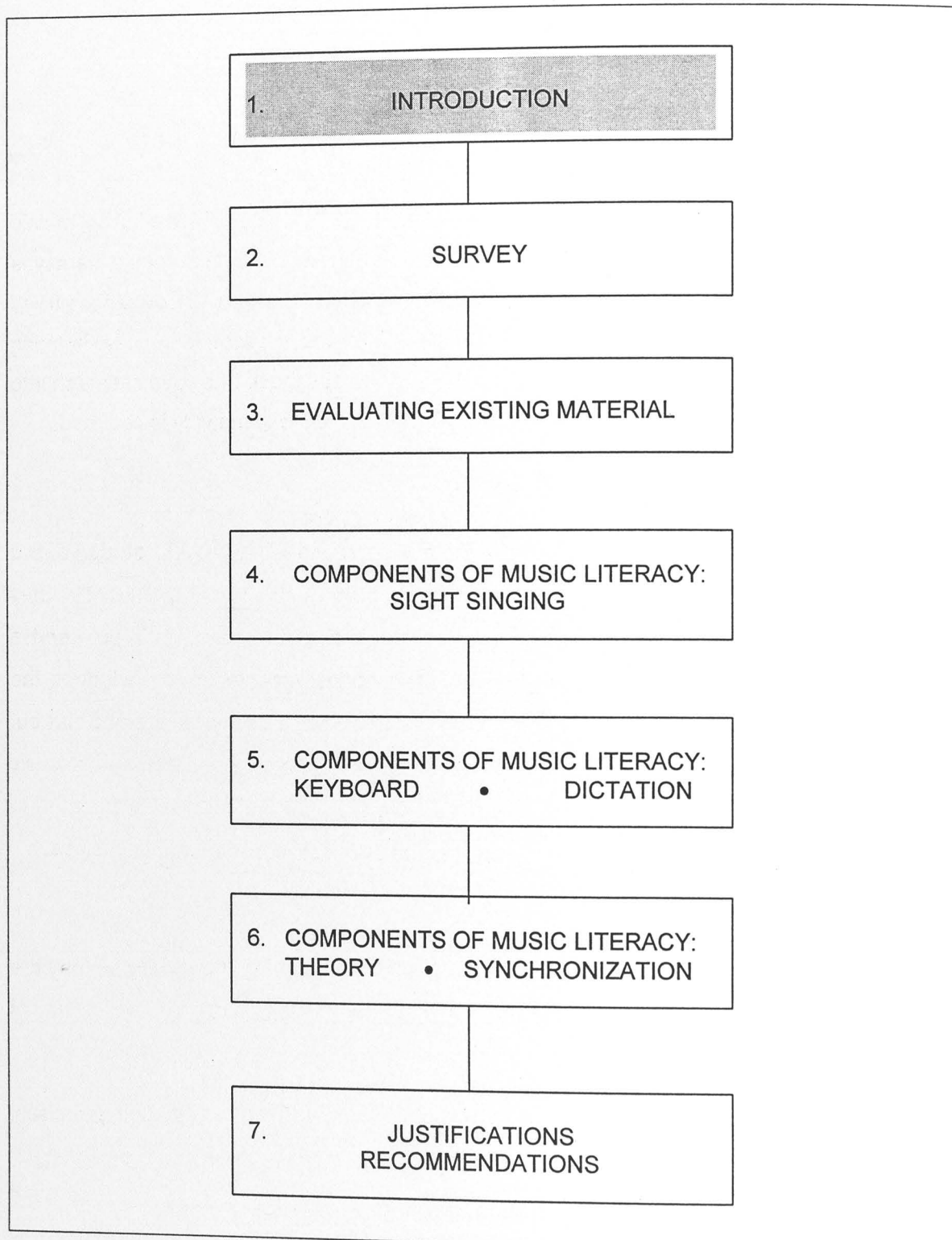


CHAPTER 1

Introduction



CHAPTER 1

Introduction

1.1 Specifically South African problems

The local situation currently, regarding music literacy, is as follows:

Music literacy in South Africa

In an environment where the dominant approach in formal music education is mainly theoretical, the level of music literacy remains low. An adequate level of music literacy is limited to the serious music student and the professional musician. In South Africa there is the additional problem that in the past and still in the present, the overwhelming majority of learners are not exposed to music education at school. Intensive research into effective programmes to alleviate this problem speedily and inexpensively is required.

Need for music literacy in South Africa

Music literacy is becoming a basic need for a wide range of amateurs, students and professionals. These include choristers, opera singers who are frequently only 'discovered' in their twenties, students in general music classes, educators in pre-service and in-service training and especially also aspirant instrumentalists studying at the available music centres/magnet schools as well as with private music teachers. Short but expensive individual lessons especially necessitate appropriate education in music literacy. However, all learners in school should have the right and should be exposed to at least basic music literacy, enabling them to make their own subsequent life choices.

Existing approaches

Existing approaches do not meet the need for music literacy at all. On the whole, they are extremely time consuming and cannot be applied immediately in independent music making.

