

**TEACHING AND LEARNING WITHIN THE CROSS-CULTURAL
TRANSMISSION OF WEST-AFRICAN MUSIC IN AUSTRALIAN
COMMUNITY SETTINGS**

Laura Corney

A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment
of the requirements for the degree of
Bachelor of Music (Music Education) (Honours),
Sydney Conservatorium of Music,
University of Sydney

2007

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT	i
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	ii
LIST OF TABLES	iii
CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION	1
Significance of the Study	2
Outline of the Research Questions	4
CHAPTER 2: REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE	6
Cross-Cultural Music Education	6
West-African Methods of Teaching and Learning	8
Cross-Cultural Music Education in Community Ensemble Settings	10
Evaluation of Instructional Approaches	12
Conclusion	14
CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY	15
Methodological Design	15
Ethnographic Research	15
Multi-Case Study	16
Research Settings	16
Role of the Researcher	19
Data Collection Methods	20
Participant Observation	20
Interviews	20
Sampling Procedures for Interviewees	21
Table of Interviewees	23
Triangulation	24
Data Analysis	24

CHAPTER 4: RESEARCH FINDINGS	26
Motivations	26
Personal Experience, Enjoyment and Cultural Relevance	27
Objectives of Learners and Teachers	29
Technique	30
Rhythm	31
Stamina	32
Deep Understanding of West-African Time and Style	33
Strategies and Adaptations	35
Pace and Hierarchy	35
Challenge and Repetition	36
Notation	37
Verbal Explanation to Supplement Demonstration and Kinaesthetic Learning	39
Terminology	39
Breaking Down and Counting	41
Mnemonics and Language as Teaching and Memory Tools	44
Self-Directed Learning, Recording Technology, and Internalization after Class	46
 CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION	 49
The Effects of Cultural Values, Music Conceptualization and Motivations on Depth of Understanding and Pedagogy	50
Implications for Adult Cross-Cultural Music Education	52
Conclusion	53
 REFERENCES	 54
 APPENDICES	
Map of African Locations	57
Appendix A: Participant Information Statement	58
Appendix B: Participant Consent Form	59
Appendix C: Letter of Ethical Approval	60
Appendix D: Interview Schedule	62

Appendix E: Examples of Djembe Notation	64
Appendix F: Glossary of Terms	66
Appendix G: Additional Biographical Information on Teachers	68

ABSTRACT

This study aimed to uncover the strategies being used to teach West-African music in cross-cultural, community settings in Australia. It examined the motivations that govern the decisions to teach and learn traditional West-African music, as well as the influence of the philosophies and practices of West-African and Western music education on current pedagogy and music outcomes. The research design was that of an ethnographic multi-case study.

Motivational issues included desire for entertainment, cultural experience, and improvement of skills. The musical skills and knowledge that teachers and learners wish to produce were categorised into immediate objectives of technique and rhythm, and long-term goals of stamina, self-direction, and deeper understanding of time and style. Emphasis on either long-term or short-term goals was found to affect strategies of teaching and learning. Changes to the learning environment were observed as having a major influence on traditional teaching methods, which are culturally incongruent with the pace of living and expectations of efficiency in Sydney. Adaptations to deal with these changes have resulted in supplementary verbal explanations, with atomistic analysis of rhythms. Additional learning tools used by experienced students included notation and recording devices. Concerns regarding the depth and authenticity of musical understanding as well as efficiency of learning are discussed.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank all the participants who made this study possible. Thank you for the many open and reflective accounts, and for sharing your passionate world of drumming with me. Special thanks to Mohamed, Rachel, Tuza and Hayley for your individual efforts in allowing this study to proceed. I am completely indebted to Kathy Marsh for all her wonderful efforts as supervisor, editor, and relaxation coach. A big thank you to all the music education staff for your guidance and words of wisdom over the past two years. To my parents who have been consistently supportive and understanding during ‘The Unmentionable’, thank you so much. Lastly, to all my fellow ‘first class’ honours girls – I couldn’t have completed this without you!

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1: Interviewees

23

CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

The effects of globalisation are manifest in the complex economic, political, technological, ideological and cultural exchanges and interactions that exist in today's society. Campbell (2003) explains globalisation as it relates to music education clearly when she writes: "The conditions for border-crossing by music education practitioners and scholars to the field have never been better, and the frequency of these crossings has been gradually rising for the last half-century" (p. 177).

Indeed, Campbell's 'border-crossing' became a reality for me in January 2006 when I traveled to Ghana in West Africa. I lived for a month in a community just outside of the capital Accra. There I learnt from a group of local talented musicians and master musicians how to dance, sing, and play djembe, kpanlogo, axtase, bell, balafon, flute and kora¹. A few years ago this may have seemed to be an example of learning Ghanaian music in an 'authentic' context through 'authentic' teaching methods. However, ethnomusicologists and music educators alike are now realizing that the issues involved in teaching and learning music cross-culturally are much more complex than a simple label of 'authentic' would imply (Solis, 2004a).

Furthermore, 'border-crossing' and cross-cultural transmission in music education are frequently occurring in local settings in Australia. Students are learning music styles and traditions that are culturally very different from their own, not only in schools where the curriculum stresses 'multiculturalism', but also importantly within community groups and ensembles. Such community groups are emerging in ever-increasing numbers around Sydney, which may be due to higher disposable incomes, further interest in other cultures and musics, or perhaps even further enjoyment of learning in ways that differ from formal school education.

The specific music tradition being studied in community groups should affect the approach to its teaching and learning. Lundquist (1998) states clearly that "the processes of instruction and learning are interconnected with the musical

¹ See Glossary of Terms for a description of these instruments and map for West-African locations discussed in this thesis.

tradition”(p.43). Music educators acknowledge the necessity of identifying and understanding the teaching and learning styles which underpin music cultures in order to introduce diverse music cultures to those not from the culture (Addo, 1997).

Obviously the tradition from which music emanates should influence the way in which it is taught. Similarly, the traditions to which teachers and students belong should also influence pedagogy. Globalisation does not only affect large scale concepts and industries, it also affects populations on a more personal level. It is increasingly common for individuals to have international training in their professions, and this includes the music profession. Furthermore, learners who meet together in community groups may derive from various musical, cultural and educational backgrounds. These students adapt strategies from their previous music backgrounds and integrate these with newly constructed strategies when studying an unfamiliar music and its culture (Dunbar-Hall, 2006). Indeed, it appears logical that cultural, musical and educational background would largely affect teaching and learning techniques. Therefore, when there is a fusion of cultures and of musics, a fusion of teaching and learning styles is likely to occur.

This study examines if, how and why teachers of West-African drumming change their instructional approach when teaching in Australian community settings. The ways in which learners adapt strategies from their previous music backgrounds to learn West-African drumming is also investigated. Underpinning the study is an inquiry into the motivations of teachers and students to participate in this unique form of cross-cultural education.

Significance of the Study

The importance of multicultural education has been widely addressed, and many writers have stated their concerns about inappropriate practices in education and performance of multicultural music. Edwards (1998) acknowledged the lack of qualitative research regarding the instruction of multicultural music and achievement. At the time of her research in 2004, McKoy found that there was no instructional approach that had been identified as being uniquely effective in accomplishing culturally appropriate world music instruction. Dunbar-Hall (2004)

suggested “the need for greater understanding of the role of assumed cultural knowledge in music teaching and learning” (p.149). A lack of research into the intrinsic meaning and cultural value of music has also been identified by Burns (2001). Although the need to maintain an appropriate representation of traditional cultures has been delineated, there is uncertainty regarding the best way to accomplish this goal. Despite the wealth of written material on this subject, there remains a call for further research in this area to be made in new, innovative contexts.

Many of the studies mentioned above involve research done in experimental ways with primary school students. It is therefore timely to switch the focus from formal school education to a different context, an adult community setting. The literature on adult education has outlined a need for further research into what kinds of music instruction are more appropriate for adult learners, in particular to encourage self-direction (Coffman, 2002; Gates, 1991). Coffman suggests that field-based studies are needed to assess effective instructional strategies. Further examination of self-directed learning and meta-cognition of adult learners in cross-cultural music education is suggested by Dunbar-Hall (2004).

Considering the increasing numbers of community based groups teaching multicultural music in Sydney, it seems important to address the cross-cultural and inter-cultural teaching and learning practices that are occurring in these settings, to foster appropriate representation of traditional cultures. Schippers (2005) articulates very precisely a justification for further research into music education occurring in community settings: "The practices of private teachers (non-formal) in community settings (informal) are less heavily influenced by institutional pressures, and may serve as points of reference and inspiration for devising new course structures in formal music education”(p. 33). Schippers seems to imply that an informal community setting illustrates ‘pure’ pedagogy, uninfluenced by curriculum and policy. However, it is precisely the ‘impure’ cultural and educational complexity of such community settings that I am studying in their influential capacities. Although there has been research on teaching and learning of gamelan in Sydney (Dunbar-Hall, 2006; Moore, 2006), a search of the literature has failed to yield case studies on

the teaching and learning of West-African music in this type of community setting in Sydney.

The issues raised in the literature and previous studies will be examined through an observational multi-case study of the cross-cultural teaching and learning of West-African music in community and institutional settings. This study has been designed to obtain rich data on the practices and views of the teachers and learners in this type of setting today, using the observations of both researcher and participants to determine the teaching practices used by teachers. Conscious decision making regarding teaching methods, and learner meta-cognition, which are influenced by the musical, educational and cultural backgrounds of the participants, are also of key interest to this study.

Outline of the Research Questions

Through this study of the teaching of West-African drumming in a community setting, I aim to discover what inspires and motivates people to learn and teach this music. I wish to observe what methods of communication are being used to teach and learn the music and understand the reason why these methods have been chosen. I examine which methods of instruction might best achieve the highest levels of musical and cultural expression and understanding in these particular students of this music. Lastly, I explore how the contexts of formal and informal music education, and the content of the music itself, contribute to developing cognitive skills for learners.

In order to refine these questions, I investigate three main areas: motivations; teaching and learning techniques; and cultural backgrounds and philosophies. These three areas of interest have shaped the following research questions:

1. a) What motivations govern the decision by musicians to teach traditional West-African music to Westerners?
- b) What motivations govern the decision by Australian adults to learn traditional West-African music in a community setting?

2. a) What are the observable teaching and learning methods being used by teachers and students?
b) How, and to what extent, do teachers and students display meta-cognition regarding the teaching and learning strategies in which they are engaged?
3. a) To what degree do the philosophies and practices of West-African and Western music educations influence teachers' methods?

In order to contextualise this study, an inquiry into existing research on cross-cultural teaching and learning evaluations, West-African pedagogy and adult community music ensembles is made in the following chapter.

CHAPTER 2 REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

This literature review examines the currently available research on a number of issues involved in this study. First, it explores the wealth of written material discussing cross-cultural music education. It is also necessary to discuss cultural knowledge systems, African traditions of teaching and learning music, and musical characteristics of West-African drumming. The following section looks at the available resources on community music ensembles and adult education, and examines the types of non-formal and informal learning which are involved in these settings. The last section within this literature review investigates some more specific examples of studies which have evaluated different instructional approaches and techniques in teaching multicultural music. Teachers and organisations involved in non-formal, cross-cultural music education in ensemble groups today are examined, and the methods and issues which arise in their experiences analysed.

Cross-Cultural Music Education

“The challenges posed by music travelling through time, place and contexts are being addressed for what they are: fascinating studies in the dynamic life of music, education and culture”(Campbell, 2005, p. v). The varied focus and increasing importance of multicultural music education can be seen in the increasing numbers of recent specialized texts (Campbell, 2005; Klopper, 2005; Nzewi, 2003; Reimer, 2002; Schippers, 2005) , and surveys of research in the field (Lundquist, 2002; Szego, 2002). Mono-cultural, multi-cultural, cross-cultural, inter-cultural and trans-cultural are all defined differently through reference to the ways they treat culture as a factor of pedagogy (Dunbar-Hall & Adnyana, 2004). Reference to such contexts of teaching and learning by various authors (Addo, 1997; L. Burns, 2001; Dunbar-Hall & Adnyana, 2004; Trimillos, 2004) illustrates the developing awareness of cultural knowledge and its influence in pedagogy. However, even in the most recent literature, there prevails a sense of confusion and concern as to the best way to develop aspects of multicultural music education (Abril, 2006; Burns, 2001; Campbell, 2005; McKoy, 2004; Pembroke & Robinson, 1997). Such areas of confusion and debate include the ideas of context, authenticity and instructional approach.

There are clearly substantive differences in the values and meanings various cultures place in music making. Hence, differences in conceptions and methods of teaching and learning are equally substantial. The negative aspects of using Western teaching methods in teaching non-Western music have been examined by Leung (1999) in her study of the concept approach that the NSW curriculum employs. This approach assumes that even when these concepts do not appear by name in the music of the areas studied, they will supply a point of entry for the ear and provide structure for instruction and comparisons across music cultures. This, Leung argues “may not be helpful for reaching an appropriate understanding of music in its cultural context,” and yields an ‘atomistic’ and ‘mono-cultural’ rather than a ‘holistic’ perspective on music (p.2). Leung suggests that as cultures become less isolated, “there is an increasing potential for trans-cultural influences to become manifest in music”(p. 2).

A recent study (Abril, 2006) has also examined atomistic and holistic approaches to multicultural music education in an experimental research project. One approach used formal elements of music as a framework for learning Ghanaian and Japanese music; the other contextualised music as a socio-cultural phenomenon. Abril found that the latter approach yielded heightened cultural knowledge, but found there was no significant difference in skill acquisition. This latter approach reflects traditional methods of transmission and suggests that learning and positive student attitudes result from students’ active participation in music-making, a finding which is agreed upon by many researchers (Edwards, 1998; Kwami, 2005; New, 1983; M. Nzewi, 2003). Burns (2001) adds that there has been too much emphasis on the psycho-acoustical parameters of music, and not enough on the intrinsic meaning and cultural value.

Placing emphasis on the intrinsic meaning and cultural values in music may also be described as placing emphasis on the ways in which music practitioners in a culture pass on their music. Many researchers suggest that this is done in ways characteristic of the music and its traditions (Dunbar-Hall & Adnyana, 2004; Green, 2001; Leung, 1999; Lundquist, 1998).

