collective level. The medium may encompass a multitude of things: the human body itself in dance or drama or one’s own hands when working with different materials; in the same time the very materials may be considered medium, as well as the tools used in editing those materials (pencil, paining brush, musical instruments or the voice).

“Human culture needs, and is dependent on media. No culture exists in a vacuum. The first medium that was available was the body – the sensory apparatus and the brain –, but imagination came with artifacts, and language is the medium with which conceptual abstraction came into existence. Much later, the invention of graphic symbols propelled the capacity for analytical thought.” (Heusden 2012)
Therefore, the four types of media that van Heusden distinguishes are: the human body (sound, movement), the artifacts (instruments, objects), language (words) and the graphic symbols (drawings, writing, photography, film). Thus, a musician will express himself through a medium\textsuperscript{12} such as the musical instrument or the staff, while a painter will use the canvas and colors as media of representation; a dancer will use his or her body and a writer, the language. However, again, the use of media is not unique to art. They are widely used in other aspects of culture, in technology and so on. In art, the artist must first master the medium in order to be able to successfully express his self-consciousness by using it. As Balázs Havasi, a modern classical music pianist and composer asserted, “Virtuosity means masterly perfection, the highest degree of artistic skills. It is a special state where the artist overcomes technical difficulties without extra effort to fully indulge in the joy of music making”. However, arts education seems to focus very much on this one dimension of art to the detriment of the other two, which might be at least equally important. And this might happen mainly because the technical skills required for the mastery of the medium are easier to teach and assess, but also because they may be the most rewarding for pupils and students that can derive great satisfaction from creating art or performing in music’s case (Harland 2000). Nevertheless, since art is ultimately yet another form of self-consciousness (like culture for example) making use of imagination through the manipulation of a specific medium of expression, arts education as a branch of general education shouldn’t be overly focused on the latter through a higher emphasis on developing students’ specific artistic literacy and their mastery of technical skills, neither should it aim at training students for a professional pathway in the artistic world, but rather its main goal should consist in laying a foundation that offers students a solid insight into what art and its specific forms imply, mean and do to people. Moreover, it should help students to understand its value within their personal lives and in society, along with the possibilities it may offer. Therefore a balanced curriculum that gives as equal as possible attention to students’ capacity of engaging in metacognitive processes and thereby constructing a world view involved in the production and contemplation of art works is needed. Along with learning the “alphabet” of a specific art form and the rules that govern its practice, the students should learn to a comparable extent how to

\textsuperscript{12} Again, according to van Heusden the term “medium” is used in this context with the meaning of “bearer of culture” or medium of expression and, in this sense, it is not limited to sound (which is usually considered as the characteristic ‘medium’ of music).
make sense of it, how to use their creativity when engaging with it and how to relate to it at a personal level. The purpose of arts education is thus not only to provide students with knowledge specific to art works and art processes, but also to teach them about the effects that these objects and processes have on the receiver, namely a process of reflection on reality and on him- or herself. Arts education should thus be to the same degree education in production and reception of art and also reflection with or through art.

2.1.3 Arts Education

"The arts provide a more comprehensive and insightful education because they invite students to explore the emotional, intuitive, and irrational aspects of life that science is hard pressed to explain." (Charles Fowler)

Based on the theories outlined in the previous chapter, it would seem that a veritable/genuine/effective arts education teaches students not only how to master a specific medium by focusing on the technical and theoretical skills it requires, but also takes into account the students’ development of artistic or cultural self-consciousness. Skills should perhaps not be taught in and of themselves as separate entities, but as a means of expressing and creatively giving form to inner thoughts and experiences. The idea that technique should occupy an important place within arts education without in fact dominating it is also strongly echoed in the specialized literature as it is very well reviewed in a study by Steve Seidel and his colleagues’ (Seidel 2009, pg. 21). In an extensive research study by the Harvard Project Zero team in the United States, Seidel (2009) and his colleagues examined the fundamental purpose(s) of arts education and how its quality and excellence is envisioned, defined, measured and pursued in arts education, by conducting interviews with arts educators and leading arts practitioners, theorists and administrators, and also through site visits to exemplary arts programs across the country, all of these in conjunction with a thorough review of published literature in the field. In the 2nd chapter of their report, the quality of arts education that constitutes the central focus of this study is strongly linked to the various purposes attributed to arts education as articulated by
the educators and experts in the field that were interviewed. According to their findings, arts education tends to serve a sum of multiple purposes. This myriad of purposes was organized in their report in seven broad clusters that we will take as a reference for our discussion. The clusters are represented through the following statements:

1. **Arts education should foster broad dispositions and skills, especially the capacity to think creatively and the capacity to make connections.**

   In this sense, students should be stimulated in arts classes to come up with ideas beyond the obvious, to interpret complex information, to reflect critically, to open their minds to multiple possibilities, to make connections between diverse topics and experiences by reenvisioning or re-composing information through imagination and metaphorical thinking.

2. **Arts education should teach artistic skills and techniques without making these primary.**

   As argued before in previous chapters, arts education should help students develop artistic skills and techniques in order to enable them to participate in an art form, but this shouldn’t be a primary purpose or focus in teaching. It should rather be an instrumental purpose that could contribute in achieving a larger one— that of meaning-making; students should be taught the fundamentals of reading musical notes in order to play music or the fundamentals of drawing in order to paint. An interesting approach to this suggested by one of the art educators included in the study by Seidel et al (2009, pg. 15) is to rather start from the meaning and then move to elements (form, theory, techniques), rather than the other way around.

3. **Arts practices should provide ways of pursuing understanding of the world.**

   Through art, students should learn to make sense of themselves and the culture they live in, as well as to understand, construct, analyze or explore their personal identities. As van Heusden put it, “art is a mirror of our life – of our collective lives, but also of our personal lives and of life in general“. Thus, the purpose of arts education “is not to induct
individuals into the world of the professional fine arts community. Rather, its purpose is to enable individuals to find meaning in the world of art for life in the everyday world” (Efland 2002).

4. Arts education should provide a way for students to engage with community, civic, and social issues.
   Within arts education students should explore and experience empathy, learn to respect others’ opinions and preferences, realize the interdependence existent in a society and its members’ capacity to enrich each other’s experiences through the use of the arts. Students should become aware of the great possibilities that artistic expression and creation can offer them to bring change or raise certain issues within society or the smaller social communities that they are involved in.

5. Arts education should provide a venue for students to express themselves.
   Maybe one of the main purposes of arts education consists of making available to students a unique form of communication and self-expression that goes beyond the verbal or literal language. The arts should provide students with ways of accessing and acknowledging dimensions within themselves and within others that they couldn’t otherwise, things that cannot be expressed adequately with words and that escape verbal forms of communication. This expressive aspect of art offers students more possibilities of expressing themselves but also understanding themselves and human nature. As Bennett Reimer points out, the act of creating art is not simply an act of self-expression but most of the times it enables and involves preliminary self-exploration through the various steps of the creative process. In this sense, arts education should help students discover themselves and not only express, but also mold their identities and link them to those of others across space and time.

6. Arts education should help students develop as individuals.
   To some extent, the fifth purpose of arts education expounded above is interrelated with this sixth one. Self-expression and self-exploration, through the expressive phenomenon intrinsic to art, are contributing to the process of students’ development as individuals.
Engaging with the arts does offer a peculiar way of self-development by stimulating students’ imagination, self-awareness and self-esteem and thereby shaping their outlook on life and their way of seeing themselves and others around them.

7. **Arts education should develop aesthetic awareness.**

Another important aspect that should be addressed and exemplified in art classes is the distinction between art and beauty. Though beauty plays an important role in artistic cognition, students should understand that “what turns cognition into artistic cognition are not its aesthetic qualities” (Heusden 2012). A work of art shouldn’t be necessarily beautiful, but rather meaningful to the receiver. Thus, from an arts education perspective, instead of setting out with the objective of being able to appreciate which painting or piece of music is good, the student should rather be encouraged and guided towards finding out what that particular work of art is good for or what horizons does it open up to him or her. To go even further, a work of art should enable the student’s process of self-reflection by matching his consciousness. Here, I would like to stress the importance that music education should give to the choice and elaboration of the repertoire. An important issue that music educators should take into consideration, though many of them might be doing this already, is to integrate in the repertoire works of art that match their students’ culture and consciousness, music that they can relate to. I believe that the current inordinate focus on the Western classical music canon and tradition might not attain the effects and outcomes that arts education aims at. I assume that a significant number of children and adolescents cannot relate to the music of the 18th or 19th century as much as they might relate to

---

13 According to Encyclopedia Britannica, *aesthetics* is defined as the philosophical study of beauty and taste which “deals not only with the nature and value of the arts but also with those responses to natural objects that find expression in the language of the beautiful and the ugly”.

14 This idea can also be found in Ayn Rand’s esthetic theory (Torres & Kamhi 2000, pg. 57). Rand clarifies this issue by introducing a distinction between what she calls *aesthetic judgment* and *aesthetic response*. The first is the evaluation of an artwork based on different concrete reasons (visual or acoustic harmony, technique, profound meaning etc.), while the latter refers to one’s spontaneous emotional reaction towards an artwork that is not preceded by a conscious judgment process. In this sense, one may appreciate a work of art event though one doesn’t necessarily like it, or one might also love a particular artwork and prefer it over others while recognizing that it is surpassed by the greatness of other works.
contemporary pop music for example, or at least not without understanding other aspects of the culture that created that music.

Returning to the idea that art doesn’t have to be beautiful, I would go further and stress that art has to mirror life and culture and that means that art can encompass and re-create the whole spectrum of life’s and culture’s aspects: from the most beautiful and enchanting, to the most unpleasant and disturbing experiences. Concluding, a highly important objective in arts education should be to teach students the difference between aesthetic (judgment) and artistic value and to help them think in these terms when faced with or engaged in an artistic experience.

In my opinion, an effective model for teaching arts education, and music education in particular, would be to ensure an instruction on all four cognitive levels that van Heusden (2012) identified as the basic cognitive strategies engaged in human cognition. These are:

1. Perception (hearing, feeling, seeing)
2. Imagination (finding new possibilities by manipulating memories, decoupling from reality)
3. Conceptualization (attaching concepts to new experiences)
4. Analysis (analyzing a piece in terms of its constituting structure)

Arts education should not, however, only take into account the four cognitive strategies mentioned above, but also combine them with the development in students of the capacity for (self-) consciousness, or metacognition. A good arts education curriculum should therefore integrate training in personal and collective self-perception, self-imagination, selfconceptualization and self-analysis. Moreover, arts education should not imply simply education in one specific skill (e.g. painting or singing) but in three distinct skills: the skill of metacognition (self-consciousness or self-awareness), the skill of imagination (and its use within creating or performing activities) and the skill of manipulating one or more media (sound, color, words etc.). If art is the goal, the emphasis shouldn’t fall too much or even exclusively on one of these elements, but it should rather be relatively balanced among them because the function
metacognition (awareness, self-awareness and reflection on something), the method
imagination and the means − medium are equally important in the process of artistic practice
and the equation of arts education.

2.2 Music Education

“It is not easy to determine the nature of music or why anyone should have a knowledge of it.”
(Aristotle)

2.2.1 What do we mean by “music”?

If we are to take into discussion music education, then we must deal first with music itself
and what it actually represents in human culture and life. A clear view regarding music’s nature,
values and roles within our societies might contribute to an adequate approach towards the goals
of teaching music. In other words, a viable philosophy and a robust position towards music
education is molded by the conceptualization of music’s nature itself.