There are in existence numerous purely theoretical handbooks, often including exercises, as well as some books with suggestions for practical application. However, they share the same point of departure: a core of time consuming written exercises. Various aural training systems are sometimes applied, but only in addition to theory.

Facile music reading/singing occurs with a fair number of choristers, especially in rural areas. The solfa system, which is generally used, is effective in diatonic choir singing and serves as an excellent introduction for their sight singing. However, they lack the necessary follow-up. Thus, independence in utilizing all kinds of notated music remains a need. Especially with choir leaders, this causes much frustration; apart from the choristers' inability, often, also the leader feels restricted due to partial or total music illiteracy.

A strong need to alleviate this problem exists specifically for music literacy within the South African context. According to the latest NRF (see 1.8.13) information, no other research has been undertaken in the last ten years to address this specific problem.

1.2 Research questions

The main research question on which this study is based can be formulated as follows:

What can be done to meet the needs of the wide spectrum of prospective music makers in South Africa?

Related to the above main question are the following sub-questions:

- 1.2.1 Will music literacy provide for the basic need of the majority of prospective music makers in South Africa?
- 1.2.2 Can a music literacy programme be developed and implemented, meeting the requirements of OBE (Outcomes-based education. See 1.8.2.)?
- 1.2.3 Can a music literacy programme be developed with which existing music educators can cope?
- 1.2.4 Can prospective educators become appropriately qualified and can they develop the necessary skills in reasonable time?
- 1.2.5 Can anything be done to provide for learners/educators/amateurs in particular groups with special needs, and with strong dependence on music literacy, groups such as:
 - people living in remote rural areas
 - weak-sighted people
 - the blind?

1.3 Aim of the study

The aim of this study is to prepare a programme in music literacy, a vital workable supporting system, for meeting the basic need in the various sub-fields of music in OBE as well as the needs of many other learners and music educators in South Africa.

The aim of the study cannot be the solving of the entire problem of music illiteracy in South Africa: this is not within the power of a single person. Various factors play a part:

- The masses can only be reached with the necessary **infrastructure**. Although there has lately been improvement in favour of education in general in the country, much is still lacking. With the arts, usually the first to suffer and the last to benefit, conditions are still not ideal for music education.
- The approaches of the policy makers in the various sub-fields in music education, eventually, determine the **syllabi**. All concerned need to be aware of the value, in fact of the necessity, of music literacy as a general **basis** in every syllabus of all the various sub-fields. This amounts to a music literacy programme designed according to the principles of the current OBE in South Africa.
- The **financial aspect** has to be taken into account. Availability of appropriately trained educators as well as of basic facilities are determined by the economic situation.

Although these factors can perhaps not change immediately, suitable learning material can make an immediate difference for learners. An **effective programme** offering music literacy as basis, specifically for the **South African circumstances** with OBE, needs to be compiled in the meantime. It should be well proven and at hand for implementation once the above-mentioned factors have changed and are ready.

1.4 The term 'Music Literacy'

Defining 'Music Literacy'

Music literacy is a term which needs to be clarified before any discussion on the subject is possible. The separate words, music and literacy, are both concepts with diverse meanings. This can be seen from several descriptions and explanations given below.

1.4.1 Defining 'music'

There can be as many definitions of 'music' as there are approaches.

- 1.4.1.1 Taking into account all five **elements** in music (see also 1.8.9), it can justly be stated: **music is the art of the ear**. This is in comparison with all the visual arts plus arts which are experienced by the other senses, or a combination of senses, such as drama, dance, opera, sculpture, and the art of cooking. It might, however, be argued that the deaf experience music by feeling the main beat and maybe some patterns of rhythms. This enables them to participate to a certain extent and even to dance to music. It is, nevertheless, singling out only one of the five components of music, namely, the metre or perhaps the rhythmical framework. The rhythmical detail which is determined by finer gradations of sound intensity, timbre and articulation is mostly lost to the deaf.
- 1.4.1.2 In analyzing the **motive** behind the activity of 'making music', it is evident that there is a need to **sing**. This need finds expression in delineation of thoughts in a poetic way. It may be described as speaking in a lyrical, a dramatic or any other in-between manner. Recitative and other forms of speech-song form the link between speaking and real singing. However, when a clear distinction is made between them, **music can be described as the art of singing**. Singing involves emotion, intellect and physical action by means of the voice or 'singing' by means of an instrument as substitute for the voice.
- 1.4.1.3 Aspects such as emotion, expressing oneself, speaking, etc., underline the **communicative characteristic** of music. This explains why **music can be described as a language**. Language entails concepts which are portrayed in words arranged in such a way to form phrases and sentences. This also applies to the succession of sounds, motives, phrases and sentences in music, but not with a specific and concrete meaning; abstract concepts, making musical sense, are formed through this alliance. The succession of sounds creates continuous action towards and from focal points which brings motion in music. Hence the derivation **music is sound in movement**.
- 1.4.1.4 It is often said that music speaks for itself, that it is **an international language** which can cross borders. Music, being literally practical for the executor or

performer/player as well as for the receiver or listener, needs little or no verbal exchange. This is perceived when one attends international instrumental and even vocal **master classes**. Verbal communication at these classes is usually limited and often virtually unnecessary.