However, many questions have arisen regarding the appropriateness of focusing a teaching approach completely on the music tradition being taught, as researchers examine the needs of the learner. Schippers (2005) describes a continuum, where a 'mono-cultural' approach is at one end and an 'intercultural' and 'transcultural' approach lies at the other end, the mono-cultural approach referring either to the tradition of the learners, or the tradition of the music itself. Identifying this continuum, Klopper (2005) believes that the "integration of context, concept and [what he describes as the] 'intangible' is crucial to honouring and deriving the wealth of knowledge offered by Mother music in Africa" (p. 169). Klopper implies that through using this method of integration, the most effective derivation of knowledge by the learners will result. Similarly, Locke (1990) has expressed the notion that if teachers and students "meet somewhere in the middle of our cross-cultural divide," the music will provide a forum for meaningful intercultural communication (p. 4).

West-African Methods of Teaching and Learning

Nzewi (2003) discusses the role of ethnomusicologists such as John Blacking, John Chernoff, Alan Merriam, Hugh Tracey and Gerhard Kubik in leading the way for what is now a growing literature on the traditional music of Africa. Currently there is an increasing focus not only on the music, in an ethnomusicological perspective, but on the methods of teaching and learning within these cultures, which have been referred to as cultural or indigenous knowledge systems (Addo, 1997; Klopper, 2005). 'Indigenous knowledge systems' are defined by Klopper (2005) as "a complex set of knowledge and technologies existing and developed around specific conditions of populations and communities indigenous to a particular geographic area" (p. 162). Understanding such knowledge systems brings an understanding of how things such as music are taught and learnt within that culture. In order to understand the learning of West-African music, a brief exploration of the main features of the cultural knowledge system must be made.

Music is commonly described as being an integral and essential part of everyday life in West Africa (Addo, 1997; Blacking, 1967; Campbell, 1991; Chernoff, 1979; New, 1983; Nzewi, 2003). Blacking (1967) clearly identifies the place of music in the Venda society of South Africa: "Music and dancing permeate every social activity

from youth to old age, and no-one is excluded from performances” (p.32). Children’s informal games and exposure to adult performances ensure learning through social experience, that is, enculturation (Addo, 1996, 1997; Campbell, 1991). Nzewi (2003) explains that learning is an interactive performance experience, while performance is a never-ending learning experience. African music embraces both the young and old in the community as they often share in the same performances, which New (1983), uses to prove that demonstration and imitation are the principal methods of teaching. Playing, improvisation, story-telling, and dancing are all vital together in performances, and in education (Addo, 1997; Agawu, 2003; Charry, 2000; Chernoff, 1979; Locke, 2004; Nzewi, 2003). Drumming is linked with singing and movement, be it dancing or agricultural labour. It seems that exposure to music situations and participation is emphasized more than formal teaching, although formal education does occur in a master and apprentice style of education. Music is often viewed as being inherited rather than learned in African traditions (Agordoh, 2005; Campbell, 1991; Charry, 2000). As Campbell (1991) notes, “for a son to hear his father’s drumming constantly as the boy matures is undoubtedly a strong environmental influence on him” (p.163).

Although initially most learning is done through observation and imitation, the development of master drummers requires more rigorous lessons (Campbell, 1991; Nketia, 1953). Training to become a professional drummer has been very intensive in the past. Practice is not done through structured lessons, but through repetition of the cyclic patterns inherent in pieces (Charry, 2000; Knight, 1984). This may be done for many hours and years, and on different materials such as boards, tin cans, or bamboo (Charry, 2000; Nketia, 1953). Kinaesthetic involvement is critical for the initial stages of learning an instrument, expressed succinctly here by Campbell: “The union of mind and body is both cause and consequence of performance of African music” (Campbell, 1991, p.162).

Vocal mnemonics are also commented on by numerous writers as a way of transmitting rhythms, timbres and techniques, serving a form of oral notation (Burns, 2001; Campbell, 1991; Charry, 2000; Locke, 2004; Schippers, 2005). Charry (2000) states that “throughout much of Africa there is a privileging of the human voice over writing” (p.339), which accounts for the lack of written records of traditional music,

and the absence of script in teaching. In Burns' (2001) study, the main participant maintained that "if you can say it, you can play it" (p. 34).

Charry (2000) comments on how pieces may be simplified for beginners in Africa. "The density of hand or finger movement can be pared down for beginners, and they can also be elaborated internally – that is, the length always remains the same, but more movements can be added to increase the density, or new movements can be substituted for old ones" (pp. 341-342). A sequential three-stage program for learning drums is explained by Campbell (1991) who describes the training for the Mandinka drumming troupe:

Beginners learn the drum that starts the ensemble and is associated with less variation. Then a second drum and its repertoire of rhythms is learned. Because this drum is related to the first, the performance technique is familiar and the apprentice can begin to improvise more freely, developing a personal style of performance that was not possible earlier. He learns the lead drum only after he has acquired considerable performance experience on the first two drums. Playing the lead drum requires a large vocabulary of rhythms and strokes and an ability to respond in an improvisatory manner to singers and dancers. (p.164)

Although djembes are traditionally played in small groups of two or three, along with accompanying doundoun and kenkeni drums, Charry (2000) mentions that "large groups of djembe players with many accompanying parts may be an invention of national ballets or perhaps African teachers catering to the desires of their foreign students in large djembe classes" (p.195).

Cross-Cultural Music Education in Community Ensemble Settings

As mentioned earlier in the justification for this study, there are more community ensembles being formed in the metropolitan cities of Australia such as Sydney and Melbourne. Charry (2000) describes how the distribution of West-African musicians and instruments is creating a new genre of ensemble.

Former members of national ballet troupes of Guinea, Mali and Senegal routinely settle abroad to teach and perform, djembe students flock to drum classes and camps, and major drum manufacturers have found a market for industrially produced synthetic djembe-like instruments (p.193).

Lundquist (1998) describes an ideal music experience as involving a culture bearer as a teacher for each community ensemble. Charry's comments prove that Lundquist's ideal music experience cannot represent cultural authenticity. In any case, the reality is that Australian-born teachers are leading groups learning music from other continents, as the 'luxury' of culture-bearer teachers is not always available. While there has not been research conducted on West-African drumming in community music ensembles in Sydney, there have been studies of the teaching and learning of Balinese *gamelan* in similar settings from which findings might be generalised (Dunbar-Hall, 2006; Dunbar-Hall & Adnyana, 2004).

Dunbar-Hall and Adnyana's 2004 case study revealed a clear example of what is described as inter-cultural music teaching and learning, demonstrating how culture influences the roles and positions of both the teacher and the learner in lessons on the *gangs*, a Balinese gamelan instrument. In this case study, the teacher was an indigenous Balinese artist, and the student, although having much formal music education and training, was not of the same culture. Trimillos (2004) also describes three different archetypes of the ensemble teacher, defined by the cultural background of the teacher. These three archetypes are defined as the culture bearer; the ethnomusicologist; and the foreign practitioner, whom Trimillos describes as one living in the culture and learning the instrument/music/cultural knowledge for many years before returning 'home' to teach it. Burns' study (2001) similarly focuses on three different forms of transmission of African music, but from three different *learner's* perspectives: the African learner growing up in Africa; the foreign learner studying with African teacher in or out of Africa; and the foreign learner studying music from a non-African teacher. The similarities between Trimillos' and Burns' distinctions between teachers and learners are quite clear, and these distinctions are obviously important to make when studying the make-up of a cross-cultural teaching and learning situation. It is also important to look at the structure and nature of the social setting of the community group, for as Merriam (1964) has stated, "social structure of contact situations is an important determinant of the culture change" (p.315).

In order to look more deeply into a community setting, it is necessary to examine some features of adult education which are represented in such settings. Adult

education is often either non-formal or informal. Although it may be organised, it often occurs when people gather together to address a specific concern outside of formal educational institutions and frequently emphasises social action. Learning is more usually incidental (informal), occurring by interaction with community members (Gates, 1991). Adult learners often pursue learning voluntarily, and self-directed learning is both a defining characteristic and a goal of adult education (Coffman, 2002). Dunbar-Hall (2006) describes aspects of learning in a community ensemble setting which appear to be very self-directed by the learner. Once a teaching style has been identified by an adult student, the student's ability to learn undergoes a developmental change, which can be seen through the discussions participants in the study have about the ways in which they are able to better learn the Balinese gamelan music.

Questions thus remain as to what choices and decisions teachers actively make in non-formal teaching ensembles. These relate to their methods of teaching, if they are indeed influenced by the music they teach, the cultural knowledge system of the culture from which the music originates, the cultural and personal background of themselves and their students, and lastly the learning style of their adult students.

Evaluation of Instructional Approaches

A number of studies experimenting with different teaching approaches/methodologies to teach music cross-culturally have been conducted in the past decade (Abril, 2006; Edwards, 1998; McKoy, 2004; Pembrook & Robinson, 1997; Rice, 1996). Many of the studies conclude that the answer to success in achieving both musical and cultural knowledge possibly lies in an eclectic instructional approach.

The evaluations of instructional approaches in community and ensemble music are growing in the literature (Anku, 1998; Burns, 2001; Klopper, 2005; Locke, 2004; Schippers, 2000, 2005; Solis, 2004a, 2004b Trimillos, 2004). These articles discuss issues relating to teaching methods, cultural representations, authenticity of the ensembles, and the musical repertoire and characteristics. There is evidence that these teachers are aware of the cultural relationships between them and their

students, and are questioning ways to improve their teaching situation. An example from Locke (2004) provides evidence that teachers are conscious of the cultural knowledge systems relating to musical traditions:

African teachers would prefer students to become competent on one part before moving on. . . . I force the students to play many parts because I think that the biggest challenge in this musical style is polyrhythmic hearing. After all, African children always hear the full musical texture. (p. 174)

This is an example of making logical decisions about the way to teach students (who in this case are university students in an institutional setting), which are based on African methods of teaching, and yet despite that do not necessarily replicate these methods. Anku (1998) works as a teacher of African drum and dance ensembles in America, and similarly displays an awareness of his own teaching methodologies: "I am aware of the importance of my knowledge of the structural elements of the music I am teaching to my students, as well as the cultural 'rules of procedure' that guide music-making. As an African, I understand these components of music-making" (p. 75).

Klopper (2005) describes the CIIMDA (Centre for Indigenous African Instrumental Music and Dance) in Pretoria, South Africa, an organisation which is being developed to teach ensemble music following the indigenous social-cultural and philosophical contexts of music and dance, but within the context of contemporary practices. The CIIMDA trains professional musicians and dancers from 'non-western cultures' to teach in Western settings. It ensures that suitable balance is created through the use of master musicians as instructors who make use of traditional teaching methods through participatory aural-oral tradition. These instructors must also identify and discuss musical knowledge concepts with students. Such concepts include pulse, balance, form, energy, mood, repetition, fusion, timbre, tempo, weight, direction, contrast, symbols, time, dress, texture, props. Intangibles (the elusive, uncertain areas that for non-Africans are most difficult to comprehend, such as taboos, magic, and emotion) are also acknowledged and discussed in the lesson by the master.

Conclusion

The irony – and audacity – of a non-African (myself) criticizing a traditionally grounded African musician for using dated European pedagogical methods (inherited from a French colonial past) instead of traditional African ones should not be lost. It is easy to bemoan the loss or trading in of certain African practices, and the line of non-Africans of varying motivations and agendas who have criticized African artists for not being African enough is long. The line of non-Africans questioning the motivations of these non-African critics is not so short nowadays either... It is crucial to view each case on its own merits in order to go beyond stereotypes and facile dismissals. (Charry, 2000, p.331)

Locke (2004) suggests that successful teaching of world music ensembles requires clarity of purpose and honesty in choosing to teach the way one does, and in balancing the right musical choices for the students with those choices required for an understanding of ensemble music and interaction itself. The clarity of purpose and honesty that Locke describes seems to be the key to successful teaching of world music ensembles. Lundquist's ideal that teachers should be native to the tradition of music which they teach is not necessarily a possibility in the current era of globalisation, where, although there is much more availability of 'native' teachers in 'non-native' locations, there is also a large increase in world music ensembles, and what Trimillos describes as foreign practitioners. Musical instruction needs to be drawn from the cultural knowledge systems and ways of teaching from the tradition from which the music emanates, although the cultural and educational background of the teachers and learners will again influence the instructional approach. Further practical fieldwork needs to be made to assess the current strategies that teachers of community ensembles here in Australia are utilising, whether they are aware of the issues surrounding these strategies, and if so, how they choose to negotiate the issues. Observing and identifying these strategies and methods in a non-formal setting will inevitably contribute towards future methods for formal education that is increasingly looking towards new avenues for effective teaching of different music styles.

CHAPTER 3 METHODOLOGY

Within the qualitative paradigm lies recognition of the importance of the subjective, experiential ‘life-world’ of human beings (Burns, 1990). While this study focuses on observable techniques of teaching and learning, the subjective interpretation of and personal reasoning behind such techniques are regarded as being indispensable in understanding this educational and cultural phenomenon. By taking in viewpoints from different participants, the qualitative researcher accepts that there exist multiple meanings within every social context (Cohen & Manion, 1994). It is necessary to use a qualitative paradigm which emphasises the constructions of these meanings when describing and studying the practices of a social group such as the community of teachers and learners of West-African music in Sydney. The current international context of music education, and the many occurring instances of cross-cultural transmission therein, often require a research paradigm that can observe with respect the complexity of teaching and learning practices.

Methodological Design

Ethnographic Research

The methodology used to conduct this study was based on key principles of ethnography, essentially involving the study of a group of people for the purpose of uncovering social, cultural or normative patterns. Such patterns include social settings, behaviours and activities (Burns, 1990). The decision to use ethnographic methodology for this study was appropriate, considering that my research goals were to study cultural and social settings, and teaching and learning patterns and activities. This study examines these activities as they occur within three specific and different social settings of West-African drumming lessons.

I employed the use of fieldwork, a common method of ethnography, in which the researcher enters into close and relatively prolonged interaction with people in their everyday lives. Fieldwork incorporates observations of and interviews with the participants within the study in order to better understand their beliefs, motivations and behaviours (Hammersley, 1992). The nature of teaching and learning practices

may be highly detailed, specific, individualised, and visual. Observation in a holistic and natural environment was necessary to “highlight subtleties in pupil behaviour and response, teaching style, and illuminate reasons for actions” (Burns, 1990, p.12). Interviews would provide in-depth information on teacher and student educational, musical and cultural backgrounds, interpretations and motivations.