Everyone has an idea about what music is. Though, if pressed for a definition, people
seem to be faced with a rather complicated task at hand. Different cultures have different
understandings about music and its nature: some people cannot conceive music apart from
activities such as ceremonies, rituals or other important events, their concept of music being
inherently different from cultures like our own. At the same time there are also cultures (like
Persian and middle-eastern Muslim societies) that explicitly distinguish religious singing from
other types of musical activities, the label “music” being attributed mostly to instrumental music
and the science or art of music. The concept of music differs from one culture to the other and
there are even cultures that don’t have a specific word in their language to refer to the

---

phenomenon that is generally understood in Western cultures as “music”. According to ethnomusicologists, many African societies don’t have any specific term for music in their languages, although some may have the concept, while most Native American languages don’t have a generic word, such as “music”, that would encompass the whole spectrum of their musical activities (Nettl 2005). Thus, music may mean different things and may fulfill different functions within people’s lives depending on the culture we’re looking at. It seems then that music is intimately linked to culture and thereby highly variable and unstable as a concept, which apparently makes it hard to grasp in a scientific explanation or theorization. As Nicholas Cook (1998) put it, “music is a very small word to encompass something that takes as many forms as there are cultural and subcultural identities”.

Yet, the work of ethnologists points out that music remains a universal human competence. People from all over the world, pertaining to different races and societies – from the most highly developed to the most primitive ones – do make music (or what most musicologists would identify as music) in one way or another, which suggests that music is in fact a defining characteristic of humankind. This being said, music then should be a fairly definable concept at least to some extent, in a broad sense that wouldn’t interfere with or stumble upon the particular variations and appropriations specific to each culture’s music, but would rather be based upon the common characteristics that are shared among all of these forms of music. Such a basic and generic definition justified by the pervasiveness of music practice in humans’ lives should be addressing the common traits that are to be found on a universal level, in all the world’s “musics”. One such trait, among several more, that appears to apply to almost all musics is proposed by Ian Cross (2001) in his study on music, cognition, culture and evolution. That is “a level of temporal organization that is regular and periodic, sometimes called the tactus. It is taken to correspond to the regular points in the music where one would tap one’s foot or clap along.” Cross emphasizes though that even if this temporal organization appears to be genuinely universal, it may still be susceptible to cultural differentiation. To exemplify, Cross mentions a case when listeners pertaining to a given culture, that is Western listeners, aren’t able to completely feel and keep the beat of a musical work pertaining to a foreign culture, in his example a Bolivian musical piece. Still, this very fact doesn’t invalidate the universal character of the tactus seen as a defining element of the specific experience identified as music. The tactus
can be found in any given culture’s musical structure, although it might appear as unclear and hardly recognizable to someone that isn’t familiar with the culture it stems from. While one might argue that, from a “universalist” point of view, music is transcultural and this makes it possible for any culture to experience the music of other cultures, someone adopting a “contextualist” view would note that the very fact that the music of each culture is a particular and unique product of that group makes it impossible for people outside of that group to experience it in a genuine way (Reimer, 1997).

Turning back to the issue of understanding and defining music, such elements as the tactus (along with pitch, intonation etc.) that are common to all human musical manifestations constitutes one of those key characteristics that we are looking for when we try to understand what music is and when we engage in formulating a universal definition. Still, as Ian Cross acknowledges, although we are able to identify and define the biological foundations for our musicality, defining music within a clear and unitary framework still escapes us. Though they are involved in a constant effort to clarify that which is universal to music, musicians, philosophers, ethnomusicologists and other theorists cannot yet offer a helpful contribution in this regard since they themselves share various distinct and many times contradictory views on what music should or could be defined as, or even whether a comprehensive and intercultural valid definition of music is at all possible.

Despite this lack of consensus about the nature and defining attributes of music, the concept does take various forms and meanings in dictionaries and in the academic literature. The Encyclopedia Britannica characterizes music as a form of art that is concerned with combining vocal or instrumental sounds with the goal of obtaining beauty of form or emotional expression, usually according to cultural standards of rhythm, melody, and, in most Western music, harmony. The Oxford dictionary defines music as “vocal or instrumental sounds (or both) combined in such a way as to produce beauty of form, harmony, and expression of emotion”, but also includes other separate meanings like “the art or science of composing or performing music”, “a sound perceived as pleasingly harmonious” and “the written or printed signs representing vocal or instrumental sound”. Similarly, Merriam Webster dictionary defines music mainly as “the science or art of ordering tones or sounds in succession, in combination, and in
temporal relationships to produce a composition having unity and continuity” but also refers to other uses of the term like “specific vocal or instrumental sounds that have rhythm, melody and harmony”, “agreeable sound” and the written symbols or scores of musical compositions. It turns out that in our (Western) European culture, music is a very general term that is used for referring to a vast range of activities, objects and concepts. As with the concept of art, when we refer to music there is in fact a multiplicity of activities and experiences that we are talking about and, as Cook (1997, pg. 5) observed, the very fact that we are attaching the term of “music” to all of them and labeling them as such might be the only reason why they seem to belong together. In the end what do we mean by music? The activity of making or playing music itself, the song that we are listening to or the whole body of musical works? Moreover, how can one decide if a particular sequence of sounds is to be labeled and recognized as music or not? What about a highly melodic sequence of sounds as that of a birdsong?

Over the course of time, many scholars have proposed various formulas in a demarche towards conceptualizing music. However, there was and still is much disagreement between philosophical discourses around this concept or the phenomena it entails. Let us take a brief look at some of the main philosophical strands that aimed at explaining and defining the phenomenon of music.

In an endeavor to emphasize and justify the need for articulating a universal philosophy of music and music education, Bennett Reimer (1997) proposed a synergistic strategy that would combine elements from each of the main philosophical approaches and reconcile them as mutually supportive components within a universal philosophical framework that would once and for all explain the nature and value of music and subsequently of the teaching and learning of music. Following the classification offered by Reimer in his paper will be useful in providing us with an image of the main academic approaches and perspectives on music education. Thus Reimer distinguishes four main distinct and partially dichotomous approaches to theorizing music and music education that have been taken in music scholarship:

---

16 In fact, this definition could also be easily attributed to spoken language.
1. **The formalist perspective**

Formalist theories focus on the product of musical creativity and use it as a benchmark and a key factor in explaining the musical phenomenon, its value and importance in our lives and our education. The musical work and the activity of making music are considered the sine qua non of music and understanding what music is and does to us is intimately related to the tangible outcomes of this activity: the pieces or works of music. The goal of engaging with music is thus to create—as artist—or consume—as audience—the musical material, while a composition’s meaning lies entirely in its form. As a general philosophical movement, Formalism isolates the works and the experience of all forms of art from the other life experiences, insisting that the form in and of itself is the actual bearer of artistic and aesthetic value and thus excellence of form is the ultimate goal. This might be translated within music education into a tendency to focus on a repertoire mainly consisting of the “great works” of the high cultural music or so-called “serious”/”erudite” music—that music which is generally considered representative and appraised for its excellence of form in the Western (European) culture. A formalist approach to music would consider that teaching music should aim chiefly at cultivating musical talent, elevating musical tastes and improving the level of culture by supporting the “serious” music over the “popular” or “low” music.

2. **The praxialist perspective**

While the formalist philosophy of music rests upon the primacy of the product and form in identifying the core characteristic of music and distinguishing it among other fields, the praxialist theory considers that the processes involved in creating, playing or listening to music constitute the key element that determines the nature of music, rather than the resulting products of these processes that are regarded as merely secondary. The rationale is that specific processes are the ones responsible for attributing meanings to the musical product. As an exponent of a robust praxialist view, Elliot argues that music shouldn’t be conceived as a product but rather as an action or a process manifestation, calling this “musicing”. Thus, a composition as Beethoven’s *Eroica* Symphony should be regarded as “the outcome of a particular kind of intentional human activity”, as a bearing of Beethoven’s creative work and not as an individuality in and of itself. Following this line of reasoning, Elliot (1995) believes that performance should be situated at the core of music education, since it represents the essential characteristic of music, its main purpose
and value. However, a very literal interpretation\textsuperscript{17} and rigid application of such a view would implicitly condition music instruction to focus particularly on performing music and performing skills’ development regardless of the type of music education. Such an approach would subsequently cause the disappearance of the substantial distinction between general and specialized music education, with the latter being based on performance-oriented instruction specific to a professional musical path. While performing is indeed an essential part of understanding and learning music, it might not be among the main goals of a general music curriculum to the same extent that it is basic to a “specialist” musical education; thus, an excessive emphasis on this dimension wouldn’t be justified. General music education doesn’t aim specifically at instructing students for professional musical attainment, but it rather tries to help students understand what music is, how it works and how it influences human beings. This understanding is indeed achieved through involvement with music itself, but the involvement is not limited to performing alone: it also implies discussing and describing it, listening and composing. Performance is thus not paramount for the amateur level of music education. As Reimer (1997, p. 12) argues, music instruction in general education will have to incorporate a “balanced mutually supportive amalgam of principles from both formalism and praxialism (…) if it is to serve the musical needs of all the students”.

3. Referentialism

In the “referentialism” category Reimer gathers various approaches to music from which he focuses on two general types that view and characterize music on the basis of its message or negotiated content and its instrumentality for achieving certain values derivative from engagement with music. In general, attributing musical meaning to the extra-musical world of concepts, actions, emotional states and character (Meyer 1956), referentialism is opposing the absolutist perspective according to which musical meaning lies exclusively within the work itself.

\textsuperscript{17} Understanding and addressing performance as merely the act of performing itself is, however, not what Elliot had in mind. He actually looked more deeply into what performing involves and used this concept to refer to the whole spectrum of its component elements (e.g. imagination, listening, meaning making), calling this “performing music intelligently”.
One of the two general strands of referentialist philosophies of music locate music’s value in the experience that is derived from musical engagement and reified through the decoding or interpretation of the transmitted message, while the other purports that music’s value stems from its communicative function that is seen as analogous to the model of linguistic communication. Instrumental music, which does not express its message so clearly or directly as music with lyrics, requires an interpretation process on the listener’s part. The message encoded by a composer into a musical piece is properly grasped by the listener to the extent to which he/she is skilled in matters of listening and interpreting music. Therefore, according to this view, music education’s main goal is to train individuals for musical (referential) meaning-making, the correct identification and reception of an intended message that is placed outside the musical piece itself or the effective communication of the original message as intended by its creator when performing music.

The second general referentialist view finds the value of music in its contribution to the attainment of a variety of general skills and benefits such as self-growth, enjoyment, self-esteem, discipline, heightened social skills, critical thinking or heightened ability to succeed in nonmusical school subjects, although such outcomes are not necessarily specific to music but can also be achieved in its absence. Therefore, this utilitarian perspective on music isn’t really doing it much justice since it fails to identify its peculiar and inherent values that are derived solely from music and engagement with it. It nevertheless fails to contribute to defining music and its specificity.