Another good example is when a visiting conductor **rehearses** with a local orchestra and/or opera singers. It is also exciting to experience the rehearsing of chamber musicians, strange to each other, *inter alia* an accompanist with a soloist or various ensemble players from different nationalities, using the same music language. Often the only common verbal tangent point in Western art music is the music terminology, mostly Italian words, which usually suffice; it is illuminative to observe them resulting in musical comprehension.

Even when there are immense cultural differences with diverse points of departure, much can be overcome without the use of spoken words. A classic example is the attractive duet from the film 'Deliverance'. This, now well-known music, is a real musical conversation between a mandolinist and one of the indigenous people **playing** a self-made banjo.

Sheet music and educational music material are distributed worldwide and fruitfully used, often without any further written information.

It can be deduced from these four above-mentioned examples, and it may rightly be stated, that **when musicing, music can be described as an international language.**

- 1.4.1.5 In addressing the music lover, layman and student, Charles Oxtoby (1964:11) states: 'I prefer the definition which causes no aesthetic problems. It simply reads: "**Music is the art of thinking in sound.**"' (The author's translation from Afrikaans.)
- 1.4.1.6 As initially mentioned, the definition depends on the approach and many approaches are possible. This is perceived from several definitions in some standard dictionaries and reference works with diverse points of view, not always with the common basic approach of music as an art. An example is by the German philosopher and mathematician Leibnitz, who describes music as

an unconscious exercise in arithmetic Grove's (Blom 1966). Taylor (1992:13) states: 'There is no simple answer to the question "What is music?" either from the scientific or the artistic point of view...' Eventually he never answers the question.

In the New Collins Dictionary and Thesaurus (McLeod 1987) music is described as follows:

- **'An art form consisting of sequences of sounds in time, especially tones of definite pitch organized melodically, harmonically and rhythmically.'**
- **'The sounds so produced especially by singing or musical instruments.'**
- **'Any sequence of sounds perceived as pleasing or harmonious.'**

Collins discusses another use of 'music' not relevant to this concept of music literacy, namely sheet music.

The following descriptions are found in Funk and Wagnalls (1964):

- **'The science and art of rhythmic combinations of tones, vocal or instrumental, embracing melody and harmony.'**
- **'A composition, or mass of compositions, conceived or executed according to musical rule or spirit.'**
- **'Any rhythmic succession or combinations of sound, especially if pleasing to the ear; also the sensation or emotions thus produced.'**

In the Concise Oxford Dictionary (Sykes 1976) music is regarded as the: **'Art of combining sounds of voice(s) or instrument(s) to achieve beauty of form and expression of emotion; sounds so produced; pleasant sound, e.g. song of bird, murmur of brook, cry of hounds.'**

The New American Dictionary of Music (Morehead and MacNeil 1991) defines music as **'sound organized in space and time'**. It continues by adding: **'A**

more specific definition would depend on the definer and the period of history, as the concept of what constitutes music has changed greatly over time. At present the term has a rather broad scope, especially in its use by *avant garde* classical, jazz and rock musicians.'

1.4.1.7 The meaning of music within African culture, and thus its approach, differs fundamentally from that in most first world countries (see 2.1.2 third bullet). It might be defined as **'Music is an expression of life itself'** (Primos 1993:94).

1.4.1.8 This brings one to the point of determining an appropriate definition for music in this thesis. As a **'specific definition depends on the definer'** according to The New American Dictionary of Music (Morehead and MacNeil 1991), this study will determine the definition for its purposes. Thus, here **music is regarded as the art of communicating in which listening and singing/playing fulfil the major roles.**

1.4.2 Defining 'literacy'

The following definitions/descriptions for literacy occur:

1.4.2.1 'Literacy' is described in Chambers Twentieth Century Dictionary (Geddie c1972) as the **'condition of being literate'** and the meaning of 'literate' is given as **'learned'** or **'able to read and write'**.

Both Concise Oxford Dictionary (Sykes 1976) and New Collins Dictionary and Thesaurus (McLeod 1987) define literacy as **'the ability to read and write'** and also in Collins **'the ability to use language proficiently'**.

Another description is: **'the state or condition of being literate'** (Funk and Wagnalls 1964).

In Afrikaans the meaning is given as: **'lees-en-skryf kennis'** (Bosman *et al* 1986) and as **'geletterdheid, lees-en-skryfkundigheid'** (Kritzinger *et al* 1986).

1.4.2.2 The word 'literate' is described as **'one who is literate: an educated person without a university degree'** (Geddie c1972).