Multi-Case Study

The holistic analysis of an individual unit such as a child, a school or a community, may be defined as a case study (Cohen & Manion, 1994). Stake (2000) supports the use of the case study as a way of describing social phenomena with its inherent complexities. In this study, the decision to investigate several cases was made after reflection on the insights these would give into the developing contexts for the teaching and learning of West-African music in Sydney, this community in general and its practices. The aim was not to collect generalized data in order to fit pre-conceived notions of the teaching and learning practices. Three very unique cases, although sharing cross-cultural transmission of West-African music, cannot lend themselves to be generalized. However, the addition of cases provides a richer array of data and perspectives. The end result is a multi-case study (Stake, 2000), incorporating fieldwork in weekly community group drum lessons over a period of ten weeks; fieldwork at an intensive four-day drumming and dancing workshop; and participant observation at a large group drumming lesson given to music education students at a tertiary music institution.

Research Settings

The study initially began as a case study on weekly community drumming lessons at a single site. I spent ten weeks within this community setting. Drumming lessons took place for 90 minutes, and were immediately followed by a 90 minute dance lesson. The classes took place in a community hall in a beachside suburb in Sydney. The ages of students in the drum classes ranged from approximately 20 to 60 years old, and in the dance classes from 18 to 50. The majority of students were Australian-born, although tourists formed a large part of the population of temporary and weekly students, especially in the drum classes. The teacher provided a number

of djembes so that people could casually visit the hall while visiting the area and take part in the lesson with no previous experience necessary. Bass drums (doundouns) and higher pitched kenkenis were also provided, and were played by a range of experienced musicians who were relatives or friends of the teacher. These people played an important role in the lessons and the social atmosphere.

The lessons were run as a private business, and all students paid cash fees to the teacher at the end of class. This differed from practices in a number of other community music and dance classes, where students often have to pay upfront for an eight or ten week course. Conducting classes on a casual weekly basis offered students the chance to have a lesson without the commitment often necessary to undertake an eight week short course of the type often provided by community classes. As a result, the number of students changed each week, and absolute beginners were present with each new lesson along with experienced players. Student numbers ranged from three to 20 on different weeks. This assured variety in observation, but did not allow a strong argument for typicality.

Fieldwork for the second case study took place over four days on an intensive short course of drumming and dancing. This type of drumming 'retreat' forms an integral part of the community drumming culture and is a common context for the teaching and learning of West-African music. The retreat was run by the same teachers who ran the weekly drum classes I was attending, and has been an annual event for five years. It took place at a recreation centre located in bushland near an isolated beach on the outskirts of Newcastle. Students had travelled from a wide range of places in order to attend the course, including Cairns, Canberra, Brisbane, Blue Mountains, Central Coast, and Sydney. Many of the students who had travelled a long way were experienced drummers who had attended previous retreats, while beginners lived fairly locally. The general level of drumming and dancing experience of students, however, was higher than that of the weekly classes I had been attending.

Approximately 60 students took part in the retreat, although many were not present for the entire four days. Also, there were varying degrees to which students chose to participate, thereby creating a subtle shifting composition of the classes. Generally drum classes contained no more than 40 students at a time. The daily schedule consisted of two 90 minute drum lessons and two 90 minute dance lessons

interspersed between meal breaks. Due to bad weather, the shared mealtimes and recreation times were mostly spent indoors, and induced much conversation and informal music making.

The third case study was conducted in a tertiary music institution during a two hour drumming lesson given to music education students. While these students had had little if any experience in this type of drumming, all students had musical expertise in other chosen instruments in which they are classically trained. From this, students' rhythmic skills, fine-motor coordination (for instrumentalists), knowledge of metre, and recognition of patterns were all generally of a high level. Also, due to some training in cognitive psychology, and the necessity of thinking about how to teach music, these students would often engage in musical meta-cognition. Consequently, this population of participants differed greatly from those in the previous two cases. However, they shared characteristics of other beginners such as a lack of hand-drum coordination; limited knowledge of playing techniques; limited knowledge of West-African music in general; and unfamiliarity with strictly aural and visual learning. This case study allowed me to examine the variables in teaching and learning techniques when the students and teaching environment were changed from that of the more common community groups. Also the third case involved the teaching of Ghanaian music, whereas the first two cases focussed on the music of Guinea.

This third case was not an original part of my study, but the opportunity to observe the lesson arose at an appropriate time during field work with the other two cases. Access was relatively straightforward, as the planned lesson was being given to my own class at university. It was also coincidental that the teacher organised by the institution to give this lesson was the teacher from my previous experience in Ghana. Despite personally knowing Afotey, the teacher, I discussed procedures regarding the filming of the lesson and content of my study with him prior to the class. The recruitment of participants in the third case was done during class time at the university, with students having the option to consent to participation or not. While being sensitive to the different contexts and participants in the various cases, I was intent on retaining similar methods of data collection throughout the whole multi-case study as a form of triangulation in order to improve the reliability of the research.

The group that ultimately participated in the study was representative of the defined population 'Sydney adult community drumming group' whose students met weekly under the guidance of a head teacher, paid fees to that teacher, and learnt traditional music of Guinea. The head teacher, Madou, was Guinean, but classes were managed and also sometimes taught by his Australian sister-in-law Rebecca. I had no previous personal relationship with any of the students or teachers. A number of weeks were spent observing the lessons in order to assess the suitability of this group for study before I approached the teachers, and ascertained their willingness to participate in the study. Official entrance into the field was made after these few weeks in order to understand the makeup and routine of the lessons so that these would be minimally affected by my participation.

Role of the Researcher

Cohen and Manion (1994) indicate that participation by the researcher in the activities to be observed forms an important part of the observational case study. Through participation the researcher gains further insider knowledge into the practices of the group, while negating any ill feelings participants may have of being 'observed' from an outside researcher. Furthermore, the researcher's personal experience may actually be studied along with other participants, which Tedlock (2000) refers to as reflexive ethnography. Using this method, researchers use their own experiences in the culture reflexively to bend back on the self and look more deeply at self-other interactions.

During lessons I took my seat along with the rest of the students and learnt the same material at the same pace as them, with no special treatment. Hence, I felt certain I was experiencing the same view of the teacher and his gestures, looks, and instruction as the rest of the students. I also participated in the same way in the dance classes: attempting, struggling and sometimes succeeding with dance steps along with the other students. Occasionally I joined the drummers who accompanied the dancers for the dance class, which was an entirely different experience of responsibility from a normal drum lesson. Tedlock encourages reflexive ethnographers to "ideally use all their senses, their bodies, movement, feeling, and

their whole being – the ‘self’ to learn about the ‘other’” (p.741). This physical experience was invaluable in developing understanding of the issues facing the students. I gained a personal understanding of learning techniques, community relationships, and cultural values in this particular setting, and was able to describe and interpret people’s actions in the least superficial way possible. Journal entries written immediately after classes were filled not only with observations about others, but with my own judgements about how I was taught, what was helpful or frustrating, and my developing understanding of how I learn best. This also was a useful additional source of data to illuminate my personal bias and judgements during later analysis.

Data Collection Methods

Participant Observation

Video recording of the lessons was undertaken with the permission of the participants. The camera was placed on the side of the room to be as unobtrusive as possible and yet capture as much of the students’ and teacher’s actions as possible. Using a video camera allowed me to record interactions and specific teaching and learning episodes whilst still fully participating in them. Thus I could view and observe from multiple angles, allowing rich observation of students’ and teachers’ facial expressions, gestures, body movements and positions in response to teaching techniques, actions which might speak louder than words, especially in this setting of West-African music which requires a lot of body movement (Addo, 1997).

Interviews

Interviews with participants provide illustrative qualitative data that show exactly what informants feel, perceive and how they behave (Burns, 2000). The interviews conducted in this study were initially semi-structured, which allowed me “to capture precise data of a codable nature...but also attempt to understand the complex behaviour of members of society without imposing any a priori categorization that may limit the field of inquiry” (Fontana & Frey, 2000, p.653). The structure of the interview was determined in relation to the research questions, and followed the

same basic shape for teachers and students, the questions reformulated depending on their teaching or learning situation.² This was done to increase triangulation by providing teacher and learner perceptions on similar questions. Interviews aimed to illuminate participants' cultural and educational backgrounds, their motivations for teaching or learning West-African drumming, and their views on the methods being used to teach West-African music. However, interviewees were always asked open questions with the intent that participants would have room to explain personal views, opinions, and stories.

The interviews took place in the field setting in all three case studies and were audio recorded to avoid distracting interviewees. Gestures were recorded in field notes as soon as possible after the interview, as I found interviewee response was more generous when we sat face to face, and I was not writing notes but conversing naturally. Informal interviews outside of classes within the field were also conducted to supplement the content of the semi-structured interviews. Burns (2000) states that informal interviews are a natural part of ethnographical fieldwork. Such interviews were spontaneous, and were often exploratory in nature, although subtly directed towards the guidelines of inquiry I followed in the semi-structured interviews. Informal interviews were not audio recorded, but field notes were made as soon as possible after the conversation.

Sampling Procedures for Interviewees

I planned to interview a broad range of students with a variety of experiences in drumming, having different musical and educational backgrounds, and varying levels of knowledge about West-African culture. Gaining information about students' attributes through exploratory conversations was important so that rapport could be developed, and also to see who might be a likely candidate for an interview. I especially observed which students in the lessons were developing their own ways of learning the drumming, as it appeared that these informants would provide interesting insights into teaching and learning methods. Thus methods of purposive sampling were employed.

² See Appendix D

Purposive sampling was used not only to interview participants with a variety of experience and knowledge levels, but also to interview those participants who displayed an interest in their learning and the group culture. Some students were particularly interested in the study, illustrated meta-cognition, and selected themselves to be interviewed. Interestingly it was also observed that within the culture of the drumming community there existed an openness to frequent discussions about music, teaching and learning, so that self-selection for discussion was a representative activity. The use of students who were particularly vocal about their learning may have provided an imbalanced view on the case study. However I anticipated that the potential bias inherent would be mediated through triangulation of interview and observational data. Selected interviewees are listed in Table 3.1.

Table 3.1 Interviewees³

Name	West-African drumming/ dance participation	Other forms of non-African drumming participation	Western Music Education	Experience teaching music
Rebecca	8 years		Classically trained in ballet, piano, violin, voice	Teacher of Guinean dance for 6 years
Gary	1 year	High level in Arabic drumming		Taught Arabic drumming
Sarah	Beginner		High level of classical training in piano	
Xavier	10 years			
Eugenie	10 years		Classically trained in ballet	Teaches ballet and dance (non-African)
Kirsty	5 years		High level of classical training in piano	Has taught West-African drumming for 3 years
Dave	7 years	High level in rock drum- kit		Has taught West-African drumming for 3 years
Brendan	15+ years	High level in classical Indian tabla	Studied composition and keyboard to high level	Has taught West-African drumming for 8 years
Madou	Since birth			Teacher of Guinean drumming/dance for 20 years ⁴
Afotey	Since birth			Teacher of Ghanaian drumming/dance for 15+ years
Zana	1 lesson		High level of classical training in piano	Studies music education and teaches piano privately
Ellie	1 lesson	Moderate level in Cuban drumming	High level of classical training in trombone,	Studies music education and teaches trombone privately

³ Shading indicates that these interviews were conducted in pairs.

⁴ Additional details of Madou and Afotey's careers are listed in Appendix G.

Triangulation

Triangulation uses multiple perceptions to “clarify meaning, verifying the repeatability of an observation or interpretation” (Stake, 2000, p.443). Triangulation is especially important for a multi-case study where a multitude of perspectives exist, and differing and perhaps conflicting viewpoints need fair representation.

Methodological triangulation involves the use of more than one method in the pursuit of a given objective, affecting the types of data collected, and the sources of the data itself (Cohen & Manion, 1994). In this study it has been achieved by the use of participant observation, interviews and field notes. Both informal and formal conversations were shared and recorded in field notes. The sources of the data collected were also varied to include observation and interviews with students and teachers and the reflexive writings of the researcher. Also, through using purposive sampling, the informants range in their experiences, knowledge and upbringing, bringing further perspectives and insights into the practices being studied.

Triangulation *within* methods concerns the replication of a data collection method as a check on reliability and theory confirmation (Cohen & Manion, 1994). The same methods of data collection were used within the different case studies, which Denzin (1970) classified as space triangulation. Happenings and practices in one case could be compared with the other two. It was not intended to compare separate people and contexts in a simplistic manner, but through noting the similarities between cases, a more balanced view of this social cultural group could be obtained.

Data Analysis

Data analysis is an ongoing aspect of ethnography which should occur during and after fieldwork, and is cyclical in nature. Emergent research themes and questions that arose while conducting fieldwork meant a continuous refinement of research questions and collection methods. The data were scanned for phenomena using open coding, defined by Strauss and Corbin (1990) as “the analytic process by which concepts are identified and developed in terms of their properties and dimensions” (p.74). This was done by making comparisons for similarities and differences

between each incident, event, and other phenomena in the data. Conceptual labels were placed on such happenings and events, and similarly labelled events were then grouped to form higher order categories. Once relationships between categories began to emerge, the process of axial coding began, making connections between categories, taking into account the causal conditions that give rise to each category (Strauss & Corbin, 1990).

Since the qualitative paradigm is necessarily subjective, interpretive methods were used in the data analysis and much care was taken to balance the prior assumptions of the researcher with observable data, with emphasis placed on the perspective of the participants. Reflexive ethnography was emphasised during data analysis, acknowledging that “The researcher’s identity, values and beliefs play a role in the production and analysis of qualitative data” (Denscombe, 1998, p.209). The resulting account is outlined in the following chapter.

CHAPTER 4 RESEARCH FINDINGS

The findings of this study have been categorised into three main parts: motivations, objectives of learners and teachers; and strategies and adaptations. Whilst the latter section is the focus of this research, the complexities of motivations and lesson objectives must be examined in their influential capacities on pedagogy and music outcomes.

Motivations

Participants were motivated to engage in West-African drumming for a variety of reasons, with the initial dynamic contact with the music being an inspiring force. Often the effect of watching master drummers would leave students not only awe-struck, but also determined to explore the music further. In an interview with a beginner drummer at the weekly classes, the issue of being drawn to the music of a different culture was discussed.

