Teaching singing in Sydney government schools

D. Hughes

A thesis submitted in fulfillment of the requirements of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

University of Western Sydney
2007
This thesis is dedicated to the teachers who participated in this study. I am extremely appreciative of your time and efforts in completing detailed questionnaires and in engaging in the interview process which included lengthy transcript verifications.
Acknowledgements

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I am indebted to the University of Western Sydney for the ongoing commitment I received throughout my candidature. I am also grateful for the interest and support given by NSW Department of Education and Training, Planning and Innovation, particularly by Dr Rob Stevens, in conducting this research.

Finally, I wish to thank my family - Paul, Annie and Lucy - for their loyalty, care and collective sense of humour when dealing with their preoccupied and, at times, domestically challenged wife and mother. Thank you for keeping me grounded.
Statement of Authentication

The work presented in this thesis is, to the best of my knowledge and belief, original except as acknowledged in the text. I hereby declare that I have not submitted this material, either in full or in part, for a degree at this or any other institution.

SIGNED___________________________________
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<td>AMEB</td>
<td>Australian Music Examination Board</td>
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<td>BCC</td>
<td>blind carbon copy</td>
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<td>BOS</td>
<td>Board of Studies</td>
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<td>CD</td>
<td>compact disc</td>
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<td>COG</td>
<td>Connected Outcome Group</td>
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<td>EEO</td>
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<td>KLA</td>
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<td>New South Wales</td>
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<td>NSW DET</td>
<td>NSW Department of Education and Training</td>
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<td>PGT</td>
<td>Primary Generalist (Classroom) Teacher</td>
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<td>PST</td>
<td>Primary Specialist Teacher</td>
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<td>SMT</td>
<td>Secondary (Classroom) Music Teacher</td>
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<td>SPSS</td>
<td>Statistical Package for the Social Sciences</td>
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<td>TAFE</td>
<td>Technical and Further Education</td>
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<td>University of Western Sydney</td>
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In New South Wales education, music is a mandated primary school subject incorporated in the key learning area of Creative Arts. In secondary education, music is typically a mandatory Stage 4 subject and an elective subject choice in Stages 5 and 6. School music syllabuses include singing as a performance experience. The methodology and appropriateness of teaching children and adolescents to sing are issues expressed in the literature. Research and scientific based understanding of the voice clearly indicate that care should be taken when teaching singing to developing voices. These reasons, together with the presumption that all students will sing at some stage during their schooling, invoke the primary research questions of “who teaches school singing?”, “what types of school singing are taught?”, “how is school singing taught?” and “why is school singing taught?”. Through an investigation and analysis of teacher perspectives, this study addresses these questions in relation to teaching singing in Sydney government schools.

The research is comprised of two parts. Part 1 was a broad-based questionnaire approach that generated qualitative and quantitative data. By encompassing primary and secondary classroom and/or choir teachers (127 respondents), school singing within a continuum of learning was investigated. Part 2 extended the format and focus of Part 1 by undertaking qualitative in-depth interviews of teachers (10 participants) sampled to investigate a range of key issues and school singing cultures.

The study found that school singing at primary level was predominantly taught by generalist classroom teachers. A range of primary specialist teachers - dedicated music and/or choir specialist teachers, designated music and/or singing specialist teachers and dedicated performing arts specialist teachers – was identified as also teaching school singing activities. Secondary classroom music teachers were those found to teach, either solely or in conjunction with singing tutors, secondary school singing.

The study determined that school singing was an activity occurring in conjunction with music syllabuses (syllabus singing), in relation to other syllabuses (co-syllabus singing) and irrespective of syllabus connections (non-syllabus singing). In addition, ancillary-syllabus singing linked singing activities occurring outside the music classroom to
syllabus singing within the music classroom. Co-syllabus singing was identified as being either thematic (illustrating a topic area) or supplementary (reinforcing learning in a non-musical area). In addition to defining the types of school singing in relation to both primary and secondary syllabuses, there was evidence of a dichotomy in school singing between teaching singing (formal singing) and the teaching of, or inclusion of, singing activities (informal singing).

Determining whether students were taught a song or taught how to sing (it) in Sydney government schools, formed one of the major areas of impetus and focus for the study. After identifying 19 components present in respondent data at elemental or proficient levels, comparison and inclusion rates of teaching components were used to determine five levels of respondent teaching approaches - sing-along, song, song dominant, functional and developmental. Descriptive statistics and univariate statistical analysis of components revealed that component inclusion increased as the level of teaching approach increased. Independent-sample t-tests showed that there were significant differences between approaches to teaching school singing and the types of teachers who teach school singing (for example between specialist/non-specialist teachers).

Contributory factors of school singing were identified as support for school singing, objectives of school singing, aptitude for school singing and constraints that restricted school singing. The types of school singing found their origins in the purposes of the singing activities. In some cases, the school culture also determined the types and purposes of school singing. Where school singing was established within the school culture, singing activities were reported as being well supported and the school culture was such that it encouraged or even enabled singing activities to occur.

Conclusions drawn from the research findings have implications for the pre-service and in-service training of teachers, for those responsible for school singing activities and for those writing curriculum, curriculum related documents and teaching resources.
Abstract

In New South Wales education, music is a mandated primary school subject incorporated in the key learning area of Creative Arts. In secondary education, music is typically a mandatory Stage 4 subject and an elective subject choice in Stages 5 and 6. School music syllabuses include singing as a performance experience. The methodology and appropriateness of teaching children and adolescents to sing are issues expressed in the literature. Research and scientific based understanding of the voice clearly indicate that care should be taken when teaching singing to developing voices. These reasons, together with the presumption that all students will sing at some stage during their schooling, invoke the primary research questions of “who teaches school singing?”, “what types of school singing are taught?”, “how is school singing taught?” and “why is school singing taught?”. Through an investigation and analysis of teacher perspectives, this study addresses these questions in relation to teaching singing in Sydney government schools.

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syllabus singing within the music classroom. Co-syllabus singing was identified as being either thematic (illustrating a topic area) or supplementary (reinforcing learning in a non-musical area). In addition to defining the types of school singing in relation to both primary and secondary syllabuses, there was evidence of a dichotomy in school singing between teaching singing (formal singing) and the teaching of, or inclusion of, singing activities (informal singing).

Determining whether students were taught a song or taught how to sing (it) in Sydney government schools, formed one of the major areas of impetus and focus for the study. After identifying 19 components present in respondent data at elemental or proficient levels, comparison and inclusion rates of teaching components were used to determine five levels of respondent teaching approaches - sing-along, song, song dominant, functional and developmental. Descriptive statistics and univariate statistical analysis of components revealed that component inclusion increased as the level of teaching approach increased. Independent-sample t-tests showed that there were significant differences between approaches to teaching school singing and the types of teachers who teach school singing (for example between specialist/non-specialist teachers).

Contributory factors of school singing were identified as support for school singing, objectives of school singing, aptitude for school singing and constraints that restricted school singing. The types of school singing found their origins in the purposes of the singing activities. In some cases, the school culture also determined the types and purposes of school singing. Where school singing was established within the school culture, singing activities were reported as being well supported and the school culture was such that it encouraged or even enabled singing activities to occur.

Conclusions drawn from the research findings have implications for the pre-service and in-service training of teachers, for those responsible for school singing activities and for those writing curriculum, curriculum related documents and teaching resources.
Chapter 1: Research Aims and Scope of Study

"Many of these questions have never been asked of me before! Just in time, [I am] approaching [my] use by date!"

PST [Ch] Respondent 95

1.1 Introduction

This study seeks to determine who teaches singing, the types of singing, the methods used to teach singing and the reasons as to why singing occurs, in Sydney government schools\(^1\). Traditionally, school singing has been an integral part of music education in Sydney\(^2\) schools. During the nineteenth century, the subjects of “music”, “vocal music” and “singing” were synonymous in New South Wales (NSW) education (Stevens, 1978, p.2). The ensuing development and influence of media broadcasting and the availability of musical instruments brought about the inclusion of instrumental music and additional musical activities into NSW school music syllabuses. The implemented reality of current school singing practices and their relevance in a musically complex milieu is yet to be determined and is addressed in this study.

The complexity has further increased with syllabus related singing in NSW primary education being included in the subject of music within the Creative and Practical Arts\(^3\) Key Learning Area\(^4\) (KLA) collective of dance, drama, music and visual arts. The current Creative Arts syllabus adds the potential for school singing to be an integrated

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\(^1\) The New South Wales (NSW) State Government typically provides free school education to NSW residents through the NSW Department of Education and Training (DET). This study encompasses government schools located in the NSW DET metropolitan Sydney regions.

\(^2\) Sydney is the capital city of the Australian state of NSW.

\(^3\) Creative and Practical Arts was established in primary education in 2000 with the implementation of the Board of Studies NSW (BOS NSW) Creative Arts K-6 Syllabus (2000a).

\(^4\) There are six Key Learning Areas: English; Mathematics; Science and Technology; Personal Development, Health and Physical Education; Human Society and its Environment; Creative and Practical Arts.
art form. With primary music being mandated\(^5\) by the Board of Studies (BOS)\(^6\) NSW under this Creative Arts banner, added complexity occurs as time-tableing, classroom programming and delivery are at the discretion of individual schools and teachers\(^7\). In this context, and as NSW Department of Education and Training (DET) music consultants\(^8\) no longer provide syllabus support at the classroom level, research on the implementation of Music within the Creative Arts K-6\(^9\) Syllabus is also warranted (Jones, 2003). Primary syllabus and non-syllabus school singing is often the responsibility of the generalist classroom teacher as not all primary schools have access to specialist music and/or choir teachers. The responsibility of appointing specialist teachers lies primarily with individual school principals. Such appointments may reflect the desire to teach specialist areas at an optimum level or may equally reflect the desire to adequately resource schools.

In NSW secondary education, music is currently a mandated Stage 4 subject usually for Years 7 and 8\(^10\), and is an elective subject for Stage 5 (Year 8 and 9) and Stage 6 (Year 11 and 12). In elective music, particularly in Stage 6 Music\(^11\), secondary students may choose the singing voice as an instrument for study\(^12\). Some NSW government schools may employ peripatetic singing teachers, however secondary music teachers

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\(^6\) The Board of Studies NSW (BOS NSW), established in 1990, develops and implements educational policies and practices for NSW government and non-government schools. It is the organisation responsible for developing syllabuses from Kindergarten to Year 12. (Board of Studies NSW (n.d. b). *What is the Board of Studies NSW?* Retrieved January 14, 2007, from http://www.boardofstudies.nsw.edu.au/contacts.index.html)

\(^7\) The *NSW Primary Curriculum Foundation Statements* (NSW BOS, 2005) suggests that 45% to 55% of the available time for teaching be prioritized for Literacy and Numeracy (p.12). The *Foundation Statements* a balance of 25% to 35% of available teaching time to span the additional four KLAs of which Creative and Practical Arts is one component; music being one of four Creative Arts components.

\(^8\) Until 2004, music consultants were employed by DET NSW (Jones, 2003) primarily to aid in the implementation and delivery of music within the primary *Creative Arts K-6 Syllabus* (BOS NSW, 2000a).

\(^9\) K-6 is Kindergarten to Years 6 primary education and encompasses Early Stage 1 (Kindergarten), Stage 1 (Years 1 and 2), Stage 2 (Years 4 and 5) and Stage 3 (Years 5 and 6).

\(^10\) *National Report on Trends in Music Education Provision in Australia* (Music Council of Australia, 2003), states that in lower secondary, usually in the first two secondary years, Years 7 and 8, students “should receive 100 indicative hours of music instruction in order to qualify for the Board of Studies NSW School Certificate by the end of their Year 10” (p.8).

\(^11\) Stage 6 Music Courses are the final music courses offered in secondary education and include Year 11 Preliminary and Year 12 Higher School Certificate Courses.

\(^12\) It is the researcher’s experience that at HSC level, it is not an uncommon practice for school music programs to rely on peripatetic or private studio teachers for vocal and instrumental tuition. This type of teaching is often external to the school and may occur without consultation from the school.
may primarily be responsible for both syllabus and non-syllabus secondary school singing.

A large part of the impetus of this study has stemmed from my own experiences as a peripatetic singing teacher\textsuperscript{13} of students in government and non-government schools where I have noted different approaches to singing activities and to the teaching of school singing. While many non-government schools have access to specialist music teachers and to peripatetic\textsuperscript{14} singing teachers, it has been my experience that teaching singing in Sydney government schools has predominantly been conducted by primary generalist classroom teachers and secondary classroom music teachers. I became interested in how singing was taught in these schools.

\textbf{1.2 Research Questions}

The methodology and appropriateness of teaching children\textsuperscript{15} and adolescents\textsuperscript{16} to sing are issues that have often been debated and are discussed in Chapter 2 of this thesis. For the young singer, there is a multiplicity of songs and choices of vocal styles, vocal tone and repertoire. Research and scientific understandings of the voice clearly indicate that care should be taken during the developmental stages of young voices. The appropriateness of student singing, together with the presumption that all students will sing within their school environment at some stage during their schooling, asks that the following primary research questions and their sub-set questions be addressed:

1. Who teaches singing in Sydney government schools?

1.i Do primary generalist classroom teachers teach school singing?

1.ii Do primary specialist teachers teach school singing?

\textsuperscript{13} The researcher notes that she practices professionally as a singer and singing teacher under the name “Diana Hunter”.

\textsuperscript{14} Peripatetic is a term used to describe a casual specialist teacher who may teach at more than one school and/or in more than one location at a school; may be linked to a private teaching studio.

\textsuperscript{15} Children entering primary school in NSW are usually in their fifth year of age and as such complete Year 6 in their twelfth year of age. For these reasons, children in this study are primary aged students.

\textsuperscript{16} In Snapshots of Australian families with adolescents (2006), the government initiated Australian Institute of Family Studies describes adolescence as “a period of transition from childhood to adulthood” and issues facts about families with adolescent children described as those from 12 to 18 years. As students usually enter NSW secondary education in their thirteenth year and complete Year 12 in their eighteenth year, for the purposes of this study secondary school students are regarded as adolescents.
1.iii Do secondary music teachers teach school singing?
1.iv Do private singing teachers teach school singing?

2. What types of singing are taught in Sydney government schools?
2.i What school singing activities are offered to children and adolescents?
2.ii Do the types of school singing vary at different educational Stages?

3. How is singing taught in Sydney government schools?
3.i Are children and adolescents taught a song or are they taught how to sing?
3.ii When teaching primary and secondary school singing, are the developmental stages of child and adolescent voices considered?
3.iii Are there different approaches to and styles of teaching school singing?

4. Why is singing taught in Sydney government schools?
4.i What are the purposes of singing in schools?
4.ii Is school singing part of a K-12 continuum of learning in music?
4.iii Is school singing relevant in an educational environment?
4.iv Is school singing valued in an educational environment?

As primary research questions are addressed throughout this thesis, the question subsets will be posed and responded to, where relevant, in subsequent chapters.

1.3 Research Statement

Through an investigation and analysis of teacher perspectives, this study therefore aims to identify and analyse who is responsible for teaching singing, what types of singing occurs, how singing is taught and why singing is taught in Sydney government schools. School singing experiences may be the only singing experiences students ever have and in this context, determining the types of experiences afforded students is also relevant. Additionally, in an education system that aims to assist “students in their lifelong learning in the visual arts, music, drama and dance” (BOS NSW, 2000a, p.7), school learning experiences should provide students with skills to be active participants as well as “informed consumers” (BOS NSW, 2000a, p.7) of cultural life. As singing is
an activity included in the performing outcomes of the music syllabuses and may also be an activity unrelated to the syllabuses, an understanding of how school singing experiences occur provides insight into the learning experiences through which lifelong skills are to be acquired.

As one participant noted and as quoted at the beginning of this chapter, there is little research on the teaching of singing in NSW government schools. The separate entities of NSW government Primary and Secondary schools in Sydney somewhat precludes a sequential development instigated by the syllabus context of a “continuum of learning” (BOS NSW, 1999b, p.7; BOS NSW, 1999c, p.7; BOS NSW, 2003b, p.49) and to date, there have been no longitudinal studies researching school singing in either Sydney or NSW within this continuum context. By implementing a broad based approach across primary and secondary schools in Part 1 of this research, it is envisaged that an investigation of school singing within a continuum of musical learning is, at least in part, addressed.

Throughout the research, relevant, current educational issues and syllabuses have been considered as well as relevant historical music documents and research literature. Early in the 20th century, school inspectors lamented the poor progress of school singing (see Chapter 2.5.1, p.28), and issues pertaining to teacher expertise and the resulting outcomes have continued to be ongoing. However while teaching expertise has continued to be an issue, determining its relevance to teaching approaches of school singing in Sydney NSW government schools has previously not been documented.

1.4 Research Rationale

Through an investigation and analysis of the teaching of singing in Sydney NSW government schools, in both primary and secondary schools, it is envisaged that the study will have implications for the pre-service and in-service training of classroom teachers, of classroom music teachers, of teachers of school choirs and those responsible for school singing activities.

17 Within the four NSW DET Sydney Metropolitan regions, two Community Schools were identified as comprising both primary and secondary students.
1.5 Research Design

The study is comprised of two main parts. Part 1 takes a broad-based questionnaire approach that draws on the collective voice of primary and secondary teachers of classroom and/or choir singing. Part 2, the format and focus of which is informed largely by the findings of Part 1, involves semi-structured in-depth interviews of individual teachers.

1.6 Scope and Limitations of the Study

The scope of the study included Sydney NSW government schools\(^{18}\) that provided either primary education (Kindergarten to Year 6) or secondary education (Year 7 to Year 12). Sydney Community Schools that offered education from Kindergarten to Year 12 were included in the scope of the study. The study excluded the following types of Sydney NSW government schools:

- Separate Infants Schools\(^ {19} \)
- Schools for Specific Purposes\(^ {20} \)
- Distance Education Centres\(^ {21} \)
- Environment Education Centres\(^ {22} \)
- Saturday School of Community Languages\(^ {23} \)
- Secondary Intensive English Centres\(^ {24} \)
- Open High\(^ {25} \)

The study does not include government schools outside the four DET Sydney

\(^{18}\) For the purposes of this study, the term used for NSW government schools located in Sydney is “Sydney government schools”.

\(^{19}\) NSW DET (2004, p.57) Separate Infants Schools offer Early Stage 1 and Stage 1 education for Years K-2. Some Infants Schools also have a pre-school attached.

\(^{20}\) NSW DET (2004, p.55) Schools for Specific Purposes cater for specific students with a range of disabilities.

\(^{21}\) NSW DET (2004, p.30) Distance Education Centres offer support to students enrolled in distance education.

\(^{22}\) NSW DET (2004, p.30) Environment Education Centres complement teaching areas and are staffed by trained environmental educators.

\(^{23}\) NSW DET (2004, p.30) Saturday School of Languages offers language tuition to students wanting to study their family background language when the relevant language is not offered at the student’s school or TAFE College.

\(^{24}\) NSW DET (2004, p.35) Secondary Intensive English Centres offer intensive English language training to newly arrived high school aged students when English is not their first language.

\(^{25}\) NSW DET (2004, p.11) Open High assists students to extend their curriculum options through the production of learning materials. These learning materials assist Distance Education students and allow students transferring schools to maintain a continuity of study.
Metropolitan Regions as singing in regional NSW schools may have added implications of distance and availability of resources and as such warrant separate investigation.

1.7 Glossary of Terms

Several terms require context clarification of their specific usage in this study. Where appropriate, terms are described in the chapter in which they arise. However, several terms appear throughout the thesis:

ancillary-syllabus singing  school singing that is related in part to the BOS NSW music syllabuses but occurs outside the context of the music classroom

classroom teacher  a teacher who teaches a particular class (primary) or teaches a particular subject to a class (secondary)

developing voice  any voice that has not yet reached adult proportions and maturity

classical vocal music  repertoire that requires singing in a classical style; Western Art Music repertoire

contemporary vocal music  repertoire that requires singing and vocalising of contemporary popular music

co-syllabus singing  school singing that is related in part to one or more BOS NSW syllabuses; may be thematic singing or supplementary singing

music of a culture  music of specific ethnic groups

generalist  primary generalist classroom teacher
**government school**

A school where free education is provided by a state government.

**incidental singing**

Classroom singing that is teacher initiated, but is not related to any BOS NSW syllabus; types of non-syllabus singing are incidental.

**inclusive singing**

School singing that encourages and embodies all participants equally.

**non-selective singing**

School singing where participants have not been selected to sing.

**non-syllabus singing**

School singing that is not an integral part or a direct consequence of any BOS NSW syllabus; may be whole school singing.

**participant**

A teacher who participated in a Part 2 in-depth interview.

**primary education**

Kindergarten to Year 6; Early Stage 1 to Stage 3.

**primary schools**

NSW DET Public Schools.

**respondent**

A teacher who responded to the Part 1 questionnaire.

**secondary education**

Years 7 to 12; Stage 4 to Stage 6.

**secondary schools**

NSW DET High Schools.

**selective singing**

School singing in which participants have been selected to sing.

**specialist teacher**

Teacher of a particular subject.
spontaneous singing  school singing that is unprompted; naturally occurring

supplementary singing  school singing used as a support mechanism to reinforce learning in non-musical areas such as mathematics

syllabus\(^{26}\) singing  school singing that is an integral part or is a direct consequence of BOS NSW music syllabuses

thematic singing  school singing that brings singing activities into a non-musical subject such as history and is used to illustrate topic/s under study

topic health  optimum voice functioning; exclusion of risk factors

vocal music  singing repertoire; songs; may be for individual or group use; term used in BOS NSW music syllabuses

pedagogy  instruction in the art of any given musical instrument

voice anatomy  physical structure of the vocal mechanism

voice physiology  physical functioning of the vocal mechanism

whole school singing  school singing in which the entire school community participates

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\(^{26}\) As “syllabus” is a term used in Board of Studies NSW curriculum and curriculum related documents, and as this term represents courses of learning, the use of syllabus in this study provides a point of reference for distinguishing four broad categories of school singing: syllabus, co-syllabus, ancillary-syllabus and non-syllabus. In this context, the terms of curricular and extra-curricular are not included in the study.
1.8 Organisation of Thesis

This chapter has outlined the impetus for the study, the research aims, the foremost research questions, the scope of the study and defines key terms.

In Chapter Two, the literature relevant to four broad categories of teaching singing, developing voices, school singing and singing in NSW schools is reviewed. Included in the context of teaching singing, literature on the pedagogical relevance of vocal technique, voice science and vocal health is reviewed; included in the context of developing voices is a review of the literature on vocal pedagogy for children and adolescents; literature pertaining to school singing includes classroom singing, choir singing and private one-to-one tuition; singing in NSW schools encompasses historical perspectives, research and current practice. Issues identified in the literature that informed the research design are summarised at the conclusion of each main section. The chapter concludes with literature initiated responses to the four principal research questions.

Chapter Three outlines the methods of research implemented in this study. It begins with the conceptual framework upon which the research is based. The foremost research questions are then outlined in conjunction with groupings of subset questions. The multi-method approach designed to address these questions is presented, together with the types of quantitative and qualitative data collected and the analytical procedures utilised. The methodology and instrumentation used in Part 1 of the research, including the pre-study, are discussed. The distribution strategy for the Part 1 questionnaire became a considerable part of the research design and is also presented. The rationale for Part 2 of the research, the in-depth interviews, is discussed together with interview, transcription and verification processes. The chapter concludes with the validity of the research and the research consent required.

Chapter Four addresses the question of “who teaches school singing in Sydney government schools?”. In this chapter, the findings of primary and secondary teacher respondents are presented separately. The chapter concludes with a summary and discussion which also addresses subset questions. A model of the types of school singing teachers in Sydney government schools is presented.
Chapter Five addresses the question of “what types of singing are taught in Sydney government schools?”. In this chapter, the findings on what types of singing activities occur at respondent primary and secondary schools are presented. Respondent school findings are followed by the types of singing activities that occur in Year 3 classrooms and in secondary music classroom. Primary and secondary choir singing activities are presented in a separate section. The chapter concludes with a summary and discussion which also addresses subset questions. A model of the types of school singing occurring in Sydney government schools is presented.

Chapter Six addresses the question of “how is singing taught in Sydney government schools?”. Components of teaching school singing are identified through an analysis of qualitative data of individual respondent teaching strategies. Five approaches to teaching singing identified in the literature and considered as being authoritative, are then reviewed and discussed in relation to component verification. This is followed by an outline of each component and the level of component inclusion in respondent data. In this chapter, respondents are divided into two mutually exclusive groupings of those respondents teaching choir at the time of data collection (choir teachers) and those respondents not teaching choir at the time of data collection (non-choir teachers). The level and combination of components in individual respondent data was analysed, and subsequent approaches to teaching school singing were determined and discussed. Descriptive statistics, univariate statistical analysis of components and the results of independent sample t-tests are presented in relation to component inclusion and teaching approaches. The chapter concludes with a discussion on levels of expertise, addresses subset questions and presents a model on the approaches to teaching singing in Sydney government schools.

Chapter Seven addresses the question of “why is singing taught in Sydney government schools?”. The chapter presents the exploration of qualitative data of the inter-relationships of contributory factors as to why singing takes place in schools. The contributory factors are discussed in relation to teachers of school singing, students and the culture of respondent schools. The chapter concludes with a discussion on levels of expertise and addresses subset questions. A model of school singing participation is generated.
Chapter Eight begins with a summary of the key issues identified in Part 1 of the research that helped form the research questions for Part 2 of the research. Presented in this chapter are the findings of Part 2 research. The findings from participant interviews are discussed separately, and the chapter concludes with a discussion that incorporates the key issues and further insights of singing in Sydney government schools.

Chapter Nine begins with conclusions from Part 1 and Part 2 research, through which a model of teaching singing in NSW government schools, addressing the research questions, is presented. Conclusions for teachers of school singing are drawn and implications for teaching school singing are raised. Recommendations for further research conclude the thesis.
Chapter 2: Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

In order to research the literature relevant to the research questions, the literature was reviewed within four broad areas of teaching singing, developing voices, school singing and singing in NSW schools. In the context of how singing is taught, literature on the pedagogical relevance of vocal technique, voice science and vocal health was reviewed. Literature on developing voices, together with methodologies for the vocal pedagogy of children and adolescents was also reviewed. The literature pertaining to school singing included classroom singing, choir singing and private one-to-one tuition.

Singing in NSW schools encompasses historical perspectives, research and current practice. As the study investigates and analyses singing in Sydney government schools and as BOS NSW syllabuses were reviewed when focusing the aims of the study, Creative Arts and Music syllabus documents were investigated for information of specific relevance to school singing. BOS NSW and NSW DET support documents were also reviewed for specific relevance to school singing.

Historically, the use of the singing voice has been embodied in NSW schools for a variety of different purposes - from its being ‘civilising’, to its being ‘moralising’, to the inclusion of patriotic and school songs, to singing within the context of music education. The variety and purposes of school singing evident in the literature, together with scientific based knowledge of developing voices and the relevance of appropriate vocal pedagogy, highlighted issues pertinent to the teaching of singing. In the following discussion, review initiated issues that informed the research design are summarised at the conclusion of each section, and issues addressing the research questions are outlined at the end of the chapter.

“I believe that, unless there is a physical problem, every child can sing.”
PCHT, Respondent 61
2.2 Teaching Singing

As a means of human expression and communication, singing is an activity that may be enjoyed by people irrespective of age, gender, culture, ethnicity or religion. Singing requires the coordination of a number of anatomical, physiological and psychological elements. Vocal technique, implemented during singing, aids in optimum vocal production and efficient voice usage. The singing of varied repertoire styles, and singing of some cultural and ethnic groups, requires a range of vocal techniques. Teaching methodologies have developed that address a range of singing styles.

Dating from the seventeenth century, foundations for the teaching of classical singing grew out of the Western European bel canto oral tradition (Callaghan, 2000, p.1):

The primary aim of voice teaching was to produce “beautiful” tone and agility, allied to a sensitive ear. Singers cultivated good breath control for singing extended phrases. Voice teachers taught techniques (musical as much as vocal) for emotionally expressive singing and for vocal ornamentation. The tradition emphasized the natural abilities of the pupil and the obligation of the teacher to develop these abilities (pp.2-3).

While much of the bel canto tradition has altered over time (Callaghan, 2000, p.1), many of its elements are evident in more recent pedagogical approaches (Mason, 2000, pp.213-220; Miller, 1996). Classical singing methodologies typically embody a one-register approach when teaching singing. Miller (1996) states that, unless specifically used to alter tone colour for “coloristic purposes” (p.90), there are “no timbre demarcations in the scale of a good singer” (p.150). Sundberg (1987), states that it is the aim of classical pedagogues to minimise register changes or to “eliminate timbral variation between registers” (p.51). However, a one-register approach is not always relevant to contemporary singing where a variety of vocal qualities within one song are often displayed.

Unlike the teaching of classical singing, contemporary singing techniques, teaching methodologies and contemporary singing research are relatively new areas of documentation and investigation. Bartlett (1999), a contemporary singing teacher and researcher, discusses the apparent “paucity of information” (p.49) surrounding the teaching of contemporary singing and identifies “the need for the development of a relevant and readily available contemporary singing pedagogy” (p.49). Miller (1995a) recognises that the art of singing is constantly changing and also calls for an
examination of “nonclassical forms of vocalism, including jazz, scat, rap, pop, soul, Blue Grass, Country Western, Broadway, extended vocal techniques, and ethnic idioms” (p. 245). However as contemporary singing has been a form of musical expression since the emergence of jazz in the 1920s and the crooning style dating from the 1930s (Potter, 2000b, p.56), and given that it has evolved into a communicative art form for “very large numbers” of western peoples (Potter, 2000a, p.2), research and literature on contemporary singing methodology seems long overdue. Unlike methodologies for classical singers, contemporary singing methodologies are typically in the form of self-directed learning texts with accompanying vocal exercise recordings. A primary concern of such self-directed learning texts lies in the singer’s ability to self-monitor their voice and progress. Exercises that start low in the range and proceed upwards may result in vocal constriction of a novice, untrained singer. Similarly, extensive range exercises or prolonged practice could render vocal fatigue.

Irrespective of the vocal style, singing teachers should aim for a vocal technique that ensures healthy voice production. Miller (1995a) states:

The muezzin who calls from the minaret (or did so before the invention of amplified recording), the Broadway belter, the youngster gyrating with a microphone while competing with a noisy back-up system - all are members of the Orpheus/Eurydice family. New to recent history of solo singing is a category of performer known as “the untrained professional”. There is no need to establish an order of merit among various styles of singing or to exercise judgmental evaluations regarding them. But, in all cases, whether with the singers of popular and ethnic idioms, tasks given to the larynx require appropriate training to ensure healthy accomplishment. The higher the level of achievement presumed, the greater the level of skill to be acquired. Therefore the greater need for precise functional information (p. 245).

Pedagogues advise that the singing voice should always be free in production, with no evidence of strain, tension, abuse or misuse. Vocal technique should include a gradual development of the voice, good posture and body alignment, a loose jaw, and, unless using the breath as an artistic device, a simultaneous onset of sound, phonation and release. Doscher (1988) advocates for the functional unity of respiration, phonation, posture, resonant tone production, vocal registers. Mason (2000) states that in addition to the technical elements of posture, respiration, phonation, resonant tone production, and expression, vocal technique should be based in scientific knowledge (pp.219-220).

Voice science found its origins in the 19th century with a Spanish singer, Garcia, who is attributed as having devised the laryngoscope (Callaghan, 2000, p.7). Callaghan argues that while Garcia developed a method of vocal pedagogy based on
“experimental investigations” (p.7), particularly in relation to vocal cord vibrations. Gracia’s work concentrated on “the separate elements of the vocal mechanism” rather than on their “interdependent working” (p.7). Callaghan concludes that this “represented the beginning of fragmentation of knowledge about vocal technique” (p.7), the ensuing development of voice science being largely independent of vocal pedagogy. However as Callaghan writes:

Since the 1960s, works attempting to integrate the scientific and experiential, written by singers with scientific interests or doctors and physiologists interested in singing, have become more common (p.7).

With the advent and development of scientific technology over the latter 20th century decades, muscle effort can now be measured, vocal acoustics analyzed and the larynx viewed “in operation” (p.8). Along with the development of contemporary voice science, there has been an increase in collaborative approaches to the voice:

That period has also seen the emergence of interdisciplinary collaboration between voice specialists in research, clinical, and performance disciplines. Interdisciplinary collaboration and the use of new technologies have raised new questions for voice research, and the answers are leading to a better understanding of how the vocal instrument works and how its health is best maintained (p.8).

Sataloff, Heman-Ackah and Hawkshaw (2006) view interdisciplinary collaboration as a team approach which provides “optimal voice care” (p.121) and the relevance of voice therapy by a range of physicians and non-physicians:

It is important for health care professionals to assemble interdisciplinary teams and to affiliate with arts-medicine specialists and other disciplines in order to provide comprehensive care for voice patients (p.125, ii).

Prior to technological advances, vocal pedagogy was based largely on conjecture and oral tradition and in light of relatively recent scientific understanding of the voice, it would seem inappropriate to base singing teaching on conjecture and oral tradition. Callaghan (1997; 2000) warns that such an approach may also prove detrimental to vocal health in that it may not prevent vocal damage (1997, p.9; 2000, p.9). If a singing teaching methodology is grounded in science, it would eliminate inaccurate assumptions and help to “minimize [emphasis in text] the influence of human bias” (Thurman & Welch, 2000a, p. xxi, i).

Sundberg (1987) suggests that the goal for teachers in educating singers must be to render “an obedient instrument through which they can realize musical ideas without
any audible technical limitations” (p.132). While emphasizing the necessity for the application of appropriate vocal technique with physiological and scientific relevance, Sundberg stresses that singing teachers use terminology that will make this goal achievable. The relevance of vocal technique and voice science to vocal pedagogy is paramount. In addition, vocal pedagogy entails instruction in the act of singing that involves the “whole person” (Callaghan, 2000, p.15); the “state of our neuropsychobiological selves is reflected in the state of our voices” (Thurman & Welch, 2000a, p.xxi, i).

Hollien (1984) advocated that in addition to grounding in teaching techniques and competent musicianship skills, all teachers of singing must possess knowledge of voice physiology and function. Although primarily concerned with the teaching of classical singing, Hollien (1984) discusses the “substantial talents” the voice teacher must display:

Since the voice teacher is central to the entire performer-performance structure, he or she must maintain that knowledge and those skills traditional to the field. He or she also should exhibit the ability to (a) extract and apply information from other disciplines; (b) foster (and then maintain) the interest of specialists from other fields, challenging them to carry out research relevant to the performing arts; (c) maintain an active review of new data; and (d) apply gained information to their teaching. It is only by sustained effort that voice teachers can continue to upgrade their field and materially enhance the potential success for their most prized of possession - their students (p.104).

In vocal pedagogy, the role of the singing teacher is central to Hollien’s “performer-performance structure”. The role of the singing teacher is viewed by some to be distinct from that of the vocal coach. As vocal coaches have been widely accepted and utilized within the classical genre, the role of the vocal coach is not a recent concept. Miller (1995b) states that the vocal coach is responsible for “performance finesse” (p.37) and that in an ideal approach to vocal pedagogy, the role of vocal teacher and vocal coach are inseparable. Formulating an ideal approach for choral pedagogy is also advocated by Harrison (2005) when promoting the collaboration of vocal educators, specifically singing teachers and choral conductors, to render “a result which is both satisfying to the ear and healthy for the voice” (p.58, ii).

Embedded in vocal pedagogy should be an awareness of vocal health as both intrinsic and external factors may impact on the condition of the vocal mechanism. The voice of a singer can be affected by many factors including diet, fitness, hydration, allergies, hormone levels, gastroesophageal reflux, asthma medications, fatigue, overuse, pitch
of spoken voice, pollutants, smoke, loud environments, drugs and caffeine. The effects of factors such as these, together with pathological health issues, have been extensively documented (Sundberg, 1987; Thurman & Welch, 2000b; Heyler, 2003; Sataloff, 2006).

Strategies to maintain optimum vocal health, while maintaining stylistic integrity, should be of concern to all teachers of singing. Singing with pure tone is regarded as a healthy way to sing. However, the singing of contemporary repertoire requires the singer to be “personally [emphasis in text] expressive” (Frith, 1998, p.186) and does not always require the singer to display pure tone, as pure tone may sometimes detract from the intimacy, immediacy and/or emotional content of contemporary interpretations. Grounding in vocal technique may allow singers to make appropriate artistic choices. Even the mastering of “a number of basic principles early can prevent problems arising later” (Mason, 2000, p.205).

Using a belt quality in contemporary singing is often viewed as being detrimental to vocal health. Sundberg (2000) writes:

Belting is sometimes described as the use of loud chest register phonation, also at pitches that would be produced in the middle register in classical singing. When used habitually it is considered detrimental to voice function, although some singing teachers have developed varieties of belting which can be used without harmful effects (Sundberg, 2000, pp. 246 - 247).

The pedagogical significance of this statement is clearly apparent. Untrained or poorly trained contemporary singers can potentially suffer significant vocal damage through inappropriate belt singing. Thurman and Felt (2000) discuss how the voice qualities, manifested in inefficient and efficient belt singing, “can be distinguished aurally by teachers” (p.785, i). However they advocate that teaching belt, either individually to students or in group settings, requires “current, deep-background training in voice education and voice care” (p.785, i). Thurman and Felt also warn that if due care is not afforded to developing voices in relation to belt singing then lifelong vocal limitations may result (p.785, ii). The appropriateness of singing in a belt quality for children and adolescents is expressed in the literature (Burdick, 2005). While some pedagogues believe that belt singing can be taught to developing voices, Burdick (2005) warns:
The muscle energy required to produce belt exceeds chest, head and speech. The possibility of resultant pathology is also greatest for belt, so teachers must exercise caution with young singers (p.267).
Another issue in the vocal health, particularly in relation to contemporary singers, is the appropriate use of sound reinforcement. Vocal damage could result from inadequate monitoring when singing using sound reinforcement. When a contemporary singer sings using amplification, he/she is reliant on foldback or monitoring of their voice. If the singer cannot hear their own voice through adequate monitoring, then there is a tendency for the singer to sing too loudly or to force the voice. This may result in vocal strain (Detogne, 1999) and/or ensuing vocal problems.

2.2.1 Summary of Issues: Teaching Singing

Teaching singing is more than the coaching of song interpretation, delivery or performance. While embodying interpretative elements, teaching singing entails knowledge of the anatomy and physiology of the voice mechanism. Teaching strategies should be based in scientific fact, not conjecture, and teachers must ensure that students receive instruction in appropriate vocal technique. Teachers should also possess knowledge of the connection of “neuropsychobiological” (Thurman & Welch, 2000a, p.xxiii, i) elements that impact on voice usage. Vocal health strategies should be embodied in teaching practices. Teaching strategies should be relevant to the stylistic integrity of the vocal music being taught.

2.3 Developing Voices

For both males and females, the voice mechanism grows and develops from infancy (Titze, 2001) through adolescence, prior to its reaching adult proportions and maturity and as such, significant anatomical and physiological changes occur:

The macro-architecture of voice-related anatomy is significantly smaller at birth compared to adult dimension; proportional relationships are different; and anatomical micro-architecture is in very early stages of maturation (Thurman & Klitze, 2000, p.697).

Pre-puberty the laryngeal cartilages of males and females “show minimal distinction” (p.700, ii). However with the onset of puberty, the voice mechanism begins to grow to adult proportions. During this time, vocal fold lengths increase in both males and females (p.700). Full adult proportions are usually realised by 20-21 years (p.701, ii). Other considerations are the audible and physical changes that occur during puberty. Cooksey (1992, 2000a, 2000b) researched and categorised the developmental stages of male voices, outlining possible range implications and voice breaks that can occur at
each mutational change. Similarly the developmental stages of female voices, including breathiness and mutational chinks, have been researched and documented (Huff-Gackle, 1985, 1991; Gackle 2000a, 2000b).

Because developing vocal mechanisms do not have adult proportions, they do not have the same capabilities as adult voices. This has implications for vocal technique, repertoire, range, voice classifications and the vocal care of developing voices. Wormhoudt (1993) advocates:

Musical directors should take care with younger voices. They are not as strong as they will be when mature, so both the length of singing and the loudness must be moderate (p.123).

Evidence of the potential overuse of developing singing as described by Wormhoudt, is found in a study on the vocal health of choral singers aged 3 to 25 years, by Tepe, Deutsch, Sampson, Lawless, Reilly and Sataloff (2002). The study found that vocal difficulties were experienced by more than half the singers surveyed. A third of the respondents experienced “oversinging” (p.244). Over a third of respondents reported that they had to “strain their voices while singing” (p.244). The incidence of voice difficulties in girls was higher in post-pubescent girls (47 of 63) than pre-pubescent girls (5 of 29) (p.248). The study conceded that both children and adolescents may have difficulty in adhering to “optimal behaviors” (p.249) or difficulty acknowledging that the capability, motivations and physiology of children and adolescents differs from adults. The study also found that late female adolescence was the determining predictor of the majority of the reported vocal difficulties:

... the cumulative effects of unhealthy habits or techniques, an increase in vocal demands associated with a more mature repertoire, increased vocal abuse related to social and recreational activities other than singing, the effects of the concurrent physiological changes of puberty or other factors (p. 249).

Other factors in interpreting these results are that the average age of respondents in the study was 15 years, the respondents were predominantly (73%) female (p.245) and there was no reported difference in the incidence of voice difficulties in pre-pubescent males and post-pubescent males (p.248). The study determined that the factors contributing to vocal health problems were common to both singers who had taken private singing lessons and to singers who had not undertaken singing training. The study however did not include variables such as the qualifications or methodology of the teacher providing singing training, the duration of the singing training or whether singing training was “preventive or restorative” (p.249). The study called for additional research.
into determining “the nature and quality of voice lessons generally provided to children in choirs, as well as the nature of ideal voice lessons” (p.249).