New Collins Dictionary and Thesaurus (McLeod 1987) defines it as follows:

- **'(Someone) able to read and write.'**

- **'Educated, learned.'**
- **'A literate person.'**

In Concise Oxford Dictionary (Sykes 1976) the meaning is given as **'(Person) able to read and write.'**

The description found in Funk and Wagnalls (1964) is:

- **'(Anyone) able to read and write.'**
- **'One versed in letters or literature.'**

1.4.2.3 The most common meaning of literacy as derived from the above-mentioned sources is: **The ability to use language proficiently as well as the condition of being learned or educated to a greater or lesser extent.** Although it is nowhere specified, words such as 'proficiently' and 'educated' imply 'understanding'.

1.4.3 Determining a definition for Music Literacy

For the purpose of this study **Music Literacy** will describe **the ability to use sheet music with understanding.** In musical terms the word 'use' is interpreted as the proficiency to:

- **sing** and **play** basically from notated music
- **recognize** auditively general fundamentals in music
- **analyze** and **arrange** uncomplicated sheet music independently in such a way that it can be applied in practice
- **read** uncomplicated scores.

1.5 Parameters

The proposed programme should enable the **beginner** or aspirant instrumentalist/singer, in the shortest possible time, to read music with understanding and to study and interpret new music independently. It is targeted at the **music educator** responsible for aural training and theory of music.

Additionally the programme will bear in mind the learner/student/educator/ chorister who is already practising music, but still lacks sufficient skill to use sheet music independently. This means that it can be used as a **supplementary programme** in purely theoretical training, or for someone who has had only elementary singing/instrumental tuition.

The supplementary programme should address the problem of the tradition of individual sessions (greatly reduced) which are **invariably short but costly**. By enabling the learner to acquire effective music reading and interpreting skills as well as background knowledge at a rapid rate, this programme frees the **instrumental/voice or choir teacher** to focus on specific practical requirements of the chosen field.

In designing the practical exercises, provision is also made for the **independent student/educator** studying music in relative isolation as is often the case in South Africa.

Although the programme is not specifically constructed with the special needs of the **pre-school or grade R learner** in mind, the introductory sections of all components are suitable for this group.

The educator/learner with **visual disability** is also kept in view (see 1.6.2).

Who specifically needs such a programme?

Any person wanting to **have access to music** for singing, playing or for better understanding purposes needs to be able to use music in one or other way. All of them have something in common: a need to become music literate. The approach of the various learners can be described/formulated in different ways, depending on their specific utilization of music.

- Music educators teaching in **group situations** need a structured programme in providing the necessary musical background for prospective **instrumentalists** as well as for learners in **general music classes**. The ultimate levels necessary for the two groups might differ, but both need to receive tuition in basic music literacy.
- With **choirs** there is always a need for improvement of singers' ability to read music. In contrast to instrumental groups, many choir leaders have the drawback of members with excellent voices but who just sing by ear. Only by training choristers in music literacy will choir leaders be relieved of such a burden. On the other hand, choir leaders themselves are often also in need of music literacy in varying degrees.

- The discovery of an adult with an **opera voice/soloistic voice** necessitates the singer using sheet music **independently** and usually **immediately**. Only by becoming music literate can this need be addressed.
- Many learners of various ages simply have the desire to play an instrument or they want to improve their elementary playing for **music making purposes**. They need **assistance** to acquire skills, to speed up the learning process and to gain confidence in playing. True back-up is only found in music literacy.
- **Expensive, individual, practical lessons** compel the majority of singing and instrumental students to be able to use sheet music **directly and independently**. Valuable time with the practical specialist, who is often a professional singer or instrumentalist and not an educator, is frequently wasted. This is apart from the learner's progress which is hampered. Again the situation amounts to separate tuition in music literacy, preferably in group work which, naturally, is also more affordable.
- People in some occupations, such as film and television direction need to **follow music scores**. This is often also a strong need with serious music lovers. Score reading implies music literacy.
- Even if they do not articulate their needs and wishes, prospective learners who are attracted to music in one or other way, be it as **subject or hobby**, aspire to use sheet music **independently and without delay**.
- **Educators** in schools receiving **in-service training to fill posts in the arts**, are in desperate need of a highly effective programme. Many of them just have an interest and perhaps some background, but usually no formal training in music. They need, first of all, to follow a music literacy programme.
- **Qualified music educators** sometimes realize the theoretical nature and limitations of their own entire schooling. They feel a need for a quick revision of their foundation but with a **practical approach** and with immediate **practical application**.
- For **weak-sighted and blind** learners/educators/amateurs, music is often of crucial importance. They need a music literacy programme with the approach: '**art of the ear**' (see 1.4.1.1) and with the minimum theoretical work (see 1.6.2).

All the above approaches and needs can be reduced to wanting to communicate musically and to be musically **independent as soon as possible**.

1.6 Research methodology

A variety of methods were used in the course of this study:

1.6.1 Survey

No formal survey was undertaken and no statistics are provided in this thesis. However, the author has informally surveyed many parents, learners, students and colleagues over a period of some thirty years. For reasons of confidentiality no names are mentioned. The results of this survey are reflected in the thesis.