4. **Contextualism**

This approach rests upon the idea that music and all the elements it entails (objects, processes, activities) are always and necessarily placed in a certain context, be it a cultural, social, or historical one. Within a contextualist framework, the socio-cultural dimension of music is the central point of gravity. As Reimer (1997, p. 15) puts it, “music is, first and foremost, a playing out of, a manifestation of, or aural portrayal of the psychological, emotional, political and social forces of the human context in which it exists.” Even the absolutist thinkers aren’t exempted from taking into consideration the environment and context in which music exists since we cannot talk about musical meaning and communication in isolation, in the absence of
the cultural context (Meyer-EB). However, an extreme variation of the contextualist position is represented by the aforementioned (cap 2.1.1, pg. 16) institutional theory of art, which argues that there are no unique intrinsically recognizable attributes inherent to art, and that in fact its artistic nature (or quality) is conferred by its affiliation to the institutions that constitute the art world. What this perspective actually claims is that the distinction between what is to be called music and what not can be made only by institutional cultural policy makers. This exaggerated emphasis on the importance of the context in which music comes to life, takes place, is assessed, appraised, and consumed, is what limits the efficiency and potential of such an approach in providing a sustainable and robust theorization or definition of music. Music is reduced to only one of its multiple dimensions and to what this one dimension can mean and tell us about the musical phenomenon, neglecting or even excluding the others. Reimer concludes that, in fact, all four general philosophical approaches can be either exclusive—by magnifying one dimension while obscuring or even denying the existence of others—or inclusive—by considering the dimension that it bases itself upon as particularly important, while also dependent on or augmented by other dimensions. He believes, though, that one should try to formulate what he calls a “universal philosophy of music” that would integrate all of the aspects that each of these theories calls us to acknowledge, in an endeavor to reconcile them and ultimately clarify to us, humans, what is universal in music.

In the end, we have to acknowledge that there are a number of distinct dimensions that must be taken into consideration when attempting to define the complex phenomenon that music seems to be. On the one hand, there is the tendency to associate the concept of music to a given body or canon of musical works, which is usually the strategy employed when engaging in proposing a socio-historical type of definition. However, it is clearly not sufficient to look at music’s manifestation in particular musical (art) works in order to fully understand it. A comprehensive understanding of what music is requires engaging in a prismatic way of looking at, and examining it. Such a perspective should allow us to combine all the various facets of the whole phenomenon of music, such as its structural elements, its functions and roles, its social practices and the various agents/actors engaged in these practices, the underlying belief systems that condition the creation and perception of certain works as music, as well as the interplay between all of these aspects. The multifaceted nature of music was addressed by Elliott (1995)
through the use of a three-folded perspective on the term music: he differentiates between MUSIC, Music and music. According to Eliott, MUSIC should be understood as a worldwide human phenomenon – that which is common to all musics worldwide – “something that people do everywhere according to different kinds of cultural-musical knowledge and style preferences in their musical communities”. On the other hand, Music stands for one specific musical style, while music refers to specific kinds of musical products, such as compositions, improvisations, and so forth (Elliott, 1995).

However, besides the very action of creating and playing music by producing certain sounds that follow meaningful organizations for the audience, certain social and cultural groups associate distinct forms of art to one and the same concept: Cook points to the fact that, in many cultures, no distinction is made between music and what we, Europeans, call dance or theatre. Moreover, we should take into account that at the root of today’s most referenced definitions and acceptations of the word “music” stand the (Western) European canon and culture. Although it would be tempting to define music as that specific thing or configuration of things that we all, as humans, irrespective of our geographical or cultural environment or background are labeling as music, such an attempt seems to be disqualified from its very beginning and most likely doomed to failure when considering Cook’s observation. We might conclude that music, as well as art in general, falls into the subjective eye of the beholder: it is music that which we regard as music.

In the end, it turns out that a technical definition, which characterizes music as simply “organized sound”, is therefore very far from satisfactory since, in its broadness, it leaves too much out; such definition employs a very highly situated point of view that, in turn, determines an extreme coagulation of the whole concept into a very narrow image that blurs away the diversity of its dimensions. Departing from the concise and often-cited characterization of music as simply “organized sound” proposed by modernist composer Edgard Varèse (1966), we have seen – by looking into the issues discussed above – that it is a self-evident fact that music means much more than mere sets of sounds and their notation through conventionally established symbols. “Music is process as well as product, an arena for both social action and personal reflection; it is emotion and value as well as structure and form” (Clarke 2004). In the same time,
we have to acknowledge that the significance of music education is connected to the meaning we attribute to music. In this sense, the deepest notion of music education can only be explored and delineated on the basis and in relation to the meanings and significance of music (Elliott 1995).

In the end, in the need for a solution to the problem of defining music, which would allow us to further operate with this concept in our paper, it would be useful to go back to the general definition of art that we put forth in chapter 2.1.2 (pg. 21). From the theoretical perspective presented there, we could look at music as a particular manifestation of imaginative metacognition that makes use of sound as medium. Thus, we might define music as a specific form of self-imagination (both at a personal and collective level) that is constructed and expressed through sound.

2.2.2 Music Education as Arts Education

“When we study music, we aren’t studying something separate from us, something ‘out there’: there is a sense in which we are studying ourselves too”.

(Cook 1998, p.73)

When we talk about music education, one central concern is to acknowledge from the beginning the distinction between a “general” and a “specialist” musical education. Music teaching should not be seen as one unified field, but we should rather emphasize the considerable difference that exists between the training offered in music schools or conservatoires and that which takes place in general schools. The many distinctions lie in the content and aims of the curriculum, the teaching methods and the amount of time dedicated to music teaching. In the end we are dealing with two quite distinct pathways: while students that attend a music school have a special interest in music and, in most cases, are musically gifted and want to pursue a professional musical career, the music education within general schools is oriented towards students that may not have much interest or prior knowledge of music and who sometimes have no musical aptitudes at all. Music classes within general education are a branch of artistic
education along with painting, drama or dance. Thus, based on these considerations and on the fact that in our study we are dealing with music instruction within general education, we will have to take into account the significant distinctions between this form of musical training and that offered in music schools.

As a consequence, we have to take into consideration the fact that general music education is not necessarily revolving around musical expertise or mastery, but rather it aims at offering students an overall view on music, a foundation with respect to what music is, what it does, how it works, how it comes to being and how it can influence human life and society. This sort of knowledge is acquired through the very involvement with music itself and not solely by describing it at a verbal level or making references to historical contexts. Involvement with music is usually associated with practical activities such as listening, performing and creating music (e.g. through composition). But unlike what is custom in the music school curriculum, the overemphasis on one of these aspects might not be justified in general music education. Students are not supposed to reach a certain level of mastery, although an perfecting any of these skills is obviously appreciated and welcome. It is important for them to be able to handle the materials of representation specific to music as an art form or, more generally put, the medium. However, the main goal lies outside this area and should be actually oriented towards an understanding of music’s building blocks, its operating mechanism, its functions, valences and the possibilities it offers to those involved with it.

Musical appreciation: aesthetic vs artistic

As van Heusden (2011) articulated this, arts education and, thus, also music education are expected to help students find and form their own identities as members of a particular culture or society; especially in a democratic society the focus should lie on the freedom and responsibility entailed by the experience of (art) music and less on the right or good (art) music according to a certain chosen canon. Therefore, general music education should not strive to instruct students in good or High (art) music – which in most cases is associated and represented by the Western canon – or stress the dichotomies of good versus bad music, of High versus Low Art. In turn, the
curriculum and instruction should rather address this matter in terms of the distinction between art and entertainment. Instead of offering aesthetic prescriptions\textsuperscript{18} that teach students what is to be regarded as good or bad art, beautiful or ugly and thereby making quality judgments, music education should rather focus on offering a perspective on function within the vast landscape of musical (artistic) expression. Students should be trained to ask themselves what a particular music is good for and not whether it is good or not. The delimitation between entertainment and art is a question of function and not necessarily of quality, as remarked by van Heusden (2011). While both entertainment and art can be of high or poor quality, their functions are clearly distinguished. Van Heusden explains that art is a very specific representation of life, namely the representation of our consciousness –of our understanding and interpretation of what we experience in the world– and not of the experiences themselves. Entertainment, on the other hand, is concerned with the very actions and experiences encountered in the world in an effort of nuancing and dramatizing them for representing a “dream world”. Teachers should thus help students identify the many times subtle demarcation between art and entertainment by clarifying how the songs they listen to or the concerts they attend are representing a consciousness that they can recognize and relate to. Musical appreciation could thus be taught very closely linked to metacognition (self-consciousness and reflection) and not according to a specific aesthetic framework.

\textit{(Self)Reflection and music within culture}

In another train of thought, following van Heusden’s rationale, music pedagogy could follow the basic human cognitive strategies: perception, imagination, conceptualization and analysis. In this sense music education could be focusing on the way students perceive music (matters of rhythm, sound, volume, pitch, timber), but also on how they use their imagination (e.g. composition, interpretation, style development, metaphorical thinking and creative

\textsuperscript{18} Regarding the aesthetic approach to music education, Regelski (1996) holds that matters of taste in terms of beauty are not universal, as argued by Kant and his followers, but are rather socially and culturally constructed and functioning as ideologies set out by people which occupy authoritative positions. He considers that music education should no longer be driven by cultural elitism, but should rather acknowledge and highlight the inherent values of all forms of music in a non-preferential way.
listening), conceptualize (e.g. musical meaning-making) and analyze (e.g. understanding notation, harmony) music. In the same time, music classes could offer students instruction in music appreciation and what I mean by this is that, on the one hand, students can learn what to pay attention for when listening to certain musical pieces and, on the other hand, they can be exposed to and encouraged to appreciate different types, genres and styles of music. In this sense music education could have the aim of breaking musical and cultural stereotypes and, as Swanwick (1999) put it, "what happens in classrooms should equip us to dream and synthesize elsewhere". When developing the curriculum and repertoire, music teachers may find it useful to take into account the implicit enculturation processes that occur outside school and treat them as an eventual starting point for situating music into a context and broadening students’ musical spectrum in terms of the richness of its manifestations across time and space. Music classes could also comprise some history lessons that would offer students an explanation to why people of a certain era liked and created particular music styles and how did those relate to the cultural context of that particular period. In this way students may learn how to correlate music manifestations with the historical and social environment in which these came into being, thereby regarding music as a specific way of mirroring people and their lives and consequently gaining a better understanding of music’s place within the perceived world. But this element of cultural reflection should be paired with another important aspect of the musical discourse: cultural refraction. With this term Swanwick (1999) refers to the opposite process of receiving culture and that is the process of interpreting, transforming and reinforcing it. Ultimately, music education aims at teaching students how to creatively engage with musical culture and offering them the possibility of making a personal contribution to its evolution (most probably in the case of specialized music education when followed by a professional musical career, but also possible to a certain extent in general education through the latent potential that the excitement for music “planted” in music classes can have in students’ future professional interests and career decisions).
Metaphorical thinking and imagination

Music classes could also try to offer students the possibility to explore music’s expressive, emotional, semantic and symbolic richness. In this sense, students could receive instruction and guidance into analyzing, interpreting and generally making sense of what they hear. Moreover, discussions that would engage students in identifying and responding in a personal way to music’s (expressive) message may be accompanied by a process of creative listening. Creative listening is a significant factor that could be stimulated within music education as an exponent of imagination and creativity. Moreover, a central emphasis could be placed on the metaphorical substrate the music operates with. All attempts at describing music ineluctably involve the use of metaphor\textsuperscript{19}. Whether we want to talk about the texture (and in this case even the term itself involves a metaphorical association) of a piece of music, the pitch, or the nature of its tonality we make use of metaphors such as the “thick” texture characteristic to Bach’s fugues, the “high” or “low” pitch and the gloomy or soft tonality of a minor chord. According to Swanwick (1999), in music the metaphorical process functions on three cumulative levels: “when we hear ‘tones’ as though they were ‘tunes’, sounds as expressive shapes; when we hear these expressive shapes assume new relationships as if they had ‘a life of their own’; when these new forms appear to fuse with our previous experience”. The very process of interpreting a musical piece or trying to describe it with the use of words pushes one to employ metaphorical thinking. Things that escape regular verbal description are usually dealt with connections and metaphorical associations that carry specific meanings among different concepts, thereby one concept lending meaning to another (normally unassociated) in order to provide a means of understanding the latter. As well as art in general, metaphorical thinking offers individuals the possibility to examine their own thoughts, look into their baggage of memories and give their own perspective or interpretation on something by enabling connections between very different dimensions and juxtaposing them in a meaningful way. Musical expressiveness thus calls for the use of metaphorical thinking and perception, these becoming a

\textsuperscript{19} Metaphor stems from the Greek meta which means time, place or direction and phéro, meaning to carry; it literally indicates conveyance from one place to another, in other words moving a concept or an image from one context to another (in fact even the word metaphor is in itself a metaphor). Metaphors are commonly understood to involve a shift of meaning between two different concepts based on a resemblance relation or an underlying analogy.
paramount condition for understanding and relating to music. Metaphorical thinking is a key tool that enables students to get in touch with the imaginary space of music and their own inner worlds.