Trollinger (2005) discusses physical problems associated with incorrect musical instrument or voice usage in performing arts activities that may result in permanent musculoskeletal damage. Trollinger discusses specific issues relating to developing voices including singing in straight tone for children, avoiding always singing in straight tone for teenagers, avoiding pressed phonation (p.46), and the development of the two muscle pairs - the thyroarytenoids and the cricothyroids - and the vocal ligament (p.45). The development of these muscle pairs, together with the vocal ligament and the ossification of the cartilages, adds to the vocal strength and stability of adult voices (p.45). For these reasons, Trollinger stresses that care is required in relation to developing voices:

All vocal behaviors, especially those of young singers, lead to the development of the functional shape the muscles will have for life. This means that we need to start students out correctly and healthfully from the beginning. An adult can make an informed choice about singing activities to participate in, but a child doesn’t always have that option (p.46).

The implication here is that singing activities led by an untrained teacher who may “sometimes try to teach young children to use particular adjustments that they do not physically possess” (p.44) can potentially result in vocal damage. For this reason and to ensure effective singing teaching, Trollinger advocates the necessity for “anyone working with voices needs voice training, specifically, private voice lessons” (p.46). Effective voice training should include the ability to encourage effective student practice. In discussing the value of quality practice, Roher (2002, p.21) states that without the knowledge of how to practice for improvement, student practice may prove detrimental.

2.3.1 Teaching Developing Voice

The relevance of constructive and successful singing experiences for children and adolescents is expressed by Thurman and Welch (2000a):

Speaking and singing with optimum skill and expressiveness are rather complex acts that require a somewhat lengthy string of learning experiences. They necessitate a blending of what can be referred to as cognitive-emotional-behavioral abilities. Whether or not people choose to continue singing over their life-span depends to a large extent on how their earlier singing experiences felt [emphasis in text] to them, pleasant or unpleasant, successful or unsuccessful (p.3, ii).
Children’s singing experiences are largely determined by those instructing them in singing. There are several different strategies for teaching singing to children and adolescents identified in the literature.

Teaching singing to developing voices can occur in a diversity of settings including classrooms, music classrooms, choral settings, small groups and in one-to-one private tuition. A variety of literature was therefore reviewed and included that of Phillips (1996), Langness (1992, 2000), Welch (1986, 2000, 2003), Bentley (2003) and Smith and Sataloff (2006). Phillips (1996) views it as essential to train young singers as "developmental instruction in vocal technique is appropriate and necessary for all students” (p.3). He believes that teaching children how to sing will also develop “musical literacy and artistic vocal expression” (p.3) and criticizes teachers who use a song approach in singing as it neglects the singing voice:

While a child’s singing may sound good in general, his technique may be faulty. This may lead to future vocal problems, though no immediate problems may be apparent (p.5).

Phillip’s methodology includes exercises in posture, respiration and sung exercises to develop vocal technique. This approach, together with the musically educative approach of Langness (2000), the strategies for “successful singing in school” (Welch, 2003, p.5) discussed by Welch, the areas viewed by Bentley (2003) as being essential to vocal development and the directives for teaching choral singing to children and “young people” (p.146) by Smith and Sataloff (2006) are reviewed in detail in Chapter 6 of this thesis.

Teaching school singing through a ‘song method’ was researched by Ashmore (1995) in a treatise that compared formal singing training and informal singing training. Ashmore recommends:

…the weight of literature and research concerning that topic [the history and training of child voice] support the general success and effectiveness of the formal approach in producing good singing habits and skills in children over that achieved by the song approach. Accordingly, the treatise recommends that instruction of the child voice be predominantly conducted using formal teaching techniques.

However, Ashmore concludes that the formality of vocal exercises should not detract from the enjoyment of singing.

Laurence (2000) offers strategies for the teaching of children’s singing. Her
methodology is based on the ideal that “all [emphasis in text] children can sing, learn to sing better, and have the right to do both” (p.221). Laurence stresses the uniqueness of all voices and also maintains that, even though a child’s voice is lighter and not as powerful as that of an adult, children are capable of singing “pleasantly and tunefully in a group and to improve individually” (p.221). She incorporates the basic rudiments of “Posture, Relaxation, Intonation, Breathing and Articulation” (p.223) in her teaching of vocal technique to children and views children as being “capable of learning about these concepts and of putting them into practice from a pre-school age” (p.223). Laurence discusses the value of warming the voice which should “protect the children’s voices from any sudden strain” (p.230). She laments the findings of a British survey which determined that singing curricula limited “younger children to pentatonic tunes and restricted vocal ranges” (p.222).

The literature revealed gender implications for the teaching of singing to developing male voices (Harrison, 2001; Harrison, 2003). Stupple (2007) suggests that the implications for adolescent boys and voice change include “social and emotional” (p.36) factors. The frustration of dealing with their changing voices, experienced by some boys, may lead to a cessation of singing (p.39). However, Crabbe (2005), teacher, writer and musician, attributes boys’ hesitancy to sing as an avoidance of sounding feminine:

Many, perhaps most boys are afraid of sounding like girls, even if they secretly love to sing. They may therefore sing half-heartedly at best, or only in an artificially low pitch which is unhealthy for vocal cords. Quite a few refuse to sing at all.

Similarly, Horin (2005) suggests that some boys compromise their talents and interests, including singing, for fear of resulting peer persecution. Mizener (1993), reporting on the findings of a study children’s attitudes towards singing, suggests that children’s attitudes towards music are “well-developed by the age of 8” (p.242). Mizener therefore believes it to be appropriate to provide male role models for primary school students to inspire boys to continue singing.

Other gender issues relating to singing may be more due to gender biases and gender activities within cultures. Crabbe (2005) discusses how in western society, “mothers will sing with their children far more than fathers do”. Similarly in ethnomusicological studies of children’s singing in Asia, Africa, Eastern Europe and South America, Corpataux (Ilari & Majlis, 2002) found that across cultures, girls are more likely to sing than boys.
Corpataux attributes this to girls in traditional ethnic groups having more connection to their mothers where singing is a part of everyday life and chores. When discussing children’s singing in different ethnic groups, Corpataux describes vocal music that is “decontextualised” (p.11) to be vocal music that is removed from children’s realities. For Corpataux, vocal music relevance is a key issue in the selection of vocal music for children.

2.3.2 Summary of Issues: Developing Voices

In addition to the issues previously raised for teaching singing, teaching singing to developing voices carries additional implications including teacher knowledge of both the developmental stages of voices and the parameters for teaching singing to developing voices. Developing voices should not be treated in the same manner as adult voices. As inappropriate vocal activities may result in vocal damage (temporary or permanent), there are implications for teaching appropriate vocal technique, for appropriate vocal music selection and for vocal care. Several methods of teaching singing were identified including teaching by a song method which was viewed as being less than ideal. While the literature reveals gender issues in relation to boys and singing, there is evidence to suggest that boys benefit from being guided through voice change.

2.4 School Singing

As some school singing activities fall under the banner of school related syllabus music, the value and relevance of music in a school environment is firstly discussed. Music and Creative Arts educators, Lehman (2002), Eisner (2002), Madsen (2002) and Mills (2002) in their respective Advocacy Statements, address the relevance, value and import of music education. Lehman (2002) believes that all students should learn skills that enable them to perform, create and listen to music with understanding. For this to be a reality, all students “should have access to a comprehensive, balanced, sequential program of music study in school” (p.146). Educators Eisner (2002) and Madsen (2002) agree that music in education is cognitive, aesthetic and experiential, requiring students to think, to feel and to experience. Mills (2002) writes that music “is not a gift but a right” (p.153) and that music in schools should be taught both musically and inclusively. However, Mills states that in the same way some people believe they are “not musical”
(p.152), many people believe that they cannot sing. In this context, the inclusion of singing in music education is warranted. The connection between educative singing and the development of musicality is also evident in the literature (Bonham, Field, Gill, Lane, Silsbury and Buckton, 1979).

Lockhart (2004), educator, songwriter, performer and activist, believes that singing is empowering and when a collective activity, school singing gives students a sense of community and connection. Lockhart includes cultural, social, creative and musical benefits of school singing in her graphical representation of the “web” of musical learning. When answering the question “Why sing in school?”, Lockhart presents a myriad of grounds for singing in schools including areas of child development that interconnect with skills and student temperament. Believing that singing is sometimes abandoned by class teachers because of the pressures of a standard-based curriculum, Lockhart considers that singing can aid teachers to be creative and standards conscious not standards driven.

Mizener (1993) found that vocal music selection and musical accompaniment were contributory factors in maintaining student interest in classroom singing in upper primary years. When discussing the relevance of vocal music choices in classroom music activities, Mizener suggests that it may be beneficial to include songs that are familiar to students. Mizener believes that music that is not age or grade appropriate, or music that is unfamiliar to students, may result in “negative attitudes towards singing” (p.241). Mizener also suggests a “judicious use of records and tapes” (p.243) as accompaniment to classroom singing activities as students in upper primary classes expressed a preference for recorded accompaniment. Mizener also found that choir singing was not supported by large numbers of students in secondary education (p.242). Reporting on children’s attitudes towards singing, Mizener suggested that because several students responded as being “not sure” about future extra-curricular choir activities, internal school support - “familiarity and encouragement” - may result in more students being interested in choir singing (p.242). Further support for school singing was seen when younger students expressed the positive interest shown by their parents for school music and singing activities (p.243).

Kennedy (2002) in a study on participation of junior high school boys in choral music
found that students preferred vocal music that appealed to their tastes (p.30). Kennedy also found that participation was in part due to a “love of singing, teacher influence, and peer influence” (p.24). In addition to vocal music appeal, musical accompaniment was another issue raised in the literature. MacDonald and Byrne (2002), when discussing the impact of information and communication technologies in the music classroom, viewed backing tracks as a way to inspire students to play along (p.49). Although backing tracks may be prescriptive in format, the availability of backing tracks for singers may stimulate or facilitate student singing. This could be particularly relevant in school environments where appropriate musical accompaniment may not be readily available.

The modeling of school singing was also raised in the literature. Vaughan (2000) advocates for the employment primary music specialist teachers in all primary schools. Trollinger (2005) advocates for all teachers to learn to “sing properly so that they aren’t inadvertently modeling unhealthy vocal behaviour” (p.45). When discussing vocal health issues, Heyler (2003) also warns that some types of “electronic enhancement” (p.24) can sometimes lead young singers to imitate inappropriate voice usage and advises that the ‘belt’ style of contemporary singing requires amplification. Marsh (2003), also in relation to young people singing contemporary popular vocal music, discusses the purposes of using sound reinforcement, the effective use of microphones, and the necessity of sound checks prior to performance (p.36).

Vocal health issues identified to be of specific relevance to school singing pertained to the care of developing voices. Spurgeon (2004), when calling for vocal pedagogy instruction for undergraduate choral conductors, discusses the importance for school choral conductors to understand voice anatomy and physiology. Trollinger (2005) believes that it is dangerous for teenage girls to regularly sing in choirs with “straight tone” (p.46). This is due to increased tension in the vocal folds when singing without vibrato that may result in vocal damage (p.45). The care of boys developing voices included suggestions (Mizener, 1993; Crabbe, 2005) that boys should be educated about voice change and should be encouraged to sing through it:

Furthermore, educating young children, especially boys, about the changing voice and informing them that it is important for boys to continue to sing when they start to experience voice change should be part of the elementary music programme (Mizener, 1993, p.242).
Crabbe (2005) also advocated for boy-only choirs in co-educational school environments.

A cogent discussion on the need for school curriculum to incorporate the stages of vocal development, particularly in relation to adolescent changing voices, was proffered by Cooksey and Welch (1998). The failure of school curriculum to appropriately address the “unique period of adolescent voice change” (p.99) was viewed as limiting the “statutory guidance” (p.99) that enabled teachers to guide students “in a healthy and positive manner” (p.116). The discussion advocated for the design of “a differentiated [emphasis in text] adolescent singing curriculum, matched to physical abilities and potential” (p.116). Sataloff and Linville (2006) also suggest that provided an understanding of vocal development is recognised when designing “vocal training” strategies (p.21), then “safe educated singing should be possible at any age” (p.21). Singing instruction in education also involves providing appropriate, constructive feedback for students. In addition, Welch (Collins & Aggett, 2005) advocates that the care of developing voices be encompassed in assessment processes and protocols, and that repertoire selected for assessment purposes be “developmentally sensitive” (p.60).

2.4.1 Summary of Issues: School Singing

The literature contained several issues pertaining to classroom singing activities, choir activities and the relevance of peripatetic singing teachers. Issues raised in the literature were in regard to teaching strategies, vocal music selection, pitch accuracy (singing skill), student gender and teacher modeling. In addition, factors that impacted on teacher and/or student participation in school singing activities included parental encouragement, curriculum priorities and curriculum design.

2.5 Singing in NSW Schools

With the human voice being the most accessible musical instrument and with singing entrenched in community traditions that have religious, patriotic or celebratory intent, it is easily understood why singing has been included in school communities in New South Wales since colonial times. Historical perspectives on singing in NSW education provide insight into the traditional inclusion of school singing activities, through which
recurring themes and the subsequent development of syllabuses are evident.

2.5.1 Historical Perspectives

Structured education began in the colony of New South Wales with the establishment of the first school in Sydney in 1810\(^{27}\). Initially, education was offered through denominational or church run schools. In the early 1830s, plans were proffered for the establishment of an education system that would provide schooling to all children in the colony. In response to His Excellency Sir Richard Bourke Governor of New South Wales Despatch No.76 of 30 September 1833, the Right Honorable Lord Viscount Glenelg, Secretary of State for War and the Colonies, wrote in 1836:

> In respect to education generally, it follows from the principles already laid down, that some plan should be adopted for the establishment of Schools for the general education of youth in the Colony, unconnected with any particular Church or denomination of Christians, in which children of every religious persuasion may receive instruction\(^{28}\).

A subsequent dual system of denominational and governing authority supported national schools developed. As the denominational schools espoused doctrines of particular Christian faiths, the National (public) schools offered “general religious” instruction:

> The National System has for its basis the principle of giving to the children attending its schools general religious instruction, that is, instruction that may with propriety be listened to by Christians of all denominations.\(^{29}\)

The National Board of Education formed in 1848 (Bridges, 1974, p.11, ii) and by 1856 there were 95 schools in the colony of New South Wales (NSW Legislative Assembly, 1856, p.15).

Stevens (1978) identified recurring themes in relation to 19\(^{th}\) century school singing and espoused that “many of these historical themes are in fact still relevant for primary music education” (p.ii) a century later. Historical themes identified by Stevens, that emerged during the period of 1848 to 1920, highlighted the deficiencies in music education and included whether music should form part of the curriculum, the method by which children should be taught music literacy skills and the appropriateness of

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generalist or specialist teachers (p.xix). Music or singing, in NSW education, began as a non-compulsory school subject and was essentially a subject that embodied sight-singing.

2.5.1.1 Pre-Federation Music Education in NSW Schools

As 19th century and early 20th century history of singing in NSW schools has been comprehensively researched and documented (Stevens, 1978) and as such the work of Stevens, together with a review of historical documents, largely forms the basis of pre-federation music discussion. In New South Wales, singing has traditionally been an integral part of education. While initially not a compulsory subject, singing was an expected learning outcome for students. Having its origins in the procurement of social and personal benefits, singing was viewed as a method for the simultaneous development of musical expression and civil temperament. However, in the mid-1800s teaching singing in NSW schools was “a means of instilling (through the words of school songs) moral, patriotic and religious values in children” (Stevens, n.d.) that had “little concern for teaching music for its own sake” (Bridges, 1974, p.11, ii). In 1856, School Commissioners reported:

Music is taught in a few schools. Hullah’s method seems to be that most generally adopted. Of the importance of Music as a branch of Education, and a means of civilization, as tending to soften the manners and to prevent intemperance, it is unnecessary to speak; and we can only lament its all but universal neglect. In the Country Districts, the beneficial effects which a knowledge of Music would confer, even to the celebration of public worship, need not be enlarged upon.  

In 1856, more students in the national schools received music education than in denominational schools (NSW Legislative Assembly, 1856, p.9). However, the total number of students who had access to music education represented less than 10% of all registered students and explains why the school Commissioners of the time lamented its “all but universal neglect” (p.17).

Stevens (1978), describes the period of nineteenth century music education as being synonymous with vocal music or singing. Stevens documents that in the mid-19th century, NSW music education predominantly espoused the English “adaptation by John Hullah of the French ‘fixed doh’” sight-singing method (Stevens, n.d.) and that in

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1849, Hullah's manual and its comprehensive teaching notes were officially endorsed for use in National Schools (Stevens, 1978, p.57). While Hullah’s method was also cited in 1856 in the teaching programme for the senior students music subject at the National Board’s Model School, the Fort Street School in Sydney\(^{31}\), the widespread teaching of singing either by Hullah’s method or by ear had not yet been adopted.

In 1866, the Public Schools Bill was passed which saw the two education systems brought together under the NSW Council of Education. National schools became known as public schools and denominational schools continued to receive government financial assistance as 'Certified Denominational Schools' (Stevens, 1978, p.80). Under the Council’s regulations singing, or more specifically student use of Curwen’s tonic sol-fa system (Bridges, 1974, p.12, i), became assessable through proficiency ratings. Teachers of school singing, or school music, were known as “Singing Masters” (p.12, i). James Fisher, a Singing Master in the Sydney region (1867 – 1884), visited schools and examined teachers for “the award of a Tonic Sol-fa Certificate” (p.12, ii).

While documenting potential benefits of school singing, the reality of singing in rural NSW was that it suffered from a lack of teacher expertise and school inspectors lamented the poor progress of school singing. In 1871 two inspectors reported:

> Except in a few instances I cannot speak highly of the singing. It has made little progress during the year. It is good in four schools only – passable or fair in seventeen, indifferent or moderate in eleven, and a failure in forty-three. Considering its importance as a means of aesthetic, moral, and intellectual culture, it is to be regretted that all teachers are not compelled to qualify themselves for teaching it. Some teachers shelter themselves under the excuse that its teaching is not obligatory, while others manifest a desire to introduce it to their schools, but allege their inability to do so for want of a knowledge of tonic sol-fa notation and principles of teaching. \(^{32}\)

Singing is taught in a considerable number of the public and denominational schools in this district, but in many the method of teaching is far from satisfactory; in some the children learn to sing by ear, and, with the exception of a few schools, the progress in singing does not merit much commendation. It is to be hoped the Council may be enabled to extend the period for the training of teachers, in order that some arrangements may be made for giving the candidates a complete course of instruction in this very important branch of elementary education. \(^{33}\)

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Inspectors Johnson and Bradley (1871) of the Sydney District were generally more optimistic in their reporting of singing stating that time for singing was allocated “on the time-table of every school” (1871, p.130) in the Sydney District in 1870. Reporting on the proficiency of school singing within the categories of “good”, “fair”, “tolerable” and “indifferent”, the 1870 proficiency tables for school singing in the Sydney District indicated that the proficiency rate of “good” singers in public schools was higher than the proficiency rate of “good” singers in denominational schools (Johnson and Bradley, 1871, pp.133-134). There were also lower numbers of indifferent singers in public schools than in denominational schools. However, there was more than four times the rate of indifferent singers in the overall student population than the rate of good singers. While this result is reported as being an “improvement” the Inspectors conceded that student “knowledge of the [musical] theory is meager” and reported that the high number of indifferent singers was possibly due to the inclusion of students in infant schools where singing was taught “only by ear” (Johnson and Bradley, 1871, p.130). However, not all Inspectors were focused only on the appropriateness of the method of teaching singing when reporting on school singing. Other Inspectors also noted the “beneficial effect on the general spirit of a school” (McCredie, 1871, p.59) and the type of singing that “acts as a safety valve to children of excitable temperament” (Allpas, 1871, p.118). Although singing was also valued for its socialising benefits, the characteristics of pre-federation music education in NSW included singing as an expected learning outcome and from the late 1860s, singing as music became an integral part of school curriculum (Stevens, 1978, p.112). In 1884 the Department of Public Instruction appointed Hugo Alpen as a Supervisor of Music (Bridges, 1974, p.12, ii; Stevens, 1978, p.133). Alpen focused on the teaching of staff notation, a moveable doh system, which facilitated the transposition of vocal music (Stevens, 1978, pp.142-147).

To summarise, in pre-federation NSW education, the preferred method of school singing was through sight singing initially using Hullah’s method, then Curwen’s method and in the late 19th century, Alpen’s method. Proficiency tables offered insight into the expectation that school singing could be assessed as an educational subject. However, implications arose as to the appropriate training of teachers.
2.5.1.2 Post-Federation Music Education in NSW Schools

The 20th century brought many changes to the face of Australia and its people. No longer a colony, New South Wales became one of the federated Australian states and territories on January 1, 1901. The occasion was marked by a chorus of 10,000 NSW school children who sang at the inauguration ceremony of the Federation of Australia (Stevens, 1978, p.150). School singing was no longer confined to sight-singing and included the teaching of vocal technique (voice production) and performance opportunities for massed choral singing.

In the early 1900s NSW Education Inspectors such as Blumer (1910), Cotterill (1909), Finney (1910) and Riley (1909), when reporting on the effectiveness of teaching practices and outcomes in district schools, at times lamented the poor quality of singing displayed at schools in rural areas of New South Wales. In these examples, the underlying reasoning for a poor quality was a lack of teacher training and expertise:

It is not often that singing is well taught or effectively used. Some are unable to teach it, others boldly try to do so, but with very slight success as regards uniformity of pitch, sweetness of tone, or correctness of time (Blumer, 1910, p.70ii).

Specialist training was offered to classroom teachers, by Singing Masters, in the form of workshops on vocal technique and musicianship (Kenny, 1908). Teacher support documents reveal articles on singing and musicianship techniques, including singing, singing technique, the artistry of singing and the teaching of singing, that were periodically published in the NSW school teacher publication, The Public Instruction Gazette. One article outlined a series of lectures designed “to meet the necessities of country school teachers” (Kenny, 1908, p.251) delivered in 1908 by Kenny of the Sydney Training College. Kenny emphasised the use of the singing voice through breathing, enunciation and rhythm exercises, and provided suitable repertoire lists. Table 2.1 (over page) compiles the essential characteristics of good singing as described by Kenny.

The first of the essential characteristics, “brightness and cheerfulness” related to “the general tone of the class” (Kenny, 1908, p.252). Characteristics 2, 3, 4 and 5 were connected to singing technique, and characteristics 6 and 7 embodied musical skills and musical accuracy. The last characteristic related to song interpretation that embodied a connection to the song. In addition to the elements of ‘good’ class singing,
Kenny championed the unifying or disciplinary benefit of group singing:

The consensus of will which exists when a number of children in a chorus unite in singing a song is of great value to discipline (p.252).

Table 2.1: Essential Characteristics of Class Singing (1908)

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<th>Essential Characteristics</th>
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<tr>
<td>1. Brightness and cheerfulness</td>
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<td>2. Sweetness and purity of tone</td>
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<td>3. Clearness of enunciation and articulation</td>
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<td>4. Beauty of phrasing</td>
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<td>5. Precision in attack and release</td>
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<td>6. Blend and balance of voices</td>
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<td>7. Beauty of rhythmic flow</td>
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<td>8. Intelligence in the rendition of song</td>
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The relevance of Kenny holding lectures for country teachers was evident in the reports of school inspectors that recounted regional singing activities and described teachers “who cannot teach singing, being more or less tone deaf” (Riley, 1909, p.116). There was also an inference of gender issues related to teaching singing as effective teaching of school singing was more apparent when taught by female teachers:

Singing is a weak subject in many schools: in some it is absent. Occasionally lessons are given on what is called “theory”, but no singing is practised, the explanation being that pupils cannot sing. Strange to say those schools are all under male teachers. In schools under the direction of women, singing is rarely neglected (Cotterill, 1909, p.115).

School inspector reports (circa 1910) describe further difficulties of school singing and a lack of teaching expertise in rural areas. Reports indicate that “some [teachers] are unable to teach it” (Blumer, 1910, p.70), “some of the teachers do not attach sufficient importance to the teaching of singing” (Hunt, 1910, p.73) and that in some small schools “singing is not taught at all” (Byrne, 1910, p.106). One Inspector reported that due to inadequate teacher training, the singing in his country district was of “poor character” (Fraser, 1910, p.114) and included in his report his belief “that bad singing is worse than no singing” (p.114).

Prior to the universal availability of musical instruments in schools, accurate singing was largely dependent upon the pitch matching abilities of both teachers and students. While it appears that much school singing was unaccompanied, pitch forks were used
for starting notes. The singing capabilities of students were sometimes given as the reason for singing activities not occurring in schools. However in 1910 the then Superintendent of Music, Theodore Tearne, wrote that student hesitancy to sing was possibly due more to inattentiveness than to inaccuracy of pitch, noting:

… that some few of the children do not attempt to sing. The teacher should see to this: I believe in most cases it is due to inattention and not to inability. Singing is a most healthy exercise, and not more than 2 per cent are really unable through a faulty ear to do their part (Tearne, 1910, p.39).

During the ensuing years, school singing was included in music activities. By the late 1930s, music was a compulsory subject “in at least the first year of [NSW] secondary schooling” (Bridges, 1974, p.13, ii). By the early 1950s, Music had become a school compulsory school subject for all students in NSW primary schools. Syllabus and teaching content were directed by the NSW Department of Education. The *Curriculum for Primary Schools* (1952) offered a music programme that had particular relevance for singing. Lesson planning and time-tableing of music was directed in the curriculum and included 135 hours of music a year in lower primary classes and 90 hours a year in upper primary school. The curriculum contained sequential programming in the areas of singing, pitch, rhythm and notation. The syllabus recommended that sol-fa names with corresponding hand signs be introduced in infants classes. Strategies and exercises for securing student pitch and for developing student vocal tone were also offered. Breathing, quality of tone and interpretive elements such as dynamics and tempo were suggested for introduction in first grade singing activities. Vocal repertoire and suitable children’s ranges were also described, with teaching strategies outlined for teachers who may have had difficulty singing in children’s vocal ranges.

For the effective delivery of the music curriculum by class teachers at this time, teacher training and expertise was clearly described in the curriculum. Teachers were required to model the voice, having “the ability to hold a tune accurately, good production and breath control, clear diction, sufficient flexibility to cope with pitch and general expression of the song being taught, a knowledge of phrasing, and an appreciation of rhythm and time” (1952, p.443). These teacher requirements were amended in the 1963 revision of the curriculum where instruments were seen as an “excellent substitute for an uncertain singing voice” (1963, p.13) and broadcasts were recommended “for the teacher lacking confidence” (1963, p.13).
In 1972, a trial program was initiated by the school executive at a government primary school located in the southern suburbs of Sydney to address teacher confidence (Hamilton, 1974). Catering for the differences in teaching expertise amongst the primary generalist classroom teachers at the school, a teaching scheme for specialised subjects was developed. Teachers were designated as specialist teachers for various subjects, including music, based on their interest, knowledge and expertise (p.318). The program concluded that one-hour periods for music were satisfactory for all classes, that teachers welcomed a reduction in the scope of their teaching, and “the phenomenon of neglected subjects disappeared completely from the school’s program” (p.324).

Music in NSW secondary education up until the mid-1960s was “mostly restricted to the junior level and comprised, essentially, singing and some history and appreciation” (Comte, 1988, p.113). Comte attributes the 1980s as being the time in which Australian state Education Departments addressed the previously “poor state of arts education” (p.116). In the early 1980s, the NSW Education Department directed that all secondary students in NSW were to complete 100 hours of music by the end of Year 10 (Carroll, 1988, p.97).

2.5.2 School Music Education Research

A research study undertaken to identify the delivery strategies of music education in Australian primary and secondary schools was the second part of a survey undertaken by ACER34 and conducted by Bartle in 1966. Encompassed within the broad context of music education, singing practices were included in a survey - “Courses as given in schools” (Bartle, 1966, pp.125-130). Survey findings identified the ten most common answers to vocal music selection criteria and included the top three criteria as “songs with popular appeal”, “a wide variety” of songs and “songs of suitable difficulty” (p.125). Less common criteria included songs to “tie in with courses in music reading and aural training” and songs that had rhythmic appeal (p.125). Bartle noted that, particularly in government primary schools, there were few attempts to include vocal exercises (p.125). Bartle also reported methods catering to out-of-tune school singers, methods for dealing with boys’ voice changes, methods of musical accompaniment for singers and methods by which lyrics and melodies were taught in schools. Bartle’s report on

34 Australian Council for Educational Research
singing concluded with “an alarming situation” (p.129) where a large proportion of students was given only lyrics to learn songs. He viewed the lyric-only method as negatively impacting on students’ ability to develop music literacy skills.

Teaching expertise and teacher training are recurrent issues found in more recent studies that have investigated the teaching of school music (Russell-Bowie, 1993; Jeanneret, 1996; Paterson, 1995). In a 1991 survey of NSW primary generalist teachers and their respective school principals, Russell-Bowie (1997) found:

…music was given a higher priority in urban than in rural schools, by older more than younger teachers, by female more than male teachers, by teachers in schools in higher, more than lower SES [socio-economic status] areas and those in schools with lower, more than higher NSEB [non-English speaking background] populations, and by teachers of younger children more than older children (p.351).

Vaughan (2000), in a study on the low participation of adolescent boys singing in NSW secondary schools, highlighted significant areas of concern in the treatment of developing voices. Vaughan suggested problems beginning in primary schools as “many primary teachers seem ill equipped to deal with singing” (p.7). He concluded that many primary teachers “demonstrate little knowledge of and/or interest in vocal skills” (pp.8). At secondary level, the study also identified a lack of vocal exercises and of appropriate methodologies to deal with voice maturation. Further research into whether the developmental stages of young voices are considered in singing activities in NSW schools appears to be both necessary and imperative.

Jones (2003) advocates the need to research the primary music curriculum. The development and implementation of the NSW Creative Arts K-6 Syllabus (2000a) has meant that music curriculum within primary schools is based on educational stages and corresponding learning outcomes. Jones explains:

In light of the implementation of the 2000 NSW K-6 Creative Arts Syllabus, research now needs to be undertaken to initially determine some directions for the future, particularly to assist practising generalist primary school teachers to teach music in their classrooms (p.42, iii).

Following the implementation of the “new” Creative Arts Syllabus, Jones laments the termination of the NSW DET initiated music consultancy program that assisted primary generalist teachers describing the loss of this curriculum support as “disappointing and alarming” (Jones, p.42, ii). She raises the question of why is “music an undervalued and inconsistently taught subject in many primary schools?” (p.40, ii). Jones argues that a
revision of music within primary curriculum is required and calls for the appointment of specialist teachers. She attributes the inconsistency in teaching primary music to the fact that “generalist teachers are required to teach music, many of whom have little training, experience, or basic skills in it” (p.41, i).

The call for specialist music teachers has been ongoing as Russell-Bowie (1993) writes:

There is still a documented need for ongoing specialist music assistance for teachers in primary schools, combined with the availability of adequate music facilities and resources. Children need access to instrumental tuition, regardless of their cultural or social background; teachers need adequate training, both pre-service and in-service; and the syllabus needs to be based on child development stages which can be implemented by adequately trained and supported classroom teachers (p.57).

Paterson (1995), in a discussion of research findings from a survey of primary teachers in the NSW Hunter region, found that of the 71% of primary classroom teachers who enjoyed teaching music, more than half of the respondents indicated that someone else was responsible for teaching music:

At present the release from face to face teacher in the school is often required to teach music and this person is usually not a trained music specialist (p.54).

Paterson identified the relevance of teacher attitude to effective teaching and curriculum implementation, and promoted that in instances where classroom music was taught by specialist teachers, classroom teachers could complement the “program with planned activities” (p.54).

Stowasser (1993) suggests that “music education research plays a vital role in overcoming problems associated with curriculum change” (p.13) and as such, the effectiveness of the new syllabuses should be investigated. In relation to singing activities at NSW secondary level, whether secondary music teachers are adequately trained and supported to effectively teach and assess singing is yet to be determined. Lierse (1998), in a study on teacher effectiveness, concluded that “teachers believe they developed most of their technical skills on the job, and after they had graduated from their music course” (p.77). Russell-Bowie (2002) advocates the need for appropriate teacher training, both in-service and pre-service, which would facilitate teacher “confidence, competence and resources to be able to implement successful music programs” (p.41).

In 2005, the Australian Federal Minister for Education instigated a National Review of
School Music Education (Australian Government, 2005) which contained strategic directions for singing in schools that included initial singing participation by every student and the provision of sustained vocal music programmes for interested and talented singers. Acknowledging that the voice was both accessible and a useful learning tool, the National Review of School Music Education included the implications for teacher education regarding and overcoming teacher fears of singing inadequacy (p.128). The National Review of School Music Education identified teacher training as essential to the “provision of good music education” (p.61) and responses to the review indicated the “large perception that teacher training in music education is inadequate at present” (p.60). Inadequate teacher training of generalist primary teachers was identified as resulting in “a lack of confidence with all aspects of teaching music” (p. 61). Also expressed was the belief that it was atypical of a primary school in New South Wales to have a recognized music programme or for it to be taught by a qualified music teacher (p.61). Although this perception has been evident in New South Wales since colonial times, emerging in the National Review of School Music Education is the opinion that inadequate training is not confined to generalist primary teachers. Rather, it was expressed that in New South Wales tertiary music education “is really the problem” (p.60) with the quality of recently graduated music teachers being “too low” (p.60). The review also expressed the opinion that in schools where peripatetic teachers were employed as tutors and conductors, they were relied on (p.69). Additional resources that were viewed as either “hindering or enabling” (p.61) participation in school music were funding, the recruitment of qualified music teachers, the purchasing and maintenance of equipment and adequate teaching spaces.

The National Review of School Music Education (2005) discussed the relevance of school culture and musical activities. In a secondary NSW government school where the school music programme “generates pervasive enthusiasm for music” (p.228) through its teaching of contemporary popular music, this resulted in music being the ‘norm’ and established a culture amongst the students to want to participate in music activities. With the intention of “performance opportunities involving students of all skills levels and various competencies” (p.229), the music culture within the school extended to the student body being both accepting and supportive of “less competent performers” (p.229). The National Review of School Music Education offered examples of where school singing was established culture at the school. Student perspectives on school
singing included one primary student stating that singing allowed the communication of feelings (p.74) and another primary student expressed his belief that at his current school “it is good allowing everyone to join the choir” (p.75) because at his previous school, choir participation was elective. The preference for inclusiveness was further expressed by a student who did not believe that students should have to be tested in order to play an instrument at school. Further benefits to school singing participation was that it facilitated excursions as participation allowed primary students to “go out to sing” (p.74). In the National Review of School Music Education (2005) there was also evidence to suggest that repertoire variety was important for student enjoyment of school singing activities. While one primary student expressed the desire to learn more songs instead of doing the “same ones over and over” (p.75), another stated that their current school music programme was different to that at a previous school as they currently “learn different songs every week” (p.74).

Different issues were raised in regards to secondary school singing participation. A secondary school student expressed frustration at being forced to join the school choir just because they were studying elective music. Choir practices were held outside normal school hours, and as such the mandatory participation interrupted the student’s study, sport and recreation time. The student, believing that singing was neither their ‘forte’ nor their area of study, qualified their frustration by saying that they would not mind if the extra practices were related to their instrument (p.74). The timetabling of secondary music was also an issue expressed in the National Review of School Music Education with one student response, although continuing with band participation, indicating the dropping of music as a subject because it did not fit into their timetable (p.75).

The National Review of School Music Education suggested that participation in school music within a continuum or a “spectrum of quality” (p.79) encompasses four levels ranging from no music, to some participation for enjoyment, to participation and engagement and to performance focused participation and engagement. Associated with the latter three levels, in corresponding order, were pedagogy for participation, pedagogy for extension and pedagogy for expertise. The Review states:

Effective education begins with participation and enjoyment and moves through extension to expertise (p.80).
2.5.3 Current Practice

Current NSW education policy states that the Music syllabuses for K-6 (BOS NSW, 2000a), for Years 7-10 (BOS NSW, 2003b)\(^{35}\) and for Years 11 and 12 Stage 6 HSC (BOS NSW, 1999b, 1999c) are viewed as an sequential “continuum of learning” (BOS NSW, 1999b, p.7; BOS NSW, 1999c, p.7; BOS NSW, 2003b, p.49). Currently, music in primary education is a mandated subject. Music is also a mandated 100 hour subject for students in secondary education which is typically studied by Stage 4 students. Once mandatory music is completed, music becomes an elective subject choice. As singing is an expected school music activity, the following review of the literature contains current primary and secondary syllabus, and syllabus related documents pertaining to these courses. A review of the syllabus documents, together with support documents, reveals the role of the singing voice in NSW music education. Within these documents, singing is identified as a performing activity (BOS NSW, 2000a, p.7), a sound source (BOS NSW, 2000a, p.12), a musical activity (BOS NSW, 2000a, p.12), a vehicle for musical performance (BOS NSW, 2003b, p.23), a musical activity (BOS NSW, 2000a, p.12), and a musical instrument (BOS NSW, 1999a, p.12-17).

2.5.3.1 Primary

The *Education Act* (Government, 1990) (BOS NSW, 2000a, p.5) requires that the primary curriculum must be studied in each of six key learning areas. Creative Arts K – 6 is one key learning area of the NSW primary curriculum. The *Creative Arts K – 6 Syllabus* (BOS NSW, 2000a) replaced three previous syllabuses: Music K - 6 (1984), Visual Arts K - 6 (1989) and Craft K – 6 (1972) (p.5), and encompasses visual arts, music, drama and dance. The *Creative Arts K – 6 Syllabus* is designed:

... to enable students to gain increasing understanding and accomplishment in the visual arts, music, drama and dance and for students to appreciate the meanings and values that each of the artforms offer personally, culturally and as forms of communication (p.8).

Underpinning the *Creative Arts K – 6 Syllabus* is the rationale that the development of “increasing understanding and accomplishment” (p.8) gained from studying the four areas of Creative Arts K – 6, in the longer term, will assist “students in their lifelong learning in the visual arts, music, drama and dance” (p.7). It is anticipated that it will

\(^{35}\) During the course of this research, *Music Years 7-10 Syllabus* (BOS NSW, 2003) replaced the *Music Syllabus Years 7-10* (BOS NSW, 1994).
also allow students to “contribute to cultural life”, be “informed” cultural consumers, “empathise with others” and “consider a range of career paths” (p.7).

While acknowledging that schools may use additional specialist teachers, the Creative Arts K – 6 Syllabus is primarily designed to be used by generalist classroom teachers and to assist teachers “in their planning, programming, assessment and reporting of student achievement” (p.5). The musical objectives of the Creative Arts K – 6 Syllabus are that students will develop skills in performing by “singing, playing and moving using musical concepts”, in organising sounds also “using musical concepts” and “in listening to and discussing musical works” (p.8). Musical concepts are listed as being “duration, pitch, dynamics, tone colour and structure” (p.11). Musical concepts are seen as providing a basis for “gaining musical knowledge and understanding” (p.90). The development of musical concepts is also viewed as being “a possible focus for skill development” (p.90). For effective inclusion and teaching of musical concepts, the Creative Arts K – 6 Syllabus pre-supposes that classroom teachers are either trained or skilled in discerning musical concepts and can both impart and assess these concepts in ways that will foster the musical knowledge, skills and understanding of their students.

Singing, playing and moving are the three performing activities defined in Creative Arts K-6 Music. The Creative Arts K-6 Syllabus identifies the voice as being “the most accessible sound source” (p.12). Singing is determined as having a “central role in each student’s overall musical development” (p.12) and is the vehicle that allows “all students to be involved in music making” (p.12). These statements indicate that singing in NSW primary education is a mandatory musical activity. This central role may be in part due to the acknowledgement that the voice is the most accessible sound source (p.12). In budgetary considerations, the singing voice is also the most cost effective musical instrument.

The Creative Arts K – 6 Syllabus provides direction in teaching content for each educational stage from Early Stage 1 to Stage 3. Beginning with the use of the spoken voice to cultivate “rhythmic awareness”, the syllabus encourages the use of “speech canons”, “simple rounds”, “partner songs” and “songs with ostinato patterns” (p.12). The introduction of more complex singing repertoire is only recommended when “students
sing with confidence and in tune” (p.12). The syllabus advises that singing activities be reinforced through the provision of “good singing models” (p.12). Recordings embodying “accurate pitch and good tonal quality” (p.12) and recordings of children’s voices are identified as providing appropriate singing models. Additionally, the syllabus indicates that examples of recorded popular music may provide familiar singing examples to students. The significance of listening and aural awareness are further emphasized by indicating that in singing “students develop their vocal tone and pitch accuracy from the models they hear” (p.12). The syllabus states that listening “provides the key to expressive interpretation of song” (p.12) and “to balanced voice blending within a group” (p.12). In other music activities that may involve singing, such as in the compositional process, students are encouraged to experiment, to imitate and to improvise (p.110).