1.6.2 Experience with the practical approach and action research

Previously related research, feasibility studies which were undertaken and the results thereof

The contrast in results obtained by students with extended periods of theoretical training and **the author's personal experience** as a late beginner of a relatively brief practical programme raised initial questions; this suggested that the practical approach eased the way to autonomy. Some other advantages were that it released musical creativity and spontaneity. Even students of apparently lower potential who were exposed to the practical programme eventually performed better than their more talented counterparts from an extensive, purely theoretical programme. This also happened later in practice.

Initially, as educator, a practical programme was drawn up instead of the established theoretical point of departure only for **late starters**, especially for opera singers who need to become musically literate quite rapidly. The effectiveness of the initial learning programme was personally tried out extensively and also in other music educators' teaching practices.

Applying this programme at **all levels in school** has yielded similar results. Even with pre-school learners, i.e. in grade R, outcomes were most rewarding.

For **partially sighted students** this practical programme was essential. The success rate was such that all these students with their initial handicap often overtook those with a headstart. Visual restrictions which were placed on the programme, compelled the author

to reduce theoretical work even more. Instead, auditive and keyboard tuition had to be maximally utilized. Thus, this challenge to the author, eventually, added to the effectiveness of the entire programme.

Specific demands made by these diverse groups revealed shortcomings in the programme. Modifications were made accordingly. These enriched and streamlined this programme, adding to the enjoyment. Naturally, at the same time the music making and tempo of the learning process increased.

Thus, drawing up and structuring of the **Music Literacy** programme with its specific practical approach, was done through action research.

1.6.3 Comparisons of current systems in existence in South Africa

After several years in the teaching profession with this practical programme, more comparisons with existing teaching approaches, methods and results thereof, followed. This made the author realize that there are many shortcomings in the commonly used systems. Apart from the theoretical approach there are *inter alia*: exam-focused teaching with limited repertoire, lack of independence and piano focused instrumental tuition. Also at tertiary institutions academic work dominates, often causing only theoretically minded students to cope with both, theory and playing/singing. Even in other sub-fields such as general music classes and choir leadership, an academic orientation was perceived. All these practices contribute to some lack of music-making and other negative outcomes with learners and with music students as prospective educators. See 2.1.2 for comments by students.

1.6.4 Confirmation of the need in South Africa for the proposed programme

Adding to personal experience, observations and comparisons, were the negative remarks and complaints received from **students and parents of learners** about their previous experience in music tuition (see 2.1).

The comments, questions and comparisons made by **fellow educators** – especially by dedicated and experienced colleagues – confirmed that this is not merely personal opinion and understanding and not only the observations of a few other people. Moreover, successful colleagues have been perceived as those with ‘priorities of practising, playing and performing’ (see 1.8.3). Practically minded colleagues have often

recommended their learners to attend the author's *Music Literacy* classes for their secondary music subject. Others started applying the proposed *Music Literacy* programme themselves. Both of these groups proved to have experienced excellent outcomes. Their participation contributed to the author's action research.

Clear perspective and objectivity were obtained by the author through **adjudications** of Eisteddfods and **examinations** for UNISA (University of South Africa) across the country. Consequent upon reports and comments by the author to learners, several workshops followed. The positive reactions, afterwards, of educators who became convinced of the benefits and feasibility, contributed to the author furthering and completing the *Music Literacy* programme.

Trips abroad^{*} with visits to music institutes in several countries brought about the final step. Henceforth, material was collected for and research done on appropriate material for the development of the much needed programme in music literacy in South Africa.

1.6.5 Literature review

The ultimate streamlined programme (see again 1.6.2) disclosed the need for dividing it in specific components and treating them separately. Once the various components were determined it was realized that appropriate material was essential in each section for achieving best results.

The survey which was undertaken into literature happened through action research. Existing material, in common use in South Africa, as well as material, familiar to the author through personal studies, was exploited. No learning matter was encountered which fully suited the practical approach regarding all the various components of the *Music Literacy* programme. As it was experienced that the practical approach was more common in European countries, the author collected and applied material used in those countries. Although this material was in general more useful, continual adjustment and supplementation were needed for this specific programme.

* In 1974 the following institutes were visited: The Musikhochschule in Cologne, Hamburg, Hannover and München, as well as the two conservatoires in Amsterdam and one in München. Some lecturers concerned were interviewed and some classes and final examinations were attended. In 1983 the Banff Centre for Performing Arts in Canada and again the Musikhochschule in Cologne were visited. In 1985 several private music educators in London and Edinburgh were interviewed and lessons, classes and workshops were attended in Cologne and also at the Zweelink Conservatoire in Amsterdam.

Eventually, no ideal learning matter could be found for any facet of the *Music Literacy* programme. In all cases, too much needed altering and adding. New, original learning matter, for specifically meeting all the requirements of the *Music Literacy* programme, had to be created. This task was undertaken over several years. The specific learning matter which forms an integral part of the *Music Literacy* programme and also of the thesis was thus designed through action research.