**Multiculturalism, otherness and culture matching**

Another central concern of music education is to make available to students a range of musical practices and forms as broad as possible. Exploring musical processes across a wide spectrum of forms and traditions can significantly widen the perspective on what music is and the potential it has. Students that are exposed to a variety of “musics” can thus acquire multiple insights into the musical realm, they may be less inclined to preconceptions and more inclined to transcend the social and cultural boundaries. Experiencing the music of other cultures can expand and enrich students’ preferences, but also develop their sense of “otherness”. The cultural diversity present nowadays in our societies, and especially in countries like the Netherlands, demands a corresponding response from arts education and music education in particular. As a branch of arts education, one of the main goals of music education is to prepare and adequately equip students for life within society and for contact with the globalized environment of musical manifestations. But besides this objective, a multicultural approach to music education and a practical contact with various musical traditions and cultures can offer students a deeper understanding of people in general and of themselves in relation to other people. In this sense, Elliott (1995, pg.35) holds that:

“If it is accurate to say that music education functions as culture as much as it functions in relation to culture, then induction into unfamiliar musical cultures offers something few other forms of education can provide. A truly multicultural MUSIC curriculum connects the individual self with the personhood of other musicers and audiences in other times and places. And the effectiveness of music in this regard resides in its essential nature as praxis: as thinking in action. A MUSIC curriculum centered on the praxial

---

20 Only Amsterdam, the capital city, hosts approximately 178 different nationalities, while there are around 190 different nationalities throughout the whole country (according to the Dutch Bureau of Statistics)
teaching and learning of a reasonable range of music cultures (over a span of months and years) offers students the opportunity to achieve a central goal of humanistic education: self-understanding through “otherunderstanding”.”

Therefore, the diversity of types of music included in the curriculum can play a very important role in the very process of constructing students’ self-identity and facilitating their socio-cultural inclusivity. Incorporating various musical traditions and forms within music classes can not only provide a platform for getting acquainted with the “other”, with foreign cultures and perspectives, but it may also work as a catalyst for more clearly demarcating and enforcing the understanding and sense of students’ own musical and cultural background. However, it is also true that although this might sound good in theory, it may lead to several “dissonances” in practice. What I am referring to here is that applying multiculturalism to the music curriculum within general education faces some very practical and legitimate obstacles. One of them is the issue related to the usually very limited time available for teaching music within the general school curriculum. Most secondary schools in the Netherlands don’t benefit of more than 1 or 2 hours of music per week, not to mention the cases where these are optional. Thus, teachers are constrained to make some choices that imply negotiating and often leaving certain things out, which themselves have many implications. How many perspectives should they teach and which ones specifically? Should the choice be made based on a correlation with the ethnicities represented among the students or is this leading to racial issues? The practical implementation of multiculturalism in music classes may be a delicate issue but, nevertheless, this shouldn’t be a reason for abandoning such an approach. Bringing students into contact with musical perspectives that are alien to their own culture and background (non-western music) could improve the students’ musical and cultural awareness, their capacity to reflect upon and relate to “otherness”, their metacognitive and imaginative abilities and, ultimately, their processes of self-exploration and self-development.

One other central concern when elaborating the curriculum or the repertoire for music classes could be to make sure that these will also encompass to some extent elements from students’ own cultures or subculture and age-appropriate music. Music education could not

---

21 What we referred to as culture matching in the subtitle.
only address musical manifestations that students come into contact with outside of school, but might also use them as teaching material. Research studies as that conducted by Harland et. al (2000), which was previously mentioned in our paper, has suggested that much of the secondary school music education is unsuccessful and inefficient because it is not in touch with students’ own musical interests. One important factor turns out to be the importance of pop music for teenagers and generally the influence of pop culture on their identity formation. And if we agree that the artistic experience is based on the act of recognizing one’s own consciousness in a work of art, then we may assert that every consciousness has its art. Following this rationale, pop music might be the type of music that best matches secondary school students’ consciousness and, thus, bringing it into the classroom might be the key ingredient that grants authenticity to school music classes. However, many secondary school music teachers have been trained in the Western classical music tradition and this is might be the reason why this canon tends to be dominant in school music. Although this paradigm is on the verge of change within the 21st century vision and philosophy of music education putting these into practice has a certain degree of inertia (Hargreaves et. al 2003).

Three essential elements

Beyond the details discussed above though, music education as a particular branch of arts education would fundamentally mean education in those three main elements that –through their unique combination– are defining artistic education, as shown in the theoretical approach that we introduced and adopted in this paper. According to this theoretical approach, music education would thus imply teaching:

• musical knowledge (both theoretical and technical)- *medium*
  - music literacy; notions of rhythm, pitch, harmony, dynamics, timber, articulation, execution, melody, texture, tempo etc.; music history; craftsmanship (use of skill

22 Folkert Haanstra (2011) states that one of the four fundamental criteria for an authentic arts education is what he calls “orientation towards students’ world”. What he means by this is that the content of an authentic arts education should be connected to the world of the students, the knowledge they already accumulated, their own interests and needs.
to achieve an artistic result) or technical skills allowing expression through sound (singing, playing an instrument)

- musical perception and understanding- *imagination*
  - metaphorical thinking, use of analogy; interpretation; creative listening; composition; improvisation; arrangement etc.

- musical self-expression & self-exploration- *metacognition*
  - musical meaning-making; contextualization of music (styles and forms within cultural and historical contexts); musical appreciation and discernment; self-expression, self-exploration and self-reflection; multicultural awareness; linking music with other art forms or socio-cultural aspects etc.

As we briefly sketched here, each of these three essential elements involves a wide range of activities and processes that could be addressed in music classes. And therefore a balance among them has to be obtained if we are aiming for a genuine and efficient artistic education.

3. Methodology

3.1 Research Design

As expounded in the introductory part of this paper, the aim of this research is to determine what type of music education Dutch students are receiving in secondary schools and whether this music education is also offering them artistic education and not merely a form of theoretical and technical training *within* an art field. In other words, this research aims at finding out to what extent music classes are offering secondary school students artistic education *in* and *through* music.

In this research endeavor, I have opted for an exploratory design since there weren’t any earlier studies available that could have been overlapped with the particular research problem
that I set off to examine. There are a few studies that tackled the issue of music education and its efficiency (Harland 2000) or addressing curriculum choices and development (Hentschke & Oliveira 1999), but no available suitable scale of measurement that could be efficiently applied to this particular research subject. I therefore proceeded to develop a questionnaire that could explore and measure to some extent the content and weight of specifically artistic education existent in the teaching practice of the discipline music within secondary education. The questionnaires that I have developed constitute a basic measuring tool, mainly directed at gaining more insight into how students and teachers perceive music education and its essential defining elements.

In order to find out if music classes in Dutch secondary education are actually offering students arts education (as we have characterized it above), a starting point in our research was to investigate how exactly music is taught in schools right now: what are the aims and the teaching methods used, how are they applied, what is the assessment procedure in terms of examination methods and targeted skills or abilities, and last but not least, what is the students’ experience and perception with respect to the knowledge and abilities acquired in the music courses they are attending.

I conducted this exploratory study by making use of both quantitative and qualitative research methods. In the first phase I proceeded with a qualitative approach. This consisted of two case studies in two secondary schools in Eindhoven, namely the Stedelijk College and the Van Maerlantlyceum, which were based on semi-structured interviews. These in-depth interviews were administered to one music teacher from each school and their results were included in the qualitative part of our research. The interviews were meant to provide a better insight into a secondary school music teacher’s opinions with regard to the music education that he offers in his classes. The interview has allowed a deeper understanding of the teacher’s views on arts education in general and musical training in particular, his perspective on the place of music as a subject within general secondary education and the reasons that lie behind the teaching practice he employs in music courses. After discussing the curriculum content currently included in the music program, the music teacher was also invited to critically reflect on its

23 The topic list used for these interviews can be found in Appendix 1.
adequacy in the light of the theoretical framework that underpins this research. This led to a
discussion on the constraints and difficulties encountered in applying certain curricular projects
or approaches.

The second phase of this research consisted in administering questionnaires to 10 secondary
school music educators and the students from one of the classes they teach to. One of the main
purposes was to find out if the teachers’ expectations and goals are indeed met or coincide with
the students’ perceptions regarding the outcomes of their music education. I have chosen schools
from different areas and provinces of the Netherlands in order to ensure a representative sample
for this research and for this same reason I selected schools on the basis of both geographical and
social criteria: from urban, as well as from rural areas or smaller towns. I should emphasize the
fact that this is still a small-sized sample and therefore the research cannot claim to be fully
generalizable or representative for the whole country, but this design does provide a certain
degree of representativeness compared to the initial one (see pg. 49). This quantitative method
was used in order to get an idea of the most popular music teaching practices and curricula used
in schools, as well as the objectives and desired outcomes of such programs. Or, to put it in a
nutshell, this research instrument was devised with the aim of determining a general “pulse” of
music education practice within Dutch secondary schools.

To conclude, the particular research method that I have applied aims at exploring some
background information, the basic settings or situation of music education seen as a specific type
of artistic education within Dutch secondary schools. It aims at providing a grounded picture of
music education’s current status and attempts to offer an insight that could be useful for future
research in this direction. As far as the theoretical framework is concerned, this study tries to
provide yet another opportunity to reflect upon certain concepts and their definitions, such as
art/arts, cognition or music, with the intention to contribute in clarifying these concepts and
enhancing their operability and functionality within the field of education. However, the
exploratory nature of this research doesn’t allow yet the formulation of robust and definitive
conclusions based on the findings thereof; in turn, it can help to generate some formal hypotheses
or develop more precise research priorities.
3.2 Selection of the respondents

As respondents for the developed questionnaires I have chosen to select both music teachers from secondary education and students that attended their music classes, so that a comparison could be made between what the educators declared to be their goals and approach towards teaching music at school and what the pupils perceive as being the results or benefits deriving from the activities and knowledge acquired in their music lessons, as well as the students’ views on the importance and impact that studying music at school has brought to their lives. I opted for the segment of secondary education because the topics that were supposed to be examined in this study seemed rather complex for children from the elementary cycle. Formulating items –as those related to metacognition for example– that could be clear enough and easy to understand for young children would have been less feasible in the sense that it would have been less likely for such young pupils to provide meaningful answers for this research.