It is recommended that singing and related vocal activities be a “regular part of music learning experiences” (p.92) and should include chants, rhymes and songs (p.93). Of specific relevance to vocal activities, learning experiences in chants and rhymes may include the making and using of vocal sounds for accompaniment, for the creation of rhythmic patterns and for tone colours. While stating that songs should be age-appropriate (p.12), vocal music is viewed as being able to “extend” the vocal abilities of students (p.92). Vocal music selections should be representative of a variety of cultures, time periods, musical genres and vocal techniques (p.93). The syllabus suggests that learning experiences with songs could include exploring pitch, tone colour and vocal techniques (p.93). The syllabus acknowledges that in “singing, for example, students develop their vocal tone and pitch accuracy from the models they hear” (p.13). Teachers are therefore required to play recorded music “that demonstrates accurate pitch and good tonal quality, and particularly music that uses children’s voices” (p.12). The latter is seen to provide good singing models. Popular music recordings are seen to provide possible “links with music commonly heard in the students’ environment” (p.12). With specific relevance to singing, teachers are encouraged to participate in singing and show that “singing is an activity which many people enjoy as well as learn from” (p.12). In addition to continuing to “model [the] use of the voice” (p.61, p.63, p.65) to Early Stage 1 and Stage 2 students and “model good use of the voice” (p.67) to Stage 3 students, teachers are required to be eclectic in their repertoire selections, musically discerning and musically skilled.
Assessments in Creative Arts K–6 Music may be both formative, as a cumulative account of student achievements, and summative in assessing student achievements at a particular time. Assessments should be relevant to both the content of what is taught and to the syllabus outcomes (p.103). Assessment procedures “should relate to the knowledge and skills that are taught within the school programme and to the syllabus outcomes” (p.103). In Music, the learning outcomes in relation to singing include participating in singing, demonstrating musical concepts, creating songs, listening and responding to music. Through the progression of educational stages in Music from Early Stage 1 to Stage 3, these learning outcomes increase in complexity. For example, “demonstrating an awareness of musical concepts” in Early Stage 1 (p.317) expands to “demonstrating a knowledge of musical concepts” in Stage 3 (p.31). Similarly, a student in Music – Early Stage 1 will perform simple songs “maintaining a sense of beat and rhythm based on rhymes, children’s game and playground chants” (p.38) and may explore repertoire by “performing the song faster, slower, louder, softer, using different instruments, whispering words, shouting words, using a different voice, using different words, adding actions or body percussion” (p.38). In addition students may explore “different ways of using the voice, eg speaking, singing, shouting, whispering, using a funny voice, singing like a rock star” (p.38). A student in Music - Stage 3 will “sing a variety of songs, individually and in groups, with accurate pitch, duration, tone colour and expressive dynamics” (p.41) and may explore “metre changes, rhythm changes, tempo changes and graduations, dynamic changes and graduation, pitch changes and changes in pitch register, exploring structures, incorporating variations in tone colour and sound production methods” (p.41).

2.5.3.2 Secondary

In the Music Years 7-10 Syllabus (BOS NSW, 2003b), which was implemented in 2005 with Year 7 and Year 9 students, singing is identified as a musical activity occurring within the learning experiences of music students. The voice is listed as a sound source (p.17) and voices are included for study in the musical concept of tone colour. Musical activities related to singing include the concept of texture being “the way voices and/or instruments are combined in music” (p.17). The inclusion of texture allows students to demonstrate the roles of voices (p.17). The concept of tone colour includes the identification of sound sources in relation to singing and may be the “single voice, multiple voices, voices accompanied or unaccompanied by instruments” (p.17). The
concept of pitch incorporates “definite pitch: melodic sounds, for example, the singing voice” (p.16). Within the syllabus, the concepts of music are explored through the learning experiences of performing, composing and listening, within a range of styles, periods and genres. In the Stage 4 Music content objective of Performing – Mandatory Course, performing is described “as a means of self-expression” (p.11). The performing experiences for the mandatory course include student experiences in singing (p.23). While the content objective of musical performance also requires students to be self-expressive in the Stage 5 elective course (p.30), students learn to “perform individually and in groups a range repertoire and styles” (p.30). In the elective course, students are required to study Australian art music (p.36). Vocal aspects for study may also include a range of classical and contemporary topics (pp.36-39). Performing in the elective course incorporates performance presentation (p.35). Students are to also have experiences in sight-singing (p.35).

Music teachers are responsible for the development of teaching and learning programmes that may incorporate a combination of concept, skill and topic based approaches (p.29). Topics in the mandatory course may include those listed in the syllabus, but may also include additional topics devised by the teacher (p.29). Repertoire includes “an exposure to art music as well as a range of music that reflects the diversity of Australian culture” (p.29). In relation to music generally and more specifically to singing, teachers are therefore required to be innovative and to have a broad base of repertoire knowledge and repertoire resources. In this context an understanding of, if not experience in, classical and contemporary singing would be relevant.

Assessment strategies in the current *Music Years 7-10 Syllabus* reflect the level to which the syllabus outcomes have been achieved. While music is to “enrich students musical experiences” (p.29), student feedback should be “individualised and linked to opportunities for improvement” (p.57) and performance opportunities should accommodate “individual [student] needs, interests and abilities” (p.18). While the syllabus allows for the provision of student progress information being disseminated to students and parents, parents are involved in the “assessment for learning” process by “reflecting on assessment data” (p.56). In this way, parental involvement may also be viewed as support for school musical activities.
The gaining of “a general experience in the study of music” (p.29) is highlighted in the context of the Music mandatory course. Of particular relevance to students who sing are the outcomes of the mandatory course including performing “in a range of musical styles”, demonstrating “solo and/or ensemble awareness” and demonstrating “an understanding of the musical concepts” (p.23). The acquisition of further knowledge, understanding and skills form part of the outcomes of the elective course which include performing repertoire “with increasing levels of complexity in a range of musical styles” (p.30) selected from a range of compulsory and additional topics (p.36).

The introduction of the Life Skills component of *Music Years 7-10 Syllabus* is designed for students with “special education needs” (p.40) when the content of the mandatory and elective courses may not be appropriate. In relation to singing, students studying Life Skills are encouraged to “experiment with voice to produce musical sounds, eg whisper, talk, sing, whistle, hum” (p. 43). Outcomes in Life Skills, including performing, moving, vocalizing, experimenting, communicating, appreciating, engaging in performing, engaging in composing and engaging in listening may all be “demonstrated independently or with support” (p.40).

The release in 1997 of the NSW Government White Paper *Securing Their Future* (1997) recommended that Higher School Certificate (HSC) Curricula be reformed and outlined a new set of criteria on which all HSC subject curricula were to be based. These criteria included “prior knowledge assumed in students enrolling in the course, and the manner in which that knowledge is to be built upon” (p.8). In this context, ‘prior knowledge’ includes the foundation and prior learning outcomes contained in the sequential “continuum of learning” (BOS NSW, 1999b, p.7; BOS NSW, 1999c, p.7; BOS NSW, 2003b, p.49). HSC Music incorporates three courses Music 1, Music 2 and Music Extension. The rationale for Music 1 includes the intention “to encourage the desire to continue learning in formal and informal music settings after school” (BOS NSW, 1999b, p.6). Music 2 is designed to “serve as a pathway for further formal study in tertiary institutions or in fields that use their musical knowledge” (BOS NSW, 1999c, p.6) while the Music Extension course offers a high degree of specialisation (p.6).

Music 1, Music 2 and Music Extension courses were first implemented with Year 11
students in 2000 with the first examinations of students in these courses occurring in 2001. The purpose of Music 1 is to “provide students with the opportunity to acquire knowledge, skills, understanding and attitudes within a broad musical context” (BOS NSW, 1999b, p.6). Students who enter Music 1 are expected to have previously completed the Mandatory or Additional Study courses. Music 1 provides students “with opportunities to engage in a range of musical styles, including contemporary popular music, and for many, it will serve as a pathway for further training and employment in the music industry or in contemporary music fields” (p.6). Students will range in ability from “those with beginner instrumental and/or vocal skills to those with highly developed performance skills” (p.8). Unlike Music 2 and Music Extension, Music 1 students require “no prior knowledge of musical notation beyond the basic introduction in the Years 7-10 Mandatory Course” (p.8).

Singing may be an instrument of choice for Music 1 HSC performance assessments. The Music 1 Stage 6 Syllabus (BOS NSW, 1999b) suggests that “performance skills should be fostered by providing extensive performance opportunities in a variety of media, styles and genres according to individual needs, interests and abilities” (p. 20). Performance assessment criteria include a “demonstration of technical skills”, “stylistic interpretation” of repertoire and “musical expression” (BOS NSW, n.d. a, p.2). There is a range of assessment criteria and a correlating marking scale. Demonstrating “highly-developed technical skills” (p.2) is the highest ranking on the marking scale, demonstrating “very limited technical skills” (p.3) has the lowest ranking. In between these rankings, and ranked in descending order, are “developed technical skills” (p.2), “competent technical skills” (p.3) and “basic technical skills” (p.3). The technical skills for assessment purposes include “technical fluency, technical facility, intonation and articulation” (p.2). In addition to technique, performance assessment criteria include “sensitivity of chosen repertoire” (p.2) and demonstrating a level of “stylistic understanding” (p.2). The range of stylistic understanding levels include “perceptive” (p.2), “a sense” (p.3), “basic” (p.3) to “little evidence of” (p.3).

While the performer’s technical ability is assessed, both internally through the school and by the HSC external examination, there is no discussion of appropriate techniques for individual instruments, including voice, within the Music 1 Stage 6 Syllabus. However, by its very inclusion in assessments, technical ability requires school music teachers to have adequate training and understanding of a variety of instruments. It
also requires external examiners to be proficient in technical knowledge of various instruments and their relevant application. Technical ability, when implemented, can enhance all other performance aspects including “stylistic understanding”, “dynamics” and “expressive techniques” (BOS NSW, 2002, p.2).

The purpose of Music 2 is to provide students with “the opportunity to build on the knowledge, skills, understanding and attitudes gained in Music 7 – 10” (BOS NSW, 1999c, p.6). Music 2, with a focus on Western art music (p.6), assumes that “students will have a formal background in music, have a developed music literacy skills and have some knowledge and understanding of musical styles” (BOS NSW, 1999b, p.8). Music 2 provides students “with opportunities to extend their musical knowledge” (BOS NSW, 1999c, p.6). Music Extension, expands studies undertaken in Music 2, and provides scope for students with a high level of “musical sophistication” (p.6):

It provides an opportunity for musically and academically talented students to undertake a rigorous music study commensurate with their academic and musical sophistication (p.6).

In Music 2 and Music Extension the HSC student should successfully address “the stylistic and technical demands of the music as a soloist” (p.14). Presumably this would require either music teachers to be highly proficient in Western art music tuition within a class context or would require students to study their chosen instrument privately. For singers, this requirement and indeed such repertoire, may place great demands upon developing voices. Much classical repertoire requires extensive ranges with a “one register” (Miller, 1996, p.150) approach and contain elements usually associated with more developed and studied voices. The focus of Music 2 and Music Extension also places greater emphasis on more established music traditions than on the more contemporary popular styles contained in Music 1. In doing so, it appears to reinforce their complexity within a musical hierarchy.

The BOS NSW introduced a set of standards, against which HSC examination performances and school assessments are to be reported. In this context, HSC assessments form part of a standards-referenced system (2003a). In the BOS NSW music syllabuses, learning outcomes are listed, together with performance achievement bands. However, no criteria or directives specifically in relation to the assessment of student singing are offered. In a discussion on assessing young solo singing
performance, Welch (Collins & Aggett, 2005) questions the appropriateness of assessing young singers against criteria designed to suit “any instrument” (p.62,ii).

Assessment specifications and procedures for the final performance HSC examinations included:

Sound and balance checks should be carried out before the examination begins. Candidates’ programs should be organised to accommodate scheduled flow of one or more students utilising the same technology. No person other than the performers and examiners is permitted in the examination venue. Ensemble members, accompanists and page turners are permitted for the duration of the piece in which they are involved (BOS NSW, 1999b, p. 40; BOS NSW, 1999c, p. 48).

These specifications and procedures have implications for all singers (and instrumentalists) wanting to use sound reinforcement, as the students themselves would have to monitor and adjust their own ‘sound’ during assessments if required. Unlike many electrical instrument amplifiers that are located within close proximity to the performers, singers using PA systems may find that the mixing desk is set some distance from their actual performance area. In addition, the front of house PA sound that examiners hear emanates from the speakers usually positioned in front of the singer. In contrast, instrumentalists tend to have their amps positioned behind them making their resultant sound both audible and accessible.

2.5.3.3 Curriculum Support

Supporting the Creative Arts K – 6 Syllabus (BOS NSW, 2000a), are the following documents published by the BOS NSW:

Creative Arts K – 6 Introducing the Creative Arts K – 6 Syllabus to Parents and Community Members (2000b)
Creative Arts K – 6 Principal’s Package (2000c)
Creative Arts K – 6 Units of Work (2000d)

The Creative Arts K – 6 Introducing the Creative Arts K – 6 Syllabus to Parents and Community Members (BOS NSW, 2000b) acknowledges that parents are “their child’s first and foremost educators” (p.5) and as such parents can help to develop their child’s interest in music by encouraging children to listen to “all kinds of music”; “to move to music and to perform at home”; “to play or respond to music” that is played at home; to experiment with sound using different home objects; to experiment with the sound of
different instruments; and to meet musicians and attend performances (p.6). In addition parents are encouraged to let their children learn a musical instrument. In relation to singing, parents are encouraged to “value your child’s singing and encourage them to sing” (p.6).

The Creative Arts K – 6 Principal’s Package (BOS NSW, 2000c), in providing a summary of the Creative Arts K – 6 Syllabus and supporting documents, states that the syllabus includes “guidance about what to teach in each stage in each artform” (p.4). However, it is the Creative Arts K – 6 Units of Work (BOS NSW, 2000d) that offers examples of how to achieve syllabus learning outcomes and examples of diverse activities for creative arts. This support document includes teaching notes, learning experiences, outcomes and provided links to other Key Learning Areas where appropriate. In the Music section, voice usage is included in seven of the eight units or work samples (pp.56-59, pp.60-64, pp.65-70, pp.72-78, pp.79-82, pp.83-88, pp.94-99). In the first work sample for Early Stage 1 (pp.56-59), students explore the musical concepts of duration, pitch and structure through song. Song awareness is developed through a combination of learning experiences. It is suggested that the teacher sing the song or that students listen to a recorded version of the song. The assessment strategy is a performance of the song that combines singing, playing percussion and moving. However, no reference is made to specific elements of vocal technique or voice care.

In the Creative Arts K – 6 Units of Work, samples increase in complexity with each ensuing educational Stage. Pitch and dynamics are introduced in the second Stage 1 work sample (pp.72-78) and learning experiences related to the song include students singing to instrumental accompaniment. During Stage 2, the exploration of musical concepts is evident in each unit of work (pp.79-82, pp.83-88). The final Stage 3 work sample (pp.94-99) combines the five musical concepts of duration, pitch, dynamics, tone colour, and structure. In this work sample, it is suggested that students sing along to the chorus using the recorded version of the song. The Creative Arts K – 6 School Planning for the Creative Arts (BOS NSW, 2001) contains answers to the most frequently asked questions “that schools and teachers may need to consider in their planning for the Creative Arts” (p.4). One question posed is:

We/I know a little about the Visual Arts and/or Music but realise we/I need to spend some more time in these areas. How can we/I do this? (p.4).
In the answer to this question is the suggestion that teachers should seek out workshops to develop their expertise and understanding of these artforms (pp.9 -10). Other strategies are offered, but no actual teaching strategies are included to assist teachers in their teaching or assessing of Music activities, incorporating singing, in the Creative Arts K – 6 Syllabus.

The Music Stage 6 Support Document (BOS NSW, 1999a) was written as a support document for Stage 6 Music. The first example for a Music 1 Stage 6 topic area is “An Instrument and its Repertoire - Focus: The Voice” (pp.12-16). This topic is designed to provide:

...greater understanding of how the voice is used in music and the contribution the voice makes to many musical styles and genres. Throughout this, the repertoire to be presented in the HSC practical examination is developed and refined with the skills, knowledge and understanding gained as a result of the study (p.12).

The topic is designed for classroom delivery over a ten week period, incorporating 5 x 45 minutes classes each week (p.12). This topic outline contains suggested lesson plans and lists resources that include vocal warm-up exercises, texts on vocal techniques and on the physiology of the voice (p.12).


2.5.3.4 Summary of Issues: Singing in NSW Schools

The literature revealed, historically and in current practice, the role of singing in NSW education. As music is mandated subject in primary education through to secondary Stage 4, and as singing is an expected performance experience, teachers will be teaching singing to developing voices. In addition to BOS NSW syllabus and syllabus support documents, NSW DET provide syllabus support documents with specific
relevance to singing in the form of *Vocal-Ease* Modules 1, 2, 3 and 4.

### 2.6 Research Questions and the Literature Review

Historically, the use of the singing voice has been embodied in NSW Education for a variety of different purposes - from the singing of hymns in denominational schools, to the inclusion of patriotic and school songs, to singing within the context of music. The current variety and purposes of school singing evident in the literature review, together with research findings in relation to developing voices, highlighted the issues that facilitated and informed the research design.

#### 2.6.1 Who teaches school singing?

Literature and research in music and/or singing in NSW schools has documented that teacher training and experience, or indeed a lack of relevant training and experience, clearly impacts on the effectiveness of music and singing activities in schools. There have been consistent calls for music to be treated as a specialist area requiring specialist teachers. If there is indeed the need for specialisation in generalist music terms, then there may well possibly be a need for further specialisation in specific areas such as singing and vocal technique. In relation to current singing activities in NSW schools, the relevance of teacher training, experience, voice knowledge and vocal ability of generalist and specialist teachers warrants investigation. Teachers are also required to participate in singing activities to show that “singing is an activity which many people enjoy as well as learn from” (BOS NSW, 2000a, p.12). If the requirement is for teachers to show that they enjoy singing, then teachers should, at the very least be confident when singing.

The relevance of training and expertise is further highlighted in the range of musical styles, suggested in the music syllabuses and syllabus support documents, that students experience. As the literature indicates, both classical and contemporary repertoire pose different vocal technique challenges. The demands of classical repertoire can be taxing on developing voices while the maintaining of stylistic integrity of contemporary repertoire may be detrimental to vocal health. If a teacher is ignorant of or cannot implement appropriate vocal technique, then the less than ideal role of vocal coach (Miller, 1995b) is likely to be assumed. In this scenario, the singer may be required to perform interpretive tasks and repertoire without having the technical basis
to do so. While the syllabus documents refer to the acquisition of technical and interpretive skills at secondary level, there is no reference as to how these skills are to be acquired. An ignorance of physiological voice function could also possibly lead to a less than optimum vocal development and vocal health problems.

2.6.2 What types of singing are taught in schools?

School singing activities related to music syllabuses were identified through a review of the current NSW DET documents and included primary class singing and learning experiences related to secondary music and music assessments. In addition, some NSW primary and secondary school children sing in school choirs. The diversity and implementation of school singing activities in Sydney government schools, and how these relate or do not relate to syllabuses, is not yet documented.

An apparent lack of teacher training and expertise also raises implications for the modeling of singing and for the musical accompaniment of school singing. The suggested use of recorded modeling (BOS NSW, 2000a), carries the underlying assumption that generalist classroom teachers are musically discerning, and at the same time eclectic, in their musical tastes. If teachers rely on popular recordings for vocal modeling purposes, then possibly inappropriate and potentially damaging vocal habits may be inherent in the modeling examples. A predominant use of recorded musical accompaniment for singing, as outlined in the literature, may impose interpretative limitations and result in the implementation of inappropriate vocal keys.

2.6.3 How is school singing taught?

The literature clearly demonstrates the relevance of vocal technique, based in science, to vocal pedagogy. At primary level, the *Creative Arts K – 6 Syllabus* would indicate that children are taught a song for the purposes of musical exploration, not how to sing the song. Phillips (1996) warns against using just the song approach in singing as singing, devoid of vocal technique, will not facilitate the optimum vocal development of students. He writes that “many children become trapped in their lower voices at an early age and never learn to sing on the inner edges of their vocal folds” (p.71). A standardised approach to singing does not allow for the individuality of voices nor shows any consideration for individual vocal development. Unless vocal music choices are carefully made, there is concern as to whether the singing of vocal music would in
reality limit, rather than extend, students’ vocal abilities. Whether children are taught a song through mimicking or listening, or whether they are taught how to sing, implementing appropriate vocal technique, requires investigation.

The learning outcomes for Music Early Stage 1 include singing “the song faster, slower, louder, softer”, and “whispering words, shouting words, using a different voice” (BOS NSW, 2000a, p.37). Different ways of using the voice are listed as “speaking, singing, shouting, whispering, using a funny voice, singing like a rock star” (p.38). For young developing voices, such voice usages may prove to be inappropriate and potentially damaging. Unless specifically trained, teachers may not be adequately aware of what was actually potentially damaging to developing voices. Similarly in Music Stage 1, students are required to perform material using different dynamics and to “explore vocal qualities in their singing activities” (p.38). They are also to sing “songs developing a sense of beat, pitch, tone colour and structure” (p.38). Music Stage 2 requires students to change tone colour (p.39). By Music Stage 3, students are expected to sing “a variety of songs, individually and in groups, with accurate pitch, duration and tone colour and expressive dynamics” (p.40). No definition of appropriate tone colour/s for developing voices is offered in current syllabus documents.

The literature suggests that it is not only beneficial, but also appropriate, to include vocal health issues in vocal pedagogy. Whether the issues of vocal health are addressed in singing activities in NSW schools warrants investigation. Reporting an absence of vocal exercises at secondary level, Vaughan (2000) identified that “a high percentage of the trained [secondary] music teachers of participants in the survey appear to neglect the vocal health of the adolescents in their care” (p.7). Within the literature, vocal care is sometimes equated with vocal health. However, the literature demonstrates that care taken during the developmental stages of prepubescent and adolescent voices can facilitate the healthy development of young voices. Therefore, for the purposes of this study, vocal care is defined as the implementation of teaching methodologies that will ensure the vocal health and optimum development of young voices.

Although implying that students’ singing ability develops over time, the BOS NSW Music syllabuses contain no specific direction in the care of developing voices.
However, the developmental stages for both genders are clearly researched, defined and their characteristics outlined. Research and scientific based understanding of the voice indicate that care should be taken during the developmental stages of young voices. Learning how to sing, how much to sing and under what conditions singing activities should occur, therefore have specific relevance to developing voices. The care of developing voices should be paramount to any teachers of young singers, choir directors and musical directors. Whether the current music curriculum content and implementation allows for the developmental stages of students’ vocal anatomy and physiology, and indeed the accessibility of tuition of the voice as an instrument, requires research.

2.6.4 Why is school singing taught?

The literature identified syllabus related singing activities that possibly occur in NSW schools. In addition to musical exploration, the purpose of school singing activities were identified as being cultural, social and creative. While historical documents provided traditional relevance as to the inclusion of school singing activities, no research was identified that provided insight into the current school singing practices in Sydney government schools.

2.7 Précis: Chapter 2

In Chapter Two, the literature relevant to four broad categories of teaching singing, developing voices, school singing and singing in NSW schools was reviewed and concluded with literature initiated responses to the four principal research questions. Chapter Three outlines the methods of research implemented in this study. It begins with the conceptual framework upon which the research is based. The foremost research questions are then outlined in conjunction with groupings of subset questions.
3.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the conceptual framework and rationale upon which the research design is based. In this chapter, the research design to facilitate the investigation of teacher perceptions of singing in Sydney government schools and to address the research questions is discussed; research administration of Parts 1 and 2 is presented. The chapter concludes with the research validity, together with the ethics approval and additional consents required to conduct the research.

3.2 Conceptual Framework

The research design is founded on the constructs of a conceptual framework as defined by Miles & Hubermann (1994, pp.18-22). As this study focuses on singing in schools, the assumed conceptual relationships between teachers, students and resultant school singing are clearly defined and shown in blue (see Figure 3.1, over page). Subset areas of inquiry (see subset questions, section 3.3, p.57) appear in the pink boxes. The assumed two main types of school singing appear as syllabus\(^\text{36}\) and non-syllabus\(^\text{37}\). The primary research questions are highlighted in green. Using the conceptual relationships and the possible impact they may have on each other, the conceptual framework was pivotal in formulating the areas of inquiry and the research questions.

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\(^{36}\) School singing that is an integral part, or is a direct consequence, of Board of Studies NSW music syllabuses.

\(^{37}\) School singing that is not an integral part, or a direct a consequence, of any Board of Studies NSW syllabus.
1. Who teaches school singing?

2. What types of school singing are taught?

3. How is school singing taught?

4. Why is school singing taught?

**SYLLABUS; NON-SYLLABUS**

- Creative Arts
- Music
- Thematic
- Choir
- Cultural

**TEACHERS**

- Training
- Experience
- Knowledge
- Vocal Ability
- Resources

**STUDENTS**

- Vocal Development
- Vocal Health
- Vocal Technique
- Vocal Ability
- Repertoire

**PERFORMANCES; ASSESSMENTS**

**SINGING IN SYDNEY GOVERNMENT SCHOOLS**

*Figure 3.1: Conceptual Framework*
3.3 Research Questions and Subset Questions

In determining who teaches singing, what types of singing, the methods used to teach singing and the reasons as to why singing is taught in Sydney government schools, together with a presumption that all children will sing within their school environment at some stage during their schooling, the following sub-set of research questions were raised:

1. Who teaches singing in Sydney government schools?
   1.i Do primary generalist classroom teachers teach school singing?
   1.ii Do primary specialist teachers teach school singing?
   1.iii Do secondary music teachers teach school singing?
   1.iv Do private singing teachers teach school singing?

2. What types of singing are taught in Sydney government schools?
   2.i What school singing activities are offered to children and adolescents?
   2.ii Do the types of school singing vary at different educational Stages?

3. How is singing taught in Sydney government schools?
   3.i Are children and adolescents taught a song or are they taught how to sing (it)?
   3.ii When teaching primary and secondary school singing, are the developmental stages of child and adolescent voices considered?
   3.iii Are there different approaches to and styles of teaching school singing?

4. Why is singing taught in Sydney government schools?
   4.i What are the purposes of singing in schools?
   4.ii Is school singing part of a K-12 continuum of learning in music?
   4.iii Is school singing relevant in an educational environment?
   4.iv Is school singing valued in an educational environment?

Ten of the sub-set research questions, that is 1.i, 1.ii, 1.iii, 1.iv, 2.i, 2.ii, 3.i, 3.ii, 4.i and 4.ii, were formulated in the initial stages of the research design. Sub-set research questions 3.iii, 4.iii and 4.iv were formulated during Part 1 data analysis. By providing
triggers for additional areas of investigation and analysis, the formulation and reformulation of the research questions were crucial to the appropriateness of the research design (Flick, 2002) and as their principal function was generative, leading to profitable areas of inquiry, none of the research questions were directly asked of questionnaire respondents or interview participants.

3.4 Research Design

A broad based questionnaire formed Part 1 of the research. Subsequent in-depth interviews, Part 2 of the research design, were shaped principally by Part 1 findings (see Figure 3.2).

Figure 3.2: The Research Design

![The Research Design Diagram]
3.5 Research Methods

Employing data collection strategies of questionnaires and interviews, the research is a type of multiple method mode of inquiry (Silverman, 2000) consisting of two sequential stages of data collection and analysis. Part 1, the broad study, was designed to provide an overview of current pedagogical singing practices in primary and secondary Sydney government schools. A questionnaire method was preferable as not only did it allow access to a large number of potential respondents across the Sydney metropolitan regions, it was also viewed as an appropriate means of addressing the NSW DET requirement of initially seeking school principal’s permission. Seeking the principal’s permission, while simultaneously forwarding questionnaires to potential respondents through the principal, streamlined the approval and distribution process. Although the collection of quantitative data was planned through the use of closed questions and scaled responses, many questions in Part 1 were also open-ended for respondents to answer in their own words and as such also facilitated for the collection of qualitative data. Part 1 was therefore designed to identify conceptual similarities and differences present in the data, which in turn were used to focus and orientate Part 2 of the study, the in-depth interviews.

In combination with Part 1 findings, and with the aim of generating a cumulative model of singing teaching in Sydney government schools, Part 2 of the research draws on qualitative strategies of researcher sensitivity, being my own expertise as a singing teaching, and purposeful sampling (maximum variation) (Merriam, 1998, p.62). The analysis utilized a constant comparative method of analysis (Merriam, 1998 p.18; Strauss and Corbin, 1998, p.67) to determine patterns in the data (Merriam, 1998, p.18). Merriam suggests that the extensive use of the constant comparative method of data analysis in “all kinds of qualitative studies” (p.18) can lead to an “indiscriminate use of the term grounded theory [emphasis in original]” (p.18).

This study therefore makes the distinction that while drawing on several principles and procedures of grounded theory, the design and implementation of Part 1 of the study and the use of pre-determined questions during Part 2, preclude the term grounded theory being applied to the research design. However, this study utilizes strategies developed by grounded theorists and as the interview questions emerged from the findings of Part 1, they were grounded in data. As all interview questions required NSW
DET approval prior to the commencement of Part 2 data collection, further grounding of the data was achieved during the interview process by eliminating questions from subsequent interviews that had not previously generated new data. This offered a focused, qualitative approach that permitted in-depth investigation of the areas of enquiry. The interviews were semi-structured as when appropriate to segue from previous responses, questions were asked out of the pre-determined order. Prompts such as “can you expand that?” were also used to probe in-depth respondent answers when appropriate. The development of the interview schedule for Part 2 of the research is discussed in detail and placed sequentially in the first section of Chapter 8.

3.6 Part 1 Research Design

The design of Part 1 comprised four progressive stages, which was followed by the distribution strategy:

- draft questionnaire
- development of a questionnaire for pre-study
- pre-study
- development of the final questionnaire instrument
- distribution strategy

In addition to the research questions providing areas of impetus, five key issues were identified that also helped shape the research design of Part 1 questionnaires:

1. Singing in schools may be syllabus and/or non-syllabus.
2. Syllabus school singing may form part of a continuum of musical learning from Kindergarten to Year 12.
3. Singing may be taught by generalist classroom teachers, music teachers and specialist music and/or singing teachers.
4. There is a variety of school sizes and locations within DET Metropolitan Sydney Regions that may impact on singing participation in schools.
5. Information pertaining to specialist expertise and appointments is not available through DET statistics.

These key issues impacted on the research design by including classroom and school choir teachers in the study, by investigating singing in both primary and secondary schools, by drawing on respondents from a range of school sizes and locations, and by
identifying respondents’ singing and/or training and experience.

3.6.1 Questionnaire Development

An initial draft of the questionnaire was submitted to University of Western Sydney Human Research Ethics Committee. The initial draft consisted of six versions of the questionnaire for completion by the following categories of teachers:

- primary teachers of class music
- primary choir teachers
- class music teachers at secondary coeducational schools
- choir teachers at secondary coeducational schools
- class music teachers at secondary single sex schools
- choir teachers at secondary single sex schools

Each questionnaire version was designed to suit the potential respondent teacher category, however the draft questionnaire structure and question content of each version was essentially the same. Wanting to maintain an emphasis on respondents using their own words rather than numbered scales and rankings, the decision was made to use word scales. A four word scale of “no”, “sometimes”, “often” and “yes” was devised and implemented for four questions. Opportunities to report “other” responses and open-ended questions were included.

This draft questionnaire contained the following areas of investigation:

- School Singing Activities
- Ages & Gender of Students
- Class Singing or Choral Activities
- Repertoire
- Choral Activities
- Assessment of Singers
- Private Singing
- Student Participation

The draft questionnaire was reviewed by two experienced researchers, one in vocal pedagogy and the other in music education, for content validity and for wording clarity. After revisions and suggestions, and in conjunction with a review of syllabus documents, eight questions including those relating to rehearsal and class times,
accompaniment choices for singers, vocal music selection and vocal health were expanded. The four word scale was expanded to a five word scale and included “rarely” and “always” instead of “yes”. A ranking scale was devised and implemented for repertoire selection criteria.

A clarification of potential respondents to the primary class music questionnaire was also made. Previously the direction had been for this questionnaire to be completed by all primary class music teachers. This direction was narrowed to only Year 3 teachers who may include generalist classroom teachers or specialist teachers. This decision was made not only to aid school principals in the forwarding of questionnaires to potential respondents, but also because Year 3 is a pivotal year in student transition from Stage 1 to Stage 2 primary schooling. It was also seen as encompassing an age group with a vocal developmental stage that was essentially pre-pubertal.

3.6.2 The Pre-Study and Final Amendments

Pre-testing the questionnaire (Gay, 1981, pp.163-164) was an essential component of the research design. By evaluating respondent answers, the aim of the pre-test was to examine question construction, rankings, scales and questionnaire layout. For the purposes of question and response verification, questionnaires were completed by school teachers who had either taught or were currently teaching school singing activities and by teachers of singing. So as not to include any Sydney government school teachers, the pre-study included the following 9 respondents:

- 4 music teachers who were teaching in non-government schools
- 1 former Sydney government primary generalist class teacher
- 1 former school music teacher who also taught studio singing
- 3 studio teachers of singing, two of whom were experienced peripatetic school singing teachers

Studio teachers of singing were included in the pre-study because of their experience in teaching singing to children and adolescents.

38 The researcher notes that there may be instances of puberty onset in the 8 to 9 year old age group. However, American puberty research outlined in Sataloff and Linville (2006) show the range of puberty onset as 8 to 15 years for females and 9.5 to 14 years for males. Voice maturation was noted as being “most active between ages 12.5 and 14 years” (p.18, i). The Year 3 age group, being predominantly 8 – 9 year olds, was therefore considered to be predominantly pre-pubertal and as such, Year 3 boys and girls should present with comparable voice capabilities.
Pre-study results indicated that the questions were answered appropriately and as such, most questions were clearly defined. However, the pre-study showed that some questions required clarification. These questions were reworded. One such example is a question determining the teacher/s responsible for school singing activities. In this example, a clarification was required to preclude respondents from writing specific names of teachers. The questions on the timetabling of music classes were amended to indicate fortnightly rotations rather than weekly. Several responses indicated that where questions required a “yes” or “no” response, an option for a scale of response options would have been preferred. This was indicated by hand-written responses such as “not often” rather than “yes” or “no”. The decision was therefore made to include more scale responses to questions. An instruction where respondents were required to underline any predominant use of vocal music was followed by only one pre-study respondent. This may have been because other respondents did not view any categories to be predominantly sung, however the decision was made to create a separate check box to indicate predominant vocal music usage.

Recognising that many teachers are restricted in release from face to face teaching time and may also have recess and lunchtime commitments, practical consideration was given to questionnaire completion time. To allow for completion during release from face-to-face teaching, a completion time of less than 45 minutes was considered practicable. Consequently, pre-study respondents were also asked to log the time for completion of the questionnaire and 6 respondents indicated a completion time. The time for completion of the questionnaire ranged from 30 minutes to 120 minutes, with an average completion time \( (n=6) \) of 51.6 minutes. Five responses were within the 30 to 45 minute range. The respondent that indicated a 120 minute completion time was a peripatetic singing teacher who noted that they took additional time to answer questions from a classroom music teacher’s perspective as well as their own. Treating this value as an outlier\(^39\) and removing it from the listing, the average completion time \( (n=5) \) was 37.92 minutes which, in light of the practical considerations discussed, was viewed as being within an acceptable range.

The pre-study version of the questionnaire was also reviewed by NSW DET Strategic Research Directorate which suggested clarification of the questions pertaining to the

\(^{39}\) For the purposes of this study, an outlier is viewed as being outside a normal distribution.
ratios of classroom activities that include singing. To avoid confusion with possible singing lessons occurring during school hours the heading “CLASS SINGING: Singing activities during school music classes (not private singing lessons or choir)” was included. Following DET suggestions, the questions pertaining to years and courses that respondents currently teach were also simplified.

The implemented amendments were then reviewed by two experienced researchers in music education which resulted in the reordering of some questions. This reordering aided in the cohesion of the areas of investigation and saw the placement of all choir questions at the end of the questionnaire. This was to preempt questions being overlooked as was the case in one pre-test response. Where pre-study questions referred to singers rather than students, the decision was made to refer to students only and to therefore avoid the connotation of students being specifically selected as singers.

Final amendments to the questionnaire design were made regarding the layout. As both NSW DET and UWS Ethics approved emailing of the questionnaires and information letters, the questionnaire was headed “Singing in Schools” and included an information statement at the beginning of the questionnaire. To avoid confusion in the number of email attachments, a reduction in the number of questionnaires was sought. Three versions of the questionnaires, instead of the original six, were to be administered to:

- Primary Teachers of Year 3 Classroom Music and/or Primary Choir Teachers
- Music and/or Choir Teachers at Secondary Coeducational Schools
- Music and/or Choir Teachers at Secondary Single Sex Schools

School principals were instructed to make as many copies of the questionnaire as required.

### 3.6.3 The Questionnaire

The following discussion focuses on Part 1 questions designed to address the four main research questions. As these questions have been grouped and sequentially numbered in the following outline, their actual placement and questionnaire numbering is dependent on the questionnaire version in which they appear. For this reason, Appendix A contains a table of corresponding questionnaire numbering for all three versions of the questionnaire (Appendices B, C and D).
For ease of reference in the following discussion, questions are coded for their relevance to each questionnaire version/s. Questions common to all three questionnaires are simply coded as Qx3. Questions relevant to specific version/s are coded PQ (Primary Questionnaire), SCQ (Secondary Coeducational Questionnaire) and SSQ (Secondary Single Sex Questionnaire) where appropriate (see Table 3.1). Corresponding Appendices are listed in Table 3.1.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Questionnaire Type</th>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Appendix</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>PQ</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary Coeducational</td>
<td>SCQ</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary Single Sex</td>
<td>SSQ</td>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.6.3.1 Who teaches school singing in Sydney government schools?

The initial questions were contextual questions (see Table 3.2, over page) and were designed to obtain data on the types of respondents and their teaching areas. Primary respondents were asked to stipulate whether they taught additional subject/s or taught in additional area/s other than generalist Year 3 classroom. Similarly, secondary respondents were asked to note any additional subject/s or teaching area/s in which they taught. Question 6 was designed to determine the types of teachers responsible for school singing. This type of contextual data is school dependant and as such, is unavailable through NSW DET Statistics.

The contextual questions were also designed to collect data pertaining to schools. Coding in relation to the school name occurred at data entry. Applying school coding protected the anonymity of the school. However, knowing the name of the school allowed the researcher access to data contained in the NSW DET 2004 Directory pertaining to school location, classification and size at the time of questionnaire completion.

The data obtained through these factual questions facilitated the development of contextual points of reference for both respondents and respondent schools and
addressed the primary research question of “who teaches singing in Sydney government schools?”.

### Table 3.2: Contextual questions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Questions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Qx3 i) Name of School and ii) Date completing questionnaire</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Qx3 What are your: i) teaching qualifications? ii) music/singing training? and/or iii) music/singing experience?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Qx3 Are you □ Male or □ Female?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Qx3 How many years have you been teaching in [type of: primary or secondary] schools?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>PQ Do you teach anything other than Year 3? □ Yes □ No If Yes, what do you teach?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>SCQ/SSQ Do you teach subjects other than music or choir? □ Yes □ No If Yes, what subjects?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Qx3 Describe the positions (eg class music teachers, specialist teachers) and duties of teachers who teach singing activities at your school (do not include teacher names):</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Qx3 Do students have the opportunity of <strong>private singing lessons</strong> at your school? □ Yes □ No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Qx3 i) Do your students have private singing lessons outside school? □ Yes □ No □ Do not know ii) Would private singing lessons be of benefit to students in school music classes? □ Yes □ No iii) Why/why not?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 3.6.3.2 What types of singing are taught in Sydney government schools?

Questions pertaining to school singing activities (see Table 3.3, over page) were designed to ascertain the types of school singing occurring, and the educational stages of students participating in singing activities in Sydney government schools. To distinguish between possible syllabus related school singing and non-syllabus related school singing, respondents were asked to indicate on a scaled response, the relevance of singing activities to BOS NSW syllabuses. Other questions sought to determine whether there were group and solo singing opportunities available through respondent schools.
### Table 3.3: School singing activities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Questions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Qx3 What <strong>singing activities</strong> take place at your school?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>☐ None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>☐ Assembly Choir Performance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>☐ Music Class</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>☐ Assembly Class Performance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>☐ Music Assessments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>☐ Whole school at assembly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>☐ Concert Class Performance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>☐ Other activities where students sing, describe these activities (eg school musical, Sing NSW):</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>☐ Concert Solo Performance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>☐ Concert Choir Performance</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

11 PQ What **Years/Stages** of students participate in singing activities at your school?
- ☐ Kindergarten
- ☐ Year 1
- ☐ Year 2
- ☐ Year 3
- ☐ Year 4
- ☐ Year 5
- ☐ Year 6

12 SCQ/SSQ What **Years/Stages** of students participate in singing activities at your school?
- ☐ Year 7, Stage 4
- ☐ Year 8, Stage 4
- ☐ Year 9, Stage 5
- ☐ Year 10, Stage 5
- ☐ Year 11, Stage 6
- ☐ Year 12, Stage 6
- ☐ Other:

13 PQ i) Are class songs/choir activities related to the **Creative Arts K-6 Syllabus**?
- ☐ No
- ☐ Rarely
- ☐ Sometimes
- ☐ Often
- ☐ Always

ii) Are class/choir songs related to other subjects? (eg thematic)
- ☐ No
- ☐ Rarely
- ☐ Sometimes
- ☐ Often
- ☐ Always

iii) If songs/choir activities are related to curricula, describe the ways in which they relate to curricula:

14 SCQ/SSQ i) Is class singing/choir activities related to the **Board of Studies NSW Music Syllabuses**?
- ☐ No
- ☐ Rarely
- ☐ Sometimes
- ☐ Often
- ☐ Always

ii) If class singing/choir activities is related to syllabuses, how is it related?