Sarah: They put on some world music, and the drumming of all the different cultures. I was so drawn to it, and I thought ‘Oh, what do I have to do to get this?’

The answer, apparently, lies in the purchase of a djembe. This drum has become the ultimate commodity, the embodiment of African music and culture, and the key to playing just like master musicians. Perhaps this represents the fastest and most accessible method of entry into the affinity group.

A large number of students and interviewees mentioned that they began learning after purchasing a drum and experiencing varying degrees of success in teaching themselves how to play.

Kirsty: I didn’t know what a djembe was until December 2002, when someone had one at a party, and I played it and found it very easy after playing classical piano for 15 years, and thought it was amazing that I could pick up an instrument and someone could show me something and it sounded so funky... . So I got back to Canberra and I actually bought a djembe.

The motivation to learn the djembe may also be attributed to the apparent ease with

which students can play and teach themselves. Comparing learning the djembe with the tabla, Brendan explained that his personal motivation to learn was linked with the difficulty levels of producing sounds on the instruments. Some experienced players denounced what they saw as misconceptions regarding djembe playing, and students who believe that they can play well without formal lessons. Xavier stated that there is a distinct difference between making a sound and playing music:

The unfortunate part about the drums is that people think that it's an easy instrument to play. If you were to put them up with a violin or a harp people would go "Oh forget it". But with the drum they say "Oh I can . . . hit it." They're kinda self-taught and they start to learn it a bit and then they think 'Oh I'm OK; I can play'. . . . They know how to create sound but it doesn't mean that they know how to actually play music.

Teachers and students alike are aware of the simplistic image that drum circles have created for the djembe, and are keen to point out the value in learning traditional rhythms and techniques.

Rebecca: Also the problem is drumming –“Oh *bongos*” – it has the connotation of people sitting around hitting a drum. . . . What they're doing is playing an instrument and teaching an instrument and traditional patterns and forms.

Personal Experience, Enjoyment and Cultural Relevance

African drumming in Australia is often viewed by outsiders and beginners first and foremost as 'an experience'. Often this experience is difficult for participants to verbalise, but conjures an almost spiritual episode. Beginner student Sarah found it difficult to explain why she enjoyed coming to classes, yet pointed out the positive effect of the lesson:

'Cause it's fun, and I love the beat. It does something good to me, and...you create a party vibe. It's the kind of stuff that I like...just to be more myself.

Enjoyment was a common reason for coming to class as a student or teacher, and is a major factor in the creation of an overall 'experience'. Some students pointed out the enjoyment and release experienced from the physical drumming. It was also clearly

observable that the social nature of group classes and the practice after class provoked laughter and a sense of well-being. Many participants at the drumming retreat and even in the more formal atmosphere of the Conservatorium discussed how they felt inspired and enriched by the experience. Teachers have promoted the intangible 'experience' as a reason for attending lessons:

Experience the energizing and uplifting effects of West-African percussion and dance at its best...Madou and Fahim...are outstanding tutors who will take you on a journey into the 'Spirit of Africa'.
(Advertisement for the Easter drumming retreat)

Some Sydney residents find that participating in drumming addresses (even fulfils) their perceived spiritual needs. Indeed, both experienced and beginner students mentioned their dependency and addiction to drumming and/or dancing lessons to maintain their physical or emotional health. Australian teacher Dave explained the unique and rich experience that Madou provided for both newcomers and experienced players alike. However, he suggested a discrepancy between those who are motivated to learn drumming for a unique experience, and those who are motivated enough to learn for the music itself. This view was also taken by other experienced players at the retreat, who almost denigrated those who come purely for the enjoyment and do not practise.

Eugenie: The ones that really want to know everything – they [tape the music]. But the rest? . . . They're not like us; they come just for the enjoyment of it. And that's it! They go away, and they won't touch the drum much during the rest of the year, or until the next workshop. *We* do. *We* do touch the drum – for a few years it was every day.

There is an assumption that some players will consume the experience without developing the skills taught to them at the retreat. However, the fun and addictive aspects of the lessons foster the perseverance that is necessary to learn this music properly. Participants are then more likely to put in the effort to help themselves learn, by developing tricks, habits, or understandings. Indeed, learners not only have the power to decide why they attend, but as Gary described it, what they learn as well:

Every teacher teaches differently, very differently. You need to be able to take whatever you can from them and just make it relevant to yourself.

Afotey insisted that he wanted students to play and improve; however he acknowledged that students will all have different priorities, perhaps to indicate that he does not push students to learn in a stereotypically strict traditional way. There are cultural aspects and music aspects to be learnt in lessons, although there are varying ratios and depth in which students desire to learn. In an advertisement for his weekly classes, Afotey stated his broad aims for the lessons:

This is a perfect opportunity to explore the rich music and culture of West Africa.

Kirsty and Dave pointed out, however, that in reality, the personal agendas of their students in Canberra often have nothing to do with cultural awareness. While more experienced learners may desire cultural engagement in the lesson, others for whom drumming is a hobby, may be content with much less.

Interestingly, some students at the Conservatorium were concerned that the music being taught was taken out of its natural context and being used in a less culturally explicit manner. Afotey had taught a rhythm specifically used in circumcision ceremonies in Ghana. Zana found it difficult to accept that this culturally significant music should become a hobby for students in Australia. Although this may be a reflection of extensive studies in Non-Western music and multicultural music education at university, it nevertheless demonstrates the breadth of responses as to why this music is, or should be learnt, as well as what content should be undertaken.

Zana: He's Ghanaian, so he's the one saying it's alright to play this, but still I feel a bit uncomfortable, because its so important to them and it means this to them, and we're just grabbing it. . . . sticking our own terms on it, putting it out of context, and doing it for fun.

Objectives of Learners and Teachers

The relationship between the wants and aims of learners and teachers is very interesting, with multiple personal agendas at play in any one lesson. As discussed in the following sections, objectives of learners and teachers may be more immediate or relate to ideas or skills developed over a longer term.

Technique

At the Conservatorium, Afotey explained what he wanted the class to reach in the one lesson. The immediate objectives were for students to learn correct technique and certain rhythms, as well as experience enjoyment and develop a repertoire of music:

The main thing is to learn the rhythm, the techniques and to how to place your hands to get the different sounds. So you've got something to teach in the future, and you can just enjoy it yourself.

However, though in concept the hand placement is easy to grasp and explain to students, few of the participants in the various contexts were content with the technique they presently had. Gary, an experienced Middle Eastern drumming teacher, described how djembe technique is not easy at a refined level:

I have a lot of trouble making a good sound on the djembe at the moment. I can't get the same crisp sounds that these African dudes can get. . . . It does make a sound but it's not the correct technique to play this drum.

Being able to achieve the three main sounds of 'bass', 'tone' and 'slap' will greatly contribute to successfully playing a correct sounding rhythmic and melodic phrase on the djembe. The rhythmic expression was often deemed more important than technical accuracy by students. An important aspect of this is the resulting creation of new methods of sound production by students as they imitate the teacher.

Zana: I found ...I was just doing something to create two different sounds around the edge. And it probably wasn't anything that resembled a tone or slap...For a while I was literally trying to do the technique as he briefly described it, and then when it wasn't making any different sound, there was actually a point where I said to myself "Ok well - you know that that makes a different sound so do that, just for now". . . . If I was to learn it, I would practise the technique. But in the workshop, because it was the only chance I had to do it, I would want it to sound like a rhythm.

Even as a beginner, Zana recognized that she was not using correct hand technique. Unfortunately these student-made methods often produce errors in technique, and bad habits necessarily arise which may lead to injury and discouragement. Australian teacher Brendan sat in on the weekly lessons, led the drumming for the dance classes, and occasionally took over the teaching if Madou was away. He stopped

students to fix arm and elbow positions, posture, and the angle at which the hand touches the drum. Brendan further demonstrated in his interview that he was aware of students' problems if the continual playing in lessons wasn't stopped:

Sometimes it's better to just let people get their hands going, and get the rhythm, but then you don't want people getting bad habits, so I usually try and stop it or let them know. I pay more attention to technique than those guys do. If someone asks them they'll always stop and show you, but unless you do ask them they won't stop and do that. They let people play. It's just a different technique or something.

Brendan is obviously accustomed to the teaching strategies Madou and other African teachers employ, and yet chooses to incorporate more verbal explanations, and encourage questions and clarifications in order to achieve this lesson objective.

Rhythm

Another immediate objective of the lessons is to learn certain West-African rhythms. A very important aspect of the rhythmic objective is to develop an understanding of all the parts which make up the whole rhythm, which includes the accompaniment patterns, doundoun and kenkeni parts, and breaks and calls for that particular rhythm. Dave and Kirsty emphasized the importance of hearing the other drum parts:

- Dave: Madou has brought a lot of players to a higher standard by understanding not only how they learn but the structure of the music. . . . For the djembe, the doundoun is so essential for where things sit in the rhythm. So a lot of people go and buy a djembe but they don't know anything about doundoun, and then it's only like one segment of the rhythm. . . .
- Kirsty: We don't even bother playing if we don't have our doundoun player with us. 'Cause for us it's just like this gaping hole, this massive gap.

In all settings, the majority of beginners were able to follow the teacher and play the rhythm in time when it was isolated. Nevertheless, a number of difficulties in the learning of rhythms ensued.

- Gary: Often I find the rhythm is easy to play; it's starting it at the right point is usually the challenge. . . . It's learning exactly what that entry point is, and how these guys count it. So if you can learn that, you're starting to really understand this music.

Some common issues were in understanding the cross rhythms; remembering the

many different parts of the rhythm learnt in the one lesson; and comprehending the call and structural entry points. Teachers such as Brendan, Madou, Afotey and Rebecca all saw these issues as symptoms of unfamiliarity with the rhythms as will be further discussed.

While there are aspects of West-African drumming for which immediate results are expected, there are also objectives for undertaking learning which are developed over a period of time. Such long-term objectives are stamina and a deep understanding of stylistic characteristics and 'African time'.

Stamina

Stamina is developed by regular practice, and is built up through long and intense warm-ups and playing sessions. Although regular practice is a common factor for improvement in most musical and non-musical endeavours, the rigorous physical training expected by some teachers of West-African drumming is quite unique in music training, particularly in community settings. Madou explained that there is a certain level of stamina expected from his students for playing the African rhythms and music that he teaches:

(For) African rhythms - you need exercise, you need a very long warm up. . . . Even after five minutes [students] say "Oh I'm tired now". . . . They need to be able to hold at least half hour, 35 minute warm up. When you do that, you'll be perfect. . . . 'Cause in Africa, the warm up helps you to get speed.

There is often a difference between the length of time Australian students and African teachers expect a warm-up to last. Indeed, one of the greatest differences between teachers appears to be their emphasis on warm-ups and stamina-building. This perhaps separates those teachers who wish students to fulfill immediate objectives, and those hoping to satisfy broader, long-term objectives. Kirsty pointed out the two teaching styles, and confessed to the lack of emphasis she places on stamina in her own classes:

Stamina is something that I don't focus on enough in my classes. . . . I guess I'm worried about losing the students so I'm scared to push them. Whereas I don't think Madou and Fahim will really care if they lose a student or two because the person doesn't want to drum the one

rhythm for 15 minutes, because they probably don't want to see that person continue drumming if they're not dedicated.

Interestingly, many interviewees who described strict teachers and hard discipline demonstrated an appreciation of their training, including Brendan who learnt from Madou's brother Gido:

We would have 10 day camps, eight hours a day, two hour classes, four of them. . . . Really long warm ups. Stamina building. At camps, or even in normal classes, the 'd-doo d-da d-da d-da' . . . 20 minutes, and you're not allowed to stop. "Do not stop!" He was a slave driver, but you know it was great in a way, because that's what got me playing with strength.

As Brendan's interview suggests, camps are often expected to be more rigorous than normal weekly classes, perhaps because the standard of playing is generally at a higher level. Repetition is used not only to achieve a rhythm, but to build stamina, speed, and strength needed for playing in real contexts. Because of time constraints, the warm-ups for the beginner Conservatorium class were very brief. The concept of stamina was not mentioned at all and apparently not recognised by those students interviewed at the Conservatorium.

Deeper Understanding of West-African Time and Style

It is clear that an ultimate aim of learning is to gain a deeper understanding of West-African timing and style. However, it appears that this depth of 'understanding' is in fact something to be *felt* and not explained or analysed. Afotey indicated that typically the overall feeling of how the music 'moves' and 'flows' should come before explicit understanding, which may be achieved in private lessons after class.

Many students commented about the point in their playing at which they abandoned conscious thought and realised that their hands continued playing the correct rhythm. Ellie discussed her surprise when she found this phenomenon happening in the Conservatorium workshop:

You get in a rhythm After a while you just stop thinking about it and you're just doing it. But if you don't keep doing it long enough, then you'll lose it.

Rebecca suggested that once students reach the level when they can listen to and enjoy all the parts of the rhythm, without slipping out of consciousness or losing the “sync”, true feeling, understanding and thus enjoyment of the music may occur:

You're sitting on one part, but then the kenkeni...the doundoun... two or three more parts...and a soloist is happening. . . . When you can listen and enjoy all the other parts, that's when a really good group happens, when you can sync into each other. You can *feel* it, and then you can really understand. And *that's* when, I think, you have more fun.

Participants discussed ‘true’ African style, suggesting such an acquisition could only be made through listening to and playing with experienced African musicians over an extended period of time. Xavier and Eugenie explained that they found it necessary to spend the time developing a clear foundation of stylistic understanding before they could improvise appropriately. Xavier noted that listening to Madou solo is important, as it opens his ears to a sense of timing that is completely different from his own:

You can learn djembe from other people, but the African way to solo is totally different to anybody else. They solo in a certain way so you have to actually acquire that special ear for their soloing. Where Madou... puts his solo is different from where *I* would put the solo. I'd probably go on the down beat, but where they place it is *so* interesting, it creates a tension.

Other participants suggested that ‘feeling the groove’ is an aspect in which even the most advanced students may continue to improve.

Rebecca: I would have danced some steps so many times, but I never would say I'm bored of doing this step because there's always a deeper way to feel it. . . .

