EXPANDING MUSIC TEACHERS’ PERCEPTIONS OF LEARNING STRATEGIES IN THE 21ST CENTURY

by

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Thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the degree

Doctor Musicae

in the

Department of Music
School of the Arts
Faculty of Humanities
University of Pretoria

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Abstract

This study was prompted by the need the author experienced for the rethinking of many practices in music teaching and her interest in achieving transformation in individual music teaching and learning.

An eclectic approach was adopted for the research. Despite much existing ‘fuzzy’ terminology, ‘broader’ or ‘less fixed’ meanings were sought of terms including Holism, intelligence, learning, Modernism, perception, personality, Postmodernism, teaching, temperament and whole-brain learning. The reader is presented with a palette of ideas, open for further exploration, in order to stimulate creativity and different viewpoints in music teaching and learning. The study has a student-centred approach, taking into account different types of learners and how to adapt teaching styles to connect with students in their learning environment.

Challenges teachers may encounter are how the meanings of many terms relate with music teaching practice, themselves and their pupils. The research explores the interaction and relation of terms with one another in order to reconsider and expand teaching methods. Inter, intra and multidisciplinary aspects of teaching are touched upon as being valuable in cutting across several traditional fields of study and also referring to knowledge seen as a coherent whole within one subject area. Experiences of ‘flow’ and transformative learning are explored in order to challenge students’ and teachers’ ‘fixed’ thinking methods.

The whole-brain model is considered where the brain is seen in four quadrants, each quadrant displaying distinctive strengths of value in music teaching. The importance of Emotional Intelligence in developing other intelligences is investigated and its link with Inter and Intrapersonal Intelligences in order to equip teachers to connect effectively with pupils in a learning context.
There is no “one size fits all” teaching strategy, learning style or framework that can apply to the myriad needs of individual music teachers and pupils. The research, however, demonstrates the importance for music teachers to be receptive in enlarging their thinking patterns. In so doing a path can be set for shifting focus in teaching strategies to a ‘moving forward’ ideal in perception and understanding of teaching and learning in the 21st century.

**Key words**

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<th>Brain Profiles</th>
<th>Learning Strategies</th>
<th>Postmodernism</th>
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<td>Whole-Brain learning</td>
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<td>Individual Music Teaching</td>
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Acknowledgements

I wish to acknowledge with deepest gratitude my supervisor Professor Caroline van Niekerk for her encouragement, support, academic empowerment, expert guidance, inspiration and endless advice while walking the doctoral road.

I wish also to express my thanks to the following people who contributed in various valuable ways:

Dr Colin Finucane for listening, encouragement, inspiration and expert computer assistance;

Tertia Jacobs for reassurance and being a locum teacher at my studio on numerous occasions;

My friends Inette Swart, Lizelle Roets and Janette Zowitsky for continuous commitment and support throughout the entire duration of the study;

All my music students who were my greatest teachers;

The University of Pretoria, Dr Pien Froeling and Mrs Marie le Roux for financial assistance;

Isobel Rycroft from the Music library for research assistance.

Pretoria, June 2010
If you were a student, would you want *yourself* as a teacher?

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