Determining what types of singing occur in Sydney government schools, involved obtaining data on both class singing and choir singing activities. Questions relating to class singing activities were positioned before the choir singing section. Contextual data (see Table 3.4, over page) pertaining to classroom singing was obtained through questions on the compositional nature of classes. The contextual questions included the range of Year 3 classes in which class singing may occur, the types of singing activities that may occur in Year 3 classes and the students that sing in Year 3 classes. At secondary level, data relating to the frequency of classes was sought, together with the timetabling of classes in which singing occurs. Gender data was generated through asking the composition of male and female students in Year 3 classes and the gender ratios of secondary music classes. This data was designed to provide comparative points of reference for gender ratios of students who sang in these classes.
Table 3.4: Class context

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Questions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>PQ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>i)</td>
<td>How many Year 3 classes are there at your school?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ii)</td>
<td>How many years have you been teaching Year 3?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>iii)</td>
<td>How many Year 3 students are in your class?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>iv)</td>
<td>Is it a composite Year 3 class? Yes No If Yes, what are the composite Years?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| 16   | PQ        |
| i)   | Do you incorporate singing activities or teach singing in your Year 3 lessons? Yes No If Yes, describe the singing activities: |
| ii)  | Do Year 3 students combine with other age groups for class singing (not choir)? Yes No If Yes, describe the combined class singing activities and the Years involved: |

| 17   | PQ        |
| i)   | In your Year 3 class: |
| ii)  | How many Year 3 boys are there? |
| iii) | What is the age range of the Year 3 boys? |
| iv)  | What is the average age of the Year 3 boys? |
| v)   | How many Year 3 girls are in there? |
| vi)  | What is the age range of the Year 3 girls? |
| vii) | What is the average age of the Year 3 girls? |

| 18   | SCQ/SSQ   |
| i)   | What is the smallest number of students in a music class? Which Year? |
| ii)  | What is the largest number of students in a music class? Which Year? |

| 19   | SCQ       |
| i)   | What is the ratio of boys and girls in your: (> is greater than, = is equal to) |
| ii)  | Stage 4 music classes? |
| iii) | Stage 5 music classes? |
| iv)  | Stage 6 music classes? |
| v)   | Boys > Girls Girls > Boys Boys = Girls Do not teach |

| 20   | SSQ       |
| i)   | What is the gender of your students? |
| ii)  | Boys Girls |

| 21   | SCQ/SSQ   |
| i)   | Answer for each curriculum stage: |
| A)   | How many music classes are there each fortnight? |
| B)   | How long is a single music class in minutes? |
| C)   | In how many classes each fortnight would students sing? |

Questions designed to obtain data on primary class singing activities and secondary music classroom singing activities, including the types of vocal music sung or predominantly sung in schools, are located in Tables 3.5 and 3.6. Table 3.5 (over page) contains questions designed to generate the context in which Year 3 classroom and secondary music classroom singing occurs. Questions pertaining to repertoire selection, musical accompaniment, sound reinforcement, the assigning of vocal parts, addressing pitch accuracy, the inclusion of vocal health issues, interpretative skills and singing exercises occurring in classroom activities are tabled in Table 3.6 (see p. 70).

---

40 Sound reinforcement is a term meaning amplification of singing using electrical equipment.
Table 3.5: Classroom context

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Questions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>PQ</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
|      | What is the approximate **ratio of boys and girls** participating in singing activities in your Year 3 class? (eg Boys > Girls: *more* boys than girls participate in singing activities)  
|      |   □ Boys > Girls  □ Girls > Boys  □ Boys = Girls |
| 23   | PQ        |
|      | i) For what **purpose/s** do your students sing in [music] class?  
|      | ii) On average, how long (in minutes) do your students sing for in class?  
|      | iii) Is the time spent singing in class different for each Year or Stage?  
|      |   □ Yes  □ No  □ Do not know  If Yes, describe the difference/s: |
| 24   | PQ        |
|      | In class, what types of singing repertoire are **A) sung** and also what types of singing repertoire are **B) predominantly sung** (mostly sung):  
|      |   A:  
|      |      B:  
|      | Traditional children’s songs  Classical  
|      | Contemporary children’s songs  Songs from Musicals  
|      | Pop  Film  
|      | Jazz  Music of a Culture  
|      | Student Compositions  Religious  
|      | Other, describe: |
| 25   | SCQ/SSQ   |
|      | In classroom music activities, including assessments, what is the **ratio of music students who sing to non-singing music students** in:  
|      | i) **Stage 4** music classes?  
|      |   □ Do not teach  □ Singing > Non-singing  □ Non-singing > Singing  □ Singing = Non-singing  
|      | ii) **Stage 5** music classes?  
|      |   □ Do not teach  □ Singing > Non-singing  □ Non-singing > Singing  □ Singing = Non-singing  
|      | iii) **Stage 6** music classes?  
|      |   □ Do not teach  □ Singing > Non-singing  □ Non-singing > Singing  □ Singing = Non-singing  
| 26   | SCQ       |
|      | In classroom music activities, including assessments, what is the **ratio of boys and girls who sing** in:  
|      | i) **Stage 4** music classes?  
|      |   □ Do not teach  □ Boys > Girls  □ Girls > Boys  □ Boys = Girls  
|      | ii) **Stage 5** music classes?  
|      |   □ Do not teach  □ Boys > Girls  □ Girls > Boys  □ Boys = Girls  
|      | iii) **Stage 6** music classes?  
|      |   □ Do not teach  □ Boys > Girls  □ Girls > Boys  □ Boys = Girls  
| 27   | SCQ/SSQ   |
|      | What types of singing repertoire are **A) sung** and also what types of singing repertoire are **B) predominantly sung** (mostly sung):  
|      | i) in **Stage 4** music classes?  
|      |   □ Do not teach  
|      | ii) in **Stage 5** music classes?  
|      |   □ Do not teach  
|      | iii) in **Music 1, Stage 6** music classes?  
|      |   □ Do not teach  
|      | iv) in **Music 2 and Music Extension, Stage 6** music classes?  
|      |   □ Do not teach  
|      |   A:  
|      |      B:  
|      | Classical, describe:  
|      | Traditional children’s songs  Contemporary children’s songs  
|      | Pop  Rock  
|      | Student Compositions  Religious  
|      | Other:
Table 3.6: Classroom singing

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Questions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>28</td>
<td>Qx3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Are the following relevant when making <strong>singing repertoire selections</strong>?:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>i) Student cultural background □ Yes □ No Ranking:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ii) Student age □ Yes □ No Ranking:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>iii) Student singing ability □ Yes □ No Ranking:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>iv) Student gender □ Yes □ No Ranking:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>v) Student interests □ Yes □ No Ranking:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| 29   | Qx3       |
|      | i) Do you **accompany** your students on piano in class? □ No □ Rarely □ Sometimes □ Often □ Always |
|      | ii) Do your students sing unaccompanied? □ No □ Rarely □ Sometimes □ Often □ Always |
|      | iii) Do your students use recorded backing tracks? □ No □ Rarely □ Sometimes □ Often □ Always |

| 30   | Qx3       |
|      | i) Do your students who sing use **amplification**? □ No □ Rarely □ Sometimes □ Often □ Always |
|      | ii) Do students operate the equipment when in use? □ No □ Rarely □ Sometimes □ Often □ Always |

| 31   | Qx3       |
|      | i) Do you assign different **singing parts** in class singing activities? □ Yes □ No |
|      | ii) If Yes, what types of singing parts are assigned? (eg harmony, rounds) Do you assign a singing part because: iii) the student has a soft singing voice? □ No □ Rarely □ Sometimes □ Often □ Always |
|      | iv) the student has a loud singing voice? □ No □ Rarely □ Sometimes □ Often □ Always |
|      | v) the student can sing high notes? □ No □ Rarely □ Sometimes □ Often □ Always |
|      | vi) the student can sing low notes? □ No □ Rarely □ Sometimes □ Often □ Always |
|      | vii) of the gender of the student? □ No □ Rarely □ Sometimes □ Often □ Always |

| 32   | Qx3       |
|      | i) Do you address **pitch accuracy** with students? □ No □ Rarely □ Sometimes □ Often □ Always |
|      | ii) Do you address any **vocal health issues** or concerns? □ No □ Rarely □ Sometimes □ Often □ Always |
|      | iii) Do you include **interpretation or performance skills** when teaching singing? □ Yes □ No |
|      | iv) Do your students **sing exercises** or participate in **exercises related to singing**? □ Yes □ No |

In addition to classroom singing activities, the questionnaire contained a section on choir singing. This section was designed for teachers of group singing and was directed at teachers who taught a choir, a singing group or a vocal ensemble. At the beginning of this section in all three questionnaire versions, the distinction was made that choir singing did not include singing in music classes. The first group of questions was contextual (see Table 3.7, over page) and included questions on the ages and gender of students. Question 40 was to determine whether choir participation was linked to
audition selection. Additional contextual questions related to participatory choir members.

Table 3.7: Choir context

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Questions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>33</td>
<td>Qx3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>i)</td>
<td>Does your school have a choir/s?  Yes No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ii)</td>
<td>Do you teach any choir activities at your school? Yes No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34</td>
<td>Qx3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>What Years of students participate in choir activities at your school?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35</td>
<td>PQ/SCQ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>What is the approximate ratio of boys and girls participating in choir activities? (&gt; is greater than)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>□ Boys = Girls  □ Boys &gt; Girls  □ Girls &gt; Boys  □ Boys Only  □ Girls Only</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36</td>
<td>SSQ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>i)</td>
<td>What is the gender of your choir students?  □ Boys  □ Girls</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ii)</td>
<td>What is the age range and average age of students participating in choir activities?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Age range of participants:  Average age of participants:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>37</td>
<td>PQ/SCQ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>What is the age range and average age of students participating in choir activities?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>i)</td>
<td>Age range of boy participants:  Average age of boy participants:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ii)</td>
<td>Age range of girl participants:  Average age of girl participants:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>38</td>
<td>SCQ/SSQ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>i)</td>
<td>Do non-music students participate in choir activities at your school?  Yes No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ii)</td>
<td>If Yes, what is the approximate ratio of music students to non-music students in choir activities?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>□ Music students &gt; Non-music students  □ Non-music students &gt; Music students  □ Music students = Non-music students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>39</td>
<td>Qx3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>i)</td>
<td>Do any students from other schools participate in your school choir activities?  Yes No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ii)</td>
<td>Do teachers from your school join in singing in your school choir activities?  Yes No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>If Yes, describe the additional participation:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40</td>
<td>Qx3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Do your singers audition for entry into the choir/s?  Yes No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>If Yes, what criteria are used in choir selection?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41</td>
<td>Qx3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>i)</td>
<td>Describe the group/s that you are responsible for and the number of students involved in each:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ii)</td>
<td>Are there any additional singing groups at your school?  Yes No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>If Yes, describe these groups:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>42</td>
<td>Qx3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>i)</td>
<td>In minutes, how long do your choir members sing for during rehearsals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>How many times does your choir/s rehearse each week? (eg 1 per week)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Designed to generate a holistic view of the types of school of choral singing available to students in Sydney government schools (see Table 3.8, over page) were questions on choral vocal music sung or predominantly sung, vocal music selection, choral conducting, musical accompaniment for school choirs, the use of sound reinforcement, the criteria used for vocal part assignment, the addressing of pitch accuracy, the
inclusion of vocal health issues, interpretive elements and singing exercises.

Table 3.8: Choir singing

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Questions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **43** PQ | At your school, what types of choral repertoire are **A)** sung and **B)** predominantly sung (mostly sung):
|   | A: Traditional children’s songs B: Classical |
|   | A: Contemporary children’s songs B: Songs from Musicals |
|   | A: Pop B: Film |
|   | A: Jazz B: Music of a Culture |
|   | A: Student Compositions B: Religious |
|   | **A: B: Other, describe:** |
| **44** SCQ/SSQ | At your school, what types of choral repertoire are **A)** sung and **B)** predominantly sung (mostly sung):
|   | A: Classical B: Songs from Musicals |
|   | A: Jazz B: Music of a Culture |
|   | A: Pop B: Student Compositions |
|   | B: Religious |
| **45** Qx3 | For performances, do you **conduct** your choir/s?
|   | **No** **Rarely** **Sometimes** **Often** **Always** |
| **46** Qx3 | Are the following relevant when making **choral repertoire selections**?
|   | i) Student cultural background **Yes** **No** Ranking:
|   | ii) Student age **Yes** **No** Ranking:
|   | iii) Student singing ability **Yes** **No** Ranking:
|   | iv) Student gender **Yes** **No** Ranking:
|   | v) Student interests **Yes** **No** Ranking:
| **47** Qx3 | i) Do you **accompany** your choir/s on piano in class?
|   | **No** **Rarely** **Sometimes** **Often** **Always**
|   | ii) Do your choir/s sing unaccompanied?
|   | **No** **Rarely** **Sometimes** **Often** **Always**
|   | iii) Do your choir/s use recorded backing tracks?
|   | **No** **Rarely** **Sometimes** **Often** **Always**
| **48** Qx3 | i) Do your choir/s use **amplification**?
|   | **No** **Rarely** **Sometimes** **Often** **Always**
|   | ii) Do students operate the equipment when in use?
|   | **No** **Rarely** **Sometimes** **Often** **Always**
| **49** Qx3 | Do you assign a singing part because: i) the student has a soft singing voice?
|   | **No** **Rarely** **Sometimes** **Often** **Always**
|   | ii) the student has a loud singing voice?
|   | **No** **Rarely** **Sometimes** **Often** **Always**
|   | iii) the student can sing high notes?
|   | **No** **Rarely** **Sometimes** **Often** **Always**
|   | iv) the student can sing low notes?
|   | **No** **Rarely** **Sometimes** **Often** **Always**
|   | v) of the gender of the student?
|   | **No** **Rarely** **Sometimes** **Often** **Always**
| **50** Qx3 | i) Do you address **pitch accuracy** with students?
|   | **No** **Rarely** **Sometimes** **Often** **Always**
|   | ii) Do you address any **vocal health issues** or concerns?
|   | **No** **Rarely** **Sometimes** **Often** **Always**
|   | iii) Do you include **interpretation or performance skills** when teaching singing?
|   | **Yes** **No**
|   | iv) Do your students **sing exercises** or participate in **exercises related to singing**?
|   | **Yes** **No**
3.6.3.3 How is singing taught in Sydney government schools?

The research design needed to address the complexity of how singing is taught and the range of issues that required investigation. Such issues included vocal exercises and the teaching of vocal health, musical aspects, the use of imagery and metaphor, musical accompaniment options, the use of reinforced sound and the availability of resources. Questions on assessment procedures and the methods by which assessment information was disseminated to students were also included. While some of these questions also related to previous research questions, their relevance in this part of the research design was to enable data collection that would possibly identify teaching components. It was envisaged that this data would be principally obtained from open-ended questions. Both class and choir singing sections contained questions used to determine the methods of singing teaching delivery (see Table 3.9).

Table 3.9: Singing teaching delivery

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Questions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 51   | Qx3  i) Do your students sing exercises or participate in exercises related to singing?  
|      |    Yes  □ No                                                              |
|      |    ii) If Yes, describe the exercises:                                     |
|      |    □ Yes  □ No                                                              |
|      |    □ No                                                                    |
|      |    iii) Do you lead the exercises?                                         |
|      |    □ Yes  □ No                                                              |
|      |    □ No                                                                    |
|      |    iv) If No, who does?                                                    |
|      |    □ Yes  □ No                                                              |
|      |    □ No                                                                    |
|      |    v) What is the purpose/s of the exercises?                              |
| 52   | Qx3  Do you address any vocal health issues or concerns?                   |
|      |    □ No  □ Rarely  □ Sometimes  □ Often  □ Always                        |
|      | If you do address vocal health issues or concerns, describe these:         |
| 53   | Qx3  Do you address pitch accuracy with students?                          |
|      |    □ No  □ Rarely  □ Sometimes  □ Often  □ Always                        |
|      | If you do address pitch accuracy, describe how:                           |
| 54   | Qx3  Do you address other musical aspects with students?                   |
|      |    □ No  □ Rarely  □ Sometimes  □ Often  □ Always                        |
|      | If you do address other musical aspects, what are they?                   |
| 55   | Qx3  Do you use imagery or metaphor in relation to singing?                |
|      |    □ No  □ Rarely  □ Sometimes  □ Often  □ Always                        |
|      | If you do use imagery or metaphor, describe their use:                    |
| 56   | Qx3  Do you include song interpretation or performance skills when teaching songs/ choir repertoire? |
|      |    □ Yes  □ No If Yes, describe these:                                     |

Question 51 was designed to be a pivotal question for distinguishing between whether students were taught a song or taught how to sing through the use of exercises as well as vocal music.

Determining the procedures by which students learn to sing vocal music was crucial in
addressing how singing is taught in both classes and choirs (see Table 3.10). As the procedures may differ between classroom and choral teaching, two specific context questions were devised (Questions 57 and 58). In the context of class and choir procedures, the selection process of the types of vocal music available to students was also included. While the BOS NSW music syllabuses refer to singing repertoire as “vocal music”, the terms vocal music, singing repertoire, choral repertoire and songs were used synonymously throughout the three questionnaires so as not to continually infer questions were in relation to syllabus singing only. Ascertainment the types of resources available and utilised by respondents in relation to school singing activities was also sought (see Question 62).

Table 3.10: Class and choir procedures

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Questions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>57</td>
<td>Qx3 How do students learn to sing the selected songs?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>58</td>
<td>Qx3 How do students learn to sing the selected choir songs and choral parts?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>59</td>
<td>PQ Who selects the vocal music for classroom singing activities?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60</td>
<td>SCQ/SSQ Who selects the singing repertoire for classroom singing activities?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>61</td>
<td>Qx3 Who selects the choral repertoire for choir activities?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>62</td>
<td>Qx3 Name the resources and texts you use when undertaking singing activities in music classes/choir activities (eg singing texts, curriculum support documents, piano, guitar, sheet music, recordings):</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Assessment procedures and the dissemination of assessment content formed another area of inquiry in the questionnaire design. Determining the types of student feedback was also viewed as central to addressing how singing is taught (see Table 3.11, over page). Questions were also included to determine the usage of recorded methods of providing feedback to students.
### Table 3.11: Student assessments and feedback

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Questions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>63</td>
<td>Qx3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 64   | SCQ/SSQ   | In relation to the assessment of singers, answer for each curriculum stage:  
A) Is singing a popular assessment choice?  
B) Who assesses the singing students?  
C) How is assessment/progress feedback given to students?  
D) What criteria are used to assess singing? |
| 65   | Qx3       | What directions or advice do you offer students regarding their singing progress? |
| 66   | Qx3       | i) Do you record your students singing in audio format?  
[ ] No  [ ] Rarely  [ ] Sometimes  [ ] Often  [ ] Always  
ii) Do you record your students singing in video format?  
[ ] No  [ ] Rarely  [ ] Sometimes  [ ] Often  [ ] Always  
iii) If you do record your students singing, for what purpose/s do you record them? |
| 67   | Qx3       | What directions or advice do you offer choir singers regarding their singing progress? |
| 68   | Qx3       | i) Do you record your choir/s in audio format?  
[ ] No  [ ] Rarely  [ ] Sometimes  [ ] Often  [ ] Always  
ii) Do you record your choir/s singing in video format?  
[ ] No  [ ] Rarely  [ ] Sometimes  [ ] Often  [ ] Always  
iii) If you do record your choir/s singing, for what purpose/s do you record them? |

#### 3.6.3.4 Why is singing taught in Sydney government schools?

While many open-ended questions were relevant to “why is singing taught in Sydney government schools?”, it was envisaged that the principal qualitative data to address this question would be generated through the open-ended questions as shown in Table 3.12.

### Table 3.12: The purposes of school singing

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Questions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>69</td>
<td>Qx3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70</td>
<td>Qx3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>71</td>
<td>Qx3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>72</td>
<td>Qx3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>73</td>
<td>Qx3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3.6.4 Distribution methods

The questionnaire\textsuperscript{41} was distributed to all Sydney government Public and High Schools. This was a total of 815\textsuperscript{42} schools. The questionnaire was distributed in four stages (see Table 3.13) with completion dates that were within school terms and dates that avoided exam periods or end-of-year deadlines. The extended timeline of the four stages of questionnaire distribution was not viewed as being significant as there were no changes to NSW DET policy during the extended timeframe that may have impacted singing in schools.

Table 3.13: Questionnaire distribution

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Distribution Stages</th>
<th>School Sample</th>
<th>Completion Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Email 1</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>4\textsuperscript{th} March 2005</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Email 2</td>
<td>806</td>
<td>4\textsuperscript{th} March 2005</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Postal 1</td>
<td>445</td>
<td>22\textsuperscript{nd} July 2005</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Postal 2</td>
<td>325</td>
<td>31\textsuperscript{st} March 2006</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.6.4.1 Email 1

The initial schools ($n=9$) were emailed the questionnaire and information letters. Principals at these schools were contacted for process verification. No significant issues were identified. Email 1 produced an initial response rate of 0.2% ($n=2$; $N=815$) (see Table 3.14, p.78).

3.6.4.2 Email 2

The emailing of the ensuing 806 began two weeks after Email 1. Emails were sent in area groupings. At this stage, the emails were addressed to my own email address at UWS and school email addresses were listed as Blind Carbon Copies\textsuperscript{43} (BCC). Emails were addressed to school Principals and sent via school email listings\textsuperscript{44}.

Following the emailing of 5 groups, some difficulties in the group email procedure became evident. Some schools reported problems in opening attachments; others

\textsuperscript{41} As outlined in Table 3.1, there were 3 versions of the one questionnaire: Primary, Secondary (Coeducational) and Secondary (Single-Sex).
\textsuperscript{42} 815 Sydney NSW Government Schools were emailed questionnaires, however a total of 817 questionnaires were emailed as 2 schools offered both primary and secondary education.
\textsuperscript{43} Individual Principal email addresses were confidential and could not be accessed.
\textsuperscript{44} School email addresses were located in the NSW DET 2004 Directory.
reported the corruption of some attachments. It became evident that computer configurations varied between schools and in some instances there appeared to be incompatibilities of software between individual school recipient computers and the server being used to send the emails. Possible corruptions may have resulted through the BCC process or through the size of attachments. Once these difficulties became evident, emails were sent individually to schools.

During the process, two responses from School Principals indicated that attachments containing approval details may have been overlooked. Further consent was obtained from NSW DET to include an email introduction to School Principals. This introduction was implemented. At this time, UWS was experiencing difficulties with its own server which resulted in periods when student web mail could not be accessed. As a result of delays and in an effort to avoid the end of year the school year, 45 remaining school emails were held over and sent in January 2005.

The complete email distribution produced a cumulative response rate of 3.1% (n=25; N=815) of schools emailed (see Table 3.14, over page). While responses indicated that the process functioned in some instances, the low return rate was also indicative that the process was not ideal. It was also plausible that some emails were deleted from computers before being opened. Determining the number of School Principals that actually received and opened the emails was not possible. Computer generated recipient read responses were activated by only 6.5% of schools. A subsequent postal strategy was initiated.

3.6.4.3 Postal 1

After first deleting respondent schools, schools that had indicated that they would not be participating and schools that had been sent two or more emails during the emailing process, there were 715 remaining schools. From these, 445 schools were selected at random for Postal 1. This first postal version produced a school response rate of 10.1% (n=45; N=445). The cumulative school response rate including this version was 8.6% (n=70; N=815) (see Table 3.14, over page).

3.6.4.4 Postal 2

Following an increase in the response rate from Postal 1, Postal 2 was prepared and
implemented. The second postal version was sent to the 325 remaining schools and produced a school response rate of 13.8% (n=45; N=325) and the cumulative school response rate including this version was 14.1% (n=115; N=815) (see Table 3.14).

### 3.6.4.5 Cumulative School Response Rates

Table 3.14 shows the frequency of respondent schools for each distribution stage. The March completion dates of Email 1, Email 2 and Postal 2 distributions occurred at similar times of year in the school calendar (see Table 3.13, p. 76) and even though they were 12 months apart, a comparison between the school response rates of Email 1 and 2 being 3.1% (n=25; N=815) and Postal 2 13.8% (n=45; N=325) showed a marked increase in the response rates of Postal 2. This suggests that the problems encountered in the emailing process impacted on the initial response rate to the questionnaire. The total response rate of the four distributions was 115 respondent schools being representative of 14.1% of all Sydney government schools.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Distribution</th>
<th>Respondent Schools</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Cumulative Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Stages</td>
<td>n</td>
<td>N = 815</td>
<td>N = 815</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Email 1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>0.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Email 2</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>3.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Postal 1</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>5.5</td>
<td>8.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Postal 2</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>5.5</td>
<td>14.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>115</strong></td>
<td><strong>14.1</strong></td>
<td><strong>N/A</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The proportional response rate of secondary schools was greater than that of primary schools in the Email 2 stage of distribution. This may have been due to secondary schools having a more developed email system than that of primary schools. However, the subsequent postal distributions saw cumulative totals of 91 primary schools (14.7%);

---

45 The researcher notes that the total number of Sydney government schools may vary slightly from year to year due to the potential opening of new schools and school closures. To maintain consistency, the total number of Sydney government Public and High schools was based on those listed in the NSW DET 2004 Directory.
n=91; N=621) and 24 secondary schools (12.2%; n=24; N=196)\(^{46}\) (see Table 3.15) and ensured that the sample was representative of both primary and secondary Sydney government schools. The total number of schools in this calculation is 817 (621 primary and 196 secondary), not the 815 sample size. This is due to 2 schools in the sample offering both primary and secondary classes and as such, each school appears in both categories.

### Table 3.15: Cumulative primary and secondary schools response rates

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Distribution</th>
<th>Primary Schools</th>
<th>Secondary Schools</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stages</td>
<td>n=621</td>
<td>n=196</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Response</td>
<td>Cumulative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Email 1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Email 2</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>2.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Postal 1</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>5.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Postal 2</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>6.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>14.7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^{46}\) NSW DET Statistics did not include information on the additional roles of teaching staff or on specialist roles such as choir teaching. Statistics were also not available for primary music specialist teachers employed at Sydney government schools. The total relevant population in these areas is therefore unknown.

3.6.5 Questionnaire Administration

Questionnaires were administered during the period October 2004 to March 2006. School names were deleted upon receipt and coded numerically. A total of 127 respondent questionnaires were entered for analysis.

Omitted from data entry was one primary respondent as information, other than relevant to school context, was not completed. Another two respondents completed choral sections, even though they themselves were not choir teachers. These latter responses were omitted from data entry.

Where data was “present”, it was coded as such. Data that was incomplete or missing was coded as “absent”. Questions that were not applicable to respondents and
therefore did not generate data were coded as “not applicable”.

Of the 127 questionnaires entered for data analysis, 8 were not complete. In 4 cases, incompleteness was due to one classroom teacher and one choir teacher at the same school both completing the one questionnaire. In an additional 4 cases, incomplete photocopying of the questionnaire had occurred when multiple respondents at the one school completed photocopied questionnaires. Another respondent did not complete the last page of the questionnaire. However, contact was made with this respondent and the previously unanswered questions were completed via transcription of verbal responses. The data from incomplete questionnaires was relevant to the overall research and was therefore included in the study. However, a reduction occurred in the sample when 3 respondents were omitted from analysis, as outlined in Chapter 6, because data in the sections required for this analysis was absent.

### 3.6.6 Part 1 Data Analysis

The questionnaires were designed to generate both qualitative data and quantitative data for analysis. Table 3.16 outlines the types of data used to address the primary research questions, the corresponding methods of analysis, the computer programs utilised for data management and analysis. The corresponding thesis chapters are also detailed.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Data Analysis</th>
<th>Method</th>
<th>Program</th>
<th>Chapter</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Who?</strong></td>
<td>Quantitative</td>
<td>Descriptive statistics; Univariate statistics</td>
<td>Excel and SPSS</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>What?</strong></td>
<td>Quantitative</td>
<td>Descriptive statistics; Univariate statistics</td>
<td>SPSS</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>How?</strong></td>
<td>Qualitative and Quantitative</td>
<td>Axial Coding and t-tests</td>
<td>NVivo 2.0, Excel and SPSS</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Why?</strong></td>
<td>Qualitative</td>
<td>Axial Coding</td>
<td>NVivo 2.0</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

47 Microsoft Excel computer software enables the management and analysis of numerical data
48 SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) developed by SPSS Inc. is a computer software package that provides a statistical analysis and data management system.
49 NVivo 2.0 is a computer software package developed by QSR International that provides a code-and-retrieval system to aid in qualitative data analysis. It also has theoretical modeling capabilities.
Using descriptive statistics and univariate statistics generated from the quantitative data, the first two primary research questions of “who teaches singing?” and “what types of singing are taught?” in Sydney government schools were addressed. The third question of “how singing is taught?” utilised qualitative open-coding to determine the components present in respondent teaching strategies and then axial coding to determine the interrelationships between these components. Pidgeon and Henwood (2004) describe the purpose of open-coding as capturing “the detail, variation and complexity” (p.629) of the data. Axial coding then allows a focused coding of “selected core categories” (p.629). The process of open and axial coding enabled the composition of the approaches to teaching singing to emerge from the data. Independent sample t-tests were also carried out to determine levels of significance between the emergent teaching approaches and other variables such as respondent teaching experience.

The data analysed in relation to “why singing is taught?” in Sydney government schools also utilised open and axial coding. NVivo 2.0 was utilised for this process.

NVivo 2.0 was used for the models within chapters. As NVivo 7 provided detailed modeling applications, NVivo 7 was utilised for generating the models presented at the conclusion of chapters 4, 5, 6 and 7. It was also used to generate the final model, Figure 9.1: MODEL 5 Teaching singing in Sydney government schools, in Chapter 9.

3.7 Part 2 Research Design

Part 2 research design comprised of semi-structured, in-depth interviews.

3.7.1 Interview Sample

The type of purposive sampling, maximum variation sampling, was utilised for interview participant selection. Maximum variation sampling, defined by Pidgeon and Henwood (2004) to be “the range of variations, or extremes, that emerge in relation to different conditions” (p.635), enabled the interview sample to encompass the variety of issues emergent in Part 1 findings. Maximum variation sampling involved the sourcing of potential participants predominantly through school internet sites. This was supplemented by researcher knowledge of singing activities at specific schools.
3.7.2 Interview Schedule

The development of the interview schedule initially began with possible areas for in-depth inquiry. Questions pertaining to these areas of enquiry were devised and a draft schedule of questions formed to meet overall project approval requirements (see Section 3.9). The draft interview schedule served as a basis for the subsequent development and finalisation of the interview questions. As discussed earlier in this chapter in Section 3.5, the findings of Part 1 research were used to focus and orientate the interview areas of inquiry and the interview questions. The development of the interview schedule for Part 2 of the research is therefore outlined in detail and placed sequentially at the beginning of Chapter 8.

3.7.3 Interview Administration

Interviews were administered during the period May 2006 to December 2006. A total of 10 interview transcripts was entered for analysis. The interview schedule (see Appendix E) required pre-approval by NSW DET. However the interviews were semi-structured in that scheduled questions were not asked if, during the course of the interview, it became apparent that they were not relevant to the respondent’s teaching. Also, scheduled questions were not posed in instances where they had been previously addressed by participants in earlier responses. In some interviews, questions were asked out of the prescribed order when relevant to participant responses. Prompts, such as asking for an expansion of the previous response, added to the semi-structured nature of the interviews.

The interviews were recorded onto cassettes and transcribed by the interviewer into Microsoft Word. To ensure anonymity, all identifying names and locations proffered by participants during the course of the interviews were excluded during the transcription process. However, in several cases the participant and/or school was identifiable through the description of participant experiences and/or participant schools. For this reason, no transcript is included in the Appendices. Two participants expressed concern over the publication of full transcripts.

3.7.4 Part 2 Data Analysis

The interviews were designed to generate qualitative data. Table 3.17 outlines the
corresponding method of analysis, the computer program utilised for the coding process and the chapter location.

Table 3.17: Part 2 Data Analysis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Data Analysis</th>
<th>Method</th>
<th>Program</th>
<th>Chapter</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Qualitative</td>
<td>Constant comparative analysis</td>
<td>NVivo 2.0</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Although purposive sampling was used, it was within the emergent principles of Part 2 design and aimed to “extend theory iteratively” (Pidgeon & Henwood, 2004, p.635, i). Particularly relevant was the inductive process of constant comparative data analysis where open-coding was continually explored and compared to identify similarities and differences present in the data. It is this type of analysis that is central to “dense conceptual development” (p.637, ii). Inherent also in Part 2 data analysis is researcher sensitivity defined by Corbin and Strauss (1998) as “the ability to respond to the subtle nuances of, and cues to, meanings in data” (p.42). However, a balance between researcher sensitivity and objectivity is maintained through the analytical process of constant comparative data analysis (Corbin & Strauss, p.43).

3.8 Research Validity and Reliability

The validity of the research (Silverman, 2000, pp.175-180) was sequentially monitored. During the design process, research questions were peer reviewed by experts in the respective fields of singing pedagogy and music education. Part 1 pre-study also enabled the research to be reviewed and critiqued by pre-study respondents. NSW DET Strategic Research Directorate also provided feedback that resulted in Part 1 wording clarifications.

Peer review (Cresswell, 1998, p.202; Smith, 2005, p.85), a term used to describe review from within a research community, was employed during Parts 1 and 2 data analysis. Expert verification was sought in relation to coding and findings, and is discussed where relevant in the proceeding chapters. In addition, four presentations relevant to the research were made during the course of the study; three
presentations\textsuperscript{50} were to research communities and one presentation\textsuperscript{51} was to a combined audience of researchers and singing teachers.

The reliability of the research (Silverman, 2000, p.185) was further enhanced through the process of interview transcript confirmation and content verification by each interview participant. This process of member checking (Cresswell, 1998, p.202) also enabled the interview participant to amend the researcher’s draft summary of the interview content, or the actual transcript if appropriate, and therefore ensured the veracity and validity of content (p.208).

The multi-method approach embodied in the research design ensured a depth of data collection and analysis. The initial pre-study and the segueing of the Parts 1 and 2 of the research, together with the inductive processes utilised, generated a grounded theoretical model of teaching singing in Sydney government schools. In addition, the researcher undertook a statistics course, and completed workshops in grounded theory, the use of NVivo, SPSS and Endnote.

3.9 Ethics and Consent

Approvals to conduct the research were sought from the University of Western Sydney Human Research Ethics Committee and from NSW DET Strategic Research Directorate.

3.9.1 University of Western Sydney

Approval to conduct research was obtained from the University of Western Sydney Human Research Ethics Committee in May 2003.

\textsuperscript{50} “The Role of the Singing Voice in current NSW Syllabus Documents” was presented at the Australian Society of Music Education XV Conference, \textit{A Celebration of Voices}, 6\textsuperscript{th} July 2005; “Singing in NSW School Communities: Historical Perspectives” was presented at the University of Western Sydney (UWS) symposium, \textit{CAESS Scholarship and Community}, 9\textsuperscript{th} October 2005; “PhD Research [design, processes and realities]” was presented at a UWS music education research review, 9th June 2006.

\textsuperscript{51} “Singing in NSW Schools [syllabus aspects in current education]” was presented at the Australian Singing Teachers Association (ANATS) symposium \textit{Delivering Young Voice}, 18\textsuperscript{th} September 2005.
3.9.2 NSW Department of Education and Training

An initial application to conduct research in NSW Government Schools was lodged in December 2003. Approval to conduct research was received from NSW DET Strategic Research Directorate in February 2004. Following an email version of the questionnaire and allowing for subsequent postal versions of the questionnaires, an extension of approval was sought from NSW DET Planning and Innovation and was received in July 2004. Subsequent approval was granted for Part 2 of the research in December 2005 and an extension of approval received in August 2006. These approvals formed one of three layers of NSW DET consent required to conduct the research.

The second layer of NSW DET consent was in the form of approval from individual school principals. Following NSW DET guidelines, school principals were initially contacted for approval prior of potential respondents at their schools being contacted. Each school principal received an information letter, together with a letter and questionnaire for forwarding to relevant teachers. Forwarding of the teacher information letter and questionnaire was taken as the principal’s informed consent. The third layer of consent was from participating respondents completing the questionnaires. Information from the teacher information letter was repeated on the front of each questionnaire and completion of the questionnaire was taken as the respondent’s informed consent.

There was a total of eight variations of the information letter:

**Part 1**
- Primary School Principal (see Appendix F)
- Secondary School Principal at Coeducational/ Single Sex High School (see Appendix G)
- Primary School Teacher of Year 3 Class Music or Primary Choir Teacher (see Appendix H)
- Secondary School Music and/or Choir Teacher at Coeducational/ Single Sex High School (see Appendix I)

**Part 2**
- Primary School Principal (see Appendix J)
- Secondary School Principal (see Appendix K)
- Primary School Teacher and/or Primary Choir Teacher (see Appendix L)
- Secondary School Music and/or Choir Teacher (see Appendix M)

The letters established that the research project was researching singing in Sydney.
NSW Government Schools and that it was PhD research that would be published as a thesis, report and research papers. Potential Part 1 respondents were asked to complete the questionnaire and potential Part 2 participants were asked to consent to an interview of approximately a one-hour duration. Respondent and participant privacy was ensured. The strategies for maintaining privacy were stated in the letters. A NSW DET requirement was to assure respondents that participation in the research was voluntary and that a decision not to participate would “in no way prejudice your relationship with the school and you are free to withdraw participation at any time”\(^{52}\).

While it was not envisaged that the research would cause any psychological distress or discomfort, in the event that a questionnaire respondent or interview participant did suffer, he or she were able to immediately withdraw from the study. The University Human Research Ethics Committee note and details for directing complaints or reservations about the research appeared Part 1 and 2 information letters and Part 1 questionnaires. The contact details of the researcher were also provided. A consent form was devised for Part 2 research respondents (Appendix N). Copies of completed consent forms were given to Part 2 respondents at the beginning of each interview for their own records.

### 3.10 Précis: Chapter 3

Chapter Three outlined the methods of research implemented in this study. It begins with the conceptual framework upon which the research is based. The foremost research questions are then outlined in conjunction with groupings of subset questions. Chapter Four addresses the question of “who teaches school singing in Sydney government schools?”. In this chapter, the findings of primary and secondary teacher respondents are presented separately. The chapter concludes with a summary and discussion which also addresses subset questions. A model of the types of school singing teachers in Sydney government schools is presented.

\(^{52}\) NSW DET Research Guidelines
Chapter 4: Who Teaches School Singing?
The Broad Study: Respondents

4.1 Introduction

The previous chapter detailed the development of the questionnaires, the pre-study and the development of the final questionnaire instrument. This chapter outlines the types of respondents who teach singing in Sydney government schools and using this data, a school singing teaching model is generated that addresses the question of “who teaches singing in Sydney government schools?”.

The findings presented in this chapter provide insight into the diversity of respondents and in doing so, focuses this data to provide points of reference for the subsequent analysis of “how is singing taught?” as detailed in Chapter 7. The following discussion pertains to the context of the respondent sample, that is, the respondents and their school location, school size and school category. More specifically, the contextual analysis of respondent gender, teaching responsibilities, teaching qualifications, teaching experience, music/singing training and music/singing experience addresses the research questions 1.i to 1.iv:

1.i Do primary generalist classroom teachers teach school singing?
1.ii Do primary specialist teachers teach school singing?
1.iii Do secondary music teachers teach school singing?
1.iv Do private singing teachers teach school singing?

4.2 Respondent Sample

The distribution strategy, as previously discussed in Chapter 3, ensured that the sample was representative of primary and secondary schools, the NSW DET Sydney Metropolitan Regions, the NSW DET Sydney School Education Areas, the range of NSW DET school sizes and the types of NSW DET secondary schools in Sydney. It
was also representative of teachers at primary and secondary level, of male and female respondents and of a variety of teaching qualifications and experience.

4.2.1 Respondent Schools

\((N=115\) respondent schools\)

Of the 10 NSW DET school regions\(^{53}\) throughout NSW, 4 regions are designated as the Sydney Metropolitan Regions (NSW DET 2004 Directory of the New South Wales Department of Education and Training\(^{54}\)), being Northern Sydney, South Western Sydney, Sydney and Western Sydney. Table 4.1 shows the frequency of primary and secondary respondent schools \((n=115)\) within the four NSW DET Sydney Metropolitan Regions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School Types</th>
<th>Northern Sydney Region (N=155)</th>
<th>South Western Sydney Region (N=242)</th>
<th>Sydney Region (N=196)</th>
<th>Western Sydney Region (N=222)</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>115</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In Figure 4.1 (over page), the respondent sample is compared to the Sydney government school population. As each Sydney region is represented by the respondent sample, the population is depicted in columns adjacent to the corresponding primary and secondary sample within each region. Primary respondent schools in the Northern Sydney and Western Sydney Regions fielded the highest response rate of \((n=26)\) each and secondary schools in the Sydney Region fielded the lowest response rate of \((n=4)\).

\(^{53}\) Each region has a Regional Director and a curriculum consultancy that supports school principals within the region.

\(^{54}\) 2004 Directory of the New South Wales Department of Education and Training (NSW DET, 2004), is the 2004 listing compiled by the State of New South Wales, Department of Education and Training, of all NSW Government Schools and TAFE Colleges. While the Directory is produced every year, school data for this study was compiled and research initiated during 2004 and as such, reference to the 2004 Directory is maintained throughout the thesis.
Sydney government schools range in size classification according to their student population\textsuperscript{55} and are dependent upon student enrolment. The classification of schools can therefore vary slightly from year to year\textsuperscript{56}. Figure 4.2 (over page) shows the frequency of respondent school sizes. The enrolment sizes for each classification are shown in brackets. At primary level, respondent school sizes ranged from Class 1 (>700 students) to Class 5 (Between 26 and 159 students). No Class 6 School (25 or less students) participated in the study. At secondary level, respondent schools included both Class 8 (>900 students) and Class 9 (900 or less students) schools. There were no Class 7 schools listed in the NSW DET classifications for the NSW DET Sydney Metropolitan Regions.

\textsuperscript{55} School sizes were determined from alphabetical school listings that contained school classifications and contact information (NSW DET, 2004).

\textsuperscript{56} As the questionnaires were distributed to schools in 2004, the classifications pertain to 2004 school listings.
In comparison to the NSW DET Sydney government school population, the distribution of the respondent school sizes followed a normal distribution pattern. This is shown in Figure 4.3 being a comparison between the number of Sydney government schools and the respondent sample.
Table 4.2 represents the population percentages of the respondent school sizes. The respondent sample represents the NSW DET classifications and range from 12.1% (Class 9) to 17.6% (Class 2).

Table 4.2: Sydney government school sizes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School Classification</th>
<th>Sydney government schools N=815</th>
<th>Respondent School Sample N=115</th>
<th>Sample Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Class 1</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>13.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class 2</td>
<td>164</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>17.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class 3</td>
<td>190</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>14.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class 4</td>
<td>152</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>12.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class 5</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>13.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class 8</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>12.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class 9</td>
<td>124</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>12.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>815</td>
<td>115</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As Table 4.3 shows all three types of NSW DET secondary schools, that is coeducational, single sex girls and single sex boys, were represented in the respondent sample.

Table 4.3: Respondent Secondary Schools

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Types of High Schools</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Coeducational</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Single Sex Girls</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Single Sex Boys</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Analysis of the respondent school sample shows that the sample is representative of NSW DET Sydney metropolitan regions, of NSW DET school classifications and of the types of Sydney government schools. The respondent school sample also included a representation of community schools\(^{57}\) and priority funded schools\(^{58}\).