1.7 Layout of the study

In **chapters one and two** the **problem of music illiteracy in South Africa** is described. This is done against the background of the entire problem in the field of music education in South Africa. Current shortcomings are briefly sketched in view of a tradition and history of music illiteracy with the majority of learners in school. The urgent need for an effective music literacy programme, as a general supporting system for music education in South Africa, is singled out.

The term '**music literacy**' is analyzed. Its specific use in this thesis, with its proposed solution for the problem, is defined.

All the various sub-fields in music education and all those people involved with their specific needs and requirements, are listed.

The origin and development of this *Music Literacy* programme are briefly described; it comprises the awareness of the problem, confirmation of it in various ways, causes and effects, the informal survey, as well as the investigation into literature. Deficiencies in appropriate material as well as the lack of an effective programme are indicated.

Chapter one concludes with important notes to the reader.

Chapter two begins with a collection of **remarks, complaints, comparisons and requests** by parents, learners, students and educators. The observance of the main systems in use in the country and also the author's own empirical learning and teaching techniques are mentioned. The subsequent aspects to be avoided, as a result of shortcomings, are discussed. Requirements according to the identified pros and cons and needs are listed.

In **chapter three** the existing materials are measured against the aspects to be avoided and the requirements described in this thesis. Material commonly used in South Africa is

assessed. This includes the material provided by music examining bodies. Material not in use locally, as far as can be ascertained, is also assessed. Tables as well as brief discussions are used for measuring and for indicating the pros and cons of each book/series.

The **Music Literacy** programme, as the proposed solution to the problem, appears in **chapters four, five and six**. Its various components are divided and arranged according to those belonging together. Every component comprises **originally designed exercises by the author**, each commencing with **specific conventions** integral to the learning matter. This includes the approach for that particular component, well-proven ideas for presenting as well as guidelines for application.

Chapter four consists of three components for sight singing exercises from staff notation. They are called **Sight Singing: Rhythms, Keys and Melodies**. **Sight Singing: Rhythms** contains exercises for recognizing and singing note values and rhythm patterns in all kinds of metres. All are applied in balanced musical phrases and sentences to be sung on one pitch. Every third page is in two-part writing, serving, *inter alia*, as a summary and revision of the previous two pages. Apart from meeting the requirements for rhythms in the **Music Literacy** programme, **Rhythms** additionally offers learners acquaintance with treatments of a motif, such as dialogue, imitation, echo, augmentation, diminution and canonic treatment. Naturally, most of these appear only in the two-part exercises.

Sight Singing: Keys is the next component with newly and specifically constructed exercises. Herein the requirements are met for learning the major and minor modes while singing in all the various keys. **Keys** consists of two parts. In the first part pitch singing is practised with solfa syllables, initially in all major and then in all minor keys. Exercises, in the second part, are compiled in the order of the circle of fifths, but alternating the sharp and flat keys. There are, however, choices. The learner/educator who prefers first to complete the flat or the sharp keys, may do so. The degree of difficulty and the process of the exercises on both sides of the circle of fifths, remain the same. Also in the second part of **Keys**, all the major keys are treated first, followed by all the minor keys.

In the third component, **Sight Singing: Melodies**, the learning matter treated and the skills obtained in the first two components are combined. As with the exercises in **Rhythms** and **Keys**, the melodies are original. The few exceptions are indicated. They

are especially designed for meeting the demands made by the *Music Literacy* programme. Like **Keys**, these melodies also appear firstly in all major and then in all minor keys, in the order of the circle of fifths. The same choices, regarding sharp and flat keys, apply here. Every fifth line, which is a two-part melody, serves as revision and is slightly simpler than the previous four.

Chapter five contains two components, i.e. **Keyboard Harmony** and **Music Dictation**. They appear in one chapter for the following reasons:

- They are a guide for educators only, except for the separate section, **Keyboard Reading and Playing** which forms part of **Keyboard Harmony**. Learners need only this section, with practice material for students, and not the actual full guide. Also in the thesis, this section appears separately for the practical reason of being in usable format on the keyboard stand.
- There is interaction between the exercises in these two components. The educator needs to use them concurrently and page to and fro.

In the first section of **Keyboard Harmony**, part of the educator's material, all learning matter is notated. These specially compiled exercises are nevertheless also described in full detail. This is done for learners/educators, working on their own, who might not be so familiar with staff notation.

Because the first section goes together with the learner's section for **Keyboard Reading and Playing**, learners beginning with this section have already made the necessary acquaintance with the keyboard and the development of the basic skills is under way, especially in chord playing. For this reason the section, on its own, appears with no additional information except for the introductory 'Conventions'.

Music Dictation, the second component of the educator's material, contains exercises with detailed descriptions for the educator. It commences with introductory exercises for recognition, followed by dictation in rhythm patterns, melodic patterns and melodies. Exercises for recognition of chords and metres occur, however, in **Keyboard Harmony** as they are integrated with **Keyboard Harmony** and are thus treated concurrently. Exercises for recognition of cadences and modulations conclude **Music Dictation** and also this chapter.

Chapter six consists of the exposition of six phases of theoretical work with their various sub-sections. Different kinds of representative pieces, needed for analysis, for application and serving as examples, are listed. This is the final component and is called **Music Theory**. It is followed by an example of the synchronization of all components.