I initially set off to select the sample of secondary schools from the city of Eindhoven and its surroundings on grounds of practical reasons: I was living in Eindhoven and I intended to visit each school involved in my study for interviewing both teachers and students in order to get a firmer grip on their opinions and perceptions. However, since the rate of schools and music teachers that were willing to collaborate turned out to be very low in this city and its surroundings, I decided to change the strategy and extend the geographical area by contacting schools from other provinces and cities in the Netherlands as well. Moreover, I had to shift the focus from qualitative research to a more quantitative oriented method. In this process, I decided that covering more provinces and disparate areas could ensure a richer and more representative picture of the situation regarding music education practice across the country. I have thus contacted a total of 92 schools (mainly by email, but also by phone), out of which 10 answered positively and were included in the research sample. The schools that agreed to collaborate for this research were: Stedelijk College Eindhoven, Van Maerlantlyceum Eindhoven, Griftland College in Soest, Carmel College in Salland, Utrechts Stedelijk Gymnasium, CSG Bogerman in Sneek, Hervormd Lyceum Zuid Amsterdam, Oosterlicht College Vianen, Olympus College Arnhem and Segbroek College Den Haag. Students between 2nd and 5th grade from both Havo
and Vwo classes were included in the sample. Questionnaires were filled in digitally and shared via a link, but in many cases they were also sent by post to music teachers who subsequently passed them to their students to get them filled in. In the case of the two schools from Eindhoven, I have met personally with the music teachers and their students and was also able to administer some short semi-structured interviews for the qualitative part of this study.

3.3 Measuring artistic education

In order to find an answer to the main research question, namely “What kind of music education is offered and is it also arts education?” I had to proceed with tackling the issue of measuring artistic education in one way or another. Of course, this seems and is a very daring and highly challenging objective in itself if we are to consider the generally ill-structured character of art that was discussed in chapter 2.1.2 (pg. 20) and all the confusion and disagreement present in the academic realm with respect to what art and arts education means and should entail. However, by adhering to a concrete theorization of art and arts education as presented in chapter 2.1.3, the attempt to measure such a variable came within reach.

Therefore, if we are to consider that art is defined by the unique combination of imagination, metacognition and the use of a particular medium of expression, then arts education should involve education in the development and use of various processes specifically related to both imagination and metacognition, in conjunction with a medium-specific instruction and technical skills development. Following this line of reasoning, the analysis of arts education begins with an examination of how metacognition, imagination and the knowledge and skills specific to the characteristic medium of expression are addressed in the curriculum. Moreover, it is also important to look at the way in which these three dimensions are treated in music lessons and subsequently to find out whether they are adequately reflected by students’ perceptions, knowledge and skills as the teachers expect them to be. We are then interested in measuring the weight of these three defining variables in the practice of music education, looking for a more or less balanced ratio between them, which would subsequently indicate a balanced level of artistic education. In other words, arts education in general and music education in particular would have
to give an equal importance to the instruction and development of pupils’ capacity for self-reflection and self-awareness (*metacognition*), as well as their use of *imagination* and specific imaginative thinking processes and strategies along with the theoretical knowledge and technical skills specific to the *medium* employed within that specific art form. Art is therefore to be seen and taught as a form of (cultural) self-consciousness through the use of *imagination* or imaginative thinking within a particular medium (visual, acoustic, etc.).

In applying this theoretical framework to music education, I have considered each of the aforementioned three main variables as a family or set of sub-variables that are specific to their parent variable in the sense that they represent manifestations or subordinate processes of a given variable set or family. To exemplify, we are dealing with three families: *medium, metacognition* and *imagination*. The *medium* family includes sub-variables such as craftsmanship, technical skills and theoretical knowledge because each of these themes is closely connected and dependent to the medium of expression, which in our case comprises sound and instruments.

![Fig. 1](image)

The *metacognition* family encompasses sub-variables like musical meaning-making (e.g. semantics), contextualization (linking music to other art forms and domains, placing musical works, styles and forms in historical and cultural context), artistic discernment and appreciation (understanding otherness) → reflection on one another, reflection on culture, musical culture matching (age-appropriate music), identity formation, multicultural insights, self-expression (e.g. interpreting a piece of music in own way, composing etc.) and self-reflection (e.g. analyzing emotions triggered by music).
Members of the *imagination* family that have been assigned as codes for certain items in our measurement instrument are: creativity and specific processes employing creativity, such as improvisation, composition or arrangement along with creative listening, metaphorical thought and projection (e.g. use of analogy with extra-musical concepts/objects/activities), interpretation and interpretative skills.
The questionnaire items were designed to measure all these sub-variables by means of Likert scale type of questions, but also close ended and open ended questions. The data obtained from the open-ended questions was dealt with separately in the qualitative part of this research. However, the great majority of items involved data that required quantitative analysis. The answers from this quantitative data set were clustered according to the model outlined above and the actual measurement consisted in comparing these three clusters or families (medium, metacognition and imagination) based on the total values obtained from all the respondents. A measurement of the highest values per cluster obtained for the whole samples of teachers and students was synthetized in a chart. Moreover, we also included comparisons based on these values measured between each teacher and his students —thus a separate analysis for each school— in order to get a better understanding of the correlation that exists between teachers’ aims, plans and expectations and their students’ perspectives and perceptions. The overall highest values per cluster that were analyzed for all the students and teachers participating in the study were used to indicate the rate that each of the metacognition, imagination and medium clusters hold within the general practice and teaching content of music classes. A balanced rate among them was considered to be the
indicator for a balanced type of artistic education, while the differences observed among them and the hierarchy resulting thereof were analyzed and interpreted so as to verify our initial hypothesis or expectation.

3.4 Questionnaire design and pilot phase

Following the interviews conducted at Stedelijk College and Van Maerlantlyceum in Eindhoven and the insights acquired thereby, I developed a questionnaire for both music teachers and their students that I have partially modified according to the feedback received in a preliminary pilot phase. Respondents indicated their level of understanding the questions, the ambiguities they noticed and gave their feedback on the clarity of the version translated in Dutch. Moreover, it was decided that the respondents’ names, both music teachers’ and students’, would remain anonymous in this research. The school year of the students and the type of secondary education they are following (vmbo/havo/vwo) are the only demographic data that were added to the record, along with the name of the schools.

The teachers’ questionnaire (QT) comprises 15 items and is mostly made up of close-ended type of questions. The first five items are structured as scaled questions with responses graded on a five-level Likert-type scale (Appendix 1) and are addressing the aims and objectives of music teachers, the central activities employed in their classes, the themes targeted in the examination process and the methods of assessing them. The respondents were asked to rate how strongly they agreed to a particular statement. The next seven items follow the structure of yes/no questions with the possibility of adding details or comments in the case of a positive answer. I have also included a multiple choice item that asks music teachers to indicate the type of content they included in the repertoire, again with the option to give additional information by specifying content that isn’t found among the choices provided in this item. Moreover, at the end of the questionnaire I have added two completely unstructured open-ended questions that target the music teacher’s focus in terms of examination and ask for his/her definition or view on what music education is and stands for. These open-ended questions were considered part of the qualitative side of this research.
The items in the students’ questionnaire (QS) are developed in such a way as to be easily confronted with the ones in the teachers’ questionnaire, in order to compare the aims and expectations of the teachers with the perceptions and outcomes perceived by the students. In this way, the interpretation of the results could offer us an idea about the correlations and discrepancies among their views; ultimately, it can indicate the efficiency of the methods and strategies employed by music teachers in order to teach and stimulate students in accordance with their goals and desired outcomes. In the first item (Appendix 2), students were asked to indicate how strongly they agree to various statements related to their perceptions on the music lessons they have attended in terms of the gained insights and the influence exerted by studying music on the way they understand and listen to music now—the difference music education makes to their lives. In the second item the students were asked to rate certain activities by indicating the extent to which they consider them to be one of the main goals of music education. Similarly to teachers’ questionnaire, the last item consists of an open ended question that tries to find out what students’ expectations and desires are with respect to their music instruction and why not—the gaps or additions that would make the difference between the music classes they attend and the fulfilling/rewarding music classes that they would wish for. The answer to this question can also offer an insight into the nature of students’ dissatisfactions with respect to the activities undertaken in music classes and their overall expectations and progress.

3.5 Reliability of the measuring instrument

Given that my research instrument consists of items that have no “right” answer, but mainly contain items that ask respondents to rate the degree to which they agree or disagree with a statement on a particular scale, I have chosen to perform an Internal Consistency Reliability Test that measured the consistency of results across items with Cronbach’s Alpha. This test was used to determine if a number of individual items from the questionnaires
measure the same construct, in which case they should come out as being related to each other or, in other words, be internally consistent. The alpha coefficient was measured on each of the 3 sets of variables, both for the teachers’ and students’ questionnaires. The results for the students’ sample were: $\alpha=0.744$ for metacognition variable set, $\alpha=0.704$ for imagination variable set and $\alpha=0.345$ for medium variable set. For the teachers’ sample: $\alpha=0.907$ for metacognition variable set, $\alpha=0.894$ for imagination variable set and $\alpha=0.413$ for medium variable set. While the commonly accepted values for a satisfactory to excellent Cronbach’s alpha lie in the range $0.5-0.9$ (George & Mallery 2003), we should also keep in mind that its formula is dependent on the number of items and thus a higher number of items can lead to an inflated value for alpha, while a narrow range of items can yield a low value. This is one of the reasons why a set of items has yielded a considerably lower value in our case. The considerably low value of alpha coefficient that was obtained for the medium item sets is in part attributed to this issue, but also to the fact that some of the items included in these sets were reverse scored items. According to Field (2009, p. 679) these type of “reversed” items make a significant difference in reliability analysis and, in extreme cases, they are even able to yield negative alpha values.

Concerning the rate of missing responses, $1\%$ of the answers weren’t completed by respondents in the students’ sample, while teachers’ sample has only $0.05\%$ rate of nonresponses.

4. Results

4.1 Results for Metacognition, Imagination and Medium

As expounded in the previous chapters, this research was aimed at finding out if a specific form of artistic education is present in music classes at secondary school level, in the sense that there is a balanced focus and implementation of its three core defining elements: metacognition, imagination and medium. Moreover, our expectation was to observe an imbalance as a consequence of an overemphasis on the latter. The sample surveyed in the research process was
made up of a number of 10 secondary schools from 6 different provinces of the Netherlands. A total number of 181 students (1 class per school) were included in the research along with 10 teachers (1 from each school).