---

\(^{57}\) Community schools are “Schools as Community Centres” that are government funded through a combination of NSW government departments: Department of Community Services, Department of Community Services Health, Housing and Department of Community Services Education and Training. The Schools as Community Centres program facilitates Connections between “families, organisations and schools in communities where indicators of disadvantage are high” (NSW DET, 2004, p.34)

\(^{58}\) Priority funded schools are schools awarded financial assistance due to the high concentrations of students from low socio-economic backgrounds (NSW DET, 2004, pp.39 - 41).
4.2.2 Individual Respondents

(N=127 individual respondents)

Of the 115 respondent schools, there were 11 schools that yielded more than 1 respondent and the sample comprised 127 individual respondents: 103 primary teachers and 24 secondary teachers. Table 4.4 shows the frequency of individual respondents at each distribution stage.

Table 4.4: Primary and Secondary Individual Respondents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Distribution Stages</th>
<th>Primary Respondents</th>
<th>Secondary Respondents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Email 1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Email 2</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Postal 1</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Postal 2</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sub-total</td>
<td>103</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>127</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.2.2.1 Respondent Categories

Individual respondents included Year 3 Classroom Teachers\(^{59}\), Teachers of Year 3 Classroom Music, Primary Choir Teachers, Secondary Classroom Music Teachers and Secondary Choir Teachers. In some areas of discussion, it is pertinent to talk about the sample in terms of those respondents who taught choir (choir) and those who did not (non-choir). For this reason, these categories are also represented in Table 4.5. As Table 4.5 shows, of the total sample of 127 respondents, 31 responded as both classroom and choir teachers.

Table 4.5: Respondent Questionnaire Completion Categories

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Non-choir</th>
<th>Choir</th>
<th>Both (Classroom and Choir)</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>23 (Year 3)</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>21 (Year 3 and Choir)</td>
<td>103</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary</td>
<td>14 (Music)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>10 (Music and Choir)</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sub-total</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>127</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>90</td>
<td></td>
<td>127</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^{59}\) Year 3 teachers were specifically targeted as Year 3 was viewed by the researcher as a pivotal year in student transition from Stage 1 to Stage 2 primary schooling. It was also seen as encompassing an age group with a vocal developmental stage that was essentially pre-pubertal (see footnote 38, p.62).
More primary choir teacher respondents completed the questionnaire than Year 3 classroom teachers. Twenty-one Year 3 teachers also responded as choir teachers. All secondary respondents taught classroom music; 10 also responded as secondary choir teachers. Thirty-one respondents therefore completed the questionnaires as both classroom and choir teachers.

4.2.2.2 Respondent Education Areas

As well as being representative of the Sydney metropolitan regions, the respondent sample includes individual teachers from each NSW DET School Education Area60. Table 4.6 shows (over page) the frequency of individual respondents (N=127) within the Education Areas of each NSW DET Sydney Metropolitan Region.

4.2.2.3 Respondent Gender

There was a higher response by female respondents (85.8%) than by male respondents (11.8%). Table 4.7 delineates primary and secondary respondents and their gender.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 4.7: Respondent Gender</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Respondents N=127</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>n</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Gender statistics appropriate to the time frame of data collection, were located in the DET Workforce Profile data as at 30 June 2005 and contained in the NSW DET 2005 Equal Opportunity (EEO) Annual Report61. While the overall gender ratio of female to male respondents is higher than the overall 2005 NSW DET gender ratio of 65.5% female: 34.5% male62 full-time permanent teachers, gender ratios within each NSW DET Sydney metropolitan regions were not published. The statistics for full-time

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60 Each Sydney Metropolitan Region is comprised of 3 to 5 Education Areas. There are a total of 17 NSW DET Sydney School Education Areas. School Education Areas provide learning support within a localised area.
62 The gender statistics were ascertained from the DET Workforce Profile data as at 30 June 2005 and contained in the NSW DET 2005 Equal Opportunity (EEO) Annual Report, p.29. These statistics were seen as most relevant to the time frame of data collection.
Table 4.6: Individual Respondents NSW DET Sydney Metropolitan Regions and Sydney Education Areas

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NSW DET Sydney Metropolitan Regions</th>
<th>Northern Sydney</th>
<th>South Western Sydney</th>
<th>Sydney</th>
<th>Western Sydney</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 2 3</td>
<td>4 5 6 7 8</td>
<td>9 10 11 12</td>
<td>13 14 15 16 17</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Area Total</td>
<td>14 9 15</td>
<td>5 7 8 4 10</td>
<td>7 5 6 4</td>
<td>7 4 11 9 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Region Total</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respondent Total</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>127</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

permanent primary classroom teachers show a higher level of females employed (83.7%) than males (16.3%)\textsuperscript{67}. The ratio reduces for full-time permanent secondary classroom teachers to 56.1% female: 43.9% males\textsuperscript{68}. It is possible that these overall gender statistics reflect the possibility that more male teachers are employed outside the Sydney metropolitan regions. However, the sample ratios suggest a gender bias towards more female teachers teaching school singing than males in both primary and secondary schools.

A further delineation of the gender ratios of respondent categories (see Table 4.8) shows that primary female choir respondents completed the highest number of questionnaires ($n=72; 45.6\%$) and that secondary male choir respondents completed the lowest ($n=1; 0.6\%$).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondents N=158</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Nil response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$n$</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>$n$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary Year 3</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary Choir</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary Music</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary Choir</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>10.8</td>
<td>138</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 4.3 Primary School Respondent Teachers (N=103 individual respondents)

The study identified a range of primary school respondents (see Table 4.9, over page). Respondents included generalist classroom teachers, specialist teachers\textsuperscript{69} (n=19; 18.4\%) and a member of a school executive. Of the specialist music teachers, 8 respondents stated that they were release from face to face (RFF)\textsuperscript{70} teachers.

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\textsuperscript{67} NSW DET 2005 *Equal Opportunity (EEO) Annual Report*, p.27.

\textsuperscript{68} NSW DET 2005 *Equal Opportunity (EEO) Annual Report*, p.28.

\textsuperscript{69} A primary specialist teacher usually teaches a particular discipline across K – 6.

\textsuperscript{70} Typically, a specialist music teacher releases generalist classroom teachers from teaching in front of their classes for a regular period/s each week/fortnight. In the context of the study, specialist is a term that applies to a specialist teacher of primary classroom music.
### Table 4.9: Primary Respondent Teachers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teacher Type</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Generalist Classroom</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>80.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dedicated Music Specialist</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>10.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Designated Music Specialist</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dedicated Choir Specialist</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dedicated Performing Arts Specialist</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Designated Singing Specialist</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Executive</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>103</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.0</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Specialist teacher is a term used in this thesis to distinguish between generalist classroom teachers and other teachers who taught music and/or music related activities across primary educational Stages. In this study, five types of specialist teachers who taught primary singing activities were identified. The term “dedicated” was used to distinguish those specialist teachers who taught only music and/or music related activities. The term “designated” was used to distinguish specialist teachers who, in addition to music and/or music related activities across educational stages, also taught classrooms and/or other activities. As these terms were devised for use in the study, the following five types of specialist teachers who taught primary singing activities were identified as follows:

1. Dedicated music specialist teachers who teach only classroom music and music related activities across K-6.
2. Designated music specialist teachers who, in addition to teaching in other areas of education at their schools, teach classroom music and music related activities across K-6.
3. Dedicated choir specialist teachers whose sole function is to teach the school choir/s.

---

71 One respondent did not provide information as to whether they were generalist or specialist teacher. However their teaching qualification, a BA Dip Ed, together with the information that a music specialist teacher also responded from their school, suggested that the respondent was a generalist classroom teacher and has been coded as such.

72 The school executive contained a respondent who, at the time of completing the questionnaire, was an Acting Principal who also taught the school choir. In this context, an acting school principal is one who is temporarily in the principal role until the school principal returns from leave or until a new school principal is appointed. Another respondent, a generalist teacher of a Year 3 class, was also identified as an Assistant Principal. However the latter respondent completed the questionnaire as a generalist Year 3 classroom teacher and as such, was included in the generalist classroom category.
4. Dedicated Performing Arts specialist teachers teach a combination of dance, drama and music performing arts subjects only.

5. Designated singing specialist teachers who, in addition to being a primary generalist classroom teacher at their school, teach singing activities across K-6.

These findings are further delineated for Year 3 teacher respondents and primary choir teacher respondents.

4.3.1 Year 3 Teachers (N=44 individual respondents)

As Table 4.10 shows, Year 3 respondent teachers were generalist classroom teachers, dedicated music specialist teachers, school designated music specialist teachers and a school designated singing teacher.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondents N=44</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Generalist Classroom</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>88.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dedicated Music Specialist</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Designated Music Specialist</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Designated Singing Specialist</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>44</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.0</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The majority of Year 3 teacher respondents were generalist classroom teachers (n=39; 88.6%). Of the Year 3 generalist classroom teachers, two indicated that school singing activities were the responsibility of the music specialist teachers at their schools. A school designated singing specialist teacher (n=1; 2.3%) was also identified as generalist classroom teacher who in addition to their own classroom teaching, taught singing across K-6. Dedicated music specialist teachers (n=3; 6.8%) were identified as those teachers who were principally appointed to teach school music programmes across Years and Stages of education and as such, taught Year 3 classroom music. In addition to classroom music, the school designated music specialist (n=1; 2.3%) also taught Technology and Library. Although also an assistant school principal and consequently part of the school executive, one Year 3 teacher respondent (PGT, Respondent 37) completed the questionnaire as a primary generalist classroom teacher and is categorised as such.
4.3.2 Primary Choir Teachers (N=80 individual respondents)

Table 4.11 lists the types of primary choir respondent teachers. Of the primary choir teachers, 76.3% were generalist classroom teachers.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 4.11: Primary Choir Respondent Teachers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Respondents N=80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$n$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Generalist Classroom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dedicated Music Specialist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Designated Music Specialist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dedicated Choir Specialist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dedicated Performing Arts Specialist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Designated Singing Specialist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Executive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Eighteen respondent primary choir teachers were specialist teachers: dedicated music specialists ($n=10; 12.5\%$), designated music specialists ($n=3; 3.8\%$) a school designated singing specialist ($n=1; 1.3\%$), dedicated choir specialists ($n=2; 2.5\%$) whose sole function was to teach the school choir/s and dedicated Performing Arts specialist teachers ($n=2; 2.5\%$) of dance, drama and music. As Table 4.11 shows, the majority of primary choir teacher respondents were generalist classroom teachers ($n=61; 76.3\%$). An acting school principal respondent\textsuperscript{73} (PET, Respondent 1) included as school executive, also taught the school choir. As this respondent’s primary function at the time of data collection was administrative, they are entered as a primary executive teacher.

4.3.3 Additional Teaching Areas

The current primary curriculum is sometimes described as ‘over crowded’ (Australian Government, 2005, p.42). In relation to this, respondents were asked to identify other subjects that they concurrently taught (see Table 4.12, over page). These teaching areas ranged from maths ($n=1$) to remedial areas such as Reading Recovery ($n=4$). In addition to teaching areas and as previously noted, 1 respondent indicated that they were an acting school principal.

\textsuperscript{73} In this context, an acting school principal is one who is temporarily in the principal role until the school principal returns from leave or until a new school principal is appointed.
Table 4.12: Additional Primary Respondent Teaching Areas

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subjects</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>Activities</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>Creative Arts</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>Other</th>
<th>n</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Science</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Sport</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Dance</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Reading Recovery</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technology</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Debating</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Drama</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Aboriginal Education</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>French</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Library</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Band</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Early Intervention</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maths</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Public Speaking</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Recorder Ensemble</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Early School Support</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Measurement</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Singing</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Learning Assistance</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PDHPE75</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>SRC76</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>8</strong></td>
<td><strong>9</strong></td>
<td><strong>8</strong></td>
<td><strong>11</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.3.4 Primary Respondent Training and Experience

Of the 103 respondent teachers in primary schools, there were 57 sole qualifications, 32 dual qualifications, 3 triple qualifications and 8 nil responses present in the data. Table 4.13 represents these qualifications simplified into 5 broad categories. “Education” and “teaching” appear as identified by the respondents. Included in “other” responses were non-specific qualifications such as “primary and “4 year trained”. The most frequently reported primary respondent teaching qualification was a Bachelor of Education (n=33), followed by a Diploma of Teaching (n=26).

Table 4.13: Primary Respondent Teaching Qualifications

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bachelor Degree</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>Diploma</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>Masters Degree</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>Certificate</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>Other</th>
<th>n</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>Teaching</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>Education</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Teaching</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Other</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arts</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>Education</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>Teaching</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Graduate</td>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>61</strong></td>
<td><strong>48</strong></td>
<td><strong>6</strong></td>
<td><strong>6</strong></td>
<td><strong>4</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.13 does not include tertiary music qualifications or music teaching qualifications as these are tabled separately (see Table 4.14, over page). There was a relatively low presence of primary respondents holding tertiary music qualifications (n=10; 9.7%) or identified music components of a tertiary degree (n=11; 10.7%). Of the specialist teachers (n=7; 6.8%) holding tertiary music qualifications, 5 were school dedicated music specialist teachers, 1 was a dedicated choir teacher and 1 was a designated music specialist. Twenty of the respondents with tertiary music training (n=20; 19.4%) taught school choir/s. One music specialist did not have a tertiary music qualification.

---

74 English as a Second Language.
75 Personal Development, Health and Physical Education.
76 Student Representative Council.
Table 4.14: Primary Respondent Tertiary Music Qualifications

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teacher Type</th>
<th>Tertiary Music Training</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tertiary Music Degree/Dip</td>
<td>Tertiary Music Degree/Dip</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>n</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary Generalist Classroom</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dedicated Music Specialist</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dedicated Choir Specialist</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Designated Music Specialist</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>8.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Music components in tertiary degrees included “music major at Teacher’s College” (PGT [Ch] Respondent 7) and “music method at College” (PGT [Ch] Respondent 87); 2 music component responses cited Kodaly training (PST [Ch] Respondent 72; PGT [Ch] Respondent 100). No respondent indicated that they held specific singing pedagogy qualifications. However, 2 responses (1.9%) indicated choral studies at Teacher’s College and University respectively.

In addition to tertiary music studies, primary school respondents (n=45; 43.7%) indicated that at some point during their lifetime, they had studied singing and/or had been trained to play a musical instrument. Instruments ranged from the piano (n=24; 23.3%) to the trumpet (n=1; 1.0%). Table 4.15 (over page) shows the range of instruments studied. Piano was the most common musical instrument indicated as studied by primary respondents. The levels of accomplishment in piano ranged from novice to licentiate level. Studying singing was the next most reported form of instrumental tuition undertaken by respondents (n=12; 11.7%). The methods of voice training ranged from private tuition, to choir and to group adult education classes. Choral in-services were reported by 4 respondents (3.9%) as providing choral training. Respondents also cited conducting courses and music theory in their musical training. Non-specific responses (n=3; 2.9%) included “loads of courses” (PST [Ch] Respondent 12) and “mostly self-taught” (PST [Ch] Respondent 21). While 91 respondents did not indicate that they had studied singing, 6 respondents specifically stated that they had no musical or singing training; all 6 respondents were generalist classroom teachers of whom four taught choir.
Table 4.15: Primary Respondent Musical Training

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Training</th>
<th>Teacher Type</th>
<th>N=103</th>
<th>Generalist</th>
<th>Specialist</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Piano</td>
<td></td>
<td>19</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Singing</td>
<td></td>
<td>9</td>
<td>8.7%</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guitar</td>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3.9%</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Keyboard</td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.9%</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Violin</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.0%</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flute</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.0%</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clarinet</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.0%</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Piccolo</td>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trumpet</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.0%</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In-service</td>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3.9%</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Music Theory</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.0%</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conducting</td>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4.9%</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-specific</td>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Of those respondents with musical training (n=45; 43.7%), an additional nine respondents had studied music at tertiary level. Therefore, more than half the primary respondents (n=54; 52.4%) had some form of formal musical training: singing/instrumental training and/or tertiary music training. Table 4.16 lists the frequencies of respondent types and their singing and/or musical training.

Table 4.16: Primary Respondents and Singing and/or Musical Training

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teacher Type</th>
<th>Musical Training Including Singing</th>
<th>Singing Training</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Generalist Classroom</td>
<td>38 36.9%</td>
<td>9 8.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dedicated Music Specialist</td>
<td>9 8.7%</td>
<td>1 1.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dedicated Choir Specialist</td>
<td>2 1.9%</td>
<td>1 1.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dedicated Performing Arts Specialist</td>
<td>2 1.9%</td>
<td>1 1.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Designated Music Specialist</td>
<td>2 1.9%</td>
<td>0 0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Executive</td>
<td>1 1.0%</td>
<td>0 0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>54 52.4%</strong></td>
<td><strong>12 11.7%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Primary generalist classroom respondents had the highest level of singing training (n=9; 8.7%) and over a third of primary generalist classroom teachers (n=38; 36.9%) presented with some form of musical training. Three specialist respondents had singing training (n=3, 2.9%); however all 12 of the respondents with singing training, including specialist (n=3) and generalist teachers (n=9), taught primary choirs.

The musical experiences, including singing, of primary teacher respondents (n=45; 43.7%) were also diverse and included "accompanying [choir singing]" (PGT [Ch]
Respondent 47) to “playing percussion in local band to improve skills” (PGT [Ch] Respondent 100). Eight respondents (7.8%) cited musical experiences through their own teaching. Ten respondents (9.7%) referred to conducting experiences. Table 4.17 lists respondent singing experiences (n=36; 35.0%). Included in these singing experiences are 26 choral singing responses (25.2%), 7 of which (6.8%) referred to experiences when the respondents were themselves at school. Participation in amateur musicals was identified by 5 respondents (4.9%). Professional singing experiences (n=4; 3.9%) included classical singing (PST [Ch] Respondent 81), singing in a jazz trio (PST [Ch] Respondent 31), regularly performing as a singer/guitarist (PGT [Ch] Respondent 82) and lead singing in jazz and rock bands (PST [Ch] Respondent 61).

Table 4.17 shows that the number of primary generalist classroom teachers with musical training and/or experiences increases when including respondent singing and musical experiences (n=45; 43.7%) with musical training. The combined overall level of respondents with training or experience increased to n=63 or 61.2%.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teacher Type</th>
<th>N=103</th>
<th>Musical and/or Singing Training and/or Singing Experiences</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Generalist classroom</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>43.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dedicated Music Specialist</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>9.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dedicated Choir Specialist</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dedicated Performing Arts Specialist</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Designated Music Specialist</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Designated Singing Specialist</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Executive</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>61.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.17: Musical Background of Primary Respondents

More primary respondents noted having singing experiences (n=36; 35.0%) than having singing training (n=12; 11.7%). Of the 36 respondents who noted having singing experiences, 32 respondents taught primary school choirs.

The primary respondents’ years of teaching ranged from 0.5 to 40 years (see Table 4.18, over page). Descriptive statistics were obtained after deleting 6 nil responses from the data (n=97).
Table 4.18: Primary Respondent Teaching Years

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of years primary teaching</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>Minimum</th>
<th>Maximum</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>97</td>
<td>.5</td>
<td>40.0</td>
<td>17.43</td>
<td>11.25</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Of the specialist respondents (n=19; 18.4%), 9 respondents had been teaching for less than 15 years, 5 teachers had taught for more than 15 years but for less than 30 years, and 5 respondents had taught for more than 30 years. The gender of respondents, tertiary music qualifications/training and combined musical training and experiences were then cross tabulated within 15 year groupings (see Table 4.19). The percentages listed correspond to the percentage within each of these groupings. Respondents in the “> 15 and < 30 years” grouping had the lowest incidence of tertiary music degrees (n=2; 5.7%) and the lowest in inclusion of male respondents (n=3; 8.6%). Respondents in the “> 30 years” grouping had the highest percentage of musical instrument, including singing, training and/or experience.

Table 4.19: Primary Respondent Data and Teaching Experience

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Data</th>
<th>&lt; 15 years</th>
<th>&gt;15 &lt; 30 years</th>
<th>&gt; 30 years</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>n</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>n</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female Respondents</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>87.8</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male Respondents</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>12.2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tertiary Music Degree/Diploma</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>14.6</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Music Training and/or Experience</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>58.5</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.3.5 Persons responsible for Primary School Singing Activities

Primary generalist classroom teachers were cited as those teachers predominantly responsible for school singing activities, either solely responsible or in conjunction with others. Figure 4.4 (over page) represents those teachers responsible for school singing activities at respondent schools. Six respondents specified the number of teachers who were responsible for singing at their school with one teacher stating that classes were exchanged as “only 5 teachers were confident” to teach singing (PGT [Ch] Respondent 18) and another respondent stating that “some teachers with some music background/interest” (PGT [Ch] Respondent 28) were responsible for school singing.

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77 These figures were based on the combined total of respondent tertiary music training, musical and/or singing training and musical and/or singing experiences. There were 3 nil responses.

78 In this context, the sample was reduced to 97 and there were 6 nil responses.
One respondent stated that there were two teachers at their school who taught singing with the aid of a CD player.

Primary respondents indicated that ‘specialist’ teachers responsible for school singing activities included specialist music, choir and performing arts teachers \((n=33)\). Other teachers included members of the school executive \((n=5)\), support staff \((n=2)\), parents \((n=2)\), a religious teacher \((n=1)\) and Musica Viva \((n=1)\). All persons nominated in these latter categories (school executive, support staff, parents, a religious teacher and Musica Viva) were responsible in conjunction with either generalist classroom or specialist teachers. One respondent stated that no one “this year” (PGT [Ch] Respondent 41) at their school was responsible for school singing. Of the 103 primary respondents, 7 respondents did not indicate those responsible for school singing.

![Figure 4.4: Teachers Responsible for Primary School Singing Activities at Respondent Schools](image)

### 4.3.6 Private Singing lessons for Primary School Students

In establishing who teaches singing in primary schools, questions as to the availability of private singing lessons were asked. Table 4.20 (over page) lists the answers to the availability of these lessons at the school, outside the school and whether private singing lessons were of benefit.

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79 Specialist teachers may be dedicated or designated; specialist teachers may or may not have specific singing training or singing experience (see Table 4.16 on p.101 and Table 4.17 on p.102).
Respondents indicated that at 3 schools (2.9%), primary students had the opportunity to study singing privately; 95.1% of respondent primary schools did not offer private singing tuition. More than 50% of respondents did not know if their students studied singing outside the school.

When asked if private singing lessons would be of benefit to students in primary music classes, 43.7% of primary respondents indicated that private lessons would be of benefit. The reasons as to why private singing lessons would or would not benefit primary students were varied. One respondent made the distinction that it would be beneficial for the students in the choir to have private singing lessons (PST, Respondent 59). Three additional respondents said that private singing lessons would help “the depth of the choir” (PGT [Ch] Respondent 43), that assumed vocal quality gained through private tuition would “enhance” the choir (PGT [Ch] Respondent 53) and that “a well developed voice will always lead better singing from the rest of the choir” (PST [Ch] Respondent 31). Three respondents similarly indicated that private singing tuition would augment musical aspects of school singing performances by providing children as “role models” (PGT [Ch] Respondent 20) and by affording children with the ability to sing vocal parts (PGT [Ch] Respondent 56 and PST [Ch] Respondent 71). One respondent indicated that private singing lessons would provide students with the “skill to sing” (PGT, Respondent 54). Another seven respondents (6.8%) believed they had a lack of appropriate expertise and/or confidence to teach singing; three respondents attributed this lack of expertise to not having suitable training. One respondent believed that their students could do more than they could “currently offer them” (PGT [Ch] Respondent 24) and two respondents stated that “professional” assistance would be beneficial to their teaching (PGT [Ch] Respondent 9 and PGT [Ch] Respondent 40).

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80 In this context, privately refers to individual one-to-one tuition with a singing teacher.
In contrast, other respondents indicated that school singing is “only one part of the curriculum (PGT [Ch] Respondent 45) and that there was “too much to cover in [the] curriculum already” (PST [Ch] Respondent 69). Two respondents believed that they provided adequate singing tuition and because they did so, private singing lessons were not necessary. Another two respondents cited a school emphasis on private tuition of musical instruments rather than on singing. In this context, singing was viewed as an avenue for student “enthusiasm” (PGT, Respondent 15) as opposed to student learning. However, personal expression and/or development were cited by respondents (n=22; 21.4%) as reasons as to why private singing lessons may be beneficial for primary students; and potential benefits included vocal technique, musical skills, confidence and personal expression. Eight respondents suggested that their students would be precluded from participating in private singing lessons due to financial reasons. Five other respondents suggested that private singing lessons were suitable only for students who were “talented” (PGT [Ch] Respondent 39 and PGT [Ch] Respondent 83) or who showed “some talent” (PGT [Ch] Respondent 6), had a “gift” for singing (PGT, Respondent 4) or “for those with particular ability” (PGT [Ch] Respondent 85). Other responses included “yes and no” (PST [Ch] Respondent 95), “you tell me” (PST [Ch] Respondent 61) and “I have no interest to answer this question” (PGT [Ch] Respondent 28).

4.4 Secondary School Respondent Teachers

The study identified a range of secondary school respondents who taught school singing. Respondents included classroom music teachers and secondary choir teachers.

4.4.1 Secondary Classroom Music Teachers (N=24 individual respondents)

Secondary classroom music teachers can teach music to students in Stage 4, Stage 5 and Stage 6 classes. Within these Stages are different courses designed by the BOS NSW and discussed in Chapter 2 (Section 2.5.3). As Table 4.21 (over page) shows, all Years and Stages of secondary syllabus music were identified in the

81 Educational Stage 4 encompasses Years 7 and 8: Mandatory Music.
82 Educational Stage 5 encompasses Years 9 and 10: Elective Music.
83 Educational Stage 6 encompasses Years 11: Preliminary Courses and Year 12: HSC Courses.
respondent sample. The most common secondary music classes taught by respondents were Stage 4, Year 7, mandatory music classes \((n=22; 91.7\%)\). With the exception of Year 11 and 12 Music 1 classes, the more advanced levels of Stage 6 school music study were the courses least taught by the respondent sample. Of the secondary respondent teachers \((n=24)\), 22 respondents \((91.7\%)\) taught at least one Stage 4 class, 20 \((83.3\%)\) respondents taught at least one Stage 5 class, 21 \((87.5\%)\) respondents taught at least one Stage 6 Music 1 class and 8 \((33.3\%)\) respondents taught at least one Stage 6 Music 2/Music Extension class. One respondent taught all secondary music courses at the time of data collection (SMT [Ch] Respondent 121).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Stage</th>
<th>Course</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Year 7</td>
<td>Stage 4</td>
<td>Mandatory</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>91.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 8</td>
<td>Stage 4</td>
<td>Mandatory</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>79.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 9</td>
<td>Stage 5</td>
<td>Elective</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>66.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 10</td>
<td>Stage 5</td>
<td>Elective</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>58.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 11</td>
<td>Stage 6</td>
<td>Music 1</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>70.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 12</td>
<td>Stage 6</td>
<td>Music 1</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>75.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 11</td>
<td>Stage 6</td>
<td>Music 2</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>29.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 12</td>
<td>Stage 6</td>
<td>Music 2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>20.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 12</td>
<td>Stage 6</td>
<td>Music Extension</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>20.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 4.4.2 Secondary Choir Teachers \((N=10\) individual respondents)

All secondary choir teachers \((N=10)\) taught secondary classroom music.

### 4.4.3 Additional Teaching Areas

Nine secondary respondents indicated that in addition to teaching secondary classroom music, there were 8 other areas in which they taught. Table 4.22 lists the additional secondary teaching areas present in the data.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teaching Areas</th>
<th>n</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Visual Art</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drama</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Design and Technology</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Home Economics</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maths</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
One respondent identified 3 additional teaching areas; 2 respondents identified 2 additional teaching areas; 6 respondents identified a single additional teaching area. The teaching of additional areas in secondary education, as one respondent stated, was to meet NSW DET requirements of full teaching loads where “a couple only” (SMT, Respondent 106) of additional lessons may meet the requirement. Of the nine respondents teaching in areas additional to secondary classroom music, 4 also taught secondary choir teachers.

### 4.4.4 Secondary Respondent Training and Experience

Table 4.23 represents secondary respondent tertiary qualifications simplified into 4 single categories.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bachelor Degree</th>
<th>Diploma</th>
<th>Masters Degree</th>
<th>Other</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Music</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1 DMA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Music Education</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contemporary Music</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1 Teaching</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arts</td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Of the 21 responses from teachers in secondary schools, 1 sole qualification, 13 dual qualifications and 1 triple qualification were present in the data. This represented a total of 34 qualifications. There were 3 nil responses. One respondent, although having a BA Dip Ed, held no specifically identifiable tertiary music qualification.

In addition to tertiary music studies, secondary school respondents \( n=11; 45.8\% \) indicated that at some point during their lifetime, they had studied singing and/or had been trained to play a musical instrument. Instruments ranged from the piano \( n=9; 37.5\% \) to the trumpet \( n=1, 4.2\% \). Table 4.24 (over page) shows the range of instruments studied by secondary respondents.

Like the primary respondents, piano was the most common musical instrument studied \( n=9; 37.5\% \) and studying singing was the next most reported form of instrumental

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84 This reference was non-specific and could have possibly been a Diploma or Doctorate of Musical Arts.
85 This reference was non-specific and could have possibly been a Diploma or Doctorate of Music Education.
tution undertaken by respondents \( (n=6; \ 25.0\%) \). The levels of accomplishment in piano ranged from non-specific to licentiate level. The methods of voice training ranged from private tuition to a vocal component studied as part of a music education degree. In addition, one respondent learned to play the flute and another played the trumpet professionally. Other noted music training included a non-specific response of “self-taught” (SMT, Respondent 112). One respondent stated that they had no singing training; another response to singing training was “teach singing in school” (SMT [Ch] Respondent 108).

**Table 4.24 Secondary Respondent Musical Training**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Instrument</th>
<th>( n )</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Piano</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>37.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Singing</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>25.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trumpet</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flute</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Musical experiences of secondary classroom music teachers included those of one professional musician and another that indicated a non-specific response of “lots of musical experiences mainly instrumental” (SMT, Respondent 125). One respondent indicated musical experiences through high school music and through being a band master (SMT, Respondent 127). Singing experiences included choir participation \( (n=6, \ 25.0\%) \), “community vocal group” (SMT, Respondent 107) and “numerous” (SMT, Respondent 111). Two respondents indicated that they sang professionally, with one respondent also participating in singing and choir competitions. Two non-specific choral participation references were present in the data: “choral concerts” (SMT [Ch] Respondent 109) and “choirs” (SMT [Ch] Respondent 108).

The secondary respondents’ years of teaching ranged from 1.5 to 30 years. Descriptive calculations, see Table 4.25, were made after deleting 1 nil response from the data \( (n=23) \).

**Table 4.25: Secondary Respondent Teaching Years**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>( n )</th>
<th>Minimum</th>
<th>Maximum</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of years secondary teaching</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>30.0</td>
<td>13.83</td>
<td>10.46</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Of the secondary classroom music respondents, 12 had been teaching for less than 15 years, 8 had taught for more than 15 years but for less than 30 years, and 3 had taught for at least 30 years.
4.4.5 Persons responsible for Secondary School Singing Activities

Secondary classroom music teachers were cited as those teachers predominantly responsible for school singing activities, either solely responsible or in conjunction with others. Figure 4.5 represents the teachers responsible for school singing activities at respondent secondary schools.

Of the 24 secondary music teacher respondents, 22 respondents stated that secondary class music teachers were responsible for school singing activities either solely or in conjunction with other teachers at the school. Two respondents indicated that a choir teacher and a drama teacher respectively were also responsible for school singing activities. Clarifications were made by another two respondents: one respondent indicating that only one secondary class music teacher at their school actually “sings with classes” (SMT [Ch] Respondent 104) and another that their position was a permanent part-time teaching position (SMT, Respondent 106). Two respondents indicated a singing tutor was also present at their respective schools and a third respondent indicated that there were two singing tutors at their school. Of the first, one tutor was available for singing lessons in the afternoons outside of regular school hours. The singing tutors were nominated as sharing the responsibility of singing activities with secondary classroom music teachers.

Figure 4.5: Teachers Responsible for Secondary School Singing Activities at Respondent Schools
Of the two responses that did not include secondary class music teachers as being responsible for school singing activities, one indicated that school singing was the responsibility of the “assistant classroom teacher” (SMT, Respondent 107). The remaining secondary music teacher indicated that “no one specialises in vocals” (SMT, Respondent 114) at their school.

### 4.4.6 Private Singing lessons for Secondary School Students

In establishing who teaches singing in secondary schools, questions as to the availability of private singing lessons were asked. Table 4.26 lists the answers to the availability of these lessons at the school, outside the school and whether private singing lessons were of benefit.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Unsure</th>
<th>Nil response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>N=24</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>At school</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outside school</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Would Benefit</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Respondents indicated that at 4 schools (16.7%), secondary students had the opportunity to study singing privately within the school; 83.3% of respondents secondary schools did not have a private singing teacher and 20.8% of respondents did not know if their students studied singing outside the school.

When asked if private singing lessons would be of benefit to students in secondary music classes, 83.3% indicated that private lessons would be of benefit. This is almost double the benefit percentage indicated by respondents at primary schools. The reasons as to why private singing lessons would or would not benefit secondary students were varied. One respondent made the distinction that private tuition would be beneficial “only for performance students” (SMT [Ch] Respondent 109). Two respondents believed that private singing tuition would “help train voices properly” (SMT, Respondent 111) and would benefit “vocal production” (SMT, Respondent 116). Three other respondents indicated that the individual attention in private singing tuition

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86 In this context, privately refers to individual one-to-one tuition with a singing teacher.
was “the best way to teach” (SMT, Respondent 118), provided “specialist expertise” (SMT [Ch] Respondent 105) and afforded students a “role model” (SMT [Ch] Respondent 104).

4.5 Summary and Discussion

Representative of the NSW DET Sydney Metropolitan Regions, Education Areas and school sizes, the respondent sample shows that school singing is taught by a diverse range of teachers.

4.5.1 Do primary generalist classroom teachers teach school singing?

The respondent sample contained 83 primary generalist classroom teachers (N=83) who were either Year 3 classroom respondents (n=22), Year 3 classroom and primary choir respondents (n=17) or primary choir respondents (n=44). The majority of these generalist classroom teachers (n=78; 94.0%) indicated that they taught school singing. Of the Year 3 generalist classroom respondents, 5 indicated that they did not incorporate singing activities in their teaching. One respondent said that singing activities were the responsibility of the specialist teacher (PGT, Respondent 77); another respondent indicated that singing activities actually occurred in a combined Stage 2 singing class held once a week (PGT, Respondent 39). The remaining three respondents went on to describe the singing activities that occurred in their classes. The implication from these latter three responses is that teaching singing activities or teaching class singing is possibly perceived by some teachers as being different from actual classroom singing. The majority of primary respondent sample (N=103) also designated primary generalist classroom teachers, either solely or in conjunction with others, as being responsible for school singing activities (n=81; 78.6%).

The musical training of generalist classroom teachers (N=83) ranged from respondents with a tertiary music diploma (n=3; 3.6%) and respondents who had studied a music component as part of a tertiary degree (n=10; 12.0%), to generalist classroom teachers with no tertiary music training (n=70; 84.3%). In instrumental training, piano was the primary instrument studied (n=19; 22.89%) by generalist classroom respondents. A minority of generalist classroom teachers stated that they had studied singing (n=9; 10.8%) and/or had singing experiences (n=25; 30.1%). This means that the majority of
generalist classroom teachers, being the majority of teachers teaching primary singing, had no singing training and/or experiences.

As well as being primary generalist classroom teachers, 20.5% of generalist respondents ($n=17$) indicated that they had additional teaching areas. The teaching of additional areas raises issues such as time constraints and whether there is a necessity for potentially interested generalist classroom teachers to prioritise school activities such as classroom singing and/or choir. Over 40% of generalist classroom respondents indicated that private singing lessons would be of benefit to primary students. This may be due to time constraints of generalist classroom teachers, but may equally be due to the view that singing teaching is a specialist area.

**4.5.2 Do specialist teachers teach primary school singing?**

Music and/or singing specialist teachers, as distinct from generalist classroom teachers, were identified in the study as those teachers who taught school singing to groups of students. In this way, the specialist teachers in the study were distinct from private singing teachers who were not included in the study. A range of specialist teachers was identified as teaching primary school singing. The five types of specialist teachers identified included dedicated music specialist teachers, designated music specialist teachers, dedicated choir specialists, dedicated performing arts specialist teachers and designated singing specialist teachers. The availability of designated specialist teachers appeared to be based on a variety of teaching skills across areas and/or generalist teaching that included music and/or singing.

Of the respondent primary sample ($N=103$), thirty-three respondents (32.0%) nominated specialist teachers as being responsible (primarily or in conjunction) for school singing activities. Specialist teachers were also present in 19 of respondent schools and as such represented 20.7% of the respondent primary school sample. However, not all specialist teachers identified in the study held tertiary qualifications in music or training in music education. This indicates that many ‘specialist’ teachers may be primary generalist class teachers with an interest in or the ability to teach school music. The implication is that while not all primary school children have access to specialist teachers, neither do all primary school children have access to musically or vocally qualified specialist teachers.
4.5.3 Do secondary music teachers teach school singing?

Of the 24 secondary classroom music respondents, 22 stated that secondary class music teachers were responsible for school singing activities either solely or in conjunction with other teachers at the school. Twenty-one secondary respondents stated their tertiary qualifications. Of those, 1 secondary classroom music teacher held no specifically identifiable tertiary music qualifications. Similar to respondents at primary schools, piano was the predominant musical instrument studied \( (n=9; 37.5\%) \) by secondary classroom music respondents. Of the secondary classroom music teachers, 6 had studied singing \( (n=6; 25.0\%) \) and/or 10 had singing experiences \( (n=10; 41.7\%) \). This means that the majority of secondary classroom music teachers \( (n=14; 58.3\%) \) had no singing training and/or experiences.

Nine secondary classroom music teachers \( (37.5\%) \) indicated that they had additional teaching areas. As with primary respondents, the teaching of additional areas raises issues such as time constraints and priorities. A higher percentage of secondary classroom music teachers \( (n=20; 83.3\%) \) indicated that private singing lessons would be of benefit to secondary students. This may be due to student singing being an accessible musical instrument at secondary level, but may be equally due to the view that singing teaching is a specialist area.

4.5.4 Do private singing teachers teach school singing?

Private singing teachers were identified at primary \( (n=3; 2.9\%) \) and secondary schools \( (n=4; 16.7\%) \). An analysis of the benefits and detriments of private singing lessons provided insight into teaching perceptions in relation to teaching singing in schools and into singing teaching expertise. While a range of responses from financial reasons to the view that private singing tuition would benefit only talented or performing students were offered for the preclusion of students from undertaking private singing tuition, the implication is that singing in school may be the only avenue available to many students for experiencing singing. As well as the personal benefits for participating students in private singing lessons, respondents indicated that there would be a positive flow on effect to their own teaching practices if students undertook singing private tuition.
4.5.5 Types Teachers of School Singing

The research findings presented in this chapter revealed the types of teachers teaching singing in Sydney government schools. The ensuing discussion focused on the similarities and differences between the types of teachers and key variables are presented in Figure 4.6: MODEL 1 - Teachers of singing in Sydney government schools (over page). Private singing tutors, identified in the research as teaching school singing, are included in the model as a 'silent voice'.

4.6 Précis: Chapter 4

Chapter Four addressed the question of “who teaches school singing in Sydney government schools?”. The chapter concluded with a summary and discussion which also addresses subset questions. Chapter Five addresses the question of “what types of singing are taught in Sydney government schools?”. In this chapter, the findings on what types of singing activities occur at respondent primary and secondary schools are presented. A model of the types of school singing occurring in Sydney government schools is presented.
Figure 4.6: MODEL 1
Teachers of singing in Sydney government schools

Who?

Key Variables

n=83; Predominantly Female: 88.0%
Teach Choir: 59.2%

Singing Training and/or Experience: 32.5%
Tertiary Music: 15.7%

n=13; Predominantly Female: 64.2%
Teach Choir: 94.7%
Designated: 21.1%; Dedicated: 78.9%

Singing Training and/or Experience: 52.6%
Tertiary Music: 42.1%

n=1;
Member of the school executive

n=24; Predominantly Female: 79.2%
Teach Choir: 41.7%

Singing Training and/or Experience: 41.7%
Tertiary Music: 83.3%
Chapter 5: What Types of School Singing are Taught?
The Broad Study: School Singing Activities

5.1 Introduction

The previous chapter detailed the types of teachers who teach singing in Sydney government schools. This chapter outlines the types of singing activities that are taught in Sydney government schools and addresses the question of “what types of singing are taught in Sydney government schools?”.

The findings presented in this chapter provide insights into the range of school singing activities being taught. The following discussion focuses on, and addresses, the research questions 2.i and 2.ii:

2.i What school singing activities are offered to children and adolescents?
2.ii Do the types of school singing vary at different educational stages?

5.2 School Singing Activities

All primary and secondary years were identified as being educational years in which school singing activities occur. School singing activities occurred in the classroom, during school assemblies, at school concerts, in associated school activities and outside the school. Determining the types of singing activities and their relationship to BOS NSW syllabuses, saw the development and implementation of the terms “syllabus singing”, “co-syllabus singing” and “non-syllabus singing” applied to the data:

---

“Although “integrated” is a term in the literature applied to connections within Creative Arts activities and between Creative Arts activities and other syllabuses, co-syllabus is used in the context of this thesis because the NSW DET initiative of Connected Outcomes Groups (COGs) (NSW DET, Curriculum K-12 Directorate, n.d.; NSW DET, Curriculum Support, 2007) implies linkage between outcomes.”