It is deemed extremely important to listen to all parts of the rhythm together holistically, to improve the understanding of the polyrhythmic nature of the music and the subtle stylistic differences which are influenced by the interplay of parts. Developing an understanding of style and technique is achieved through a range of teaching and learning strategies which are discussed in the following section.

Strategies and Adaptations

It is perhaps in the varying strategies used for learning and teaching that the cultural differences in approach are most clearly evident. These differences are manifested in numerous changes to the learning environment, which must be constantly negotiated by African drumming teachers.

Pace and Hierarchy

The learning environment in Australia differs geographically and culturally from that in West Africa, where the sequencing of learning is traditionally directly affected by a hierarchy based on experience levels and rhythmic difficulty. This hierarchy influences aspects of teaching and learning such as the use of challenge and repetition. Brendan explained the start of the hierarchical learning process:

The hierarchy of learning over there is, you hang around the musicians, you carry their stuff. . . . You're their slave basically, and then they might let you play one little part, basic accompaniment. And that's all you're allowed to play for years.

The hierarchy is an aspect of the drumming culture which is drastically changing. A major factor in this change is the accelerating pace at which students expect to play new musical material. Many Australian students and teachers pointed out the remarkable length of time their African teacher had spent learning a basic accompaniment pattern, which clearly highlights the differences between the two learning approaches. Australian and West-African teachers interviewed, unanimously mentioned the common desire of students to learn new material at a much faster rate than their teachers were allowed.

Madou: For me when I was learning music, it was really tough. They give you one part for years. Like 'Pum du DA, pum du-DA' for a *long* time. But here people *can't* do that. That generation has finished! . . . Even now in Guinea. . . . So many people learn to play djembe. 'Oh yeah, I can do it' That's it! They're on to next, next, what's next? And they don't have much experience, like I do.

Madou implied that without repetition over years, vital experience was lacking in the new generation of students. However, clearly this realization is an important factor in this current transition period. Brendan demonstrated his insight into the issue, mentioning the cultural irrelevance hierarchical learning had in society in Sydney:

I have to be a realist because I realize that most people who come to classes aren't necessarily going to want to be an African drum master and go through the whole routine of that discipline it takes and the pain it takes. . . . That doesn't always work in our culture - that discipline thing, and sitting at the feet of a master.

However, evidence of an adaptation of the cultural norm of soloing suggests changes have been ongoing slowly since the first wave of West-African teachers started giving lessons in Australia a decade ago. Brendan described how he affected the roles on a camp with his own teacher Gido:

First of all when [Gido] was here, no-one would solo. Then at one camp I said to him 'Look, I want to solo'. And he said, 'Oh, ok'. And he gave me all the solos!

Major changes in hierarchical roles have served as the first steps in finding a new balance that is emerging, and yet still evolving, today.

Challenge and Repetition

Australian drumming students are willing to accept challenge, as students have stated that they want to go faster, learn new material, and take solos. However, a discrepancy remains between the notion of challenge, and repetition, which was traditionally the strategy used to engage in new musical challenges. Students generally wish for the challenge of new material, not the challenge of the same material, and it is the motivations and expectations of the students which are influential in shaping the pace and outcomes of the lessons. Brendan explained that as a teacher he is careful not to alienate his students. In Australia, the financial transaction between student and teacher suggests that a degree of efficiency, success, and enjoyment is achieved at the end of any given lesson, not at the end of a five-year period.

Xavier: The main aspect is the psychological aspect. Because in Africa it's tough, you have to pay service. Whereas here you just pay a few bucks and you're in. . . .The teacher in Africa can be really tough on you and it's fine - the family will accept that. But here if you're tough on your students, they won't come back. So it has to be enjoyable as well.

Many of Madou's students volunteered that they appreciated Madou's teaching style because when he sees that students are tired he stops. However, there is also a level of appreciation by experienced students of learning the 'real' way, which Kirsty suggests reflects commitment to the music and valuation of the culture.

- Kirsty: This teaching style that we get from Madou . . . they have no worries about saying "Right we're gonna play this rhythm for 15 minutes until you can play it". And we're committed to learning it, we have an understanding [that] these are the masters. If we want the real deal, this is how we will do it. . . . But if you have people come along for the first time who don't know that, they won't come again.
- Laura: So there has to be a sort of understanding of the culture to be able to accept that.
- Kirsty: Yep, I think so definitely.

Interestingly, music education students at the Conservatorium identified the lack of repetition in the teaching strategies used by Afotey, reflecting perhaps a higher level of cultural-musical understanding.

Notation

An observable teaching and learning strategy which was being used by participants was the use of notation to record and visualize the rhythms learnt in class. Students differed in their notation techniques, some preferring traditional Western note heads, and others incorporating variations on common djembe notations⁵. Some students at the drumming retreat created their own form of notation to record the rhythm immediately after class. Tom explained how subdivision was an important part of his notation process:

- Tom: I'm trying to work out any way to count this and keep it in my head, including resorting to kiddy-counting and stuff.
- Laura: Kiddy-counting? What's that?
- Tom: Pretty major steps. (*Sings*) One-e-and-a-Two-e-and-a-Three... And then writing *that* down, and working it out from there.

Students could often be seen working on notation together in small groups after a lesson on the retreat. The communication regarding self-teaching methods was often made between students, and not to the teacher. However some teachers have also sought to adapt notation for this learning environment in order to facilitate both the

⁵ See Appendix E for examples of djembe notation

learning and retention of rhythms.

Dave: The other thing that what we do with the rhythms that the Africans never do is that we write them down. So when we teach the rhythm, we give the students a transcript of the rhythm, which has got the name of the rhythm, cultural aspects of it, but also how to play it with the different parts and calls and everything. A lot of the students really rely on that. That's a way of remembering. . . . As a teacher you want your students to have a repertoire of rhythms. . . . I realized people *weren't* remembering, so by writing it down you're saying "You need to go away and practise that and you've got no excuse because there it is".

For Dave, notation is seen as a learning strategy to achieve long-term objectives of memorization and practice. However, when Afotey discussed notation as a teaching strategy, he implied that it would change his teaching style dramatically. He described the debate he had on learning and teaching through notation with an Australian percussionist and educator:

Afotey: A music director from Canberra came to Ghana to study. He is really good. I play, he writes it down straight away, it's amazing. . . . But the last time he said "Afotey, this rhythm –you can't write it! This notation is bullshit!" He doesn't think it's the correct way of learning. . . . I want to improve music level, maybe so I could teach in a university. I have to know how to write so I can write to students and explain. He said "You don't need it". I thought it will be easier for the students here. So I can write the rhythm myself. "This is the rhythm, go and learn". And then we'd have a practical lesson. Theory then practical. But he said "No, no, no. Learning this will waste your time. You are a professor by nature already. You teach professors who are writing it, so why do you have to go and learn it?"

Laura: Yes, and certain rhythms are 'pushing', they're not quite within the beats. I feel it would be losing something if I wrote them down.

Afotey: Losing something. That's right. I think it's important if you learn the rhythm by writing it – that's cool – but then you need to find out how the rhythm works. Play exactly how it is. So you can figure how the rhythm moves.

This illustrates that an 'exact', working rhythm is much more dynamic than can be expressed in notation. However Afotey implies that an additional step of notation in the learning sequence could have beneficial outcomes, especially in terms of efficiency and cross-cultural student-teacher communication. The views taken by the two teachers in this debate symbolize an emerging role reversal regarding beliefs of cultural preservation and adaptation.

Verbal Explanation to Supplement Demonstration and Kinaesthetic Learning

A major adaptation discussed by all participants was the use of verbal explanations to supplement traditional teaching methods of demonstration and imitation. Participants discussed differences between West-African and Australian perceptions of time, and the pressures for West-African teachers to incorporate Western terminology, rhythmic and technical analysis, and counting in order to improve learning facility and efficiency. The positive and negative effects these adaptations have on student self-direction as well as rhythmic conceptualization are addressed in this section.

Terminology

A number of students mentioned that they believed they would appreciate more detailed explanations of how to play certain rhythms, or hand techniques. Students explained the teaching strategies which they thought would assist them to learn better and overcome typical hurdles in learning West-African drumming. Gary referred to subtle playing techniques that were difficult to detect through imitation only:

I think in some of the patterns there are little tricks. Like you might use a double left hand, or a double right, or a very quick maneuver of a slap-tone or something. And if they can just tell you those particular tricks and where they're used within the phrase, I find it very helpful for me. Just a technical explanation of what's going on. . . . I can look out for it, I can concentrate. You can actually practise those little maneuvers, and then you can just get it right. 'Cause that's the thing that holds you back, it's just sometimes you get to a point in the pattern and you just don't know how to push through. And it's those little techniques that can make all the difference.

Through verbal explanation, opportunities increase for communication of issues and difficulties from the student to the teacher. However, for communication to be successful there must be a common vocabulary available. Afotey mentioned the complications and difficulties he had when he began to teach foreigners. He discussed his realization that the teacher has to be able to express ideas and explain sounds to drummers from a variety of backgrounds:

It was very complicated in the beginning teaching foreigners. Sometimes... "Oh God!" I was a bit nervous. I'd never taught foreigners before, it was a bit different. . . . Here, you have to explain.

I have to tell you ‘This is tone, bass, slap’. You can’t just play and then they play. They are not from Africa, they are not used to the rhythm. That makes it a bit harder but it’s challenging, and it’s helped me learn a lot. . . . If you’re teaching just locals you don’t learn the actual name of the sound. But since I’ve started teaching I’ve come across a lot of drummers who know rhythms, and music. I have to be able to express myself and explain the sound.

Both Madou and Afotey discussed the need to change; to learn new terminology, and understand Western methods of counting and Australian time. Afotey implied that this strategy would link the drumming with prior learning of the students at the Conservatorium, as well as the students in his own weekly classes. Interestingly, the suitability of teaching style is discussed by West-African teachers as being most influenced by the learning context and student understanding and less influenced by the music. Afotey described a method he used to learn the terminology students were using: by giving students breaks in the lesson and listening to their conversations with each other:

- Afotey: Some of the students who know a bit of music start to explain to each other. I listen - “Hey, what did you say?” - and then record it. ‘Cause I know the sound and techniques already, but I have to know the *names*. “This is called ‘syncopated beat’ . . . this is called this”. . . .
- Laura: It’s so funny that you have to learn all these labels to put on these things you already know.
- Afotey: We need it, if you want to move far. . . . So when I go to Africa and play with the master drummers, saying “This is called bass-tone flan. This is called syncopated. This is called bla bla bla”, they’re like “Whaa?!”

Although Afotey made reference to the incompatibility of Western terminology in Africa, he nevertheless explained that it was necessary “if you want to move far” in the teaching and learning of drumming. It suggests that without years of training, efficient, technical improvement can still be obtained. Music education student Ellie pointed out that using Western terminology allowed students to learn new material at a faster pace:

It was easier for us to put it in our language. It depends on how much you want to keep it to the cultural. In the interest of learning as much as you can in a short space of time, you probably do have to say things like “This is in 4/4”. It’s hard to say if anything’s better, I guess there are just different teaching styles.

A balance between efficient and culturally authentic learning emerged in the data. Despite acknowledging the difficulties inherent in implicating Western terminology in lessons, both Afotey and Madou generally see this adaptation as both positive and necessary. However opinions among Australians differ as to how much African teachers are adapting, and need to adapt. Kirsty believed that Madou's teaching style still maintained a heavy tendency for demonstration, and verbal explanations were rather tokenistic and rare. However, she pointed out that this was to be expected due to the incompatibility of West-African and Australian approaches to analysis:

Well, it might be a bit extreme to say this, but I don't think there's actual *teaching*, because I think it's more *showing*. [Madou's] not explicit about things. He doesn't say 'left, right, left', or 'tone, slap, tone', or very rarely. He does *occasionally* and I think that's just a result of so many white people saying "How many slaps are there? How many tones are there?" But his natural tendency is not to go into any of that, because he doesn't understand it in that way. Whereas I do, I think seven tones, six slaps to learn a tricky phrase. Whereas he has heard it and knows it so well that it would be difficult for him to analyse everything on the spot for every student.

The Conservatorium subject *Multicultural Studies in Music Education* examined culturally diverse teaching methodologies as well as musical characteristics. As a student, Zana mentioned her expectations of the teaching methods that would be applied in the workshop, and was surprised at the Western terminology used. She explained that such a teaching strategy was helpful to make the music accessible. However she then questioned whether 'music' could be so simply separated from 'culture':

It's a hybrid – he's using our terms to explain it to us... the whole approach was more so that we could play music. It wasn't sharing in the culture per se.

Breaking Down and Counting

New ways of thinking about 'time' have produced adaptations to traditional demonstration methods. Many participants discussed the existence of 'African time' and 'Australian time'. However, though these terms were frequently used, participants found it difficult to convey the meaning behind them in words. Two teaching and learning strategies which clearly affected the musical 'time' were the breaking down of rhythms into component parts; and counting rhythms with the help

of comprehensive subdivision. Since such levels of rhythmic dissection are abnormal for many African teachers and students, a discussion of the difficulties in these particular adaptations arose. Madou discussed how different senses of time and beat affected his teaching strategies:

- Madou: The way of teaching Western people and the way of teaching African people is different. . . . For African people, music is in our soul. Just tell them what to do and they'll do it like that. Just give them the call and they'll know what to play. But teaching Western people, it is so different. One: you have to *explain* to them where the *beat* is...
(*laughs*)
Two: tell them where the beat is. Three: you have to count the beat.
Four: you have to pause. In Africa? Nah. You just do it.
- Laura: You say you can play a rhythm if you're teaching an African student and they just *get* it. Why then do *we* have to have this *beat* thing?
(*taps on leg*) Do we need to understand the space between notes?
- Madou: Because the time is so different. Western time and African time is so different. African time is like this (*sings a groove and claps slowly*). But Western time is here (*sings the same thing a little awkwardly and claps fast*). It's so...ugh...everywhere!! For me sometimes its like: '...Whaa?! That's the time? That's the beat? Noooo!' So sometimes I get confused by the Western beat. . . . Here it's so different. That's why when you teach Western people you have to be very careful with the beat, the time.