In **chapter seven**, the concluding chapter, all qualities of the proposed **Music Literacy** programme are measured against aspects to be avoided and the requirements described in this thesis. From this, the essence of the various components with their approaches and contents are justified as the ideal solution for the problem in South Africa.

The need for further research in **Music Theory** and specific suggestions are expounded. Recommendations for broadening and enrichment of other components, needed for some target groups, are made.

In conclusion, it is pointed out that the proposed **Music Literacy** programme is an effective initial programme for any beginner in the various sub-fields of music education, in various cultures, and also in other countries.

1.8 Notes to the reader

The reader's attention is drawn to a variety of matters in this section:

1.8.1 The various sub-fields in music education:

- Choir singing
- General music classes
- Individual instrumental/vocal lessons
- Independent learning
- Tertiary music education: Full-time studies
In-service training.

1.8.2 OBE

The National Outcomes-based Education approach

- The following is taken directly from the latest [October 2002] draft document of the national Department of Education:

'Introducing the National Curriculum Statement' (NCS:3)

'What is outcomes-based education?

Outcomes-based education:

- i. Is developmental – it encompasses what learners learn and are able to do at the end of the learning process.
- ii. Emphasises high expectations of what all learners can achieve.
- iii. Is a learner-centred educational process.
- iv. Through its outcomes at the end of the learning process shapes the learning process itself – the process of learning is thus considered as important as what is learnt.
- v. Is an activity-based approach to education designed to promote problem-solving and critical thinking' (NCS:4).

'The NCS aims to provide a curriculum which will ensure a broad, general education for all, to as high a level as possible.

What kind of learner does the NCS aim to develop?

By the end of the General Education and Training (GET) band, the NCS aims to produce a life-long learner who is:

- i. Confident and independent.
 - ii. Literate, numerate and multi-skilled.
 - iii. Compassionate, with respect for the environment and an ability to participate in society as a critical and active citizen' (NCS:5).
- Another exposition of OBE is taken from the **Training Manual – Curriculum 2005 – Intermediate Phase** (Dreyer *et al* c2002). It was released by UNISA, briefed by the Gauteng Department of Education for educators' training during 2002.

'The new curriculum 2005 rests on an outcomes-based approach to education and training. OBE is **learner centred**.

Thus, the accent falls on what the learner should

- i. know, understand,
- ii. be able to do and
- iii. be able to become,

rather than what the educator strives to attain' (Dreyer *et al* c2002:8).

The **holistic approach** is emphasized and briefly referred to as **head, heart and hands**.

Principles in OBE are described as follows:

- i. Clear focus
- ii. Multiple opportunities
- iii. High expectations
- iv. Reverse designing.

According to this document, 'reverse designing' applies to the curriculum and training planning. Thus, the outcomes are taken as point of departure. Curriculum content which is not necessary for achieving the ultimate outcome is omitted so that concentration can be on essential, meaningful aspects. The outcomes which should be aimed at and from where the designing process should begin (see below) have to include the complex role of life-performance and the requirements of the vocational world.

Reverse designing

- i. Retiring outcome
- ii. Programme outcome
- iii. Course outcome
- iv. Unity outcome

(Dreyer *et al* c2002: 8-12). This is informally translated by the author.

- 1.8.3 'Pppp': Priorities of practising, playing and performing.** During discussions with colleagues over several years, it was realized, time and again, that fine outcomes were due to specific **priorities** in music teaching. This amounted to a **practical** approach which always leads to **playing** and eventually to **performing**. In this way pppp became a kind of motto and is used as such in this thesis.

1.8.4 Music examining bodies in South Africa:

- National and provincial syllabuses for music as a **school subject** are compiled and examined by the various authorities in charge. However, educators across the country use systems and learning matter of their own choice for attaining the specific requirements.
- **UNISA** (University of South Africa) examines across the country and also in Namibia. They offer syllabuses at all levels from pre-grade one to advanced grades as well as various kinds of licentiates and diplomas. All instruments in common use and singing are catered for. They also provide for the various sub-fields in music. Apart from licentiates in teaching and performing, licentiates are also offered in specialist fields, i.e. chamber music and vocal accompaniment, class music, church organist, band mastership, choir mastership and music theory. UNISA offers exercise books, practical exercises included, as preparation for their various grade examinations in music theory. There are also available specimen theory papers and practical musicianship tests.

UNISA's advanced grades for instruments, singing and theory are recognized by the national Department of Education, e.g. grade seven for instruments/voices with grade five theory, together, equals music as school subject for grade twelve. Licentiate is accepted as 'M+3', a tertiary or post school qualification of three years.

- '**Trinity College of Music, London**' and '**Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music**' are two British examining bodies each visiting South Africa twice a year. They also offer all grades, licentiates and diplomas in most instruments and some sub-fields in music. Each prescribes its own syllabuses. Their certificates are also recognized by the National Department of Education. Both bodies offer exercise books and also specimen tests and papers for their various grade examinations.
- Since the various **tertiary institutions** in South Africa, mainly universities and technikons, function autonomously, each has its own music courses and standards. Syllabuses are compiled, learning matter determined and

students examined by local staff. Only for some final and post-graduate examinations are external examiners brought in.