---
1. syllabus singing is school singing that is an integral part or a direct consequence of BOS NSW music syllabuses

2. co-syllabus singing is school singing that is related in part to one or more BOS NSW syllabuses; may be thematic singing or supplementary singing

3. non-syllabus singing is school singing that is not an integral part or a direct consequence of any BOS NSW syllabus

In this study co-syllabus was applied to singing activities that related to one or more of the BOS NSW syllabuses. Therefore, in addition to possible music syllabus connections, co-syllabus singing examples present in the data served other functions. Two types of co-syllabus singing were found to occur in respondent primary schools: thematic singing brought singing activities into a general subject such as history and was used to illustrate a topic; supplementary singing was used as a support mechanism to reinforce learning in non-musical areas such as language or mathematics.

5.2.1 Primary

(\(N=103\) individual respondents; \(N=91\) primary respondent schools)

Respondents indicated that, at respondent primary schools (\(N=91\)), singing activities occurred in Kindergarten through to Year 6 (\(n=76\); 82.6%) inclusively. Of an additional 12 responses that stipulated specific years in which singing activities occurred, such as Year 3 through to Year 6, 8 responses were found to correlate to the years of choir inclusion at the respondent schools. For these 8 respondents, participation in school singing activities was associated with choir participation. Of the remaining 4 responses, participation in singing activities occurred in Kindergarten to Year 4 inclusively (\(n=2\)) and in Year 2 to Year 6 inclusively (\(n=2\)). As these respondent schools offered classes K – 6\(^{88}\) and as three of these schools offered primary choir for Years 3 to 6, respondents were possibly only identifying the Years in which classroom singing activities occurred. There were 3 nil responses.

\(^{88}\) The educational years each school offered were determined from their listing as primary schools in the 2004 Directory of the New South Wales Department of Education and Training, compiled by the State of New South Wales, Department of Education and Training.
Unlike the analysis of the school years participating in singing activities which utilised the primary respondent school sample \((N=91)\), the location and description of primary singing activities were determined using the full primary respondent teacher sample \((N=103)\). Singing in school assemblies, both class \((n=87; 84.5\%)\) and choir \((n=78; 75.7\%)\) performances, were the most reported singing activities (Table 5.1, over page). Whole school singing\(^{89}\) at assembly \((n=74; 71.8\%)\) was also frequently reported.

School singing activities occurred in various locations - in school assemblies, in school concerts, in the classroom, additionally at school and in locations outside the school. “Other” school initiated singing activities that occurred outside the school were performance orientated and included eisteddfod performances \((n=4)\), performances at nursing homes \((n=4)\), performances at local festivals \((n=3)\), performances at local school spectaculars \((n=2)\), a performance at the local hospital \((n=1)\), an audio recording of the school choir \((n=1)\) and a pre-school visit \((n=1)\).

Primary Year 3 singing activities included syllabus, co-syllabus and non-syllabus singing (see Figure 5.1, p.121). Year 3 teacher respondents \((N=44)\) indicated that classroom syllabus singing at times \((n=37; 84.0\%)\) and co-syllabus at times \((n=41; 93.3\%)\) occurred in their classroom teaching. Of the respondents that indicated Year 3 classroom singing was not specifically related to the music component of BOS NSW Creative Arts Syllabus, two respondents reported that classroom singing was always non-syllabus singing as it did not relate to any of the BOS NSW syllabuses. One respondent reported that syllabus singing was not applicable to their teaching as all singing activities were the responsibility of the music specialist teacher.

\(^{89}\) School singing in which the entire school community participates equally.
Table 5.1: Location of primary school singing activities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location of Activity</th>
<th>Singing Activity</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>School Assembly</strong></td>
<td>Class Performance</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>84.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Choir Performance</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>75.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Whole School</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>71.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>School Concert</strong></td>
<td>Choir Performance</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>69.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Class Performance</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>47.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Solo Performance</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>26.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>School Concert</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Presentation Night</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>In Classroom</strong></td>
<td>Music Class or CA&lt;sup&gt;90&lt;/sup&gt; Music Groups</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>45.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Music Assessments</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>19.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Class Singing&lt;sup&gt;91&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Creative Arts: Drama</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>At School</strong></td>
<td>School Musical</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>18.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>School Choirs and Choir Practice</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>9.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Talent Quests</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Musica Viva&lt;sup&gt;92&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Community Days&lt;sup&gt;93&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Christmas Carol Pageant</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Outside School</strong></td>
<td>Regional or Area Festival&lt;sup&gt;94&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>19.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Primary Choral Concerts&lt;sup&gt;95&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>9.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sing NSW&lt;sup&gt;96&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>7.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Primary Proms&lt;sup&gt;97&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>School Spectacular&lt;sup&gt;98&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Other</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>15.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<sup>90</sup> Two responses cited Creative Arts Performance Groups which could either relate to music classes or be performance groups. As the syllabus was specifically mentioned in these responses, both responses were included with Music Classes.

<sup>91</sup> Class singing in these responses did not indicate classroom music singing and as music class was an optional response, these class singing responses were likely to be references to co-syllabus thematic singing.

<sup>92</sup> Musica Viva is a non-government music support initiative which presents performances and workshops to students and teachers.

<sup>93</sup> Community days included Grandparents’ Day.

<sup>94</sup> Festivals are organized at either NSW DET Region or Area level and usually showcase a combined school festival choir, school music and dance groups that are within the relevant DET Region or Area. Included in this category are 9 respondents who indicated participation in district choirs.

<sup>95</sup> Primary Choral Concerts refer to the NSW DET Arts Unit (2006a) initiative being the Primary Schools Choral Festival. Schools may enter up to 34 students capable of singing in two parts.

<sup>96</sup> Sing NSW is a NSW DET Arts Unit (2006c) initiative that provides choral education and performance opportunities. Participation may be either as an individual student or as a school choir.

<sup>97</sup> Primary Proms is a NSW DET Arts Unit (2000a) initiative. Schools may enter choirs of up to 30 Year 3 and 4 students capable of singing in two parts.

<sup>98</sup> School Spectacular is a NSW DET Arts Unit initiative (2006d). It showcases students and performance groups from NSW government schools. Singers may either be in a combined choir or appear as featured artists.
A comparison between Year 3 syllabus and Year 3 co-syllabus singing activities revealed that on a scale of 1 (No), 2 (Rarely), 3 (Sometimes), 4 (Often) to 5 (Always), co-syllabus singing had a slightly higher mean (3.37) than syllabus singing (2.93). This indicates that co-syllabus singing occurred slightly more often in Year 3 classrooms than music related syllabus singing.

Year 3 classroom singing was found to include syllabus singing, co-syllabus thematic and supplementary singing, and/or non-syllabus singing. Examples of co-syllabus thematic singing activities included a “thematic approach [to classroom singing] often environmental, historical songs relating to HSIE [Human Society and its Environment] units” (PGT [Ch] Respondent 45) and “we did an HSIE Unit on Australia and learnt Australian songs” (PGT, Respondent 48). Examples of co-syllabus supplementary singing included “maths songs” (PST [Ch] Respondent 27) and singing for “language development” (PGT, Respondent 55). Examples of non-syllabus singing included singing that occurred incidentally\(^99\) to the syllabuses such as “lesson break” singing \((n=5)\), singing the school song \((n=2)\) or singing “in scripture for some students’” (PGT, Respondent 55). In this context, the singing activity is teacher initiated incidental school singing that is not related to any Board of Studies NSW syllabus.

\(^99\)
Respondent 54). Another respondent also identified “daily singing and voice exercises” (PST [Ch] Respondent 61).

As Figure 5.2 shows, primary choir teacher respondents (N=80) indicated that syllabus singing (n=53; 66.3%) and co-syllabus (n=56; 70.0%) occurred at times in their choir teaching. Twenty-one respondents (26.3%) reported that primary choir singing was non-syllabus singing as it at no time related to any of the BOS NSW syllabuses. There were 3 nil responses.

A comparison between primary choir syllabus and primary choir co-syllabus singing activities revealed that on a scale of 1 (No), 2 (Rarely), 3 (Sometimes), 4 (Often) to 5 (Always), syllabus and co-syllabus singing occurred on average above the “rarely” range. The means of choir syllabus (2.65) and choir co-syllabus singing (2.65) were the same, however they were slightly lower than the means of Year 3 classroom syllabus (2.93) and Year 3 classroom co-syllabus singing (3.37) which indicates that syllabus related singing was slightly more prevalent in Year 3 classroom singing activities than in primary choir singing. As the means of both syllabus and co-syllabus singing being below “sometimes”, most primary choir singing was non-syllabus singing.
5.2.2 Secondary

\((N=24\) individual respondents; \(N=24\) secondary respondent schools)\)

The majority of secondary responses, \((n=15; 62.5\%)\), indicated that secondary school singing activities occurred in Year 7 to Year 12 inclusively. Of the remaining 9 secondary responses, all noted specific years that participated in singing activities. The noted years possibly reflected the years of music being offered at the respondent schools at the time of data collection such as Year 7 to Year 9 inclusively and Year 11 (SMT [Ch] Respondent 119). The 2 responses that did not include the mandatory years of studying school music were possibly indicative of the years when singing is an elective activity. Secondary school singing activities occurred inside and outside the music classroom (see Table 5.2). Syllabus and non-syllabus singing activities were evident. However, unlike in primary schools, co-syllabus secondary school singing activities were not identified.

Table 5.2: Location of secondary school singing activities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location of Activity</th>
<th>Singing Activity</th>
<th>(N=24)</th>
<th>(n)</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>School Assembly</td>
<td>Choir Performance</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>41.7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Class Performance</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>29.2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Whole School</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>29.2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Concert</td>
<td>Solo Performance</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>50.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Choir Performance</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>41.7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Class Performance</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>29.2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In Classroom</td>
<td>Music Class</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>91.7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Music Assessments</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>70.8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>At School</td>
<td>School Musical</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>25.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cabaret</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4.7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Music and Dance Concert</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4.7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Battle of the Bands</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4.7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Performance Night</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4.7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Celebration Concert</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4.7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outside School</td>
<td>Area Music Festivals</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>16.7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Arts Unit Vocal Ensembles(^{100})</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>12.5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>School Spectacular</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8.3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sing NSW</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8.3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Talent Development Project(^{101})</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4.7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^{100}\) State schools vocal ensembles are initiated through the NSW DET Arts Unit (2006b). There are two vocal ensembles – State School Singers (Years 7 to 12) and State Schools Junior Singers (Years 4 to 9). All applicants are auditioned.

\(^{101}\) Talent Development Project is initiated through the NSW DET Arts Unit (2000d) that invites students in NSW government schools or TAFE NSW colleges to participate in a workshop program running from August to July the following year. It is designed for those students wanting to enter the entertainment and music industries. Successful students graduate in August. A recent initiative, the Junior Troupe Program, for younger performers requiring development over a longer period has been implemented.
The majority of secondary respondents reported that syllabus related classroom singing activities \((n=22; \text{ 91.7\%})\) at times occurred in their classroom. Twelve respondents indicated that classroom singing activities were “always” syllabus singing as most secondary classroom singing activities appeared to explore music topic areas. Additional syllabus singing in music classes was in relation to assessment tasks \((n=17; \text{ 70.8\%})\). Two respondents did not view their secondary classroom singing activities as syllabus singing and as such, were coded as being non-syllabus singing. Of the 2 respondents that indicated that classroom singing was non-syllabus singing, one stated that singing was used for “pitch awareness and [to] improve individual and classroom skills” (SMT [Ch] Respondent 124). Another respondent indicated that while class singing occurred in their music classrooms, it was for “participation” in Years 7 and 8, for “sight-singing” purposes in Years 9 and 12 and for assessment in Year 11 (SMT [Ch] Respondent 121). In this context, the perceived lack of music syllabus relevance may relate to the described types of secondary classroom singing being participatory, exploratory and purposive rather than ‘real singing’.

Table 5.3 shows the inclusion of syllabus singing in secondary classroom music and choir syllabus singing activities as described by respondents on a scale of 1 (No), 2 (Rarely), 3 (Sometimes), 4 (Often) to 5 (Always). Syllabus singing occurred on average just below the “often” range in secondary classroom singing activities and was slightly above the “rarely” range of secondary choir activities. This indicates that syllabus singing occurred more often in secondary classroom music than in secondary choirs.

| Table 5.3: Secondary classroom music and choir syllabus singing activities |
|---------------------------|----------|------------|-------|----------------|---------------|
|                           | \(n\)    | Minimum    | Maximum | Mean  | Std. Deviation |
| Classroom Syllabus Singing| 24       | 1          | 5      | 3.92  | 1.412          |
| Choir Syllabus Singing    | 9        | 1          | 3      | 2.11  | 1.054          |

5.3 Classroom Singing

In acknowledging that curriculum development occurs at national, state, school and classroom levels, Marsh (1998) states that it is in the classroom where teachers “make numerous curricular decisions, both about what they teach and how they teach it” (p.143) and in doing so, the classroom is where the curriculum transcends its design to
become an implemented, experienced reality. The realization of syllabus, co-syllabus and non-syllabus classroom singing is revealed through the analysis of questions pertaining to classroom singing and in part addresses the issue of what types of school singing are taught.

5.3.1 Year 3 Primary Classroom Singing

\((N=44)\) individual respondents

As the timetabling and composition of primary classes is the responsibility of individual schools, information pertaining to Year 3 class sizes and composition was collected to determine a range of variables that may impact on singing activities. The study identified two types of Year 3 classes: classes comprising of only Year 3 students \((n=17; 38.6\%)\) and composite classes \((n=23; 52.3\%)\) that combined Year 3 students with students from other years. The majority of respondent composite classes identified from the data were Year 3/4 classes \((n=15; 34.1\%)\). The actual composition and size of two Year 3 classes and one composite class could not be determined. There were an additional 4 nil responses.

The size of Year 3 classes varied and ranged from 22 to 32 students. One respondent of a Year 3 music class indicated that they taught 110 Year 3 students music. Although intimated, it was unclear as to whether the respondent did in fact teach 110 students at any one time and as such, this response was omitted from class size statistics. The number of Year 3 students included in composite classes ranged from 4 to 19 students. One respondent indicated that the number of Year 3 students in their composite classes was 85 and another indicated that there were 45 students. However these figures were possibly reflective of the total number of Year 3 students at the school and were excluded from analysis. Another respondent of a composite class did not indicate the size of their class.

In addition to the range of class sizes, the age range within classes varied greatly. Composite classes included Years 1/2/3 \(^{102}\) \((n=1)\), 2/3/4 \((n=1)\), 2/3 \((n=6)\) to Years 3/4 \((n=15)\). Teaching singing to a broad age range of students in these classes may have

\(^{102}\) The respondent indicated that their class had commenced the year of data collection as a 1/2/3 composite and then changed to a 3/4 composite later the same year.
implications for vocal music selection and musical complexity. The age range for Year 3 students alone was varied. Even though data was collected from respondents at different times during the calendar year, the average ages for Year 3 students was similar for both boys (8.37) and girls (8.39). As ten respondents did not include the age range of their students, tabulated averages were determined using data from 34 Year 3 teacher respondents (n=34; 77.3%).

The researcher acknowledges that student gender ratios in primary classrooms will be dictated by the gender ratios of school enrolments or by the gender ratios of any particular year. For these reasons, the gender ratios pertaining to class music were included to provide subsequent references when analyzing student singing participation and student singing gender ratios. Student gender classroom ratios were determined from the stated number of boys and girls in respondent classes and were compared to the “approximate” gender ratios of students who participated in classroom singing.

Calculations were performed using only respondent data that provided corresponding ratios (n=33) (see Table 5.4).

**Table 5.4: Gender ratio comparisons of Year 3 students and of Year 3 students who sing**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender Ratios</th>
<th>Year 3 Classrooms</th>
<th>Participating in Year 3 classroom singing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>n</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boys &gt; Girls</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>36.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Girls &gt; Boys</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>22.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boys = Girls</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>13.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not applicable</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>25.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>44</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.0</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The researcher acknowledges it was possible that participation ratios altered in the context of respondent approximation. Therefore, in cases when the approximated ratio differed from the classroom ratio by more than three students, the ratios were viewed as being different (n=6) and revealed reductions in boys' (n=5) and in girls' (n=1) participation in Year 3 classroom singing. Of the additional two “other” Year 3 classroom singing participation responses (see Table 5.4), one respondent wrote that “all” students participated in classroom singing (PGT, Respondent 37) and the other responded in the context of their complete composite class (PGT [Ch] Respondent 34).
The analysis of the time students spent singing in Year 3 and Year 3 composite classrooms provides an understanding of the inclusion and types of Year 3 singing activities. The responses that stipulated the minutes spent singing in classes \( (n=35) \) varied in the average time range from 5 minutes to 75 minutes, with a mean of 29 minutes (see Table 5.5). Twelve respondents indicated that singing time was incorporated weekly \( (n=9) \), twice a week \( (n=1) \), daily \( (n=1) \) and three times a term \( (n=1) \). By distinguishing between the time spent in classroom music as distinct from additional time spent singing in the classroom, two respondents differentiated classroom syllabus singing and other types of classroom singing: “...formal lessons and as lesson infills” (PGT [Ch] Respondent 63) and “very rarely [sing in Year 3 classroom] as music is covered in Music RFF” (PGT [Ch] Respondent 46). An additional two responses stated that the time spent singing “varies” (PGT, Respondent 37) and “depends on many factors” (PST, Respondent 61). The variance of these responses may be indicative of one or more factors including school directives, different types of singing and/or classroom priorities.

Table 5.5: Time Year 3 students spent singing in classrooms

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>( n )</th>
<th>Minimum</th>
<th>Maximum</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Average class singing time in minutes</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>75.0</td>
<td>29.00</td>
<td>14.338</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

When Year 3 teacher respondents were asked if the time spent singing in the classroom altered in other primary Stages, there were 39 responses. Thirteen of these responses indicated that the time spent singing did alter during primary schooling for each educational Stage. The reasons given for the variances in time spent singing in the classroom were complex. Five responses stated that there was more classroom singing in Early Stage 1 and Stage 1 classes than in other primary classes. Three responses stated that time spent singing depended on the confidence and/or expertise of the teacher. There was a single reference to different syllabus content (PST, Respondent 59). One respondent included having to prioritize classroom time due to a “crowded curriculum” (PGT [Ch] Respondent 40). Another respondent answered that singing just “doesn’t happen in some classes” (PGT, Respondent 15). Of the other responses, eight respondents did not perceive there to be any differences and thirteen respondents replied “do not know”. No responses linked the developmental stages of
student voices to the variance of time spent singing in primary classrooms.

The most frequently reported types of vocal music (songs) sung in Year 3 classrooms were children’s songs (see Table 5.6) and traditional children’s songs formed the vocal music that was predominantly sung \((n=23; 52.3\%)\). The types of vocal music ranged from traditional children’s songs \((n=31; 70.5\%)\) to student compositions \((n=5; 11.4\%)\). The two “other” responses both related to the ABC Sing! Series: “mixture as use [ABC] Sing books exclusively” (PST [Ch] Respondent 12) and “all covered by ABC Sing!” (PGT, Respondent 37).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vocal Music</th>
<th>Sung</th>
<th>Predominantly Sung</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(N=44)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Traditional Children’s Songs</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>18.2</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contemporary Children’s Songs</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>13.6</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pop Songs</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>25.0</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Songs from Musicals</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>27.3</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Songs from Music of a Culture</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>18.2</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Songs from Films</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>18.2</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classical Vocal Music</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>13.6</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religious Songs</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>11.4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jazz Songs</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>13.6</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Compositions</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>9.1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Vocal Music</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

When selecting the types of vocal music for Year 3 classes, the majority of respondents reported that student age was a selection criterion \((n=33; 75.0\%)\). Other selection criteria are listed in Table 5.7.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Frequency (N=44)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Student Age</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Cultural Background</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Singing Ability</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Gender</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Interests</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

ABC (Australian Broadcast Commission) Sing! Series is a compilation of vocal music produced for primary school aged children that is produced yearly. Available with the Sing! Book containing melody lines, chords and song information, are the Teacher’s Handbook and the Sing! recordings of guide vocals and instrumental tracks for each song.
In addition to student age, student gender, student interests and student singing ability were the vocal music selection criteria used by the majority of Year 3 teacher respondents.

The types of singing experienced by Year 3 children included singing with backing tracks ($n=40; 90.9\%$), unaccompanied singing ($n=34; 77.3\%$) and with piano accompaniment ($n=9; 20.5\%$). Respondents of Year 3 classes indicated that during Year 3 classroom singing or as a result of Year 3 classroom singing, their students experienced singing using sound reinforcement ($n=16; 36.4\%$). Some respondents also indicated that the sound reinforcement equipment would at times be operated by students ($n=9; 20.5\%$) or was “always” operated by students ($n=3; 6.8\%$). Much of Year 3 vocal music was sung in unison as half of the Year 3 respondents ($n=22; 50.0\%$) reported assigning some vocal parts. Of the 22 responses, the most common types of vocal parts were rounds ($n=18$), followed by harmony ($n=5$). Of the 22 respondents, 13 respondents ranked criteria used to assign vocal parts (see Table 5.8). Voice projection and range implications were evident in the vocal part assignment criteria. All 13 respondents noted that they, at times, used the criteria of the ability of students to sing high notes in assigning parts. Nine respondents reported that, at times, student gender was also a criterion for vocal part assignment.

### Table 5.8: Year 3 vocal part assignment criteria

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Student has a soft voice</th>
<th>Student has a loud voice</th>
<th>Student can sing high notes</th>
<th>Student can sing low notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$n$</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>$n$</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rarely</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7.7</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>15.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>53.8</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>53.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Often</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7.7</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>15.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Always</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>69.2</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>92.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the types of Year 3 singing activities, just over half of the respondents ($n=25; 56.8\%$) addressed pitch accuracy at some level: “rarely” ($n=5; 11.4\%$), “sometimes” ($n=15; 34.1\%$), “often” ($n=4; 9.1\%$) and “always” ($n=1; 2.3\%$). The types of singing in Year 3 classes at times included vocal health issues with a total of 13 respondents (29.5\%) indicating that they “rarely” ($n=7; 15.9\%$) or “sometimes” ($n=6; 13.6\%$) addressed vocal
health issues in their teaching. Interpretative elements of vocal music were included in less than half of the Year 3 teaching strategies \((n=17; 38.6\%)\) primary respondents. A minority of Year 3 classes included some form of singing exercises \((n=15; 34.1\%)\).

### 5.3.2 Secondary Music Classroom Singing

\((N=24\) individual respondents; \(N=19\) coeducational schools; \(N=5\) single-sex schools\)

Similar to primary classes, the timetabling of classes is the responsibility of individual secondary schools. Questions relating to the size and duration of classes of secondary classroom music were included to determine a range of variables that may impact on classroom singing activities.

The size of secondary music classes varied. Respondents indicated that classroom music sizes ranged from 1 student in Year 12 to 78 students in Year 7. The respondent who indicated 78 students in Year 7 was possibly referring all Year 7 students or the total number of Year 7 students that the respondent taught. Twenty respondents indicated that the largest classes they taught were the mandatory Year 7 and/or 8 music classes. Another three respondents referred to elective music classes with 30 students in Year 10 to Year 12 music classes \((n=1)\), 21 students in a Year 9 music class \((n=1)\) and 12 students in a Year 11 music class \((n=1)\). The latter respondent did not teach mandatory music. Of the smallest class sizes noted, 20 responses referred to Stage 6 music classes. These figures suggest that in most final Stage school music classes, the sizes of classes reduce dramatically when compared to mandatory music class sizes.

Responses indicated that the duration of secondary class music also varied (see Table 5.9, over page). Single and double period time frames were evident in all Stages. The most reported duration \((n=7)\) was a 50 minute period across all three Stages; the second most reported duration \((n=4)\) was a 60 minute period across all three Stages. The variation in the minimum duration of classes across Stages, seen in Table 5.9, was due to one respondent noting the duration in of their Stage 4 classes only.
Table 5.9: Duration in minutes of secondary music classes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Duration in minutes</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>Minimum</th>
<th>Maximum</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Stage 4 Music Classes</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>54.74</td>
<td>12.440</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stage 5 Music Classes</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>55.64</td>
<td>11.946</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stage 6 Music Classes</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>55.64</td>
<td>11.946</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

While the duration of classes did not alter across Stages for each respondent school, there appeared to be a progressive increase in the frequency of music classes from mandatory to elective modes of study. The means of the frequency of secondary music class across stages could not be calculated as some respondents noted frequencies for their classes only, while other respondents appeared to have included all classes at their school in their responses.

The time spent singing in secondary music classes also “varied” across Stages (n=3) ranging from “usually always” (SMT [Ch] Respondent 105) to “rarely” (SMT [Ch] Respondent 117) in Stage 4 music classes and “every lesson” (SMT [Ch] Respondent 108) to “0.01 for the year” (SMT, Respondent 107) in Stage 5 music classes. In Stage 6 music classes, the time spent singing appeared to be more consistent for “performance lessons” (SMT [Ch] Respondent 103) and for “individual solo practice” (SMT, Respondent 123).

The researcher again acknowledges that student gender ratios in secondary coeducational mandatory music classes will be dictated by the gender ratios of school enrolments or by the gender ratios of any particular year. For these reasons, the gender ratios pertaining to class music were included to provide references for subsequent analysis of student singing participation and student singing gender ratios. Respondents, at coeducational schools (N=19) identified the student gender ratios that participated in secondary mandatory and elective music classes at the time of data collection (see Table 5.10, over page).
Table 5.10: Gender ratios of secondary coeducational classroom music

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender Ratios</th>
<th>Stage 4</th>
<th></th>
<th>Stage 5</th>
<th></th>
<th>Stage 6</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$n$</td>
<td>$%$</td>
<td>$n$</td>
<td>$%$</td>
<td>$n$</td>
<td>$%$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boys &gt; Girls</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>47.4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>21.1</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>42.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Girls &gt; Boys</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>15.8</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>21.1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>10.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boys = Girls</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>31.6</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>57.9</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>47.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nil response</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5.3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>19</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.0</strong></td>
<td><strong>19</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.0</strong></td>
<td><strong>19</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.0</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5.11 shows that in coeducational secondary classroom music at respondent schools ($N=19$), there were more girls involved in classroom singing activities than boys across all Stages of study.

Table 5.11: Gender ratios of students who sing in secondary coeducational classroom music

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender Ratios</th>
<th>Stage 4</th>
<th></th>
<th>Stage 5</th>
<th></th>
<th>Stage 6</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$n$</td>
<td>$%$</td>
<td>$n$</td>
<td>$%$</td>
<td>$n$</td>
<td>$%$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boys &gt; Girls</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>10.5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5.3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>21.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Girls &gt; Boys</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>57.9</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>57.9</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>47.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boys = Girls</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>26.3</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>36.8</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>26.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do not teach</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5.3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>19</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.0</strong></td>
<td><strong>19</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.0</strong></td>
<td><strong>19</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.0</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

When compared to the ratios in Table 5.10, it is apparent that Girls>Boys is the only ratio to increase. For example, where 9 respondents initially indicated there were more boys than girls in Stage 4 classroom music (see Table 5.10), only 2 respondents reported that there were also more boys than girls singing in classroom music (see Table 5.11). This reduction therefore showed that there were fewer boys singing in the respondents’ mandatory Stage 4 music classes than girls. There was a single response in Stage 6 where the reduction trend appeared to be reversed with one respondent indicating that there were more boys than girls singing. However, in this case there were no girls in Year 12 music classes at the time of data collection.

Respondents were asked to approximate singing participation ratios in relation to the classes they taught. Responses on singing participation ratios indicated that more students did not sing in secondary classroom music than those who sang in secondary music classes (see Table 5.12, over page).
Table 5.12: Participation ratios of students who sing in secondary classroom music

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participation Ratios</th>
<th>Stage 4</th>
<th></th>
<th>Stage 5</th>
<th></th>
<th>Stage 6</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>n</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>n</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>n</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Singing &gt; Non-Singing</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>33.3</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>25.0</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>29.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-singing &gt; Singing</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>50.0</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>54.2</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>41.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Singing = Non-Singing</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8.3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>16.7</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>20.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All students sing</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not applicable</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5.13 shows the response range of the average time spent singing in secondary classroom music. While all respondents indicated that at some point in secondary music education students sang, two respondents indicted “0” as the lower end of the range average time. As this suggests, while singing in classroom music varied within education stages, in some music classes singing did not occur. Another respondent indicated that singing “hardly” (SMT [Ch] Respondent 117) occurred. Two other respondents qualified the occurrence of classroom music singing with “sometimes none” (SMT, Respondent 125) and “if practicing for an assessment” (SMT, Respondent 123). The most frequent response was that 10 minutes (n=5) were spent singing in each music class.

Table 5.13: Time secondary music students spent singing in classrooms

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Average singing time in minutes each classroom music lesson</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>n</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 minutes</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 minutes</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 minutes</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30 minutes</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Varies</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Responses to the frequency of secondary music classes in which students sang were varied. The most common response for Stage 4 classes in which singing occurred was 1 class per fortnight (n=6). In other single responses, “usually always” (SMT [Ch] Respondent 105) and “every lesson” (SMT [Ch] Respondent 108) were contrasted with
“not structured singing” (SMT, Respondent 123). In Stage 5 classes, two respondents indicated that singing in music classes occurred in “every lesson” (SMT [Ch] Respondent 108), in “half” (SMT [Ch] Respondent 105) of the lessons and was a rare occurrence ($n$=2). One respondent noted that “seldom is singing the focus, [although] some students sing with me a lot” (SMT [Ch] Respondent 103) and another respondent stated “0 – 0.01 average for the year” (SMT, Respondent 107). One respondent indicated that singing occurred in Stage 6 “performance lessons” (SMT [Ch] Respondent 104) where the focus is on performing with an instrument of choice.

The most popular types of vocal music (songs) sung and predominantly sung in secondary classroom music are listed in Table 5.14 (over page). The tabulated percentages correspond to the sample size at each secondary music Stage: Stage 4, Stage 5, Stage 6 Music 1 and Stage 6 Music 2 and Music Extension (see Table 4.21, p.107). As Table 5.14 shows, in Stage 4, Stage 5 and Stage 6 Music 1 secondary music classes the most frequently sung styles are contemporary. These were determined by totaling the sung and predominantly sung frequencies as noted by respondents. In Stage 4 Music, rock songs were the most frequent types of vocal music ($n$=19; 86.4%) and pop songs were the most frequent types of vocal music reported as predominantly sung ($n$=14; 63.6%). There were no religious songs sung in Stage 4 music classes. In Stage 5 Music, pop songs were the most frequent types of vocal music ($n$=17; 85.0%) and pop songs were also the most frequent types of vocal music reported as predominantly sung ($n$=14; 70.0%). In Stage 6 Music 1, pop songs were the most frequent types of vocal music ($n$=17; 81.0%) and pop songs were again the most frequent types of vocal music reported as predominantly sung ($n$=11; 52.4%). The prevalence of pop and rock vocal music was reversed in Stage 6 Music 2 and Music Extension students where classical was the most frequent type of vocal music ($n$=6; 75.0%) and student compositions were the most frequent type of vocal music reported as predominantly sung ($n$=3; 37.5%).

One respondent indicated that while singing occurred in classes, no specific vocal music styles were sung or predominantly sung. Rather than state the specific vocal music styles sung in classes, another respondent noted that vocal music styles were dependent upon the topics being studied. Topic dependence was a recurring concept associated with the styles of vocal music being sung, particularly in relation to classical
Table 5.14: Vocal music in secondary music classes

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*Vocal music percentages are calculated using the sample representation (n) for each teaching Stage and/or Course.
repertoire. Sight singing was another type of class singing that was present in Stage 6 Music 2 and Music Extension classes (n=3; 37.5%).

Student singing ability was the most reported criterion when selecting vocal music (n=22; 91.7%). Other selection criteria are listed in Table 5.15. All tabled criteria were reported as being relevant to vocal music selection in secondary music by the majority of respondents.

Table 5.15: Secondary vocal music selection criteria

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<th>Criteria</th>
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<td>83.3</td>
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<td>Student Interests</td>
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<td>83.3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Student Gender</td>
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<td>70.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Cultural Background</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>66.7</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

The types of singing experienced by secondary students included singing with backing tracks (n=20; 83.3%), unaccompanied singing (n=22; 91.6%) and singing with piano accompaniment (n=21; 87.5%). Almost all secondary class music respondents (n=23; 95.8%) indicated that at some time during classroom music or as a consequence of classroom music, their students who sang experienced singing using sound reinforcement. The majority of respondents also indicated that sound reinforcement equipment would at times be operated by students (n=17; 70.8%) or was “always” operated by students (n=5; 20.8%).

Another type of singing experienced by secondary classroom music students was part singing (n=18; 75.0%). The most common type singing in vocal parts was harmony singing (n=11; 52.4%) followed by singing in rounds (n=4; 16.7%). Of the 18 respondents, 16 respondents noted the criteria they used to assign vocal parts (see Table 5.16).

Table 5.16: Criteria for assigning of vocal parts in secondary classroom music

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Student has a soft voice</th>
<th>Student has a loud voice</th>
<th>Student can sing high notes</th>
<th>Student can sing low notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>n</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>n</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rarely</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6.3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sometimes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Often</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>12.5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>18.8</td>
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<tr>
<td>Always</td>
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<td>0.0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
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<td>Total</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>43.8</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>62.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Range implications were evident in the vocal part assignment criteria with the majority of respondents assigning parts doing so because of student vocal ranges. Eleven respondents, 68.8% of secondary music respondents who included vocal parts assignment in their teaching, reported that at times gender was also a criterion for vocal part assignment.

In the types of secondary music singing activities, the majority of respondents (n=23; 95.8%) addressed pitch accuracy at some level. A total of 22 respondents addressed pitch - “rarely” (n=1; 4.2%), “sometimes” (n=7; 29.2%), “often” (n=8; 33.3%) and “always” (n=6; 25.0%). The types of singing in secondary music classes at times included vocal health issues with 15 respondents (62.5%) indicating that they “rarely” (n=4; 16.7%), “sometimes” (n=9; 37.5%) or “often” (n=2; 8.3%) addressed vocal health issues. Interpretative elements of vocal music were also included in the teaching strategies of 17 (70.8%) secondary respondents. The majority of secondary music classes included some form of singing exercises (n=16; 66.7%)

5.4 Choir Singing

In addition to the syllabus, co-syllabus and non-syllabus types of school singing occurring in respondent classrooms, choir singing also occurred in primary and secondary respondent schools. School choir singing included singing in a choir, a vocal group or a vocal ensemble. It did not include group singing in classroom music lessons.

5.4.1 Primary Choir Singing

(N=80 individual respondents)

Of the primary respondent school sample, 6 respondents indicated that their school did not have a choir, one respondent was unsure as to whether their school had a choir at the time of data collection and there were 3 nil responses. Of the primary choir teacher respondents (N=80), there were two instances where more than one choir teacher responded from the same school. The individual respondent sample, in relation to respondent schools was therefore representative of 78 schools. At these schools, primary choir singing was available to a range of students in varying Stages of education (see Table 5.17, over page). The most frequent choir participation available to students was from Stage 2 to Stage 3 (n=33; 42.3%); Stage 1 to Stage 3
participation \((n=30; 38.5\%)\) was the next most frequent. Choir participation at eight respondent schools was available to students from Kindergarten to Year 6 or from Early Stage 1 to Stage 3.

Table 5.17: Educational stages of participating students in primary choir activities

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<td>1.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stage 1 – Stage 2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stage 1 – Stage 3</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>38.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stage 2 – Stage 3</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>42.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stage 2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stage 3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nil response</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>78</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.0</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Of the 80 choir teacher respondents, 8 respondents (10.0%) reported teaching choirs composed of students in specific Year/s at their school, 12 respondents (15.0%) reported teaching choirs comprised of students in specific Stage/s and 60 respondents (75.0%) reported teaching choirs comprised of students from various Years and/or educational Stages. Two respondents noted that each class \((n=1)\) or Year group \((n=1)\) was taught as a vocal group. Thirty-two respondents (40.0%) reported teaching more than one choir at their school. A total of five school choirs was taught by one respondent (PST [Ch] Respondent 93) at the one school.

The age range of both boys and girls participating in respondent choir activities was 5 years to 13 years. However the average age of participating boys (9.35 years) was slightly lower than for participating girls (9.57 years). Three respondent choirs noted that they composed of girls only. There were an additional 3 responses where Years rather than ages were noted by respondents and there were 2 nil responses.

The number of participating primary students in respondent choirs, vocal groups and/or vocal ensembles also varied. The maximum number of participating students in any one group ranged from 6 to 95 students. The smallest vocal ensemble of 6 students represented a subset of the school choirs that was selected to perform at School Spectacular. Subset reductions were reported by a total of four respondents. Size variations were also due to there being more than one choir at the respondent school.
(n=40; 50.0%). Other reductions were indicated by two respondents: one noted that their school choir “dwindled” by half in numbers in Term 4 (PGT [Ch] Respondent 2), while another respondent indicated that during Term 4, their school choir increased in numbers with additional students wanting to sing Christmas Carols (PGT [Ch] Respondent 3). The largest reported ensemble was 296 members. However, this represented the number of students cast in the school musical (PGT [Ch] Respondent 69). Of additional choir/s at respondent schools not taught by respondents, one respondent stated that there was a “parent choir” (PGT [Ch] Respondent 96). Twelve respondents described the composition of their choirs, but did not include the actual number of participating students. There were 7 nil responses.

Respondents noted the amount of choir rehearsal time that was spent singing in minutes. Respondents also indicated the number of rehearsals held each week. From these figures, the range and mean were calculated (see Table 5.18).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 5.18: Rehearsal time in minutes spent singing in primary choirs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Average weekly time spent choir singing time</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>n</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The time choir participants spent singing each week ranged from 13.5 minutes to 1.5 hours, with a mean of 41.18 minutes. The majority of respondents indicated that choir rehearsal times were 45 minutes or less (n=68; 85.0%). An additional respondent noted that their students sang for 2 hours, 3 times a week. This totalled 6 hours (360 minutes) a week. As the respondent taught 3 choirs, the nominated amount was possibly the totalled amount for all three choirs. Another respondent indicated that their students sang for 1.5 hours, twice a week. This totalled 3 hours (180 minutes). The latter two responses were viewed as being improbable in the context of a weekly choir rehearsal and were therefore not included in data analysis.

The most frequent response for the number of choir rehearsals each week was once per week (n=64; 80.0%). This was followed by twice per week (n=9; 11.3%). There were three additional responses of 1 to 2 rehearsals each week (n=2; 2.5%) and 2 to 3 rehearsals each week (n=1; 1.3%). Four respondents indicated that there would be
additional rehearsals prior to performances. There were two nil responses.

Respondents were also asked to complete approximate gender ratios of participating choir students (see Table 5.19). In the majority of respondent choirs, there were more girls than boys ($n=68; 85.0\%$). One respondent indicated that their choir was a “boys only” choir (PGT [Ch] Respondent 65). However, this respondent also noted the average ages of both girls and boys in the three choirs that they co-taught with another teacher. As the respondent noted that they taught only the alto part, it is possible that only boys sang the alto part in this respondent’s choir.

![Table 5.19: Gender ratios in primary choirs](image)

In addition to students at respondent schools participating in choir activities, 15 respondents (18.8\%) indicated that students from other schools participated in singing with their choir/s. Additional participation was present in the data as combined participation in music festivals or in NSW DET Art Unit initiatives. Twenty-nine choir teacher respondents (36.3\%) indicated that teachers at respondent schools actively participated in singing in school choir activities. Choir participation in half of the respondent choirs was non-selective ($n=40; 50.0\%$), that is, members were not auditioned. Selective choir participation, where members were auditioned, was reported by 38 respondents (47.5\%). There were 2 nil responses. One respondent noted that although participation was non-selective, for some sub-groupings of choir activities, students were auditioned.

The most popular types of vocal music (songs) sung in primary choirs were children’s songs (see Table 5.20, over page).
Table 5.20: Primary choir vocal music

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vocal Music</th>
<th>Sung</th>
<th>Predominantly Sung</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>n</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>n</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Traditional Children’s Songs</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>38.8</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contemporary Children’s Songs</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>23.8</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pop Songs</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>35.0</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Songs from Musicals</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>32.5</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Songs from Music of a Culture</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>35.0</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Songs from Films</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>42.5</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classical Vocal Music</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>32.5</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religious Songs</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>28.8</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jazz Songs</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>35.0</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Compositions</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>10.0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Vocal Music</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>8.8</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Contemporary children’s songs was the most frequently reported predominantly sung (n=46; 57.5%) vocal music in respondent choirs. The types of vocal music either sung or predominantly sung ranged from contemporary children’s songs (n=65; 81.3%) to student compositions (n=9; 11.3%). One respondent noted that they endeavored “to give good selection” so that no style was predominantly sung (PST [Ch] Respondent 12). “Other” responses (n=10; 12.5%) included “Irish Folk” (PGT [Ch] Respondent 60), “mini musicals” (PGT [Ch] Respondent 61) and “special occasions” (PGT [Ch] Respondent 85).

When selecting the types of vocal music for primary choirs, the most frequently reported selection criterion was student singing ability (n=70; 87.5%). The majority of respondents also reported student age (n=69; 86.3%) and student interests (n=64; 80.0%). Other selection criteria are listed in Table 5.21:

Table 5.21: Vocal music selection criteria for primary choirs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Student Singing Ability</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>87.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Age</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>86.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Interests</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>80.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Cultural Background</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>46.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Gender</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>37.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The types of singing experienced by primary choir participants included singing with backing tracks \((n=73; 91.3\%)\), unaccompanied singing \((n=56; 70.0\%)\) and with piano accompaniment \((n=49; 61.3\%)\). Respondents of primary choirs indicated that during primary choir singing or as a result of primary choir singing, their students experienced singing using sound reinforcement \((n=51; 63.8\%)\). Some respondents also indicated that sound reinforcement equipment would at times be operated by students \((n=34; 42.5\%)\) or was “always” operated by students \((n=3; 3.8\%)\). Most choir respondents reported assigning vocal parts \((n=64; 80.0\%)\) and the criteria they used to assign vocal parts is listed in Table 5.22.