A general consensus regarding the adaptations which are taking place appears to be developing in the affinity group. Afotey described a very similar understanding of teaching Westerners to that of Madou, including the use of counting and subdivision, which suggests clear general differences in 'time' arising from different forms of music education. The term 'pause' is also used frequently by African teachers, which illustrates a different view of time. A 'pause' is quite an undefined length of time for Australians, and this caused confusion in different settings. Afotey also mentioned the difficulty such a shift in thinking posed for some master drummers:

If you are a teacher and you're teaching Westerners, you have to break the rhythm to a very low level, and count the rhythm, one, two, three, four...and you have to explain. This is a bit hard for a lot of teachers. You see a lot of master drummers, but they don't know how to do that. Some of them don't know where the one is, because in Africa we don't learn like that.

Rebecca as an Australian clearly understood the difference in the musical upbringings of teachers, and made clear that confusions in counting did not result

from a lack of musical understanding, but from a lack of familiarity with counting. The implication is that some Australian students, especially beginners, may develop warped and possibly negative impressions of their African teachers due to miscommunications:

Often when you ask Madou and Fahim where the one is, it'll change! . . . And it's definitely not because they don't understand the timing, it's because they're not counting it like that.

Despite having an understanding that African teachers do not think about rhythm and time in a similar measured way to Australian students, it appears there is nevertheless an expectation and assumption that rhythms will be broken down and verbally analysed in lessons. Even Rebecca admitted that her teaching style differs from the way she was taught, as a result of the difficulties she had in learning in a completely holistic rather than atomistic manner. She discussed isolation of difficult parts as a helpful learning strategy:

When I teach I try and break it down a little bit more because I understand what could be difficult for people to hear. . . . If there's a particular section that I can't get I'll have to say to them 'I'm doing it again, I'm doing it again'. I have to kind of take over the learning process. . . . I've had to break it down myself to get it, because my teachers there aren't really breaking it down because I don't think they understand why I can't hear it. . . . They show it as a whole and then if you say I don't understand they just show it again as a whole and say "There's the beat!" (*claps*) And you're just like '...That...doesn't...' (*laughs*) So you have to break it down yourself.

Indeed, students often asked questions themselves in order to break down rhythm, and direct their own learning. Student questions have the ability to confuse teachers who do not think in that manner, and lead to misconceptions regarding who has greater knowledge or understanding. Certain questions have obviously become well-known as problem areas for teachers, who have developed strategies to overcome these.

- Kirsty: You see in workshops... new people who come and ask questions, and you cringe...
- Laura: "Where's the 'one'?"
- Kirsty: Yeah. *That* at least has become a bit of a joke and [the teachers] know that. . . .
- Dave: And African teachers, African drummers get more sensitized to an understanding of Western ways the longer they've been teaching.

Many of the Australian teachers, and experienced students discussed the preconception that ‘understanding’ means to analyse and verbally explain the music. Indeed, Kirsty implied that the difference between demonstration and breaking-down of rhythms was the difference between ‘transmission’ and ‘teaching’. In addition, Kirsty explained that breaking down rhythms led to less mistakes, and easier learning:

- Kirsty: I think the kind of teaching style that they use can be best described as just a transmission of information. It’s not broken down at all or presented in a way where people can attempt to understand it or clarify it. . . . Just transmitting. . . .
- Dave: We basically teach the same stuff as Madou...Madou is our teacher so we learn from him and then can pass it on. But the way we teach our students is...(laughs)
- Kirsty: (laughs) A platter; we put it on a platter for them!
- Dave: It’s completely different. And in fact a lot of our students can’t handle learning from Madou because it’s not presented in that broken down way: “This is left, this is right...three tones, four slaps, five tones and then a flan”. And so therefore they get frustrated. We do it in a completely different way.

However, although Rebecca utilizes further verbal explanations and isolation of rhythms, she implies that there is a danger in over-analysis. She explains that this may lead to a broad problem of misconception of how the music interacts and should be understood, and would indeed affect the learning objective of a deep understanding of the music.

- Rebecca: It’s not the way they understand that music, and it’s their music. So I think we need to be, westerners need to be a little bit more relaxed when they come in, and say “Ok. It’s a whole other way of understanding”.
- Laura: “I’d better change the way I learn”.
- Rebecca: Yeah. It’s more about how the parts relate than where they sit on a...
Laura: On a linear sort of thing?
- Rebecca: Yeah. But I can see why it’s challenging for some students, and I can see why sometimes Westerners have bigger classes than the Africans, which I think is sad. I think it’s really sad, but I do think people feel more challenged and perhaps more intimidated by the Africans.

Mnemonics and Language as Teaching and Memory Tools

Verbalisation of rhythms and their component parts is a teaching method that has become increasingly expected from students. However the authenticity and non-

holistic nature of such pedagogic adaptations arose in discussion with participants. The use of mnemonics is a traditional strategy which ensures that students can verbalise the music whilst using non-culture-specific terminology, and without breaking up rhythmic phrases. Afotey described how mnemonics were a part of West-African music pedagogy, which he employed in classes here when students failed to immediately understand a rhythm:

For the normal class... if they don't get it they have to stand up, clap and sing the rhythm. 'Cause in Africa that's how we learn. Once they sing the rhythm we believe the rhythm enters the body. So the difference is that we break it down very slow.

Mnemonics are not 'taught' to students but are simply used as a teaching tool, with the understanding that students will naturally follow the teacher. Afotey emphasized that most of the rhythms in Africa were based on spoken phrases, each with their own meaning. Without mention of this knowledge, Gary reflected on the link between speech and rhythmic expression. This link is seen as a most important strategy in learning drumming itself:

All the expressions are in the same part of the brain that govern speech. You can't play unless you can speak it. I think that is the basis of learning drumming.

Experienced students and teachers often mentioned the notion that music, especially in the form of separate rhythms, could enter and stay or be 'anchored' in the body. This was seen as the strongest argument for maintaining pedagogy based on kinaesthetic learning and repetition. Afotey explained and justified the process of mnemonics for both learning and remembering rhythms to the students at the Conservatorium. Interestingly, Ellie and Zana found the explanation behind the teaching strategy most beneficial both in and after the workshop:

- Zana: He was using the mnemonics a little bit: "Pa-pati-pa", which is probably more the way they learn. . . .
- Ellie: He said "The reason we sing it is that's how you get it in you".
- Zana: The voice is the instrument in your body.
- Ellie: And it just comes out of your hands into your drum.
- Laura: Did that help you?
- Zana: Yeah, when I was confused doing the shaker thing, I was doing it, going "pa-pati-pa".
- Ellie: Yeah and I thought "I'm going to go home and sing all my conga rhythms so I can maybe learn better or something."

A number of the participants pointed out similarities between learning music and learning a language. Just as a native language is learnt slowly through assimilation and constant listening, they maintained that music and rhythms are most easily played within such a learning environment. However, the teaching and learning methods for a second language will differ greatly. Sarah described the process she went through in learning French as a second language, and suggested that music should be taught in a similar fashion:

- Sarah: When I learnt French, I had to listen to it a *lot* before I could isolate what they were actually saying, and then I could actually produce it. . . . There are a lot of linked sounds between words and you don't know where words begin and words end. . . . It's good that [Madou] lets everybody do it at once, but I think it'd be better if he actually drills everyone individually.
- Laura: Is that so if you get a chance to do it individually you get a chance to hear yourself?
- Sarah: You can hear yourself, other students can learn from that person's good effort or mistake.

Contrary to popular belief, a number of beginners displayed an appreciation of repetition, in conjunction with intermittent isolation of parts. However, perhaps there is an implied need to break down and define or detail the spaces between 'words'. Listening is seen as a key strategy in learning the music language, suggesting that audio recordings could be central learning tools.

Self-Directed Learning, Recording Technology, and Internalization After Class

Afotey described the learning process as a constant, circular shift between group playing and individual readjusting. Thus, without extra effort and self-direction given by the learner, the learning process cannot continue to develop. Self-direction is demonstrated in a number of ways. The first step for learners is to identify their own errors. Gary explained that he knew when he fell out of time and described how he used eye contact to alert the teacher to his mistakes.

I know usually when I've got it wrong. Well I hope so! I try to catch [the teacher's] eye and they usually see that I'm looking for something, and they'll try to help guide me.

There were also many observed examples of self-directed learning from the students in breaks and after lessons, in all three research settings. Students often learnt from each other by asking questions, and clarifying instructions by using familiar terms, or providing parallel demonstration of techniques.

Zana: I was asking people next to me when I forgot the rhythm. Or if I didn't understand an instruction. . . . "How do you do the slap?" I was asking Ellie about that particular technique. . . . "What exactly do I have to do?", so that in the second half I could try and do it.

However, students were not alone in learning during the break times. Afotey described his conscious decision to encourage this 'after-class' learning process in order for him to listen to students' questions and explanations:

I teach them a rhythm, and then take...maybe five minutes break. In that break, I don't go, I just sit around and chat with them, listen to what they're discussing. So I know exactly what kind of problems some of them have. . . . I want to understand...what they are thinking.

Self-directed learning was also described in the responses of students who explained their practice routine. A number of the learners from all experience levels of drumming recognised the tools they needed to review and understand the music in their own way at home. Xavier and Eugenie described their kinaesthetic intake during the lessons and discussed how after taping the music they could go home and intellectualize it individually.

Xavier: So when you're learning, it's hands on, and you just gotta go. And sometimes you're like (*Pulls a stressed face*), and [Madou says] 'Ok back to the top' and you're going 'I don't even remember it!' But you can't really work on a mental pattern, you have to just go with it and then it comes to you.

Eugenie: And it's in your body! The body has picked it up, it's in there, it's written in there. Then after, when you're finished with the classes, you just go home, and you slowly go through it and you go 'Now I want to understand! I want to understand everything!'

Certain students recorded the rhythms learnt at the end of the lessons and justified this as a way of remembering the music which they would otherwise forget.

However, Gary explained that this was the only method which allowed him to recall the material learnt in class, review it, and only then 'learn' it.

- Laura: I remember in the first week you recorded something. Is that a technique that you often use?
- Gary: Definitely. Cause we get shown different parts. Otherwise I get obsessed with trying to remember it, and I like to take that away from me so I can just be in the moment. And it doesn't matter, even though we might have played it 50,000 times in one class, I might walk away at the end of it and just I don't remember what we did. So I like to be able to record to be able to review it, learn it, and indeed I probably wouldn't come to the class if I couldn't record it, because I can't get value out of classes I can't record.

If deeper understanding is derived from anchoring the rhythms in the body through the use of repetition, the reliance on technology of recording and notation may possibly lead to a lack of kinaesthetic knowledge and feel for the music. However, recording technology is commonly identified as a strategy to connect with the music and encourage memory retention in a cultural environment where musical osmosis is not plausible.

Teachers and students alike are employing a number of adapted strategies to accommodate their unique learning environment and musical backgrounds. Student motivations and expectations are seen to be very influential in their capacity to shape the learning pace and content. Many participants were aware of this, although there are varying degrees to which teachers and experienced students perceive the integrity of the music is being tested.

CHAPTER 5 CONCLUSION

This study aimed to uncover the motivations that govern the decisions by musicians and Australian adults to respectively teach and learn traditional West-African music in Sydney. It also investigated the observable teaching and learning strategies being used by teachers and students in community settings, and the extent to which teachers and students display meta-cognition towards these strategies in which they are engaged. Finally, the study examined the influence of the philosophies and practices of West-African and Western music education on pedagogy and musical outcomes in these settings.

The research design was that of an ethnographic multi-case study. Over a period of two months, fieldwork was conducted in weekly community drum and dance classes, in addition to an intense four-day drumming retreat, and a two hour drumming workshop at a Conservatorium of music. The use of participant observation enabled the formation of a unique view of the teacher-student relationship and encouraged the role of the 'reflexive' ethnographer. Video observation and semi-structured interviews with a range of interviewees ensured triangulation of the data, and provided rich accounts and insights into motivations, and reflections on music education philosophies.

The study found that many students were motivated to attend drumming classes and retreats because of the overall 'experience', which they found enjoyable and physically and spiritually invigorating. More experienced players, however, were motivated less by the 'experience' and more by the challenge of understanding West-African rhythms and playing them as authentically as possible. There was some incompatibility between what teachers wanted students to learn and student motivations, which apparently significantly shaped learning outcomes.

The musical skills and abilities that teachers and learners wished to produce could be divided into immediate and long-term objectives. The learning of correct drumming techniques and rhythms took place every lesson, while longer-term goals such as stamina, self-direction, and deeper understanding of time and style were typically

developed over many years. Whether teachers or students emphasised either long-term or short-term goals affected their teaching and learning strategies.

Changes to the learning environment have had major influences on traditional repetitive teaching methods, which are culturally incongruent with the pace of living in Sydney, and general expectations of efficiency. Adaptations to manage these changes have resulted in verbal explanations to supplement traditional demonstrative teaching methods. Atomised analyses of rhythms were a major issue in the musical transmission process. The use of notation and recording devices as learning tools was also discussed by many participants, as well as vocal mnemonics, which have been mentioned by numerous writers (Burns, 2001; Campbell, 1991; Charry, 2000; Locke, 2004; Schippers, 2005).

The findings of this study have yielded considerable insight into the diversity of views and issues relating to teaching and learning within an adult cross-cultural environment. While this multi-case study focused on a small community group, the results have initiated reflection on a number of broader educational implications.

The Effects of Cultural Values, Music Conceptualization and Motivations on Depth of Understanding and Pedagogy

The general pace of teaching, along with other aspects of life, is accelerating. Change is also increasing exponentially, sometimes resulting in lower levels of commitment for extra-curricular activities and interests. Simultaneously, the financial transaction between teacher and students in community drumming lessons increases students' expectations of learning success and efficiency. It is important to address the effects that more rapid learning has on the level and depth of understanding of the music in terms of conceptualization and skill development.

A focus on achievement of immediate objectives tends to produce teaching and learning strategies that encourage learning efficiency, student enjoyment, and Western methodology. However, a lack of regard for traditional learning possibly produces a shallow understanding of West-African music, with limited repetition of accompaniment patterns in a rhythmically holistic environment leading to less

familiarity with the integrity of the rhythms. The literature strongly suggests that music is an essential part of everyday life in West Africa (Addo, 1997; Blacking, 1967; Campbell, 1991; Chernoff, 1979; New, 1983; Nzewi, 2003), a point of difference between the experiences of African teachers and their Australian students and counterparts which was made explicit by participants in this study. In terms of the slow pace, hierarchy, and repetition associated with West-African music, the Australian settings differ greatly, and such changes to learning environment have affected teaching strategies. Rote learning, repetition, and stamina have been replaced by recording technology. This is changing methods of memory retention and the anchorage of the music in the body, both of which are essential in order to gain a deep 'feel' for the music.