The items that were analyzed quantitatively were grouped and designated to one of these 3 main variables, as was explained in the previous chapter. Subsequently, these three sets of data were analyzed by calculating the frequency of answers from the five-Likert scales that were employed. The answers were ranked from 1—the most positive (Strongly agree/ To a great extent) to 5—the most negative (Strongly disagree/ To a small extent). Thus, for example, positive responses (1 and 2) to items pertaining to the metacognition set were interpreted as indicators of the presence of those particular metacognitive elements within the curriculum, the practice of teaching music or the acquired knowledge and skills, depending on the specific construct and whom it was addressed to. On the other hand, negative answers (4 and 5) were considered to express the absence of a given variable from teachers’ or students’ experience with respect to the music curriculum or teaching practice. What such analysis of the data showed is that there is in fact a considerable difference to be noted among these three dimensions in what their weight within music teaching and learning is concerned. As can be seen in Fig. 4, there is a significant gap between metacognition (MC) and the other two variables: imagination (IM) and medium (M), both according to students and music teachers. Although the difference between IM and M is not significant, the hierarchy that looms out of this graphic is interesting and confirms that medium is indeed scoring higher among the three variables, even though not always to a great extent. The highest number of positive answers was associated by students to the medium group, with a rate of almost 40%. This is followed by a rate of 38.44% affirmative answers for constructs belonging to the imagination dimension, while 32.91% is the result obtained for the metacognition set. Teachers have also rated medium and imagination close, with 27.85% and 27.27% respectively, while metacognition is distanced at 26.25%.

---

24 Noord Brabant (Stedelijk College Eindhoven, Van Maerlantlyceum), Utrecht (Griftland College, Utrechts Stedelijk Gymnasium, Oosterlicht College Vianen), Friesland (CSG Bogerman), Overijssel (Carmel College Salland), NoordHolland (Hervormd Lyceum Zuid Amsterdam), Zuid-Holland (Segbroek College Den Haag), Gelderland (Olympus College Arnhem)
It is also interesting to look at the negative answers (4 and 5) since they portray a slightly different tendency in the overall hierarchy. Normally, they should reflect more or less the reversed configuration of the positive answers. However, for students, imagination shifts below medium, while metacognition keeps the last place. This means that there were more students that disagreed or reported negative attitudes towards the medium dimension compared to the imagination one. The gaps are also looking somewhat different: 3, 34% for imagination, 5, 23% for medium and 7, 46% for metacognition.

![Graph showing comparison among teachers and their students](image)

**Fig. 4**

### 4.2 Comparison among teachers and their students

A separate analysis of the results, which allows for a comparison between each teacher’s and his or her own students’ results, is interesting to consider firstly because such a confrontation is able to show us the level of congruence that exists among these different perspectives and between the aims and effects of music teaching within a particular school. Such an analysis can provide an indicator of the efficiency of the music education program that we’re looking at and a mark of the dynamics between the transmitting and the receptive parties (i.e. teachers and students) involved in the music learning process. The comparison between music teachers’ and their students’ perspectives can also offer an insight into what and where are the eventual discrepancies or inconsistencies between these two viewpoints with regard to music education’s

---

25 Taking in consideration that such given case is not necessarily representative for the whole school’s music teaching situation
meaning, impact and outcomes, and what the real effects and outcomes of music learning are as far as the students are concerned. The inconsistencies between teachers’ and students’ opinions can also contribute to offering an image on what is or isn’t achieved in the teaching and learning processes, while also offering an opportunity for changing and improving teaching methods or plans. Therefore, let us now have a look at what the results of our surveys are showing when the answers of each teacher and his/her students are compared.

In the first case (Fig. 5), students from Stedelijk College Eindhoven and their music teacher reported a relatively different order between the three variables that were analyzed. The instructor and his students agreed most frequently on statements that indicate a focus on the medium (aims, goals, activities specific to the theoretical and technical area). However, the importance of metacognition and imagination is inversed among the two samples of respondents: students are perceiving imagination’s presence and role within music learning to a greater extent than that of metacognitive elements, while the teacher offers an opposite priority for these dimensions. This might happen because, even though metacognitive aims occupy a high place on teacher’s agenda, it may not be properly emphasized in practice or it may be harder to perceive by students because of their greater focus on the practical and creative sides of the activities—which is in fact a predictable attitude if we consider their young ages (this is a 2nd year class, thus students in this sample are between 13-14 years of age) and their immaturity. Adolescents are more likely to look for and enjoy practical activities, entertaining and creative things rather than taking time to think about and meditate upon the underlying values of what they are doing or to engage in introspection. If we look at the curve of the negative answers, metacognition is not the variable with the higher score as would be expected on the basis of the teacher’s response, which may then suggest and support the idea that students might in fact not be aware of this dimension, although it is part of their experience and involvement with music.
The students from van Maerlantlyceum are a year older than those from the first school and this might be the reason why the place of metacognition is no longer the last according to the obtained data (Fig. 6), but instead it receives a higher degree of attention and awareness from the pupils. However, their attitude towards medium is completely opposite to that of their teacher. Although the teacher puts a great emphasis on issues related to theoretical and technical teaching content, the students do not perceive it as being the core of what they are learning; to the contrary: creativity and imagination is predominant in their perception and experience of music education.
The results from Griftland College (Fig. 7) portray a fairly close resemblance between students’ and their teacher’s views. The hierarchy emerging from both groups of respondents is similar: 1. medium, 2. imagination, 3. metacognition. Results from students’ sample are 53, 26% M, 33, 70% IM, 24, 90% MC and those from the teacher: 28, 57%, M, 27, 27% IM and 8, 33% MC. It is thus evident that, in this case, medium-specific training is central to the activities undertaken in music classes, as well as to the aimed and perceived outcomes of music learning, while metacognition turns out to be passed by to a considerable extent.
A similar situation is indicated by the results from Hervormd Lyceum Zuid Amsterdam if we consider the percentages obtained from the positive answers in both students’ and teacher’s responses (Fig. 8). The two groups of respondents seem to contradict each other as far as the medium variable is concerned. However, in this case, results obtained from the negative statements suggest an obvious inconsistency in teacher’s answers. This is shown by the clear contradiction that comes out from the high percentage of both positive and negative statements related to items representative for the medium variable. In fact, the percentage of negative statements or disagreements with constructs that express the presence of medium-specific elements among the aims, methods, evaluation and activities existent in the program or curriculum used in music classes is actually higher than its’ positive correspondent: 37.5% answers of disagreement (4) as compared to 25% answers of agreement (1). Indeed, when looking into the specific questions and answers thereof given by the teacher, it turns out that the main tendency is that indicated by the highest values represented in the graphic; namely that the highest percentage of teacher’s answers regarding the medium variable were negative. In other words, the teacher is also placing the medium on the lowest position, as his pupils do. In fact, the high percentage of positive statements related to the medium variable that causes this apparent
inconsistency and contradiction in teacher’s answers turns out to be attributed to only one specific aspect of the *medium* variable: the performance-oriented skills (singing and instrument playing). These skills seem to receive significant attention from the teacher. However, when considering other statements such as “I want to develop in my students technical proficiency in instrument playing” with which the teacher consistently disagreed, it becomes clear that the focus on performance skills is not exaggerated and is not motivated by or supporting a strong emphasis on the *medium* dimension.

Fig 8. Hervormd Lyceum Zuid Amsterdam

The respondents’ sample from Carmel College Salland consists of a 2nd year class of students and their music teacher. In this case the results (Fig. 9) show a clear opposition regarding the place of *imagination* variable in the two emerging hierarchies. For students, elements related to imagination are clearly the most substantial and important in the music education equation, whereas the music teacher seems to place them on the lowest level in his music teaching rationale. This apparent mismatch may arise due to the fact that students might have a higher attraction towards elements specific to the imaginative side of music and, hence, exhibit a higher sensitivity and reaction towards its manifestation than to other elements involved.
in the process of studying music. However, in the teacher’s answers the medium variable has the highest and most clear importance (37, 5%). The other two variables are problematic given the high percentage of neutral and negative answers that were assigned to them. For imagination there is a rate of only 9% positive answers, while the majority of answers are negative in nature: 36, 3% disagreement (4) and 27% of total disagreement (5). Moreover, there is also a significantly high rate of “uncertain” (3) answers, that is 33%. Thus, according to the music teacher’s view, imagination seems to occupy a marginal place within his teaching and objectives. As far as metacognition is concerned, teacher’s attitude is quite unclear since the percentage of positive and negative answers is almost equal and the highest rate of answers is assigned to the neutral category (3).

![Graph](image)

**Fig. 9 Carmel College Salland**

The students from Utrechts Stedelijk Gymnasium that were included in our survey have expressed the perception of a higher degree of importance, focus, awareness and presence of aspects linked to imagination in their experience of music learning in school. A rate of 45, 45% is shown in the results and this is surprisingly the same rate indicated by the music teacher’s
responses related to this variable. The difference among students’ and teacher’s perspectives steps in when we look at the other two variables: *medium* has a higher score (43, 18%) than metacognition (32, 23%) in students’ eyes, while for the teacher the opposite holds true: 41, 67% MC, 37, 50% M. I would again attribute this variance to the young age of these students (they are 2nd year students) and, therefore, to their lesser disposition and capability of taking this sort of concepts into consideration at a level equivalent to that of operating with imaginative and practical issues. Pupils might not have such an accentuated perception of the metacognitive dimension because they are still unaware of its meaning and importance, given that much of their previous experiences with learning other academic subjects have more often confronted them with practical, conceptual, problem-solving and imaginative matters and less, or maybe not at all, with metacognitive challenges (at least not in a direct way, by clearly presenting those challenges in these terms).

![Graph](image)

**Fig. 10 Utrechts Stedelijk Gymnasium**

At CSG Bogerman there is a very interesting situation to be observed. The results (Fig. 11) portray a fairly considerable difference between students’ and their teacher’s views in the sense that students’ answers yield a completely different position for the *medium* variable as compared to their teacher’s. While they express a very low level of importance associated to the medium-specific content of the music classes they are attending, their teacher is in turn indicating a fairly high emphasis on this aspect within the curriculum and teaching practice employed. The highest percentage of positive
answers for students’ sample is attributed to the metacognition variable (48, 79%), closely followed by the imagination (46, 67%) category. The medium variable obtained a significantly lower result compared to these two, namely 35%. On the contrary, the teacher’s answers led to a greater weight of the medium variable: 25% positive answers (of 1-strongly agree) compared to 20, 83% for metacognition and 18, 18% for imagination. We are thus facing a discrepancy here between students’ and their teacher’s opinions regarding medium’s place and weight among music education’s focus and priorities. Moreover, when looking at the dynamic of the positive and negative answers we can find a pretty good consistency, at least in the case of medium variable: in both teacher’s and students’ cases the high values of positive answers in relation to this variable are accompanied by low values of negative answers and respectively vice-versa.

The results from Olympus College Arnhem (Fig. 12) show a fairly high concordance between the answers given by students and their music teacher. Medium scores the highest in both cases, while the other two variables present a relative variation in terms of values. They follow, however, the same order in weight: the teacher’s results- 37, 5% M, 27, 27% IM, 20, 83% MC; students results- 48% M, 36,25% IM, 30 % MC.