Table 5.22: Vocal part assignment in primary choirs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>N=80</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Student has a soft voice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(n)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rarely</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Often</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Always</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Range implications and voice projection were evident in the vocal part assignment criteria with all respondents assigning vocal parts including the ability of students to sing high or low notes and over half of those assigning vocal parts including the ability to sing loudly. Twenty-three respondents (28.8%) reported that at times student gender was also a criterion for vocal part assignment.

In the types of primary choir singing activities, the majority of respondents \((n=64; 80.0\%)\) addressed pitch accuracy at some level - “rarely” \((n=5; 6.3\%)\), “sometimes” \((n=21; 26.3\%)\), “often” \((n=21; 26.3\%)\) and “always” \((n=15; 18.8\%)\). Two additional respondents indicated that pitch accuracy was addressed, however these respondents did not specify a level. The types of singing in primary choirs at times included vocal health issues with 38 respondents \((47.5\%)\) indicating that they “rarely” \((n=6; 7.5\%)\), “sometimes” \((n=23; 28.8\%)\), “often” \((n=5; 6.3\%)\) and “always” \((n=4; 5.0\%)\) addressed vocal health issues in their teaching. Two additional responses indicated that vocal health issues were addressed, however these respondents did not specify a level. Interpretative elements of vocal music were also included in the majority of primary
choir teaching strategies \( (n=60; 75.0\%) \). The majority of primary choir respondents included some form of exercises singing exercises \( (n=58; 72.5\%) \) in their teaching. The majority of respondents indicated that they conducted their choirs for performances \( (n=73; 91.3\%) \), with most respondents “always” \( (n=61; 76.3\%) \) conducting.

### 5.4.2 Secondary Choir Singing

\( (N=10 \text{ individual respondents}; \ N=24 \text{ secondary respondent schools}) \)

Of the secondary respondent school sample \( (N=24) \), there were 10 \( (41.7\%) \) secondary choir respondents. However, 8 secondary respondents \( (33.3\%) \) indicated that their school did not have a choir and there was 1 nil responses. Secondary choir teacher respondents \( (N=10) \), indicated that secondary choir singing was available to a range of students in varying Stages of education (see Table 5.23). The most frequent choir participation available to secondary students was from Stage 4 to Stage 6 \( (n=7; 70.0\%) \); additional responses contained various Years in Stage 4 to Stage 6 \( (n=3; 30.0\%) \).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participating Years</th>
<th>( N=10 )</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Stage 4 to Stage 6: All Years</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stage 4 to Stage 5: Year 8 –Year 10</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stage 4 to Stage 6: Years 7, 9 and 11</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stage 4 to Stage 6: Years 7, 8, 9 and 11</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The age range of both secondary boys and girls participating in respondent choir activities was 12 years to 17 years. However the approximated average age of participating boys (15.9 years) was higher than for participating girls (14.6 years). The number of participating secondary students in respondent choirs, vocal groups and/or vocal ensembles also varied. The size range of secondary groups was from 5 students to 45 students. Three respondents described the composition of their choirs, but did not include the actual number of participating students. There was one nil response. Two vocal groups, ensembles of 5 and 6 students, were reported by respondents and both were at coeducational schools. Of the singing groups at single sex schools, all were described as being choirs. The largest secondary choir, comprised of 45 members, was at a coeducational school.
Respondents noted the amount of group rehearsal time that was spent singing in minutes. Respondents also indicated the number of rehearsals held each week. From these figures, the range and mean were calculated (see Table 5.24).

### Table 5.24: Rehearsal time in minutes spent singing in secondary choirs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Minimum</th>
<th>Maximum</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>30.00</td>
<td>85.00</td>
<td>51.50</td>
<td>20.555</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The time choir participants spent singing each week ranged from 30 minutes to 85 minutes, with a mean of 51.5 minutes. The most frequent response for the number of choir rehearsals each week was once per week (n=6; 60.0%), although one respondent noted that there were sometimes two rehearsals a week. This was followed by three responses of twice per week (n=3; 30.0%). There was an additional response of 4 x 20 minute singing rehearsal time each week.

Respondents were also asked to complete approximate gender ratios of participating choir students (see Table 5.25).

### Table 5.25: Gender ratios in secondary choirs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender ratio</th>
<th>Coeducational</th>
<th>Single Sex</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>n</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>n</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boys = Girls</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>30.0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Girls &gt; Boys</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>30.0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Girls only</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>10.0</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>70.0</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Girls only choirs were the most frequently reported composition of choirs (n=4; 40.0%), with 3 at single sex girls’ schools and 1 at a coeducational school. At three coeducational schools, more girls than boys were in the school choirs. The only single sex boys’ school to participate in the study did not have a school choir.

In secondary choir participation, secondary music students and non-music students participated. There were more music students than non-music students in five respondent choirs (n=5; 50.0%), music students and non-music students participated in
equal numbers in two respondent choirs ($n=2; 20.0\%$) and there were more non-music students than music students in another two respondent choirs ($n=2; 20.0\%$). Two respondents (20.0\%) indicated that teachers at respondent schools actively participated in singing in secondary school choir activities. No secondary choir respondents indicated that students from other schools participated in singing with their secondary choir/s. Choir participation in more than half of the respondent choirs was selective ($n=6; 60.0\%$), that is, choir members were auditioned prior to joining.

The most popular types of vocal music (songs) sung in secondary choirs were pop songs (see Table 5.26). Contemporary vocal music styles were the most frequently reported vocal music styles either sung or predominantly sung in respondent choirs. Student compositions were not included in vocal music repertoire for secondary choirs.

| Table 5.26: Secondary choir vocal music |
|-------------------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|
| Vocal Music                    | Sung             | Predominantly    | Total            |
|                               | $n$ | %  | $n$ | %  | $n$ | %  |
| Pop Songs                     | 2   | 20.0 | 6   | 60.0 | 8   | 80.0 |
| Songs from Musicals           | 1   | 10.0 | 5   | 50.0 | 6   | 60.0 |
| Songs from Music of a Culture | 1   | 10.0 | 2   | 20.0 | 3   | 30.0 |
| Songs from Films              | 1   | 10.0 | 3   | 30.0 | 4   | 40.0 |
| Classical Vocal Music         | 1   | 10.0 | 3   | 30.0 | 4   | 40.0 |
| Religious Songs               | 1   | 10.0 | 3   | 30.0 | 4   | 40.0 |
| Jazz Songs                    | 3   | 30.0 | 2   | 20.0 | 5   | 50.0 |
| Student Compositions          | 0   | 0.0  | 0   | 0.0  | 0   | 0.0  |
| Other Vocal Music             | 0   | 0.0  | 1   | 10.0 | 1   | 10.0 |

When selecting the types of vocal music for secondary choirs, the most frequently reported selection criteria were student singing ability and student interests (see Table 5.27). Half of the secondary choir respondents also reported student age ($n=5; 50.0\%$) and student interests ($n=5; 50.0\%$).

| Table 5.27: Vocal music selection criteria for secondary choirs |
|-------------------------------|------------------|
| Criteria                      | $N=10$           |
|                               | $n$ | %  |
| Student Age                   | 5   | 50.0 |
| Student Cultural Background   | 3   | 30.0 |
| Student Singing Ability       | 9   | 90.0 |
| Student Gender                | 5   | 50.0 |
| Student Interests             | 9   | 90.0 |
The types of singing experienced by secondary choir participants included singing with backing tracks (n=7; 70.0%), unaccompanied singing (n=7; 70.0%) and with piano accompaniment (n=10; 100.0%). Respondents of secondary choirs indicated that during secondary choir singing or as a result of secondary choir singing, their students experienced singing using sound reinforcement (n=8; 80.0%). Some respondents also indicated that the sound reinforcement equipment would at times be operated by students (n=5; 50.0%). Choir respondents reported assigning vocal parts and the criteria they used to assign vocal parts are listed in Table 5.28.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>N=10</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Student has a soft voice</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>n=2 20.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student has a loud voice</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>n=1 10.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student can sing high notes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>n=0 0.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student can sing low notes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>n=2 20.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rarely</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Often</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Always</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>n=5 50.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>n=7 70.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>n=8 80.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>n=8 80.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Range implications were evident in the criteria used to assign vocal parts with 8 respondents (80.0%) specifically noting student ability to sing high or low notes as criteria. One respondent indicated range as a criterion for only some forms of vocal music (SMT [Ch] Respondent 117). The remaining respondent noted that vocal range and “ensuring that I have a strong voice in each part” (SMT [Ch] Respondent 105) were the criteria used for vocal part assignment. Eight respondents (80.0%) reported that at times student gender was also a criterion for vocal part assignment.

In the types of secondary choir singing activities (N=10), half of the respondents (n=5; 50.0%) addressed pitch accuracy at some level - “rarely” (n=1; 10.0%), “often” (n=3; 30.0%) and “always” (n=1; 10.0%). The types of singing in secondary choirs at times included vocal health issues with 4 respondents (40.0%) indicating that they “rarely” (n=1; 10.0%), “sometimes” (n=2; 20.0%) and “often” (n=1; 10.0%) addressed vocal health issues in their teaching. Three additional respondents had previously indicated in relation to their classroom teaching, that they addressed both pitch accuracy and vocal health issues. Interpretative elements of vocal music were also included in the teaching strategies of 9 (90.0%) secondary choir respondents. Half of the secondary choir
respondents included singing exercises \((n=5; 50.0\%)\) in their teaching. The majority of respondents indicated that they conducted their choirs for performances \((n=7; 70.0\%)\), with most respondents “always” \((n=4; 40.0\%)\) conducting.

5.5 Summary and Discussion

The types of school singing determined in the study include a variety of physical localities in which school singing occurs, vocal music styles sung and participatory factors.

5.5.1 What school singing activities are offered to children and adolescents?

It is the analysis of the school localities in which singing occurs and the types of vocal music styles sung in schools that provides insight into the types of school singing activities available to children and adolescents. For the purposes of this study, children are primary school students and adolescents are secondary students.

With some primary respondents making the distinction between formal syllabus related singing and informal more recreationally based or incidental singing activities, and having these distinctions shared to some extent by some secondary respondent teachers of the singing content in their own music classrooms, the dichotomy that exists in the types of singing activities available to children and adolescents in Sydney government schools is revealed. The dichotomy is possibly also apparent in instances such as the increase in responses to the time spent singing in Year 3 classrooms \((n=5)\) when compared to the corresponding responses as to whether singing activities were included when teaching Year 3 classes. The implication here is that respondent perceptions of directing singing activities in the classroom may differ from their perception of actually teaching singing. Add to this dichotomy, an eclectic mix of thematic singing, supplementary singing, selective singing and other participatory factors and the question of “what types of singing are taught” is partially addressed. The focus or intent of the types of singing adds to this complexity.

There is a marked difference in the types of school singing activities occurring in respondent primary and secondary schools. In primary schools, children participate in a range of singing activities that have a performance focus. The most frequently reported
singing activities by respondents at primary schools were those that occurred outside the classroom such as singing performances for school assemblies or for school concerts. In contrast, respondents at secondary schools indicated that the foremost adolescent singing activities occurred in the music classroom and for music assessments. With a music classroom focus on singing, it is perhaps not surprising that singing performances and whole school singing at school assemblies are less prevalent in secondary schools than in primary schools. Singing to the broader community is also more likely to occur in primary schools than in secondary schools.

In addition to the types of singing initiated at respondent schools either in response to BOS NSW syllabuses or as non-syllabus singing, the study identified sources external to respondent schools that impacted on the types of school singing within respondent schools. Music festivals organized either through Regional or Area committees, provided opportunities for children at primary respondent schools \((n=19)\) and adolescents at secondary respondent schools \((n=4)\) to participate in massed choral events. The vocal music for such events was usually determined externally to the school and taught by respondents at their schools to their school choirs. Both primary \((n=20)\) and secondary \((n=8)\) responses also identified singing activities available to their students initiated by the NSW DET Arts Unit. Even though Arts Unit initiatives were structured outside respondent schools, the group singing activities were usually taught within respondent schools, rehearsed in combined rehearsals outside respondent schools and performed externally to respondent schools. However solo singing opportunities, such as individual student involvement in the Talent Development Project, occurred outside the context of respondent schools. Musica Viva \((n=3)\), an external non-government provider, was also identified as initiating singing activities within schools.

Participatory factors for both children and adolescents include whether the type of school singing was inclusive, such as classroom singing or whether it was selective, such as an auditioned choir. The issue of selectiveness was complicated by possible selected sub-groupings of what were principally inclusive groups; the issue of inclusiveness was complicated by the possibility and implications of singing activities being mandatory. School directives, together with teacher priorities and interests also impacted on the types of singing activities offered and on the length of time spent
singing in schools. The study identified that in some primary and secondary classrooms, singing did not happen or rarely happened. However in some school choirs, singing was directed by a specialist teacher. If the reality is that “singing” happens outside the classroom and is a specialist activity for a selection of students, the issue arises of student access to appropriate singing teaching methodology that fosters individual singing development for all children and adolescents.

5.5.2 Do the types of school singing vary at different educational Stages?

While the types of singing activities children participated in were syllabus singing, co-syllabus singing and non-syllabus singing, both in Year 3 classroom and in primary choirs, the most frequently reported type of singing that at times related to BOS NSW syllabuses was co-syllabus singing. The means of ranked syllabus related singing occurrences revealed that syllabus singing and co-syllabus singing occurred more frequently in Year 3 classrooms than in primary choirs. Co-syllabus singing occurred more often than syllabus singing in Year 3 classrooms. However as the means of syllabus related singing in all cases occurred just above or below “sometimes”, non-syllabus related primary singing activities must also occur.

Secondary singing was found to be either syllabus related singing or non-syllabus related singing. No example of co-syllabus singing was apparent, although one respondent noted that school religious groups sometimes prepared items for scripture classes (SMT [Ch] Respondent 107). Secondary classroom music teachers reported a higher incidence of syllabus singing occurring at times in their music classrooms than primary respondents indicated occurring in their Year 3 classrooms. The calculated means of secondary syllabus singing occurred just below the “always” range in secondary music classrooms. However, the mean of syllabus related singing was just within the “rarely” range in secondary choirs and as such was lower than in primary choirs.

The issue of predominantly female singing participation was present in all Stages of education in this study. A comparison of gender ratios in the Year 3 classroom between classroom ratios and the approximated ratios of those students who sing, suggests that in Year 3 there more girls than boys participating in singing activities. The predominance of girls participating in primary singing activities was further revealed in
the gender ratios of primary choir participation with the majority of respondents reporting that more girls than boys participated in their choir activities. Three of these responses related to girl only choirs. Of the secondary respondents who taught at coeducational schools, when comparing the gender ratios of students in the classroom to the gender ratios of those who participated in classroom singing activities, there were more girls participating in classroom singing activities than boys across Stages 4, 5 and 6. Similarly, of the seven secondary choirs at respondent coeducational schools, four (57.1%) contained more girls than boys. One of these responses related to a girl only choir. However, the percentage of more girls participating in secondary choirs than boys, although still predominantly more girls, was less than in primary choirs. While the researcher acknowledges that the secondary respondent sample is smaller than the primary respondent sample, the comparative percentage reduction in coeducational ratio may reflect student participation by those secondary students who choose to sing as both music and non-music students are present in 2 respondent secondary choirs. Of particular interest in secondary choir participation was that the average age of adolescent boys (15.90 years) participating in choir was higher than that of adolescent girls (14.61 years). This higher average age of adolescent boys possibly reflects that boys by this age have more stable post-voice change singing capabilities. In comparison, the average ages of children in primary choirs were similar with boys being 9.32 years and girls being 9.57 years. This possibly also reflects pre-voice change singing capabilities of boys and girls being similar.

While the researcher acknowledges that the time spent singing in classrooms is at the discretion of individual teachers, the amount of time spent singing in classrooms appears to alter throughout the educational Stages. Primary respondents (n=5) indicated that more time was spent singing in Early Stage 1 and Stage 1 classrooms, than in upper primary classrooms. Similarly, students choosing to sing in Stage 6 music classes at times spent entire periods (performance lessons) practising their singing as opposed to music students in Stages 4 and 5 who might spend a proportion of lessons singing.

The types of school singing also included singing that embodied pitch awareness although pitch was of more concern at times to secondary music teachers (n=23; 95.8%) than to Year 3 classroom teachers (n=25; 56.8%). Similarly, levels of
awareness of healthy singing were more apparent at times in secondary music classes (n=15; 62.5%) than in Year 3 classes (n=13; 29.5%). Secondary classroom music respondents (n=16; 66.7%) showed a greater inclusion of singing exercises in their teaching than Year 3 respondents (n=15; 34.1%). Types of singing in Year 3 classes included a high incidence of singing to backing tracks (n=40; 90.9%); unaccompanied singing (n=22; 91.6%) and singing with piano accompaniment (n=21; 87.5%) in secondary classroom music were frequently reported. The use of sound reinforcement was prevalent in secondary classrooms music (n=22; 91.7%) and was possibly reflective of the solo nature of secondary music singing performances. Solo singers at school concerts were more prevalent in secondary schools (n=12; 50.0%) than in primary schools (n=27; 26.2%).

Levels addressing of pitch accuracy (n=66; 82.5%), an awareness of healthy singing (n=38; 47.5%) and the inclusion of singing exercises (n=58; 72.5%) were more prevalent in primary choir activities than in Year 3 classrooms. While unaccompanied singing (n=56; 70.0%) and singing with piano accompaniment (n=49; 61.3%) were also higher, the use of backing tracks was the predominant form of musical accompaniment in primary choirs (n=73; 91.3%). In addition to some use of backing tracks and unaccompanied singing, all secondary choirs experienced piano accompaniment. However the addressing of pitch accuracy (n=5; 50.0%), awareness of healthy singing (n=4; 40.0%) and the inclusion of singing exercises (n=5; 50.0%) were less frequent in secondary choir activities than in primary choirs and in secondary music classrooms. This may be due to the same teachers teaching classroom music as choir activities; it may equally be due to secondary choir students being more proficient at singing than primary choir students. The means of choir rehearsal times also showed that, on average, over 10 minutes less time was spent singing in primary choirs each week than in secondary choirs.

When viewing the percentage responses of the types of vocal music most frequently sung in Year 3 classrooms, primary choirs, secondary music classrooms and secondary choirs, a progression of vocal music styles complexity was evident from the traditional children’s songs sung in Year 3 classrooms to the classical vocal music styles of Stage 6 Music 2 and Music Extension. Similarly progressively complex vocal music styles were evident with primary choirs and contemporary children’s songs being the most
frequently reported styles of vocal music sung to the pop songs of secondary choirs being the most frequently reported songs sung. The predominantly used vocal music selection criteria varied from student age for Year 3 teacher respondents to student singing ability for secondary classroom music teacher respondents. Singing ability was also prevalent for the vocal music selection in primary and secondary choirs. Vocal music appropriate to student ages was a prime consideration when choosing vocal music for primary choirs; “student interests” were of prime consideration when choosing vocal music for secondary choirs. Primary singing was predominantly the singing of age appropriate children’s songs; secondary singing was primarily reflective of student singing ability and indicative of the singing voice being a musical instrument.

5.5.3 Types of school singing

The research findings presented in this chapter revealed a variety of singing occurring in Sydney government schools. The ensuing discussion focused on the similarities and differences in the types of school singing and key factors are presented in Figure 5.3: MODEL 2 - Types of singing in Sydney government schools (over page).

5.6 Précis: Chapter 5

Chapter Five addressed the question of “what types of singing are taught in Sydney government schools?”. In this chapter, the findings on what types of singing activities occur at respondent primary and secondary schools were presented. Chapter Six addresses the question of “how is singing taught in Sydney government schools?”. Components of teaching school singing are identified through an analysis of qualitative data of individual respondent teaching strategies. Relevant literature is then reviewed and discussed in the context of component verification. Descriptive statistics, univariate statistical analysis of components and the results of independent sample t-tests are presented in relation to component inclusion and teaching approaches. The chapter concludes with a discussion on levels of expertise, addresses subset questions and presents a model on the approaches to teaching singing in Sydney government schools.
Figure 5.3: MODEL 2
Types of singing in Sydney government schools

[Diagram showing the types of singing in Sydney government schools, with different focus areas and key variables.]
Chapter 6: Teaching a Song or Teaching How to Sing

The Broad Study: Components and Approaches

6.1 Introduction

Chapter 5 discussed what school singing activities occur in NSW government schools in Sydney and identified that school singing is predominantly group singing: whole school, event, classroom and choir. In this chapter, the issue of how singing takes place is discussed. Singing teaching components present in respondent strategies were identified and their inter-relationships explored. Encompassed within the broad question of “how school singing is taught?” are the subset questions:

3.i Are children and adolescents taught a song or are they taught how to sing?
3.ii When teaching primary and secondary school singing, are the developmental stages of young and adolescent voices considered?
3.iii Are there different approaches to teaching school singing?

Chapter 6 contains qualitative and quantitative data analysis and as such, consists of six main sections:

- Component identification: using axial coding and constant comparative qualitative data analysis, components are identified in respondent singing teaching strategies

- Literature review: 5 authoritative approaches are reviewed in relation to the identified components and utilised in component verification

“I sometimes let a small group listen to the harmonies and they really enjoy that. Some [students] are surprised. They just don’t sing along.”
PCHT, Respondent 1
- Component inclusion: quantitative analysis using descriptive statistics to determine the overall inclusion rates of components

- Component comparison: quantitative analysis using descriptive statistics to determine the inclusion and combination of components in individual strategies through which the approaches to teaching school singing are evident

- Approaches to teaching school singing: utilizing the hierarchy borne out by incremental increases in component inclusion, the testing of approaches embody quantitative analysis using univariate statistics and independent-sample t-tests

- Summary and discussion of qualitative and quantitative findings

Inherent in the overall context of teaching expertise are levels of development, experience, effectiveness, competency and confidence. Some of these traits are dependant upon measurable student achievement and/or achievement delivery. However, not all traits are dependant. By employing theoretical sensitivity, reviewing the literature, collegiate verification and statistical analysis, teaching components are evaluated and teaching approaches determined. The relevance of these components and approaches to singing teaching expertise is also examined. As this chapter identifies components within teaching strategies, each component is initially discussed and then teaching approaches examined. Although not separated into primary and secondary sections, references to primary and secondary teaching approaches are made where relevant in the concluding sections of this chapter.

### 6.2 Components in Teaching School Singing Strategies

#### 6.2.1 Component identification

Table 6.1 (over page) shows the sample size (N=124) and the types of primary and

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104 The researcher notes that verification of the identification and relevance of teaching components to teaching and approaches in this study was sought from an eminent vocal pedagogue and researcher.
secondary respondents included in component identification. For this purpose, 3 respondents were omitted from the original sample. Non-inclusion was due to insufficient respondent data – nil responses (n=2) and not applicable (n=1).

Table 6.1: Respondent sample used for component identification

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>n</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>n</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>n</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>17.7</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>62.9</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>80.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>11.3</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>8.1</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>19.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>29.0</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>71.0</td>
<td>124</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Components were identified from the two mutually exclusive groupings of respondents: respondent teachers who did not teach choir at the time of data collection (non-choir) and respondent teachers who taught choir at the time of data collection (choir). Teaching components were therefore identified from Class Singing (Section C of the questionnaire) for teachers who did not teach choir or from Choir Singing (Section D of the questionnaire) for teachers who taught choir. When a component was present, a corresponding category was added and previously analysed respondent data was revisited. The data was reviewed several times during this process and as such, each component was grounded in the data. Data analysis identified nineteen individual components within four broad categories: Technical and/or Expressive, Vocal Technique, Musical Aspects and Delivery (see Table 6.2, over page).

6.2.2 Component identification levels

The teaching strategies of the respondent sample (N=124) were evaluated. Data pertaining to vocal exercises, pitch, musical concepts, vocal music selection, vocal health issues, learning vocal music, vocal part assignment, expressive techniques, student feedback and the use of imagery and metaphor was coded for technical and/or expressive components. When a component was present, a corresponding category was added and previously analysed respondent data was revisited. The data was reviewed several times during this process and as such, each component was grounded in the data. Data analysis identified nineteen individual components within four broad categories: Technical and/or Expressive, Vocal Technique, Musical Aspects and Delivery (see Table 6.2, over page).

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105 Five questions relevant to the identification of teaching components appear in both class (Section C) and choir (Section D) singing sections of the questionnaire. When respondents completed both sections and when no data was generated through repeated questioning in Section D, previous respondent data from the five questions in Section C was included for analysis (n=12).
Table 6.2: Components of teaching school singing

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Content</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Technical and/or Expressive</strong></td>
<td>Exercises</td>
<td>generic exercises</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Expression</td>
<td>phrasing or dynamics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Student feedback</td>
<td>technical or expressive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Text</td>
<td>lyrics; words; meaning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Vocal music selection</td>
<td>generic; partial</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Vocal Technique</strong></td>
<td>Breathing</td>
<td>generic; partial</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Diction</td>
<td>generic; partial</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Phonation</td>
<td>generic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pitch</td>
<td>generic; partial</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Posture</td>
<td>generic; partial</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Vocal health</td>
<td>generic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Vocal tone</td>
<td>generic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Musical Aspects</strong></td>
<td>Aural</td>
<td>generic “listening”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Accompaniment</td>
<td>backing tracks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Musical concepts</td>
<td>generic; partial</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Delivery</strong></td>
<td>Imagery/metaphor</td>
<td>generic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Group</td>
<td>generic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Modeling</td>
<td>recorded; sings with students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Visual cues</td>
<td>generic</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Elemental</strong></th>
<th><strong>Proficient</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>specific exercises</td>
<td>specific exercises</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>phrasing and dynamics</td>
<td>phrasing and dynamics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>technical and expressive</td>
<td>technical and expressive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sequential learning; combination of elements</td>
<td>criteria must include range; combination of elements including range</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>specific relevance</td>
<td>specific relevance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>voice production; registers</td>
<td>voice production; registers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pitch matching strategies</td>
<td>pitch matching strategies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>body/larynx alignment</td>
<td>body/larynx alignment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>specific relevance</td>
<td>specific relevance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vocal tone development</td>
<td>vocal tone development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>skill development</td>
<td>skill development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>backing tracks and/or instruments; instruments</td>
<td>backing tracks and/or instruments; instruments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>musical concepts; notation</td>
<td>musical concepts; notation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>specific relevance</td>
<td>specific relevance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>small groups; consideration of individual singers</td>
<td>small groups; consideration of individual singers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>demonstrates singing</td>
<td>demonstrates singing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>specific relevance</td>
<td>specific relevance</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

106 “Consideration of individual singers” was added after a review of the literature.
Component content was initially coded as being present in the data. However, the initial analysis revealed varying levels of component content and subsequent component coding consisted of two levels of coding. Identified components that were generically described, partially described or were evident at a fundamental level, were coded as “elemental”; component content that was of a higher level than elemental was coded as “proficient”. Table 6.3 contains examples of component content and coding.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Content</th>
<th>Proficient</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Aural</strong></td>
<td>&quot;Listen to the music.&quot;</td>
<td>“To develop good listening, to hear small differences, to hear patterns and reproduce it accurately.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PGT, Respondent 30</td>
<td>PGT [Ch] Respondent 65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Imagery/metaphor</strong></td>
<td>&quot;Comparing a song or passage to the natural world or event.&quot;</td>
<td>“Not donut singing - every note the same from the machine - more like a landscape some mountains higher, longer, smoother.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PST [Ch] Respondent 21</td>
<td>PST [Ch] Respondent 95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Respiration</strong></td>
<td>“…deep breaths…”</td>
<td>“Breathing …Hands tummy and side - in for 4 - out on ss (shoulders down).”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PGT [Ch] Respondent 42</td>
<td>PST [Ch] Respondent 31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Posture</strong></td>
<td>“…how to stand when singing…”</td>
<td>“Attention to posture and breathing - maybe demonstration of how posture and breathing affect the voice.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PGT, Respondent 55</td>
<td>PGT, Respondent 103</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Vocal health</strong></td>
<td>&quot;Vocal straining.&quot;</td>
<td>“Get sleep, don’t drink dairy products prior [to singing], don’t strain, warm up, breathe.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SMT [Ch] Respondent 105</td>
<td>SMT [Ch] Respondent 104</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
6.3 Literature Review: Authoritative Approaches

Verification of identified components was sought in the literature of Phillips (1996), Langness (2000), Welch (1986, 2000, 2003), Bentley (2003) and Smith and Sataloff (2006). Collectively, these authoritative approaches cover a broad age range and are relevant to this research as respondents in this study may be teaching singing to pre-pubertal, pubertal and post-pubertal children and adolescents. The particular relevance of the authoritative texts is that each approach embodies teaching group singing to developing voices. Phillips’ (1996) method is sequentially based for the teaching of singing in schools and as such, is intended for the teaching of singing to children and adolescents. The musically educative approach of Langness (2000) is devised for the teaching of singing to primary age children. Welch (2003) discusses strategies for “successful singing in school” for primary aged children (p.5). Bentley (2003) discusses three areas that are viewed as being essential to the vocal development of children through to adolescents (p.6). Smith and Sataloff (2006) direct their approach to the teaching of choral singing to “young” singers (p.146). These pedagogical approaches confirm that technical and expressive elements of singing are relevant to the teaching of developing voices.

Highlighting the relevance of both vocal music repertoire and musical literacy in the school singing programme, Phillips (1996) believes that these elements are well covered in established music literacy programs and in song literature (p.xi). He therefore chooses not to include them in detail. Instead, he focuses on a systematic program that includes respiration, phonation, resonant tone production, diction and expression. Phillips also describes a singing approach in music education, in contrast to his own developmental method, that places primary emphasis on expression and secondary emphasis on technique. While acknowledging that such an approach involves school students in singing activities, Phillips proposes that the result may be the learning of repertoire rather than fostering the singing development of students (p.5).

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107 These approaches were designated as authoritative because the writers are practitioners and researchers.
108 Phillips (1996) cites the music literacy programs of Kodaly, Orff, Dalcroze and Gordon (p.xi).
Welch (2003) discusses the relevance of vocal music selection and vocal range for ensuring that school singing experiences are positive for all students. He also emphasises the benefit of music learning that is activity based and as such, leads to “longer-term memory retention” (p.4). Among his recommendations for school singing approaches, Welch discusses issues of text and music, musical accompaniment and student vocal development.

Langness (2000) also emphasises the development of student singing voices in activity based learning. Describing singing as a “developmental skill” (p.804) rather than a talent, Langness’ approach to teaching singing in the classroom is facilitative. Included in this approach are strategies for the identification of student levels of participation, student voice assessments, breathing, posture, voice production, use of visual cues and strategies for developing pitch awareness. As well as the inclusion of many strategies for group singing activities, examples of encouraging individual singing within the classroom are also offered. Consideration of how students are engaged in classroom singing activities and the content of student feedback is viewed as paramount for singing progress to occur. The teacher’s capacity to be a voice model, an observer and a heightened listener is also seen as being vital. ‘Praise only’ feedback content is viewed as being inadequate for promoting sequential student vocal development.

Bentley (2003) discusses the relevance of sound quality, appropriate repertoire and performance strategies to school singing. Included in this approach are posture, breath control, vowel shapes, dynamic contrast, phrasing and diction that contribute to “beauty of tone” (p.7). Technical aspects leading to the acquisition of good vocal habits from an early age are also discussed by Smith and Sataloff (2006, pp.143-146). In their discussion on the teaching of choral music to children, elements of relaxation, posture, breathing and resonance are addressed. This approach recommends that exercises be progressive with relaxation exercises to be followed by breathing and posture exercises. Methodical training of melody, rhythm and text is also encouraged.

6.4 Component Inclusion

Table 6.4 (over page) lists those components present in the data and confirmed as relevant in authoritative literature as previously outlined. The components are listed in
Table 6.4: Components of school singing teaching

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Present</th>
<th>Elemental</th>
<th>Proficient</th>
<th>Absent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>Percentage</td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>Percentage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accompaniment</td>
<td>124</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>24.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vocal music selection</td>
<td>118</td>
<td>95.2</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>78.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pitch</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>75.8</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>43.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Musical concepts</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>67.7</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>44.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aural</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>63.7</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>54.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exercises</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>62.9</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>52.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expression</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>58.9</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>43.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student feedback</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>56.5</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>52.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vocal health</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>48.4</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>40.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Modeling</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>48.4</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>23.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Breathing</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>46.8</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>30.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Imagery/metaphor</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>44.4</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>40.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group strategies</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>37.1</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>21.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Text</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>27.4</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>20.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vocal tone</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>26.6</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>22.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diction</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>25.8</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>22.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Posture</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>21.0</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>16.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phonation</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>16.9</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>14.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visual cues</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>15.3</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>10.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
descending order and are ranked according to their totalled identified frequencies. The following discussion on component findings corresponds to that order.

6.4.1 Accompaniment

Bentley (2003) guards against the use of pre-programmed accompaniment and holds the view that it can inhibit expression. Instead, Bentley recommends a variation of accompaniment that includes piano, guitar and pitch percussion (p.11). Welch encourages unaccompanied singing that precludes the need for students to sing only in the keys of printed music (p.4) and suggests that unaccompanied singing can also help heighten aural and vocal awareness.

Accompaniment in this study, focused on how instrumentation is incorporated in teaching strategies and the range of musical instruments used for school singing activities (see Figure 6.1). The use of backing tracks was discussed in Chapter 5 in relation to primary and secondary usage. Combined primary and secondary usage shows that the majority of respondents included the use of recorded backing tracks at varying times in their teaching (n=110; 88.7%). In addition to the use of recorded backing tracks, respondents included a variety of musical instruments in their teaching.

![Figure 6.1: Accompaniment Component](image)

Respondent strategies that included only the use of backing tracks were coded as elemental (n=30: 24.2%). Respondent strategies that included instrumentation either
through respondents’ playing of instruments, through accompaniment provided by other teachers or students at respondent schools or through the playing of percussion by the singers themselves, were coded as proficient \((n=94: 75.0\%)\). Included in proficient examples were respondent and/or accompanist methods that included the use at times of piano \((n=83)\), keyboard \((n=6)\), guitar \((n=22)\), percussion \((n=17)\), tuned percussion \((n=6)\), untuned percussion \((n=3)\), body percussion \((n=4)\), recorders \((n=1)\), zither \((n=1)\), school bands \((n=21)\), string ensembles \((n=3)\) and a respondent’s voice \((n=1)\). The deliberate inclusion of unaccompanied singing as a learning strategy that encompassed vocal instrumentation was present\(^{109}\) \((n=3)\) in the data and as such, was also coded as proficient.

6.4.2 Vocal Music Selection Criteria

Langness (2000) recommends that teachers discuss the demands of vocal music so that students can prepare for, and be responsive to, the inherent musical demands. This presupposes that teachers understand developing voices and appropriate vocal production, together with vocal range and tessitura implications for vocal music selection. In describing the possible negative impact of selecting inappropriate vocal music on fledgling singers, Welch (2003) recommends that simple vocal music with limited pitch ranges be selected for students inexperienced in singing and advocates for a thematic approach to school singing activities (p.5). Welch suggests that combining musical singing with other subjects such as mathematics and science, encompasses all students and aids in the development of cognitive awareness (p.4). Bentley (2003) discusses the relevance of range and tessitura in vocal music selection for young singers and guards against the use of pop or show tunes that may be too demanding for young voices.

As Figure 6.2 (over page) shows, the majority of selection criteria was present at an elemental level \((n=97: 78.2\%)\). Respondent strategies that included general criteria for vocal music selection were coded as elemental. Elemental responses also included those where vocal range was not a consideration.

\(^{109}\) 76.6% of respondents indicated that at times they utilised unaccompanied singing in teaching strategies. However it could not be determined from the data that unaccompanied \textit{a cappella} singing was distinct from singing that was unaccompanied by either recorded or teacher vocal modeling. Therefore only those responses that described \textit{a cappella} singing were coded as proficient.
Elemental examples included a variety of resource and motivational factors:

- Predominantly what is popular at the time and [coverage of] a wide range of music styles.
  (PGT [Ch] Respondent 53: Elemental)

- Availability/difficulty/easy to teach without a piano.
  (PGT [Ch] Respondent 67: Elemental)

- Songs that enthuse and sound good.
  (PST [Ch] Respondent 71: Elemental)

Respondent criteria that demonstrated a consideration of vocal development and/or included a combination of elements of student singing ability, together with vocal range were coded as proficient (n=21; 16.9%). Tessitura was noted as a selection criterion by one respondent. Proficient examples included a number of factors:

- Variety in style, musical concepts, pitch range, appeal to singers.
  (PGT [Ch] Respondent 70: Proficient)

- [Vocal] Range suitable to young children’s voices, decent melodic line text suited to the children, avoid high or low tessitura, avoid tighter vowels on high notes.
  (PST [Ch] Respondent 95: Proficient)

- Programme, students in class, range (pitch), appropriateness to students and programme.
  (SMT, Respondent 111: Proficient)

Included in a diversity of noted criteria, vocal music selection was dependent upon the availability of resources (n=2). For one respondent, vocal music was seen as a
motivational factor in singing participation (PST [Ch] Respondent 71). Seven respondents indicated that vocal music selection was not always relevant in their teaching as vocal music was usually selected by a Choral Committee. Thirteen respondents indicated that ensuring a range of vocal music styles was relevant to the selection criteria they used. Variety in vocal music selection was specifically mentioned in relation to mood \( (n=1) \), balance of styles \( (n=1) \) and for a variety in performance \( (n=2) \).

### 6.4.3 Pitch

Pitch accuracy or strategies for developing pitch accuracy are contained in the authoritative approaches, with pitch matching being the most common form of developing pitch accuracy and awareness. Smith and Sataloff (2006) discuss how singers “can learn to match pitch” (p.146). Phillips (1996) believes that inaccurate singers can be taught to sing accurately, the preferred option being that students with inaccurate pitch be taught through individual instruction (p.36). Langness (2000) includes strategies for developing pitch and refers to the effectiveness of the Kodaly/Glover/Curwen systems. When discussing pitch inaccuracy and young singers, Welch (2003) suggests that it is sometimes an inappropriate song key that precludes young singers from matching pitch (p.4) and that pitch awareness may develop (1986).

Figure 6.3 (over page) shows that pitch accuracy in school singing was present in the majority of respondent teaching strategies \( (n=94; 75.8\%) \). Elemental pitch references \( (n=54; 43.5\%) \) included the relevance of accurate pitch in school singing, but did not always indicate how pitch accuracy was addressed. Elemental teaching strategies incorporated the modeling of the required pitch by the respondents, by students or by recorded modeling. Three respondents noted their difficulty in addressing pitch:

- I am untrained in singing - if it doesn’t sound like it should, I ask students to listen to me and repeat.
  (PGT [Ch] Respondent 99: Elemental)

- Poorly I’m not a specialist.
  (PGT [Ch] Respondent 100: Elemental)

- I find this difficult to address. I try to demonstrate and have students copy.
  (PGT [Ch] Respondent 101: Elemental)

Four respondent strategies included requesting inaccurate singers to modify their singing by singing softly (PGT [Ch] Respondent 18; PGT [Ch] Respondent 41; PGT [Ch] Respondent 68; SMT, Respondent 107) or by not singing certain notes (PGT [Ch]
Respondent 20). One respondent indicated that students were instructed not to force or yell (PGT [Ch] Respondent 96).

Figure 6.3: Pitch Component

Proficient examples of pitch ($n=40; 32.3\%$) included exercises for students to match pitch and/or participatory strategies to promote accurate singing:

- Singing as a group is different from solo singing - we work a lot on listening and matching.
  (PGT [Ch] Respondent 46: Proficient)
- Tracing pitch pattern of tunes with hands.
  (PST, Respondent 59: Proficient)
- Encourage good listening skills (other singers and music). Sing with students one-on-one. Talk about breathing and open mouths.
  (PGT [Ch] Respondent 57: Proficient)
- Listening activities, respond to pitch cards - which pitch pattern am I playing?
  (PGT [Ch] Respondent 65: Proficient)
- Singing exercises, recording performances, regular rehearsing, close work with the keyboard (one on one).
  (SMT [Ch] Respondent 113: Proficient)
- Try to get them to match the sound they hear (on piano).
  (SMT, Respondent 122: Proficient)

There was one reference to Kodaly (PGT [Ch] Respondent 2) and two references to solfa (PST [Ch] Respondent 31; PGT, Respondent 62) included in pitch strategies. Another respondent noted a difference between the way pitch was addressed in
A pitch component was not identified in 24.2% of respondent teaching strategies.

### 6.4.4 Musical Concepts

As pitch is a separate component, the musical concepts component excluded pitch. The musical concepts component incorporated the instruction of musical concepts such as rhythm, timing, structure and the use of notation. Smith and Sataloff (2006) discuss the relevance of rhythm skills in the training of singers (p.146) and Langness (2000) discusses the relevance of exploring rhythmic patterns and phrases (p. 811).

The majority of respondents included musical concepts ($n=84; 67.7\%$) at either an elemental or proficient level (see Figure 6.4). Elemental coding included references to musical concepts, but elemental references did not encompass how these were incorporated in singing activities. Responses were elemental when respondents generically indicated such aspects as rhythm ($n=38$), beat ($n=14$), timing ($n=5$), structure ($n=5$), time signatures ($n=3$), syncopation ($n=2$) and melismas ($n=1$). Typical of elemental coding was:

Time, rhythm.
(PGT [Ch] Respondent 5: Elemental)

![Figure 6.4: Musical Concepts Component](image-url)
When musical concepts and associated strategies for student development of this knowledge were present in the data, proficient coding was applied:

Focus has been on rhythms. We’ve done songs using body percussion a lot. (PCHT, Respondent 46: Proficient)

Rests, where are they? What did you notice about the parts in the first page? Same or different? Numbers at the top of each stave mean? What’s first word in Bar 16? 21? Top part 30? Notice piano part for each bar is written under bar. What do you notice about the piano part? Hold on note until end of phrase, crotchet = 1 beat, semibreve = 4 beats. (PCHT, Respondent 31: Proficient)

6.4.5 Aural

In the approaches of Smith and Sataloff (2006), Phillips (1996) and Langness (2000), the relevance of listening and aural strategies in teaching singing are evident. As Figure 6.5 shows, respondent data contained listening strategies \((n=79; 63.7\%)\) of which 10 respondents specifically used the term ‘aural’.