1.8.5 Other institutions determining the contents, standards, ways of assessing or performance opportunities in music education programmes:

- As **choir singing** is quite a common practice for music making in groups, there exist in most communities many (different) kinds of informal choirs with totally different purposes. They create their own opportunities and choose their own appropriate repertoire. Naturally, they determine their own goals. There are also competitions, festivals and workshops, all with their own requirements and programmes for the various kinds and levels of choirs. In regular workshops, specifically for choir leaders, guidance and training take place and repertoire is learnt, covering a wide range of needs for the various expectancies of choirs.
- **Syllabuses for general music classes**, which are currently undergoing extensive changes, are determined/prescribed by the different bodies in charge. They are also responsible for regular assessment and guidance.

1.8.6 **Prima Vista:** Literally, prima vista is the Italian for 'first sight'. It is often used in music, and also in this thesis, for playing or singing at sight. The learner is given no or little time to look at the music before playing/singing.

1.8.7 **The word 'educator'** is used throughout. It represents all those in various capacities, responsible for guidance of learners, such as facilitators, teachers, lecturers, instructors, tutors, leaders, guides, mentors, etc.

1.8.8 **The word 'key'** has two meanings in music. 'Key' may refer to one of the fifteen major or fifteen minor **scales** forming the basic mode system for a specific piece. The second meaning of key is the white and black **rectangular blocks** of the keyboard which are pressed. They are sometimes called notes. To distinguish between these two meanings and to avoid confusion, in this thesis the keyboard keys will be referred to as **notes**, **piano/keyboard notes** or **piano/keyboard keys**.

1.8.9 Basic elements in music: There is difference in opinion between musicologists as to whether texture/density of **sound** should be regarded as one of its **basic elements**, bringing the number of elements to five. The other four are pitch, duration, dynamics (volume) and timbre (tone colour). Eventually, this difference in opinion can be carried over to the number of **elements of music**. For the purpose of this study, it does not make any difference. All these elements are perceived by ear.

1.8.10 Numeration: The system used in the thesis differs from that of the components. For practicality, referring to a single number within an item or a section in a component, prevents confusion.

The following applies to the **thesis**, i.e. in chapters one, two, three and seven:

- The **decimal system** is mainly used, e.g. the third part of the fourth item in chapter seven is 7.4.3.
- **Small Roman numerals** are used for:
 - items consisting of a few words or one sentence
 - items which have to be mentioned elsewhere where space is limited, e.g. within the tables of 3.3
 - avoiding a broad open left hand column on several pages when using the decimal system.
- **Bullets** are used for:
 - separate items where the number and order are unimportant
 - division in sub-sections of items under Roman numerals
 - division in sub-sections of items under four decimal numbers, avoiding the use of lengthy five decimal numbers.
- **Dashes** are used for sub-sections under bullets.

In the **components** (chapters four, five and six) a different numeration system is followed for the following reasons:

- In practice, simplicity is needed for quick reference by educators and learners.

- Sub-sections do not often occur. Thus a hierarchical system is not needed.

Generally in the components, there are only two main sections, i.e. conventions and units with ten exercises each. Even with more than ten exercises, e.g. in **Music Dictation**, there can not be any confusion. Capital Roman numerals and normal Arabic numerals are used for main sections. With the few sub-sections, either small Roman numerals are applied or only bullets and dashes. For headings under sub-headings, normal print is used with underlining, e.g. in the Contents of **Sight Singing: Melodies**.

- 1.8.11 Separate lists of contents for the various components:** In the main contents, chapters four, five and six are treated differently for reasons of practicality. These chapters contain the various components of the proposed **Music Literacy** programme, each with its specific learning matter. To assist the reader in locating items and sub-sections and for referring to and from when using the programme, the contents of each component appear directly with it.
- 1.8.12 Framework for Music Theory:** The component for **Music Theory** in chapter six comprises the **framework** for all theoretical learning matter necessary in the **Music Literacy** programme. All aspects which need to be written, analyzed and applied are divided in systematically designed and compiled exercises. These exercises are spread over six phases. Suitable, relevant compositions which are culturally representative in South Africa need to be chosen for this purpose. Before finalizing the exercises and before finally selecting specific pieces, research into ethnic and other local music is necessary. For this reason the specific exercises and pieces are not presented in this study.
- 1.8.13 NRF:** The National Research Foundation in South Africa.
- 1.8.14 Learning styles:** This thesis does not discuss the extensive research area of different learning styles. However, the systematic and gradual nature of the material in the programme is intended to accommodate the full spectrum of learning styles of individuals of all ages.
- 1.8.15 Sketches/diagrams** (see for example Hand signs and Circle of fifths) were drawn/computer-generated by the author herself, and not copied from elsewhere.