Fig. 11 CSG Bogerman
Likewise, at Oosterlicht College Vianen the results show consistency among teacher and students. They all indicate the same hierarchy: 1. imagination, 2. medium, 3. metacognition. The specific values differ because students tended to give a higher number of uncertainty (3) answers regarding the statements included in the questionnaire. The exact results in teacher’s case are: 63, 64% IM, 62, 50% M, 54, 17% MC and for students: 37, 5% IM, 32, 14% M, 31, 82 % MC. The values for these three variables are nevertheless fairly close in students’ case with a somewhat higher emphasis on imagination, while from the teacher’s perspective the gap lies between metacognition and the first two. Her focus lies thus more on imagination and medium, of which the former seems to be more strongly emphasized in class according to students’ perceptions.
At Segbroek College there is agreement between students’ and teacher’s answers in what the primacy of imagination is concerned (see Fig. 14). The students, however, indicate a significant difference in weight between metacognition and both medium and imagination. From the teacher’s perspective, the three variables are approximately equally distributed across the curriculum and activities undertaken within music classes, although elements pertaining to the imaginative dimension seem to be a little bit more emphasized. The exact values are: teacher—27, 3% IM, 25%M, 25%MC; students—56% IM, 53, 33% M, 40% MC. There should also be noted the high percentage of neutral/uncertainty (3) answers provided by the teacher and the slightly higher rate in negative statements attributed to metacognition.
4.3 Qualitative Data Results

After statistically analyzing the answers for the close-ended questions, it is interesting to shift our attention to the insights that the qualitative data derived from this research have to offer us, as drawn out from the elaborated answers offered by students and teachers both to the questionnaire and interview items.

Students

The open-ended items comprised in the students’ questionnaire were:

1. *How did the knowledge acquired within music classes change/influence the way you listen to music now?*

2. *What else do you think you should learn or would you like to learn in music classes?*

For the first question, regarding the changes occurring in the listening experience, students have mentioned a various palette of elements, as presented in Fig. 15. Out of a total of 181 pupils, 61 (33, 7%) did not respond to this item and were therefore excluded from the sample. Despite the fact that a high proportion (32%) of the students that answered this question
affirmed that they experienced no change at all regarding their music listening experience as a consequence of the knowledge and insights acquired while studying music in school, an almost equal number of students (31%) reported a substantial change in perceiving underlying structural elements of music such as rhythm, harmony, intervals, modulations, melody, allocation of voices or the interplay between melody and text. An important number of students reported an enhanced ability to recognize the particular instruments that are played in a certain musical piece or song and the capacity to focus on more elements than they were previously able to: “I can hear more elements than rhythm and melody”, “I can focus more on melody than rather only the beat”, “I listen more to the melody and what instruments are used”, “I listen more to melody and rhythm rather than only to text” are a few examples depicting this type of answers. Much of the changes perceived by students with respect to their music listening experience have been attributed to a higher degree of attention towards the various structural factors that make up the musical work. Students seem to be more aware of all these “details” as they call them, as a consequence of studying their particularities and functions in music classes. It is a way of applying the theoretical knowledge they have acquired and making use of it when engaging with music. A substantial number of students (15%) have indicated their enthusiasm towards the fact that, in some cases, they are themselves able to play music that they listen to and like. Recognizing and enjoying more styles of music has been reported by very few respondents (6%), while the perception of a change in musical meaning-making was only mentioned once in terms of the emotional message that could be derived as denoted by certain sounds or musical sequences. However, there is also a certain segment of the pupils (9%) that reported experiencing very little change in their music listening behavior and that were not able to name or identify what those specific changes are. What we can draw out of this data is that, from students’ perspective, the most frequently perceived outcomes of studying music –as manifested in the process of “consuming” or listening to music– are closely linked to the theoretical knowledge acquired from music classes.

26 This could be interpreted as an important outcome of studying music according to the pupils, but does not actually represent a relevant answer to the initial question.
Concerning the second question regarding the additional things that they would like to learn in music classes, the majority of students that responded to this item\(^\text{27}\) (39\%) indicated their interest in learning to play more instruments or different other instruments than those that they were already offered to study. From all the answers provided it turns out that the most common musical instruments used in classroom are piano and guitar, closely followed by drums. Apart from their wish to get familiarized with a wider range of instruments, students also manifested their strong desire to get involved with more contemporary music, to study more “cool” or “modern” music and specific styles that they prefer or greatly enjoy (such as rap or rock), to “choose what music to study”. A rather frequent element reflected in their answers is composition. 21\% of the students who responded to this questionnaire item have expressed their interest in learning to write or compose music, few of whom have also indicated their wish to be taught “how to arrange songs” and “how to play a song in a different style”. A small number of students (4\%) have indicated an interest in getting acquainted with new technology/media in

\(^{27}\)Again, the statistical analysis was applied to the sample of valid answers obtained after ruling out the nonresponses.
music classes or learning about computer music. A fairly high percentage of the students (32%) have stated that they are satisfied with what is comprised in the music curricula and that they do not have any additional requirements regarding the content or activities undertaken in music classes. Another 4% of the respondents were not decided, as depicted in Fig. 16.

![Desired learning topics](image)

**Fig. 16 Desired learning topics**

**Teachers**

*Views on the purpose of music education*

The teachers were asked to formulate their views on what the purpose of music education is, so as to be able to better understand their aims and their approach to teaching music. The teachers’ answers reflected a number of similar topics that were subsequently brought together in broader categories or themes for further analysis. Therefore, by identifying and statistically examining certain recurring concepts emerging from the teachers’ answers, we can draw some conclusions regarding their most common perspectives on the purpose and aims of music
education. What this analysis has shown is that the main purposes of music education—as most frequently mentioned in teachers’ answers—are:

1. To develop students’ socio-emotional skills (24%)
2. To help them enjoy and appreciate music (20%)
3. To teach them how to play music or sing (20%)

Other frequently mentioned topics were self-identity exploration (12%) and listening abilities (12%), while elements related to cultural insight were scarcely mentioned—they make up only 4% of the topics mentioned.

![Pie chart showing purposes of music education](image)

**Fig. 17 Purpose of music education**

*Examination topics*

Teachers were also asked to indicate the main topics that they focus on in the assessment or examination process. We wanted to find out what are the teachers’ ultimate expectations
regarding the knowledge and skills that their pupils should acquire from music classes, and thereby, once again get a firmer grip on what are the particular elements emphasized in and considered essential to a good education in music. The main topics targeted in examination are also an indicator of the areas in which pupils have to invest most of their learning efforts, in order to prove their assimilation level of the subject matter.

As presented in Fig. 18, it turned out that performance skills such as singing, playing an instrument, and everything that these activities imply occupy a central place in the assessment agenda (the majority of 27% most frequently listed topics). Theoretical knowledge and listening abilities are the second most common subjects assessed by teachers, each of them occurring in 19% of the cases. Matters related to composition and overall class participation were also mentioned by some teachers (each with 13%). Only one of the ten teachers that were surveyed stated that he also focuses on assessing pupils’ analytical skills and their abilities of attaching or deriving meaning from music at the affective level. Similarly, in one case, the assessment procedure was reported to involve a type of peer assessment as well.

![Fig. 18](image_url)

*Fig. 18*

*Diversity of musical instruments and listening activities employed*
Next to being asked whether they make use of musical instruments in teaching music to their students, teachers were also required to specify what those particular instruments were. It is interesting to find out the diversity of musical instruments that pupils are exposed to at school. In 70% of the cases these are piano and guitar, both acoustic and electric – as we’ve previously seen to also be reflected in students’ answers– while drums are as well popular in music classes (24%). One out of 10 teachers has reported to also teach wind instruments along with the classic pop instruments; in another case accordion was also included among the instruments made available to students in the classroom.

Concerning the type of listening activities or projects undertaken in music classes, a proportion of 40% was found to belong to the “programma” listening activities comprised in the music textbooks chosen by the teachers. Two teachers mentioned YouTube as a platform used for listening activities that are undertaken in their music classes, while other two indicated that attending concerts or theaters was an extra listening activity besides the usual listening exercises proposed in the textbooks.

4.4 Discussion

The results of our research are reflecting a slight imbalance among the three defining components of arts education that we discussed in the theoretical framework. This is reflected in students’ answers by the significant difference (of 25%) that their statements indicate among the metacognition variable and the other two, medium and imagination. The results show a reduced emphasis on the metacognitive dimension in comparison with both medium and imagination through pupils’ less numerous references to matters of reflection, knowledge about cultural contexts, aesthetic judgment-making or internalisation outcomes28. This might indicate that students do not perceive these aspects as important or present in their music learning experience as medium-specific knowledge and skills or imagination. Based on students’ perspective, we could conclude that a greater emphasis on the metacognitive dimension is needed in order to

---

28 Implying the development of reflection, interpretation, meaning-making processes.
achieve a more balanced artistic education in the music teaching practices that we examined in this study. However, if we look at the results obtained from the teachers’ sample, it seems that the three components are generally equally addressed in the lessons: the results indicated 27, 85% and 27, 27% positive statements for medium and imagination respectively, and 26, 25% for metacognition. Therefore, as far as the teachers are concerned, their music teaching seems to be equally directed to all three variables that we set off to examine, which suggests that their music classes are offering students a balanced artistic education. Still, the inconsistency that appears to exist between music teachers and their pupils’ views and perceptions in relation to the weight of metacognition within their music teaching and learning experience is yet worth considering. Metacognition is the key element that makes the distinction between artistic education and education in non-artistic disciplines, such as the scientific ones. Learning physics also requires a strong emphasis on and the acquisition of specific theoretical knowledge (e.g. laws, formulas, axioms, etc.), imagination and creativity (in order to visualize certain situations presented in problems, but also to find creative solutions for tackling a certain problem). Yet the process of self-reflection or self-consciousness that the metacognitive dimension brings in is what seems to be at the core of the artistic phenomenon, especially in what the process of meaning-making is concerned. Therefore, a misunderstood role and importance of metacognition within arts education is in fact compromising it. Although the metacognitive aspect is essential to experiencing and getting involved with the arts and music in particular, it seems that the pupils are very little aware of it. Despite the fact that music teachers indicated a similar degree of interest and attention for training, developing and stimulating students’ use of metacognitive strategies—as well as medium-specific theoretical and practical skills or the use of imagination—, our findings suggest that at some point these aims are not met, judging from the experience and outcomes perceived by their students. Nevertheless, if teachers become aware of what their students consider to be central to music education or what they do or do not perceive as learning effects or outcomes of studying music, they could be able to identify and address the issues that prevent an efficient communication and the teaching of music as an art discipline.

Although our hypothesis of an overemphasis on medium is not supported, since the results indicate a similarly important focus on both imagination and medium, we can notice that, to a certain degree, the medium does have priority over the other elements according to both
teachers’ and students’ views concerning the music education they are involved with. This can be observed by looking at the results of both the quantiative and qualitative data that was collected in this study. In the graphic from Fig. 4 (pg. 58) we can see that the highest percentage of references in both teachers’ and students’ questionnaire answers is attributed to the medium variable (27%, respectively 39%). Moreover, according to teacher’s statements, the qualitative data gathered in this study shows that the assessment in music classes is mostly directed towards performing (27%), listening (19%) skills and musical theory (19%)\(^{29}\). This indicates that the assessment is to a great extent medium-oriented. Teachers’ perspectives on the purpose of music education are also indicating that the development of performing skills are one of the main goals of music education\(^{30}\), along with socio-emotional and enjoyment outcomes.