In this study, Western methods of teaching were seen to emphasise verbalisation, atomistic explanation and language-based teaching, which is congruent with the literature on multicultural education (Campbell, 1991; Leung, 1999; Lundquist, 1998). Abril (2006) examined atomistic and holistic approaches in multicultural music education and found that the main difference was heightened cultural knowledge in the latter approach. However, this study suggests that the result of atomistic teaching and learning is a possible change to the conception of rhythm and 'African time' present in the music. There is the risk that rhythm is being measured in terms of duration on a completely linear scale, with less emphasis on the teaching of 'groove' and feel of the music: in Afotey's words, "how the rhythm *moves*". It is important to examine the effect that these approaches have on the intangibles of music, especially on performance of rhythms and understanding of timing. Future research may look at why our obsession with language-based pedagogy began, and how the intangibles of West-African music may still be taught even in a Western institution.

The motivations of participants in the learning environment are of key importance when examining the pedagogy used. As Charry (2000) points out, we can only go beyond stereotypes and generalizations when the merits of each particular case are viewed. However, the issue appears to be how to balance the motivations of teachers and students with what some participants saw as an objectively 'correct' method of teaching West-African music. The literature has stated that there is not one identified

‘correct’ way of teaching this music in a cross-cultural setting, and indeed this must reflect the many variables in a cross-cultural learning environment. Nevertheless, there should be clear music-based objectives for the lessons, to ensure that participants are striving towards musical and cultural authenticity, however adaptive the pedagogy may be. These objectives should be made clear to the students, accompanied by an explanation of how and why the music will be taught. Although there must be room for flexibility in the teaching approach to accommodate emerging differences of learning styles in students, this process may encourage deeper reflection and understanding of both cultural values and culturally based music conceptualization, even in students for whom the motivation is primarily experiential.

Implications for Adult Cross-Cultural Music Education

With an increase in cross-cultural group classes, further training relating to definitive strategies for assisting adult learners is needed. Students in community drum classes represent a wide range of musical, cultural and educational backgrounds, with individual differences highlighted more than in the traditional school classroom. With shifting attendance, the teacher cannot attempt to cater for every individual difference in every lesson. Therefore strategies for encouraging students’ self-teaching must be developed.

The literature states that self-directed learning is both a defining characteristic and a goal of adult education (Coffman, 2002; Dunbar-Hall, 2004; Gates, 1991). In the observed classes in this study, an important strategy for developing understanding of rhythms was to encourage kinaesthetic, visceral learning to occur in class, so that, with the music ‘anchored’ in the body, students could analyse the rhythms and practise after class, and an individualised cerebral understanding could occur.

This study found however, that teachers did not always reveal this style of learning to their students. Students who discussed self-directed learning were all experienced music students. It is possible that self-directed learning is only applicable for those students who can work meta-cognitively and have a thorough knowledge of how they understand music already. However, teachers can address the issues of meta-

cognition and practice during classes to their students, and this may encourage beginner students to engage in self-directed learning earlier, and to appreciate traditional kinaesthetic learning of the drumming in class.

Conclusion

Leung (1999) examined the negative aspects of using Western teaching methods in teaching non-Western music in her study of the concept approach that the NSW school curriculum employs. This study similarly found discomforting references to the measured aspects of 'duration' (one of six musical concepts in the NSW curriculum) being used to learn West-African 'rhythm'. It is questionable whether the ingrained sense of measurement in Western music education is an advantage or disadvantage when learning non-Western music. Here the interface between efficiency of learning and depth of understanding music conceptually comes to a crossroads.

Perhaps a more well-rounded pedagogy for classrooms is needed to introduce students to other ways of learning and teaching in more than just a superficial level, allowing flexibility when confronted with learning different musics. Such pedagogy might entail an on-going program of music from a chosen culture which is implemented over the full six years of high school for elective music students. Traditional methods of teaching and learning could be employed, and varying references to such methods and depths of understanding made while learning through the music.

REFERENCES

- Abril, C. R. (2006). Learning outcomes of two approaches to multicultural music education. *International Journal of Music Education*, 24(1), 30-42.
- Addo, A. O. (1997). Children's idiomatic expressions of cultural knowledge. *International Journal of Music Education*, 30, 15-25.
- Agawu, K. (2003). Defining and interpreting African music. In A. Herbst, M. Nzewi & K. Agawu (Eds.), *Musical Arts in Africa: Theory, practice and education*. Pretoria: Unisa Press.
- Agordoh, A.A. (2005). *African music: Traditional and contemporary*. New York: Nova Science Publishers, Inc.
- Anku, W. (1998). Teaching creative dynamics of African drumming: A cross-cultural teaching approach. In B. R. Lundquist & C. K. Szego (Eds.), *Music of the world's cultures: A source book for music educators*. Reading, UK: International Society for Music Education.
- Burns, R. (1990). *Introduction to research methods in education*. Melbourne: Longman Cheshire.
- Burns, R. (2000). *Introduction to research methods* (4th ed.). Frenches Forest, NSW: Pearson Education Australia.
- Burns, L. (2001). *The transmission of Ghanaian music by Abdul Adams in Calgary, Alberta, Canada: Teaching and learning Kpanlogo of the Ga and Adowa of the Ashanti as social expression*. Unpublished Masters, University of Calgary, Alberta.
- Campbell, P.S. (1991). *Lessons from the World: A cross-cultural guide to music teaching and learning*. New York: Schirmer Books.
- Campbell, P. S. (2003). Ethnomusicology and music education: cross roads for knowing music, education and culture. *Research Studies in Music Education*, 19.
- Campbell, P. S. (2005). Local musics, global issues. In P. S. Campbell, J. Drummond, P. Dunbar-Hall, K. Howard, H. Schippers & T. Wiggins (Eds.), *Cultural Diversity in Music Education: Directions and challenges for the 21st century*. Brisbane: Australian Academic Press.
- Campbell, P.S., Drummond, J., Dunbar-Hall, P., Howard, K., Schippers, H. & Wiggins, T. (Eds). *Cultural diversity in music education: directions and challenges for the 21st century*. (2005). Brisbane: Australian Academic Press.
- Charry, E. (2000). *Mande Music: Traditional and modern music of the Maninka and Mandinka of Western Africa*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.
- Chernoff, J. M. (1979). *African rhythm and African sensibility*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Coffman, D. D. (2002). Adult education. In R. Colwell & C. Richardson (Eds.), *The new handbook of research on music teaching and learning*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Cohen, L. and Manion, L. (1994). *Research Methods in Education*. London: Routledge.
- Denscombe, M. (1998). *The Good Research Guide: For small-scale social research projects*. Buckingham: Open University Press.
- Denzin, N. (1970). *The Research Act in Sociology: A Theoretical Introduction to Sociological Method*. London: The Butterworth Group.
- Dunbar-Hall, P. (2006). An investigation of strategies developed by music learners in a cross-cultural setting. *Research Studies in Music Education*, 26, 63-70.

- Dunbar-Hall, P., & Adnyana, I. W. T. (2004). Expectations and outcomes of intercultural music education: A case study in teaching and learning a Balinese *gamelan* instrument. *Australian Association of Research in Music Education* (Proceedings of the XXVIth Annual Conference 25-28 September 2004), 144-150.
- Edwards, K. (1998). Multicultural music instruction in the elementary school: What can be achieved? *Bulletin of the Council for Research in Music Education* 138(Fall, 1998), 62-82.
- Fontana, A. and Frey, J. (2000). The Interview: From structured questions to negotiated text. In N. Denzin & Y. Lincoln (Eds) *Handbook of Qualitative Research* (pp.645-673). Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.
- Gates, J. T. (1991). Music participation: theory, research, and policy. *Bulletin for the Council for Research in Music education* (109), 1-35.
- Green, L. (2001). *How popular musicians learn: A way ahead for music education*. Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing.
- Hammersley, M., & Atkinson, P. (1995). *Ethnography: Principles in practice* (2nd ed.). London: Tavistock.
- Klopper, C. (2005). Honouring and deriving the wealth of knowledge offered by mother music in Africa. In P. S. Campbell, J. Drummond, P. Dunbar-Hall, K. Howard, H. Schippers & T. Wiggins (Eds.), *Cultural Diversity in Music Education: Directions and challenges for the 21st century* (pp. 161-171). Brisbane: Australian Academic Press.
- Knight, R. (1984). The style of Mandinka music: A study in extracting theory from practice. *Selected reports in Ethnomusicology: Studies in African Music*, 5, 3-66.
- Kwami, R. M. (2005). Indigenous African music in a relocated context: A case study. In A. Herbst (Ed.), *Emerging solutions for musical arts education in Africa*. Cape Town: African Minds.
- Leung, T. (1999). *A critique of the concept-based approach to world music education in New South Wales and an exploration of alternative models*. Unpublished Honours, The University of Sydney, Sydney.
- Locke, D. (1990). *Drum damba: Talking drum lessons*. Crown Point, IN: White Cliffs Media Company.
- Locke, D. (2004). The African ensemble in America: Contradictions and possibilities. In T. Solis (Ed.), *Performing Ethnomusicology: Teaching and Representation in World Music Ensembles*. (pp. 168-188). Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Lundquist, B. R. (1998). A music education perspective. In B. R. Lundquist & C. K. Szego (Eds.), *Musics of the world's cultures: A source book for music educators* (pp. 38-47). Reading: International Society for Music Education.
- Lundquist, B. R. (2002). Music, culture, curriculum and instruction. In R. Colwell & C. Richardson (Eds.), *The new handbook of research on music teaching and learning: A project of the Music Educators National Conference* (pp. 626-647). New York: Oxford University Press.
- McKoy, C. (2004). Effects of instructional approach on preferences for an untaught selection of indigenous folk music of Ghana. *Bulletin of the Council for Research in Music Education*, Winter (159), 33-45.
- Merriam, A. P. (1964). *The anthropology of music*. Chicago: North-Western University Press.

- New, L. H. (1983). Progressive western methods and traditional African methods of teaching Music - A comparison. *International Journal of Music Education*, 1(1), 25-29.
- Nzewi, M. (2003). Acquiring knowledge of the musical arts in traditional society. In A. Herbst, M. Nzewi & K. Agawu (Eds.), *Musical arts in Africa: Theory, practice and education*. Pretoria: Unisa Press.
- Pembroke, R. G., & Robinson, C. R. (1997). The effect of mode of instruction and instrument authenticity on children's attitudes, information recall, and performance skill for music from Ghana. *Bulletin for the Council for Research in Music Education*, 133(summer, 1997), 115-120.
- Reimer, B. (Ed.) (2002). *World musics and music education: Facing the Issues*. (2002). Reston, VA: MENC - The National Association for Music Education.
- Rice, T. (1996). Traditional and modern methods of learning and teaching music in Bulgaria. *Research studies in Music Education* (7), 1-13.
- Schippers, H. (2000). Designing the intercultural music education of the future: the development of a world music centre in Portugal. *International Journal of Music Education*, 35, 59-62.
- Schippers, H. (2005). Taking distance and getting up close: The seven-continuum transmission model (SCTM). In P. S. Campbell, J. Drummond, P. Dunbar-Hall, K. Howard, H. Schippers & T. Wiggins (Eds.), *Cultural diversity in music education: directions and challenges for the 21st century* (pp. 29-34). Brisbane: Australian Academic Press.
- Solis, T. (2004a). Dual discourse in Arab music pedagogy: Interview with Ali Jihad Racy. In T. Solis (Ed.), *Performing Ethnomusicology: Teaching and Representation in World Music Ensembles*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Solis, T. (2004b). Teaching what cannot be taught: An optimistic overview. In T. Solis (Ed.), *Performing Ethnomusicology: Teaching and Representation in World Music Ensembles*. (pp. 1-18). Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Stake, R. (2000). Case Studies. In N. Denzin & Y. Lincoln (Eds) *Handbook of Qualitative Research* (pp.435-455). Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.
- Strauss, A. L., & Corbin, J. (1998). *Basics of qualitative research*. Thousand Oaks, CA.: Sage.
- Szego, C. K. (2002). Music transmission and learning: A conspectus of ethnographic research in ethnomusicology and music education. In R. Colwell & C. Richardson (Eds.), *The new handbook of research on music teaching and learning: A project of the Music Educators National Conference* (pp. 707-729). New York: Oxford University Press.
- Tedlock, B. (2000). Ethnography and Ethnographic Representation. In N. Denzin & Y. Lincoln (Eds) *Handbook of Qualitative Research* (pp.455-487). Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.
- Trimillos, R. D. (2004). The ethnomusicology ensemble. In T. Solis (Ed.), *Performing Ethnomusicology: Teaching and Representation in World Music Ensembles*. (pp. 20-51). Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Tuckman, B. (1978). *Conducting Educational Research*. New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Inc.

MAP OF AFRICAN LOCATIONS DISCUSSED IN THIS THESIS¹



¹ Image downloaded on 10/12/07 from: <http://www.cnmat.berkeley.edu/~ladzekpo/maps.html>

APPENDIX A: PARTICIPANT INFORMATION STATEMENT



The University of Sydney
**SYDNEY CONSERVATORIUM
OF MUSIC**



PARTICIPANT INFORMATION STATEMENT
Research Project

A cross-cultural study of the teaching and learning of West-African drumming in Australian community settings.

The study is about the methods being used to teach West-African music in community drumming groups in Australia. The study will look at the ideas teachers and students have about what types of methods should be used. This study also seeks to understand the different motivations behind the teaching and learning of West-African drumming.

The study is being conducted by Laura Corney, a student at the Sydney Conservatorium of Music, and will form the basis for the degree of Bachelor of Music Education (Music Education) (Hons) at The University of Sydney under the supervision of Dr. Kathryn Marsh, Chair of Music Education.

The study involves Laura observing and participating in drumming lessons and other musical activities. While taking part in the lessons as a normal student, Laura will videotape the lessons by placing a camera at the back of the room. The study also involves interviewing the teachers of the drumming group, and also several students, and recording these interviews by either video or audio tape. The study may also involve taking still photographs of the physical lay-out of the lesson.