The overall situation of music education portrayed by the results of this study is considerably different from the findings of Harland’s et. al (2000) research conducted in the UK. On the one hand, their findings indicated a very strong emphasis on knowledge and skill-based outcomes (p. 269), attributed in our study to the medium category, while imagination and creativity were much less mentioned by pupils as perceived effects of music education. What we discovered in our research is, on the students’ part, a similarly high perception of elements pertaining to both imagination and medium categories and a significantly weaker accent on matters of reflection and internalisation processes\(^{31}\), or what we more broadly called metacognition. In the teachers’ case we found a relatively balanced focus on all of these three aspects. The difference between our findings and the results of Harland’s study could be explained by many factors. Firstly, the studies were conducted in different countries with different education systems, but also the allotted time for the research projects (three years for the research conducted in UK) should be taken in consideration. Secondly, the research methodologies and measuring instruments that were used differ significantly in complexity: besides surveys, Harland and his colleagues have also conducted in-depth case studies consisting in interviews and informal (video-taped) observations. And probably most importantly, we should note that our study was significantly more limited in what the sample sizes are concerned.

\(^{29}\) As seen in Fig. 18

\(^{30}\) See Fig. 17

\(^{31}\) Which are involved in students’ process of constructing a world meaning
While we surveyed 10 music teachers and 181 pupils across 10 secondary schools, Harland’s study was conducted on a larger and more generally representative sample of schools, teachers and students: the questionnaires were completed by a number 2,269 students and 52 teachers from across 22 schools.

5. Conclusion and Recommendations

As discussed in the introduction, the purpose of this study was to explore how music is taught in secondary schools and to find out whether music classes are offering students a type of artistic education. According to the definition of arts education stemming from van Heusden’s theory of art, we evaluated the music education subject to the three defining components discussed in our theoretical framework, namely imagination, metacognition and medium (i.e. theoretical and practical skills specific to the art discipline).

In order to assess this, we conducted an exploratory study which consisted in administering questionnaires to both teachers and students in 10 Dutch secondary schools. We surveyed a total number of 181 students and 10 music teachers (1 teacher per school along with one of his/her classes). The items comprised in the questionnaires were specifically designed to examine elements pertaining to the three components mentioned above. The study relied on both qualitative and quantitative data that reflects teachers’ and students’ perspectives and opinions on what is taught and learned in music classes and what the aims and outcomes of music education are, according to their views and personal experience.

Based on the results obtained after a statistical evaluation of the data, our findings suggest that the metacognition component is slightly less represented in music classes than the other two. This imbalance is however reflected only by pupils’ statements with respect to the place that (self-) exploration, (self-) reflection and musical meaning-making processes hold among other aspects involved in studying music at school. According to the teachers, the emphasis on the metacognitive dimension is not considerably different to that on medium or imagination. Our results suggest that teachers’ goals and assessment targets revolve not only around medium-
specific instruction (e.g. theoretical knowledge, technical/ performing skills) and creativity or use of imagination, but also around aspects specific to metacognition (e.g. (self)-reflection, cultural contextualization, musical meaning-making). Students’ views on what they ultimately learn and acquire from music classes are generally corresponding to the topics indicated by their teachers, with the exception of the metacognitive factor that, in their case, is significantly reduced. Thus, according to our study, metacognition seems to be slightly misrepresented according to students’ perspective regarding the priorities, interests and focus experienced in their involvement with music education. Yet, considering that metacognition is a constituent and defining part of art (both as process and phenomenon), our finding calls for a reconsideration on the part of music educators regarding the effectiveness of communicating to students the centrality and importance of this dimension in understanding and relating to music. By better emphasizing this factor when teaching music and bringing it to the attention and awareness of the students, music teachers could be more effective in offering students an artistic education within the field of music.

We should however stress the fact that our findings are not generally representative for music education within the Dutch secondary education system. Future research in this direction could allow a fuller picture on the situation of the artistic education provided by Dutch music education by extending the study on a larger sample of schools, teachers and students. Developing a more comprehensive measurement instrument that would assign more items for each variable could improve the accuracy of the measurement. The methodology may also be improved in order to allow a more in-depth exploration; conducting interviews on a large sample of respondents can offer a greater insight into their views and motivations on certain aspects and it can also ensure a greater response rate. Concerning our findings on metacognition, a follow-up study employing focus-groups could provide a deeper insight into students’ understandings and attitudes towards the metacognitive dimension.
Acknowledgements

Generally, writing a thesis seems to be an independent project, something that you have to carry out by yourself. However, its completion and final form are to a great extent shaped through the assistance, guidance and support of those around you. I want thus to express my gratitude to all those that supported me and contributed to the completion of this thesis in one way or another.

I would especially like to express my gratitude and deepest appreciation to my principal thesis supervisor, prof. dr. B. P. van Heusden, for all the inspiration and enthusiasm that he instilled in me in relation to the subject of this research. I also want to thank him and dr. J. van Gessel, for all their valuable insights and advices, their overall support, patience and time spent for directing and improving my work.

I am also very grateful to all the schools, music teachers and students that accepted to be part of this study and without whom this research would not have been possible.

I am greatly thankful to all my friends that supported me emotionally and in so many other ways, particularly to Adrian Millea, Adelina Barbu, Raluca Moglan, Damian Podareanu and Diana Nitu. I thank my whole family for always being there for me, for all their confidence and encouragement. And most especially, I want to thank my husband for his continued support on all levels, his inexhaustible encouragement, patience and love.

Ultimately and above all, I want to thank God for the help given through all these people that I have mentioned (and many others that were not included in this list), for the strength of overcoming the challenging moments along this journey and, generally, for this great learning opportunity—about art and education, but also about myself, my own capabilities and limits.
Bibliography


Regelski, T. 2002. *On" methodolatry" and music teaching as critical and reflective praxis* in Philosophy of Music Education Review, 10(2), 102-123.


Appendix 1: Semi-structured interview

_N.b.: The questions below were used as a guide for the interviews administered to the teachers. Although this scheme was not strictly followed in the discussions, the topics were all touched upon._

**VIEW**
1. What does arts education (culture education) mean to you?
2. What are, from your point of view, the main outcomes that can be attributed to this type of education?
3. How would you describe music education as a specific form of arts education?
4. What does music education specifically offer students compared to the other curriculum subjects?

**AIMS**
5. What do you want students to learn from music classes?
6. Which would you consider to be the main capacity or capacities developed through music education? /contribution of musical training to the development of students?
7. Does music education prepare students for / contribute to their further development as individuals?
8. What part does imagination play in the process of learning? Provide examples.
# Appendix 2: Teachers Questionnaire

1. To what extent do your lessons aim to stimulate students’…?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>To a great extent</th>
<th>To a considerable extent</th>
<th>To some extent</th>
<th>To a small extent</th>
<th>To no extent at all</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Self-reflective skills</strong></td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Reflection on one another</strong></td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Expressive skills</strong></td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Social and emotional skills</strong></td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Imagination</strong></td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cultural awareness</strong></td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Identity formation</strong></td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

32 The capacity to reflect on one’s own state of being, thoughts, emotions etc. through music
33 Awareness of the atmosphere, meaning, situation of a culture through its music
2. The specific skills that I want to develop in my students are...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>...</th>
<th>To a great extent</th>
<th>To a considerable extent</th>
<th>To some extent</th>
<th>To a small extent</th>
<th>To no extent at all</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Music literacy</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creativity</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Listening skills</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Singing/ Performing skills</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technical proficiency in instrument playing</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Understanding of musical concepts</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Analysis abilities</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appreciation skills</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Historical and cultural contextualization of music</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aesthetic discernment/ judgment</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------------</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Multi)cultural insight</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-expression through music</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interpretative abilities</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Metaphorical Thinking</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge of their musical tradition(s)</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3. My students are able to...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>…</th>
<th>To a great extent</th>
<th>To a considerable extent</th>
<th>To some extent</th>
<th>To a small extent</th>
<th>To no extent at all</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Relate the music they hear outside the school to the music studied in school</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extend the analysis of a musical piece to the affective level (emotions, feelings)</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Match musical pieces to their characteristic historical period or sociocultural environment</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Understand the relevant differences among diverse music traditions and canons around the world

4. In my lessons, I employ activities such as...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>...</th>
<th>To a great extent</th>
<th>To a considerable extent</th>
<th>To some extent</th>
<th>To a small extent</th>
<th>To no extent at all</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Listening</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Singing</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Composition</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improvisation</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arrangement</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Audition</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Other ..........................................................................................................................................

............................................................................................................................................
5. The assessment is based on...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Method</th>
<th>To a great extent</th>
<th>To a considerable extent</th>
<th>To some extent</th>
<th>To a small extent</th>
<th>To no extent at all</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Standard pencil and paper tests</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mixed method of evaluation (both written and practical assignments)</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluating the correct reproduction of the theoretical material</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluating the student’s ability of attaching their own interpretations to the learned material</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self or peer-assessment</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6. Do you incorporate music-listening projects in your curriculum?

☐ Yes, Please specify ...........................................................................................................

☐ No
7. Do you use musical instruments in the class?
   ☐ Yes, 
   Please specify ………………………………………………………………………...
   ☐ No

8. Do you usually employ practical demonstrations in instrumental teaching?
   ☐ Yes
   ☐ No

9. Do students participate in school musical ensembles?
   ☐ Yes
   ☐ No

10. Do you teach music other than that of the Western classical tradition?
   ☐ Yes, 
   Please specify ………………………………………………………………………...
   ☐ No

11. Do you have a fixed repertoire?
   ☐ Yes
   ☐ No

12. What styles or genres does it cover?
   ☐ Classical music
   ☐ Jazz
   ☐ Pop music
   ☐ Folk music
   ☐ World music
   ☐ Other …………………………………………………………………………………

13. Does the repertoire integrate music that is requested by students?
   ☐ Yes
   ☐ No
14. What are the main topics targeted in examination?

15. What is the purpose of school music education according to you?

Thank you very much for your time.

Appendix 3: Students Questionnaire

Q1. Please indicate your agreement with the following statements:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I can express my feelings and ideas through music.</th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Uncertain</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Through music I get in touch with my inner world.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Statement</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning music offered me an insight in myself and other people.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Music can be fun even without knowing how it is made.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I want to be taught at school about music that I enjoy listening to in my spare time.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I think music is a way of sharing things that you can't really express otherwise.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Through music I can give form to my experiences and memories.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I find the music studied in class pretty old-fashioned and boring.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>From music classes I gained insight in the role that music plays in our society and culture.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In music classes I learned that people may understand the same song differently.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I think music helps me to be more creative.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>When listening to music you start to use your imagination and creativity.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>By studying music I came to know and enjoy more styles and genres of music.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
I can recognize good music. ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

Playing an instrument makes me feel good because I can do something that not everyone can. ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

In music classes we are encouraged to express our personal understandings of the music we study or listen to. ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

The way I listen to songs now is different because of what I have learned in music lessons. * ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

*How?............................................................................................................................................................................................
........................................................................................................................................................................................................
........................................................................................................................................................................................................
........................................................................................................................................................................................................

Q2. The goal of studying music is to learn to...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>To a great extent</th>
<th>To a considerable extent</th>
<th>To some extent</th>
<th>To a small extent</th>
<th>To no extent at all</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Read and write music</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Play an instrument or sing</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Listen</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activity</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------------------------</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recognize different forms and styles of music</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Express oneself and communicate musically</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Explore own identity</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Understand different eras and cultures</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Q3. What else do you think you should learn or would you like to learn in music classes?

………………………………………………………………………………………………………………
………………………………………………………………………………………………………………
………………………………………………………………………………………………………………
………………………………………………………………………………………………………………
………………………………………………………………………………………………………………

Thank you very much for your time.