The study will take place over a number of approximately 5 - 10 lessons. One interview with each participant will take place after the lesson and will last approximately 20 - 30 minutes.

Being in this study is completely voluntary - you are not under any obligation to consent. If you decide to participate, you are free to withdraw your consent and to discontinue your participation at any time without prejudice. If you do not wish to be videotaped or mentioned in any of the research notes, a camera angle will be used to ensure you will not be filmed, and Laura will not take notes on your involvement in the class.

All aspects of the study, including results, will be strictly confidential and only the researchers will have access to information on participants. A report of the study may be submitted for publication, but individual participants will not be identifiable in such a report.

The study may be beneficial to the participants in that they may gain a further understanding of their own attitudes towards teaching and learning West-African music, and be provided with the opportunity to articulate their ideas and thoughts on aspects of this community ensemble.

Although the results and materials of the study will be kept strictly confidential by the researcher, participants are free to mention their involvement in or knowledge of the study to anyone they choose, if they wish to do so.

When you have read this information, Laura Corney will discuss it with you further and answer any questions you may have. If you would like to know more at any stage, please feel free to contact Kathryn Marsh on [9351 1333](tel:93511333) or Laura Corney by email (lcor0380@usyd.edu.au).

Thank you very much for your time.

Any person with concerns or complaints about the conduct of a research study can contact the Senior Ethics Officer, Ethics Administration, University of Sydney on (02) 9351 4811 (Telephone); (02) 9351 6706 (Facsimile) or gbriody@usyd.edu.au (Email).

This information sheet is for you to keep

Page 1 of 1

Postal Address
Building C41
The University of Sydney NSW 2006

Telephone: +61 2 9351 2222
Facsimile: +61 2 9351 1287
<http://www.music.usyd.edu.au>

APPENDIX B: PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM



The University of Sydney
**SYDNEY CONSERVATORIUM
OF MUSIC**



PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM

I, give consent to my participation in the research project
Name (please print)

TITLE: A cross-cultural study of the teaching and learning of West-African drumming in Australian community settings.

In giving my consent I acknowledge that:

1. The procedures required for the project and the time involved have been explained to me, and any questions I have about the project have been answered to my satisfaction.
2. I have read the Participant Information Statement and have been given the opportunity to discuss the information and my involvement in the project with the researcher/s.
3. I understand that I can withdraw from the study at any time, without affecting my relationship with the researcher(s) now or in the future.
4. I understand that my involvement is strictly confidential and no information about me will be used in any way that reveals my identity.

Signed:

Name:

Date:

Any person with concerns or complaints about the conduct of a research study can contact the Senior Ethics Officer, Ethics Administration, University of Sydney on (02) 9351 4811 (Telephone); (02) 9351 6706 (Facsimile) or gbriody@usyd.edu.au (Email).

APPENDIX C: LETTER OF ETHICS APPROVAL



The University of Sydney

NSW 2006 Australia

Human Research Ethics Committee

www.usyd.edu.au/ethics/human

Senior Ethics Officer:

Gail Briody

Telephone: (02) 9351 4811

Facsimile: (02) 9351 6706

Email: gbriody@usyd.edu.au

Rooms L4.14 & L4.13 Main Quadrangle A14

Human Secretariat

Telephone: (02) 9036 9309

(02) 9036 9308

Facsimile: (02) 9036 9310

Email: bdeleon@usyd.edu.au

11 December 2006

Mr James M Renwick
Sydney Conservatorium of Music
Building C41
The University of Sydney

COPY

Dear Mr Renwick

Title: *A cross-cultural study of the teaching and learning of West-African drumming in Australian community settings*

Your ethics application was considered at the Executive Committee meeting of the University of Sydney Human Research Ethics Committee.

Approval of this project has been deferred for the following reasons. The Committee will give the application further executive consideration when these concerns have been addressed. **Please provide one (1) original of your response.**

- Section 1.4 – Provide your University of Sydney's telephone number.
- Section 1.4 – Miss Corney should provide her University of Sydney's email address.
- Section 3.1(a) – Clarify whether the age range "18-70 years" truly reflects the ages of participants who will be recruited for this study i.e. teachers and students.
- Section 7.3 – If the Participant Information Statement and Consent Form are translated a copy of the translations together with a Statutory Declaration should be provided to the Committee indicating that all translations were accurate.
- Amendments to the Participant Information Statement:
 - The letterhead should include additional details i.e. address, office contact telephone number, facsimile number.
 - Page 1 of 1, Paragraph 9:
 - Provide your University of Sydney's telephone number.
 - Provide Miss Corney's University of Sydney's email address.
 - Remove Miss Corney's home telephone number.

The above concerns should be addressed in dot point form referring to the corresponding points above. If the Committee has requested amendments to particular questions in the application form, submit the relevant pages and underline the changes. DO NOT re-submit the entire application.

If the Committee has requested that you amend any additional documents, such as the Participant Information Statement or Consent Form. You are asked to underline these changes to assist the Committee's checking of the amended documents.

Your reply should be sent to the Ethics Office, Human Research Ethics Committee, Room L4.13, Main Quadrangle A14.

Please note that if the Ethics Office does not receive a response from you within three months, the application will be withdrawn and a new application will be required.

Yours sincerely



**Associate Professor J D Watson
Chairman
Human Research Ethics Committee**

cc: Miss Laura Corney, P O Box 383, Eastwood NSW 2122

APPENDIX D: SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

Teacher

- **Current Musical Situation**
 - What sort of musical activities are you involved with these days? (Such as teaching, playing, watching, listening...)
 - What styles do you play, listen to, and teach (traditional West-African, fusion, etc)
 - What inspired or motivated you to start teaching West-African drumming?
 - How long have you been teaching for?

- **Music Education Background**
 - When did you start learning music?
 - Where and with whom did you learn? (Family, at school, in groups with friends, individually, band)
 - What were your lessons like growing up? How long did lessons go for? Were they casual or formal? What sort of music did you play?
 - Where and when did you start learning African music? How were you taught? If you had a teacher, what methods were used?
 - *For Madou and Afotey*: Did you teach in Guinea/ Ghana? Who did you teach, and how? Did you teach the same way you were taught?
 - Has the way you learnt influenced the way you teach music now?
 - When did you move to Australia? Why did you move? What were your expectations?

- **Current Teaching Situation**
 - What do you think about when you organise group lessons?
 - Do you teach the same way or differently from lessons in Guinea / Ghana?
 - What would you like your students to know or understand the most? What are your aims for the lessons?
 - Are there any specific methods for teaching certain things that you've found helpful when teaching students who haven't played much West-African music before?
 - Why have you chosen the methods of teaching that you have?
 - How do you communicate with your students?
 - What goes through your mind when a student is making an error, or not playing properly? When and why do you decide to correct them?
 - Do you notice a difference in the techniques you use compared to other teachers of the same music?
 - *For Madou and Afotey*: You often count 1, 2, 3, 4. Do you find that it helps students? Have you had to learn more about Western music education? Has this been gradual or purposeful?

Student

▪ **Current Musical Situation**

- What sort of musical activities are you involved with at the moment?
- What styles of music do you enjoy playing, listening to, watching, etc?
- When and where did you start learning West-African drumming?
- What inspired or motivated you to start learning West-African drumming?
- Did you know much about how the lessons would be held before you decided to join? (Group setting, playing level, type of music learnt, etc)

▪ **Music Education Background**

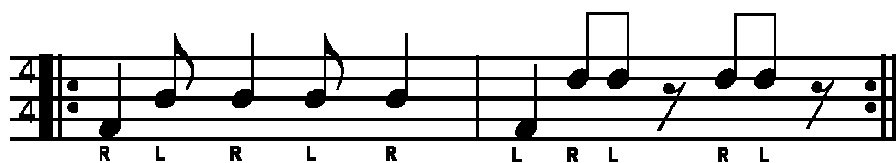
- Have you had previous experience in learning a musical instrument before? (What instrument, for how long was it learnt, in what context)
- What style of music did you play on this instrument?
- What did you enjoy or dislike from your previous music training? Has this influenced your decision to join this drumming ensemble?

▪ **Current Learning Situation**

- Do you think about the way that you learn this type of music?
- In what ways do you think you learn best?
- Do you have any special techniques which help you learn better (recording, notation, playing with others, listening only first, etc).
- Are there certain teaching methods which help you to learn a specific type of style, drum pattern or technique better?
- Why do you think some methods of teaching work better for you than others?
- Have you ever had any frustrating experiences in learning?
- How do you communicate your questions with the teacher?

APPENDIX E: DJEMBE NOTATION

Rhythm 1) notated using Modified Western Notation¹



Modified Western Notation example taken from my participant observation journal:

① 1 - 2 - 3 - 4

②

③

DUN DUN

BASS TONE SLAP

BASS Left side small Right side small

CALL
"1, 2, 3"

Flam

¹ <http://www.drums.org/djembefaq/v5d.htm>

Western Notation variation using 2 staves and visual imagery of drums:



Simple multi-part notation with reference to bass, tone, slap and hand movement²:

Part 1	b t t t b . s .
Part 2	b . . b b . t t b . . . t t t t
Part 3	s . s s . s t t
Hand movement	r l r l r l r l

Rhythm 1) using the Gun Dun Method with Rests Noted³

1 e & a 2 e & a 3 e & a 4 e & a
 Gn - Do Go - Do Go - Dn - Pa Ta - Pa Ta -

Rhythm 1) using the Gun Dun Method with Timing

1	.	*	.	2	.	*	.	3	.	*	.	4	.	*	.
G	-	d	g	-	d	g	-	D	-	P	T	-	P	T	-

² <http://www.silvercircle.org/yankadi/notation.htm>

³ <http://www.drums.org/djembefaq/v5d.htm>

APPENDIX F: GLOSSARY OF TERMS

<i>affinity group:</i>	“Charmed circles of like-minded music-makers drawn magnetically to a certain genre that creates strong expressive bonding.” ⁴
<i>axtase:</i>	Gourd rattle, covered with a net of small shells or seeds.
<i>balafon:</i>	Wooden-keyed percussion idiophone, similar to the xylophone. Sound is produced by striking the tuned keys with two padded sticks. The balafon usually has around 20 keys, and is tuned to a tetratonic, pentatonic or heptatonic scale.
<i>bass:</i>	The lowest of the three main sounds produced on a djembe or kpanlogo. The bass sound is created with a slightly curved palm hitting the centre of the djembe, and is generally the easiest sound to make on the hand drums.
<i>community group:</i>	A group which is formed outside formal learning institutions for the purposes of teaching, learning, and social exchange.
<i>djembe:</i>	West-African drum played with both bare hands. Djembes are shaped like a funnel with a thick spout and are approximately 60 cm tall with a circular goatskin head 30–38 cm in diameter. The drumskin is mounted with a high degree of tension, creating a very bright timbre.
<i>doundoun:</i>	Also referred to as the <i>dundun</i> , this is a generic name for a family of West-African bass drums in Mande drum ensembles. The doundoun is made from metal cylindrical containers, covered on both sides by animal skin and is played standing using sticks.
<i>gamelan:</i>	A music ensemble of Java or Bali, made up of a variety of percussion instruments such as gongs, chimes, metallophones, xylophones and drums.
<i>gangsa:</i>	A metallophone used in Balinese and Javanese gamelans.
<i>kenkeni:</i>	Similar to the doundoun, but smaller in size and thus higher pitched. The kenkeni often has a metal bell attached to it so the player can play two different rhythms and sounds simultaneously. It often ‘holds the rhythm together’ with simple patterns.
<i>kora:</i>	West-African harp with a mellow tone often used to accompany songs, played and sung by Mande ‘jelis’ or griots. It is made from half of a hollowed calabash body covered with

⁴ Defined by Slobin, M. (1993). *Subcultural sounds: Micromusics of the West*. Hanover: Wesleyan University Press. (p.98).

sheep or goat skin. Attached to the body is a metre-long piece of wood, from which twenty-two strings are suspended in tension across a bridge.

- kpanlogo:* A Ghanaian drum originating from the Ga people, which is similar in shape to a conga, and is carved from a single piece of wood. The drumhead is typically made from thick goat skin tightened and easily tuned through the use of six wooden pegs. The kpanlogo come in various sizes and may be played with sticks, pegs, or bare hands, and produces a mellower tone than the djembe.
- slap:* The highest pitched and brightest sound produced on the djembe or kpanlogo. To produce a slap sound, the very edge of the padded part of the hand where the fingers join the palm should hit the rim of the drum. The fingers naturally spread out slightly when they hit the edge.
- tone:* One of the three main sounds played on the djembe. The tone is played with the underside of your fingers, and all of the fingers should hit the skin flat at the same time.

APPENDIX G: ADDITIONAL BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

Afotey

Afotey is a master drummer, dancer, singer and percussionist from Ghana, West Africa. As a child Afotey was disciplined in traditional African drumming and dancing. He has worked with Ghana's national cultural troupe The Dance Factory, as well as other prominent percussion groups including The Kusun Ensemble. In 2001 Afotey formed Wala, a Ghanaian drum and dance group and over the following years Wala performed extensively across Australia, visiting schools in almost every state and teaching workshops to all levels of percussion students. Afotey is currently performing in NSW schools and corporate team building events in Sydney and Melbourne. He funds a teenage drum and dance group in Ghana providing a group of talented young performers with a rigorous education in traditional drum and dance. Afotey and another percussion teacher from Melbourne have established Rhythm Power, an annual drum and dance workshop in Ghana. The month long workshop also provides much sought after employment opportunities for an extended local community. Afotey also gives weekly classes in traditional drum and dance in Sydney.

Madou

Madou was born in Guinea, West Africa in a village called Bourramya-Koubya. This village is a few hours north of the capital, Conakry. Madou was born in a griot family, and started to play at the age of 5 years old and has been surrounded by music throughout his life. He started teaching as a young teenager, and was a member of the international acclaimed "Percussion de Guinée" and other National Ballet Ensembles based in Conakry. Madou moved to Sydney in 1998 and holds regular classes and workshops in drum and dance. He founded and teaches and performs in "Djembe Kan" schools throughout Australia, New Zealand, Europe and Japan. Madou has appointed djembe instructors to teach the traditional rhythms as played in Guinea. He also takes students back to Guinea every year to study traditional drum and dance as an introduction to Guinean culture.