![Figure 6.5: Aural Component](image)

Elemental responses were generic listening strategies \((n=67; 54.0\%)\) such as:

…listening to the tune…
(PET [Ch] Respondent 1: Elemental)

Listen and appreciate song first…
(PGT [Ch] Respondent 18: Elemental)

When aural strategies were applied to specific skill development, the component was identified as proficient \((n=12; 9.7\%)\):
Pitch exercises - recognizing leaps or steps.  
(PST, Respondent 59: Proficient)

Kodaly exercises, scales, listening and repeating.  
(PGT [Ch] Respondent 2: Proficient)

6.4.6 Exercises

Singing exercises and exercises related to singing can foster singing development, focus students, explore musical concepts and prepare voices for singing. Smith and Sataloff (2006) recommend that warm-up exercises adjust the voice from speaking to singing (p.142) and through breathing, posture and resonance exercises, the basics of singing can be taught (pp.142-145). Phillips’ (1996) method contains sequential exercises for breathing, posture, phonation, resonant tone, pitch, diction and expressive techniques. Rather than prescriptive vocal exercises, Langness (2000) offers facilitative strategies to develop vocal and pitch awareness. Welch (2003) suggests simple echoing games, glides and simple patterns to develop pitch accuracy (p.3). Bentley offers exercise strategies to develop breath control and vocal tone (p.8).

Figure 6.6 (over page) shows respondent singing exercise inclusion: elemental (n=65; 52.4%) and proficient (n=13; 10.5%). Warming the voice was cited by the majority of respondents as the purpose of vocal exercises (n=56). Where the focus of the exercises was to “warm-up” voices, or where there was limited explanation of exercise content or purpose offered, exercises were coded as elemental. While beneficial to teaching group singing, responses that included exercises only for relaxation and/or group focusing were also coded as elemental. One respondent indicated that vocal exercises were implemented by the vocal tutors at the respondent’s school. In this case even though the exercises were included in the respondent’s teaching strategy, they were not instigated nor lead by the respondent and as such, were coded as elemental (SMT, Respondent 118). Another respondent indicated that even though singing exercises were included for shows and choirs, technical exercises for voice development in music classes were not:

Only for shows, choir activities - not technical exercises specifically for voice.  
(PCHT, Respondent 118: Elemental)

Proficient exercise strategies contained a combination of exercises that aimed at student skill development such as exercises for breathing and voice production, or
exercises for breathing, pitch and expression. One primary respondent indicated that they included “at least 5-8 exercises” each choir rehearsal and that these included a “rag doll” exercise for relaxation, postural exercises, breathing exercises, articulation exercises and pitch exercises (PST [Ch] Respondent 31). Other respondents indicated a variety of purposes for singing exercises:

To engage students, to warm up, to develop range, confidence, to improve intonation. (SMT [Ch] Respondent 104: Proficient)

Figure 6.6: Exercise Component

The inclusion of exercises related to singing was evident in 62.9% \( (n=78) \) of teaching singing strategies. In contrast, 37.1% \( (n=46) \) of respondent teaching strategies did not include any form of vocal exercises. The latter strategies therefore encompass the singing of vocal music (songs) only.

6.4.7 Expression

Phillips (1996) includes expression that leads to meaningful interpretation as a major component of teaching singing (p.16) and offers exercises related to expressive “phrasing, dynamics, tempo, range and agility” skills (p.335). Bentley (2003) offers exercises for the development of dynamic control and suggestions for the development of legato phrasing (p.10).

An expressive component was found in the majority of respondent strategies \( (n=73; \)}
58.9%) (see Figure 6.7).

![Figure 6.7: Expression Component](image)

Most elemental responses ($n=54; 43.5\%$) containing expression were generic references such as:

Expression, appearance, movement.

(PST [Ch] Respondent 21: Elemental)

Other elemental generic references included dynamics$^{110}$ ($n=40$), phrasing ($n=17$) or tempo ($n=10$). While "range" was cited by many respondents ($n=51; 41.1\%$) in relation to repertoire selection, part/solo assignment, choir selection and singing exercises, one respondent related expression and vocal range as being the [technical] shape of the "mouth for higher notes" (PST [Ch] Respondent 17). This response was also coded as elemental.

Musical interpretation, embodying a combination of dynamics, phrasing and/or tempo was coded as proficient ($n=19; 15.3\%$). Proficient expression coding included:

Musical expression, stylistic interpretation, word painting, facial and personal involvement.

(SMT [Ch] Respondent 113: Proficient)

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$^{110}$ The researcher acknowledges that 21 respondents made generic references to “volume”. One reference was in the context of lyrical enhancement. As the additional references may have related to several vocal issues including vocal projection, forcing the voice and/or dynamics, generic “volume” references were not coded.
6.4.8 Student Feedback

Three of the authoritative approaches state that singing teaching strategies should include student feedback. Phillips (1996) views appropriate feedback as essential to the development of pitch awareness (p.26). While Welch (2000) discusses the relevance of student feedback to student progress (pp.711-712; p.715) and to vocal health (pp.711-712), Smith and Sataloff (2006) suggest that student feedback should be balanced and not effusive (p.147). Langness (2000) suggests that helpful, skill related feedback allows students to “feel ownership of their achievements” (p. 805, ii).

Present in the data were motivational, technical and expressive feedback elements. Student feedback was present in the majority of responses ($n=70; 56.5\%$) as shown in Figure 6.8.

![Figure 6.8: Student Feedback Component](image)

Feedback content was elemental ($n=65; 52.4\%$) when the data contained generic references such as:

- Positive praise.
  (PCHT, Respondent 18: Elemental)

General feedback that referred to context and/or content was also coded as elemental. While five respondents indicated that they provided individual instruction for some
components, other respondents indicated that feedback was not directed to individual students:

- Not individual – only general.  
  (PGT [Ch] Respondent 97: Elemental)

- General but need to/could offer more constructive/individual.  
  (PGT [Ch] Respondent 91: Elemental)

A single reference of “very little” (PGT, Respondent 48) was not coded as there was no indication of feedback context or content.

Proficient coding of student feedback ($n=5; 4.0\%$) embodied a balance of expressive and technical elements to facilitate student progress and was inclusive of all students:

- Always correcting pitch, pronunciation, dynamics etc in rehearsal, praise post performance etc. Debrief if necessary post performance.  
  (PST, Respondent 31: Proficient)

- Story behind the song affects the way it is sung...Look for tone; head voice – ladder out top of head! Breath control; technique...occasionally I’ll ask students one at a time to match my pitch.  
  (PST [Ch] Respondent 38: Proficient)

- I show my enthusiasm – when they watch and follow and achieve musical results...improve vocal tone quality.  
  (PST [Ch] Respondent 95: Proficient)

- Regular lessons, exercises, make recordings, take opportunities to perform, written feedback from performances.  
  (SMT [Ch] Respondent 113: Proficient)

- Comments [to students] about pitch, rhythm, technique, phrasing, interpretation.  
  (SMT, Respondent 118: Proficient)

### 6.4.9 Vocal Health

Langness (2000) recommends that school singing experiences should be “healthy, musically expressive singing” (p.810) and Phillips (1996) advocates for teachers of singing to instruct students in voice function and vocal care (p.92).

Figure 6.9 (over page) shows the frequency of respondent inclusion of vocal health issues in their teaching ($n=60; 48.4\%$). Nineteen respondents included vocal strain as a vocal health issue; one respondent included “care of” the voice as a vocal health strategy (PGT [Ch] Respondent 86). The generic “care of”, or when vocal strain was the only health issue identified, components were coded as elemental.
Proficient coding includes a combination of elements. Proficient examples include:

“Don’t force sound; don’t sing with sore throat; drink water.”
(PST [Ch] Respondent 38: Proficient)

“Over singing, nodules, keeping the vocal chords wet, rest.”
(SMT [Ch] Respondent 113: Proficient)

“Warming up, smoking, pushing the voice, straining the muscles when singing high.”
(SMT [Ch] Respondent 119: Proficient)

More than half of the respondents ($n=64$; 51.6%) did not include vocal health issues in their teaching strategies; two respondents indicated that they did not understand the meaning of the term vocal health. Other respondents indicated that the inclusion of vocal health strategies was not applicable to their teaching. One respondent stated that they addressed vocal health “poorly … I’m not a specialist” (PGT [Ch] Respondent 100).

6.4.10 Modeling

Different types of voice modeling are available to teachers of school singing and include teacher, peer and recorded. In the authoritative approaches the latter type of voice

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111 The researcher acknowledges that while it is physically impossible to keep the vocal folds wet, the connection of hydration to vocal health is made.
modeling, recorded modeling, is not considered to be a preferred singing teaching. Smith and Sataloff (2006) discuss this form of modeling in terms of its being an osmotic process being one that “discredits the minds and musical gifts of our children” (p.146). Smith and Sataloff also recommend that choir conductors should be able to model examples comparable to “the range, dynamic and character of young voices” (p.145). Phillips (1996) discusses the relevance of teacher vocal modeling, particularly for those students who are specifically responsive to auditory stimulus. Phillips also raises the importance of vocal quality in voice modeling and suggests that when modeling for children, male teachers should model using a lighter head-voice production (p.28). Langness (2000) offers suggestions for teacher modeling of pitch and voice exploration strategies.

Figure 6.10 shows that just over half of the respondents \( n=64, 51.6\% \) did not include specific examples of voice modeling in their teaching strategies.

![Figure 6.10: Vocal Modeling Component](image)

As most respondents \( n=110; 88.7\% \) indicated that they used backing tracks at some stage during their teaching, it is possible that while many of the respondents who did not specifically note the use of recorded voice modeling used associated recorded backing track guide vocals\(^\text{112}\) for this purpose. Therefore, the figure of over a third of

\(^{112}\) Guide vocals recorded onto backing tracks, are often supplied as separate tracks on backing track CDs. ABC Sing! series contain separate guide vocal CDs and corresponding instrumental backing track CDs. Similarly, coordinators of festival and combined choral events, sometimes supply guide vocal tracks as well as instrumental backing track for choir rehearsals.
respondents \((n=45, 36.3\%)\) who noted that they used recorded modeling for the teaching songs and/or for accurate pitch, may be understated. Eighteen respondents indicated that their use of recorded modeling was combined with teacher modeling \((n=18)\) and/or playing the melody on a musical instrument such as the piano \((n=7)\).

Respondent usage of recorded modeling or a non-specific reference to modeling that did not include teacher modeling was coded as elemental \((n=29, 23.4\%)\). Respondent use of teacher modeling was coded as elemental \((n=3)\) when teachers sang “with” students and proficient \((n=31, 25.0\%)\) when teachers demonstrated singing:

- Singing with them.  
  (PGT, Respondent 30: Elemental)

- I model the song then split into smaller teaching units until whole song is taught.  
  (PST, Respondent 59: Proficient)

### 6.4.11 Breathing

Strategies that incorporate breath management into teaching singing are discussed in the authoritative approaches. Langness (2000) offers strategies to develop breath awareness through the exploration of sounds requiring breath energy (p. 807). Phillips’ (1996) method incorporates abdominal-diaphragmatic-costal breathing (p.145). Breathing exercises are also encouraged by Smith and Sataloff (2006) with the suggestion that they follow “a period” (p.144) of relaxation and postural focus and this sequencing of exercises was identified in one respondent teaching strategy.

Respondent breath management for singers strategies were typically generic references such as “breathing”. As Figure 6.11 (over page) shows, just less than half the respondents included breathing for singing in their strategies \((n=58, 46.8\%)\). Although one respondent mentioned the “stomach” (PGT [Ch] Respondent 82) in relation to breathing exercises, no respondent referred to abdominal or intercostal muscles. There were generic references such as keeping the “breath low” (PGT [Ch] Respondent 46) and eight respondents cited the diaphragm in relation to breathing. However, all diaphragmatic references implied that the diaphragm is a voluntary muscle that can be “opened” following shoulder rolling and correct deportment (PGT [Ch] Respondent 42), “strengthened” (PST [Ch] Respondent 12) or voluntarily “used” (SMT [Ch] Respondent 108). Three respondents indicated that appropriate singing is “from”
the diaphragm “not [from the] throat” (PGT [Ch] Respondent 34), “not from the back of the throat” (PGT [Ch] Respondent 108) and “not [from] the chest” (PGT [Ch] Respondent 41). One respondent indicated that singers breathe “from the diaphragm” (PGT [Ch] Respondent 14). While one respondent connected the use of the diaphragm with breathing exercises, no diaphragmatic reference was anatomically accurate. However within these responses, the implication of the energising function of the breathing mechanism in singing was valid.

Overall, breathing for singing was identified in 46.8% (n=58) of teaching strategies. Where “breathing” was identified as either an element or a generic instruction, it was coded as being elemental (n=38; 30.6%) such as:

Talk about breathing...
(PGT [Ch] Respondent 71: Elemental)

Where breathing was discussed in terms of management and/or physiology, it was coded as proficient (n=20; 16.1%) and included:

Some [exercises] to enhance breath capacity and breath control.
(PGT [Ch] Respondent 46: Proficient)

6.4.12 Imagery and/or Metaphor

The authoritative approaches included the use of imagery and metaphor in teaching

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113 Posture is identified as a separate component; 4 respondents linked breathing and posture in singing strategies.
singing to children and adolescents. Smith and Sataloff (2006) discuss the use of imagination and visualisation to assist young singers in their exploration of “vocal sounds and colours” (p. 142). Phillips (1996) uses metaphors for the titles of some his exercises such as “Locomotion”, “Silent Rowing”, “The Tired Dog” and “The Hot Dog” (pp. 206-207). Langness (2000) suggests imagery as a means of helping novice singers become aware of vocal qualities such as approaching low notes with “a light, cushioned feeling” (p. 808,ii).

Respondents indicated a use of imagery and/or metaphor (see Figure 6.12) that aided voice projection, pitch accuracy, phonation and/or interpretation. Generic references were coded as elemental (n=50; 40.3%) and included:

To explain a concept or idea.
(PGT [Ch] Respondent 97: Elemental)

![Figure 6.12: Imagery and/or Metaphor Component](image)

Specific references to aid vocal development were coded as proficient (n=5; 4.0%). Examples include:

Step down on the note - to pitch high notes etc. Feel the song as a ribbon gliding out of your mouth.
(PCHT, Respondent 31: Proficient)

### 6.4.13 Group Strategies

students within group settings is contained in two of the authoritative texts. Langness (2000), primarily focusing on classroom singing, includes strategies for the inclusion of individuals and small groups. Welch (2003) discusses ways of deconstructing text and music that caters to the varying ways in which individual students learn.

Present in the data were strategies for teaching singing components to small groups and individuals within a larger group context (n=46; 37.1%) (see Figure 6.13). Instead of immediately teaching a whole song or a complete part, elemental group strategies sometimes included an initial listening of the song to be followed by the teaching of small units or sections:

Parts - line by line, sometimes together, sometimes in different locations.

(PGT [Ch] Respondent 57: Elemental)

![Figure 6.13: Group Strategy Component]

Breaking down classes and choirs into smaller groups at some stage during classes or rehearsals was viewed as individual/small group strategies and as such, respondent examples were coded as proficient. Six respondents included teaching components to individual singers within their groups. Five of these respondents included ‘one to one’ pitch exercises and one respondent offered individual feedback to singers. Teaching pitch accuracy, exploring vocal music and learning parts were small group strategies present in the data of five respondents. Other strategies for determining the overall level of individual student singing participation within a group, as described by Langness (2000), were not present in the data.
6.4.14 Text

Authoritative approaches indicate that essential to the singing text are meaning and expression. When teaching vocal music, an initial delineation, or deconstruction (Welch, 2003, p.3), of text and music is preferred. For children entering school, and for those children who are predisposed towards text rather than melody, Welch recommends the deconstruction of text and music (p.3) to allow students to become secure with the melody. Welch adds that deconstruction can be utilised again if students sing inaccurately after the text is added. Phillips (1996), and Smith and Sataloff (2006), suggest that text be practiced prior to melodic assignment (Phillips, 1996, p.345, pp.337-338; Smith and Sataloff, 2006, p.147). This is to ensure that rhythmic and/or articulation issues in relation to text are adequately addressed.

Figure 6.14 shows that a text component was specifically referenced by over 25% of respondents (n=34; 27.4%).

In relation to text, those respondents who discuss lyrical content and/or meaning were coded as elemental (n=25; 20.2%). Respondent data that discussed text separately to music in the teaching of new vocal music, presented a sequential learning of text or delineated between text and music in the learning of vocal music were coded as proficient (n=9; 7.3%):

They clap through the rhythm of the words or say the words sections - words on OHP over a steady beat, learn melody.  
(SMT, Respondent 110: Proficient)
6.4.15 Vocal tone


Vocal tone was noted as being included in the teaching of over 25% of respondents (n=33; 26.6%) (see Figure 6.15).

Figure 6.15: Vocal Tone Component

![Bar Chart with Vocal Tone Component](image)

Generic references of tone, tone colour, timbre, mouth opening and clarity were coded as elemental (n=28; 22.6%). References that connected respiration and tone production were coded as proficient (n=5; 4.0%) such as:

Look for tone; head voice ladder out of top of head; breath control etc.
(PST [Ch] Respondent 38: Proficient)

The combination of tone development and/or vowel exercises was also considered proficient:

…Key, Kay, Car to E F# G# F# E, up semitone etc to the three syllables in melisma then, due to certain ethnic tone quality, now use Maw, May, Mar to encourage warmer rehearsal tone.
(PST [Ch] Respondent 95: Proficient)
6.4.16 Diction

Diction, in its simplest form, is the pronunciation of words. However, Phillips (1996) approach indicates that singing diction involves pronunciation, enunciation (vowel sounds) and articulation (consonants) (p.305). Bentley (2003) discusses diction in relation to being able to sing legato phrases while articulating clear diction (p.10).

Figure 6.16 shows that diction was identified in 32 (25.8%) respondent strategies. Respondents who made individual references of diction, articulation, enunciation or pronunciation were coded as elemental (n=28; 22.6%). Examples of diction exercises or combinations of diction elements were coded as proficient (n=4; 3.2%):

...pronunciation, articulation, stylistic inflections.
(SMT [Ch] Respondent 113: Proficient)

![Figure 6.16: Diction Component](image)

6.4.17 Posture

Smith and Sataloff (2006) discuss posture as a “basic skill each singer much master” (p.143) and one that should be visually modeled by the choir conductor. Phillips (1996) discusses posture as being an integral part of the respiration process (pp.148-195). Bentley (2003) discusses posture as being a foundational component for teaching singing (p.7).
Figure 6.17 shows that over 20% of respondents included strategies for posture \( (n=26; \ 21.0\%) \) in their teaching.

![Figure 6.17: Posture Component](image)

Respondents that used generic references of posture, stance and stand were coded as elemental \( (n=21; \ 16.9\%) \). Where respondents indicated physical actions that precipitated correct posture and alignment for singing, the response was coded as proficient. Descriptions that connect posture with breathing for singing were also coded as proficient \( (n=5; \ 4.0\%) \):

- [Directions and advice] Praise reinforcement of good stance, posture…
  (PGT [Ch] Respondent 35: Elemental)

  Arms above the head, down, perfect posture - things for good posture - start at feet.
  (PST [Ch] Respondent 31: Proficient)

### 6.4.18 Phonation

Phillips (1996) recommends that teachers of singing possess “at least a rudimentary knowledge of the basic sound producing areas of the larynx” \( (p.226) \). He also presents sequential singing exercises to aid in phonation and for the development of vocal adjustments (registers) and adjustment coordination. Langness (2000) recommends that young singers receive “simple, descriptive” \( (p.805,\text{ii}) \) instruction in the vocal
mechanism and voice functioning so that students can recognise individual voice differences and discusses how this type of activity aids individual student development.

As Figure 6.18 shows, phonation was included in 16.9% \((n=21)\) of teaching strategies.

![Figure 6.18: Phonation Component](image)

References to vocal adjustment/s or vocal folds were coded as elemental \((n=18; 14.5\%)\). There are three references that were generic references to voice production and/or anatomy. References that embodied phonation were coded as proficient \((n=3; 2.4\%)\):

> How vocal folds work, how they damage.
> (SMT [Ch] Respondent 115: Elemental)

No reference to the larynx was present in the data. There are 8 references to vocal chords and 2 references to vocal folds. In relation to vocal adjustments or registers, 6 references mentioned either head voice or a combination of head and chest voices. No reference was identified that referred to mixed or middle adjustments. Phonation was not included in 83.1% \((n=103)\) of teaching strategies.

### 6.4.19 Visual cues

Bentley (2003) describes conducting that instructs students in phrasing as well as following beats. She also acknowledges that teachers who accompany students on piano during group singing activities, need to place themselves where students can
clearly see them. Physical limitations on the teacher’s ability to conduct may be more prevalent during rehearsals and classes than in performance (p. 12).

The use of visual cues in the classroom or rehearsals (n=19; 15.3%) (see Figure 6.19) was distinct from responses that indicated conducting for performances.

![Figure 6.19: Visual Cues Component](image_url)

The majority of respondents indicated that they conducted for performances (n=80, 64.5%). However, when conducting was present as a teaching component in rehearsals and classes, it was incorporated as a visual cue. This was because respondent data included generic references to rehearsal conducting or instructions to watch the conductor. These references, while representative of respondents who conduct when teaching singing, did not include the purpose/s for conducting and were therefore coded as elemental.

Teacher hand gestures for singing strategies that assist student development were another form of visual cues present in the data. One respondent included gesturing the time with their hand, while speaking the words of the exercises. This form of visual cue, aimed at aiding the development of student skills, was coded as proficient. In relation to pitch, Langness (2000) recommends that gestures reflect spatial positioning relative to pitch within a range and suggests that gestures are musically expressive if they are fluid rather than abrupt (p. 810i). Five respondent examples related changes in pitch; one
described the tracing of pitch patterns. These pitch related visual cues were also coded as proficient.

6.5 Components Comparisons

Variations in the frequency of component identification are identified between respondent groupings (see Table 6.5, over page): primary and secondary teachers; choir and non-choir teachers.

6.5.1 Primary and Secondary Teachers

Components were identified at varying levels of inclusion in primary and secondary teaching strategies. As Table 6.5 indicates, most primary and secondary respondents incorporated breathing and imagery/metaphor components at similar rates of inclusion in their teaching strategies.

Strategies for musical accompaniment were equally evident in primary and secondary respondent teaching. Aural strategies, modeling, text, vocal tone, posture and visual cues were present at a higher level of inclusion in primary strategies than in secondary strategies. Primary respondents indicated that they were therefore more likely to include aural aspects, model singing, link text, include vocal tone and incorporate postural issues than secondary respondents. Hand gestures were used only by primary respondents. All other components including pitch accuracy, musical concepts, musical expression, student feedback, vocal health issues, group strategies and diction were identified at higher levels of inclusion in secondary singing teaching strategies. Secondary respondents were noted as having a higher level of inclusion of student feedback which possibly reflected music as an elective subject and the instrument of choice content of secondary elective music.
Table 6.5: Components in Primary and Secondary School Singing Teaching

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Primary Choir</th>
<th>Primary Non-Choir</th>
<th>Primary Choir and Non-Choir</th>
<th>Secondary Choir</th>
<th>Secondary Non-Choir</th>
<th>Secondary Choir and Non-Choir</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N=78*</td>
<td>N=22*</td>
<td>N=100*</td>
<td>N=10*</td>
<td>N=14*</td>
<td>N=24*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>n</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>n</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accompaniment</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vocal music selection</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>93.6</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>95.5</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>94.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pitch</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>85.9</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>31.8</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>74.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Musical concepts</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>71.8</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>45.5</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>66.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aural</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>69.2</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>50.0</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>65.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exercises</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>74.3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>18.9</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>62.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expression</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>62.8</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>27.3</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>55.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student feedback</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>57.7</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>31.8</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>52.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vocal health</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>48.7</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>27.3</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>44.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Modeling</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>53.4</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>36.4</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>50.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Breathing</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>57.7</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>9.1</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>47.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Imagery/metaphor</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>50.0</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>22.7</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>44.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group strategies</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>33.3</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>36.4</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>34.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Text</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>35.9</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>29.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vocal tone</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>37.2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>29.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diction</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>25.6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>21.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Posture</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>26.9</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>9.1</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>23.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phonation</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>14.1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>12.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visual cues</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>21.8</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>9.1</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>19.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Percentages are calculated for each category using the sample representation (N) for each teacher category.
6.5.2 Primary and Secondary Choir Teachers

Analyses of the inclusion rates of components by primary and secondary respondent choir teachers and those non-choir teachers indicate that, with the exception of vocal music selection, student feedback, modeling, group strategies and text, respondent choir teachers include components at a higher inclusion rate in their teaching strategies than those respondent teachers who do not teach choir. Primary choir teachers present with a marginally lower percentage when compared to primary non-choir teachers and to secondary vocal music selection percentages. This is possibly a reflection of non-choir teachers choosing their own repertoire for class, whereas much of the respondent choral repertoire is selected by committees as previously discussed.

6.6 Approaches to Teaching School Singing
(N=124 individual respondents)

Further analysis of the inclusion and combination of singing teaching components within individual teaching strategies (N=124) revealed five respondent approaches to teaching school singing (see Figure 6:20): sing-along (n=4; 3.2%), song (n=42; 33.9%), song dominant (n=65; 52.4%), functional (n=10; 8.1%) and developmental (n=3; 2.4%). All five approaches were evident in primary schools. Three approaches, song, song dominant and functional, were evident in secondary schools. Table 6.6 (over page) shows the inclusion rates of individual components within each approach.

![Figure 6.20: School Singing Approaches](image-url)
Table 6.6: Approaches to School Singing Teaching and Components

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Sing-along (n=4)</th>
<th>Song (n=42)</th>
<th>Song Dominant (n=65)</th>
<th>Functional (n=10)</th>
<th>Developmental (n=3)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>E</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>E</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accompaniment</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vocal music selection</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pitch</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Musical concepts</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aural</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exercises</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expression</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student feedback</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vocal health</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Modeling</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Breathing</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Imagery/metaphor</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group strategies</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vocal tone</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Text</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diction</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Posture</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phonation</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visual cues</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Percentages are calculated using the sample (N=124).
6.6.1 Sing-along Approach

The sing-along approach was identified at primary level. Typically, a sing-along approach contained no inclusion of technical and expressive components. Vocal music selection criteria were present in the data at an elemental level only. Backing tracks were used for musical accompaniment and no instrumentation was utilised in classes, although piano accompaniment was “sometimes” (PCT, Respondent 37) used by one respondent for performances only. In the sing-along approach, no references to singing teaching strategies other than for students to learn vocal music by “rote” (PCT, Respondent 66), “repetition” (PGT, Respondent 48; PGT, Respondent 37) and “piece by piece” (PGT, Respondent 37) were present in the data. Singing exercises or exercises in relation to singing, musical concepts and student feedback other than a single reference of “very little” (PGT, Respondent 48) were not included in teaching strategies. In this study, sing-along respondents were primary generalist class teachers (see Table 6.7) who had no singing or musical training and who did not teach choir.

Table 6.7: Respondent types who taught a sing-along approach

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Primary</th>
<th>Secondary</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Choir N=78</td>
<td>Non-choir N=22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>n</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6.6.2 Song Approach

The next level, the song approach, was identified at primary and secondary levels. This approach contained minimal inclusion of technical and expressive components in relation to the vocal music being sung. Singing exercises or exercises in relation to singing were not included in teaching strategies. Singing instruction was incorporated with singing the song or singing along with song modeling, however instruction was offered only in the context of the vocal music. As the song was the means of teaching vocal skills, typical examples included:

- Repeating parts of the song to hear the pitch.
  (PGT, Respondent 13)

- Listening to the pitch of the song and making sure they’re [the students] singing according to pitch.
  (SMT, Respondent 116)
The typical process of learning the vocal music was identified as “listening” \((n=25)\). Phonation was not included in this approach although one respondent discussed the use of imagery and metaphor in relation to “the physics of how singing works” (SMT: Respondent 116). Over 75% of song approach respondents \((n=32)\), 16 respondents who taught choir and 16 respondents who did not teach choir, did not identify singing training or experiences. In addition, 12 choir respondents and 8 non-choir respondents did not identify musical training. Typically song approach respondents had no private singing training, although one respondent indicated participating in adult education singing courses. Five respondents indicated that they had some singing experience as adults and two respondents indicated that they had singing experiences as children. Three respondents cited in-service choral related training. While 10 of the song approach respondents had studied music at tertiary level either as a tertiary qualification \((n=8)\) or as a component of a degree \((n=2)\), 8 were secondary music teachers. Eleven song approach respondents had, at some stage, studied piano.

Table 6.8 shows the types of respondents who taught a song approach. Non-choir primary respondents (63.5%) were the most common type of teacher to teach this approach. Over 60% of primary non-choir teachers and 50% of secondary non-choir teachers taught the song approach.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Primary</th>
<th>Secondary</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Choir (N=78)</td>
<td>20 (26.4%)</td>
<td>1 (2.4%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-choir (N=22)</td>
<td>14 (63.6%)</td>
<td>7 (50.0%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 6.6.2 Song Dominant Approach

The middle approach, song dominant, was the approach most frequently identified from the data. Singing exercises or exercises in relation to singing were present at an elemental level only. Typically, exercises were warm-ups with the purpose of warming the voice. Additional generic exercises included references to breathing, pitch and dynamics. Other components were present only in relation to the singing of vocal music.
and in this way, the vocal music predominated. Typical responses reflecting the dominance of vocal music in teaching included “the song” (SCT, respondent 100), “depends on the song” (SMT, Respondent 106), for “effective performance” [of the song] (SMT, Respondent 107) and [interpretive elements included] “if it suits the piece” (PGT [Ch] Respondent 75). The “sing along” (PGT [Ch] Respondent 85; PGT [Ch] Respondent 41) element was sometimes evident in the overall teaching strategy but was at times combined with vocal modeling and some musical concepts. Table 6.6 (p.189) shows that while musical concepts and aural strategies were present at similar overall levels to those in the song approach, breathing, posture, pitch and vocal tone components were present at higher inclusion levels. Proficient levels of vocal modeling, including teacher modeling, were more prevalent in this approach than in the song approach. All but 2 feedback strategies were coded as elemental.

Of those respondents who taught a song dominant approach, 37 respondents (29 respondents who taught choir and 8 respondents who did not teach choir) did not identify singing training or experiences. In addition, 16 choir respondents and 3 non-choir respondents did not identify musical training. While 28 respondents indicated that they had singing experiences, 12 choir respondents and 3 non-choir respondents indicated that they had some form of singing training such as “3 years singing experience” (PGT [Ch] Respondent 86) and “Grade 8 Singing” (SMT, Respondent 126).

Twenty-three of the song dominant approach respondents had studied music at tertiary level either as a tertiary qualification (n=15) or as a component of a degree (n=8). Eleven of these respondents were secondary music teachers. Of the remaining 12 primary respondents, 5 held a tertiary music qualification and 7 noted studying a music component of a degree. Seventeen song dominant approach respondents indicated that they had, at some stage studied piano, taught choir.

Table 6.9 (over page) shows the types of respondents who taught a song dominant approach. Secondary choir respondents were the most common type of teacher to teach this approach. Over 60% of primary choir teachers and 80% of secondary choir teachers taught the song dominant approach.
Table 6.9: Respondent types who taught a song dominant approach

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Primary</th>
<th>Secondary</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Choir N=78</td>
<td>Non-choir N=22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>n</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>n</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>47</td>
<td>60.3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>80.0</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 6.6.3 Functional Approach

The second highest identified approach was the functional approach. A key determining factor of this approach was the inclusion of vocal exercises at a proficient level. Exercise proficiency was determined by the types of exercises and the purposes of the exercises. Proficient exercises included exercises for breathing to develop control, posture, vocal tone, diction, expression, musical concepts, group focus and as warm-ups. Exercise strategies were coded as proficient when at least four types of exercises were present and when the purpose of exercises indicated skill improvement. Exercise purposes included:

To engage students, to warm up, to develop range, confidence, to improve intonation.
(SMT [Ch] Respondent 104)

The inclusion of exercises at a proficient level was indicative of more prominence being given to learning singing in ways other than through the singing of vocal music.

Most functional respondent strategies (n=9) incorporated pitch as a focus of their teaching. Expression was included by all functional respondents, although the majority of respondents (n=7; 70.0%) included it at an elemental level. Student feedback was evident in the majority of respondent strategies (80.0%), although none was identified at a proficient level.

Of those respondents who taught a functional approach, half of the respondents (4 choir respondents and 1 non-choir respondent) did not identify singing training or experiences. One choir teacher respondent indicated that they had received singing training in their “high school choir” (SMT [Ch] Respondent 104). Nine (90.0%) functional approach respondents identified having musical training. More than half of the functional approach respondents held a tertiary music qualification (n=4) or had studied a music component of a tertiary degree (n=2). Four functional approach respondents had, at some stage, studied piano.
Table 6.10 shows the types of respondents who taught a functional approach. Primary choir teacher respondents were the most common types to teach this approach.

Table 6.10: Respondent types who taught a functional approach

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Primary</th>
<th>Secondary</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Choir ( N=78 )</td>
<td>Non-choir ( N=22 )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>( n )</td>
<td>( n )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>( 8 )</td>
<td>( 0 )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>( 10.3 % )</td>
<td>( 0.0 % )</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6.6.4 Developmental Approach

The uppermost level identified in the study, the developmental approach, was typified by the inclusion and combination of proficient singing exercises and student feedback strategies. All development approach respondents included accompaniment, pitch, musical concepts, expression, breathing, vocal tone and teacher modeling at proficient levels.

All respondents (\( n=3 \)) who taught a developmental approach identified having singing training and musical training. Two respondents indicated that they had achieved Australian Music Examination Board (AMEB) 5th Grade Voice; one respondent indicated non-specific singing training. All developmental respondents played the piano with two respondents indicating that had achieved their AMusA and AMEB Grade 7 in piano respectively. The third respondent indicated a non-specific mode of piano studies. One developmental respondent held a music education degree and another developmental respondent held a tertiary music degree.

Table 6.11 shows the types of respondents who taught a developmental approach. All were primary choir teacher respondents.

Table 6.11: Respondent types who taught a developmental approach

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Primary</th>
<th>Secondary</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Choir ( N=78 )</td>
<td>Non-choir ( N=22 )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>( n )</td>
<td>( n )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>( 3 )</td>
<td>( 0 )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>( 3.85 % )</td>
<td>( 0.0 % )</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
6.7 Univariate Analysis of Approaches

An analysis of the inclusion of components within these approaches further clarifies the differentiation of approaches. Table 6.12 contains the components identified within each approach and their frequency inclusion rate. The tabulated mean of component inclusion rises as the level of approach rises. This indicates that the complexity of each approach increases as the levels progress.

Table 6.12: Ranges, means and standard deviations of approaches

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Approach</th>
<th>Minimum component frequency</th>
<th>Maximum component frequency</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sing-along</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(n = 4)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Song</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>6.83</td>
<td>2.023</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(n = 42)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Song Dominant</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>10.42</td>
<td>2.506</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(n = 65)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Functional</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>13.40</td>
<td>1.897</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(n = 10)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Developmental</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>17.00</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(n = 3)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Adding further insight into the compositional nature of each approach is a comparison between the inclusion rates of elemental and proficient components. While the overall level of component inclusion for each approach increases (as shown in Table 6.12) and although the elemental coding peaked in the song dominant approach, there is a progressive increase of proficient coding in the sing-along through to the developmental approach (see Table 6.13, over page). In the developmental approach, proficient coding is included at much higher levels than in the other approaches which reflects the rise in the level of intricacy involved in this highest level of teaching school singing identified in the study.
Table 6.13: Ranges, means and standard deviations of elemental and proficient coding present in each approach

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Approach</th>
<th>Elemental Coding</th>
<th>Proficient Coding</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Min</td>
<td>Max</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Sing-along (n = 4)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Song (n = 42)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Song Dominant (n = 65)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Functional (n = 10)</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Developmental (n = 3)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6.7.1 Component Differences among Approaches

Utilizing the hierarchy borne out by progressive increases in component inclusion and the progressive increases of proficient coding, independent-sample t-tests were conducted on teaching approaches and components. Means were tabulated on the five level approach scale from 1 = sing-along, 2 = song, 3 = song dominant, 4 = functional to 5 = developmental. Components that were significantly different when comparing teaching approaches and the levels of component coding included: vocal music selection, accompaniment, pitch, expression, breathing and modeling (see Table 6.14).

Table 6.14: Independent-sample t-tests on teaching approaches and teaching components

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Group 1: Elemental</th>
<th>Group 2: Proficient</th>
<th>T-value</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>n</td>
<td>Mean (SD)</td>
<td>n</td>
<td>Mean (SD)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vocal music selection</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>2.66 (0.779)</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>3.10 (0.625)</td>
<td>-2.415</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accompaniment</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>2.40 (0.621)</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>2.84 (0.770)</td>
<td>-2.834</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pitch</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>2.70 (0.503)</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>3.25 (0.776)</td>
<td>-4.151</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expression</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>2.85 (0.627)</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>3.42 (0.838)</td>
<td>-3.109</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Breathing</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>2.97 (0.545)</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>3.40 (0.883)</td>
<td>-2.275</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Modeling</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>2.61 (0.629)</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>3.06 (0.892)</td>
<td>-2.253</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*p < .01,** p < .05
When included at an elemental level, the average teaching approach of these components was below song dominant. When included at a proficient level, the average teaching approach of accompaniment was also below song dominant. For the other five components - vocal music selection, pitch, expression, breathing and modeling - when included at a proficient level, the average teaching approach of these components is above song dominant.

As independent-sample t-tests were conducted on all components using the approach scale, 7 additional components – aural ($n=12$), exercises ($n=13$), feedback ($n=5$), vocal health ($n=10$), imagery and metaphor ($n=5$), vocal tone ($n=5$) and posture ($n=5$) – suggested a level of significance. However, as the frequency of the coding groups of these components was less than 15, they were therefore viewed as inadequate for inclusion.

### 6.7.2 Teaching Approaches and Choir and Non-Choir Respondents

Utilizing the hierarchy borne out by progressive increases in component inclusion and the progressive increases of proficient coding, independent-sample t-tests were conducted on teaching approaches and who taught choir and respondents who did not teach choir (see Table 6.15). Means were tabulated on the teaching approach scale (1 = sing-along to 5 = developmental). There were significant differences between choir (2.94) and non-choir (2.22) teachers ($t (121) = 5.299$, $p < 0.001$). These results show that choir teachers on average teach at a level closer to the song dominant approach than non-choir teachers who on average teach at a level just above the song approach.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group 1: Choir</th>
<th>Group 2: Non-choir</th>
<th>T-value</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Frequency $n = 87$</td>
<td>Mean (SD) 2.94 (0.688)</td>
<td>Frequency $n = 36$</td>
<td>Mean (SD) 2.22 (0.681)</td>
<td>5.299</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*p < .01

### 6.7.3 Teaching Approaches and Specialist Respondents

Utilizing the hierarchy borne out by progressive increases in component inclusion and the progressive increases of proficient coding, independent-sample t-tests were conducted on teaching approaches and primary specialist respondents and non-
specialist respondents and teaching approaches. An independent-sample t-test was conducted using the primary sample (see Table 6.16). Means were tabulated on the teaching approach scale (1 = sing-along to 5 = developmental). There were significant differences between primary specialist (3.37) and non-specialist (2.57) teachers (t (98) = -4.299, p < 0.001). These results show that specialist teachers on average teach above a song dominant approach and non-specialist teachers on average teach above a song approach.

Table 6.16: Independent-sample t-tests on teaching approaches and primary specialist and non-specialist teachers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group 1: Specialist</th>
<th>Group 2: Non-specialist</th>
<th>T-value</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Frequency n = 19</td>
<td>Frequency n = 81</td>
<td>Mean (SD) 3.37 (0.895)</td>
<td>Mean (SD) 2.57 (0.688)</td>
<td>-4.299</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* p < .01

Independent-sample t-tests were also conducted on teaching approaches and primary specialist respondents and secondary classroom music respondents (see Table 6.17). Means were tabulated on the teaching approach scale (1 = sing-along to 5 = developmental). Secondary classroom music teachers were viewed as specialist teachers, as similarly to the primary specialist teachers, their area of interest was music. There were significant differences between primary specialist (3.37) and secondary classroom music (2.75) teachers (t (41) = 2.693, p < 0.01). These results show that primary specialist teachers on average teach above a song dominant approach and secondary classroom music teachers on average teach below a song dominant approach.

Table 6.17: Independent-sample t-tests on teaching approaches and primary specialist and secondary classroom music teachers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group 1: Primary Specialist</th>
<th>Group 2:Secondary Music</th>
<th>T-value</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Frequency n = 19</td>
<td>Frequency n = 24</td>
<td>Mean (SD) 3.37 (0.895)</td>
<td>Mean (SD) 2.75 (0.608)</td>
<td>2.693</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* p < .05
6.7.4 Teaching Approaches and Respondent Training and/or Experience

Utilizing the hierarchy borne out by progressive increases in component inclusion and the progressive increases of proficient coding, independent-sample t-tests were conducted on teaching approaches and respondents who had and did not have singing/music training and/or singing/music experience. Means were tabulated on the teaching approach scale (1 = sing-along to 5 = developmental). Significant differences were revealed between respondents with tertiary music qualifications, respondents with singing experience, respondents with musical instrument (excluding voice) experience and respondents with singing and/or instrument training and teaching approaches (see Table 6.18).

Table 6.18: Independent-sample t-tests on teaching approaches and singing training/experience and non-singing training/experience

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Group 1: Identified</th>
<th>Group 2: Not identified</th>
<th>T-value</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>n</td>
<td>Mean (SD)</td>
<td>n</td>
<td>Mean (SD)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tertiary Music Training</td>
<td>42 3.02 (0.780)</td>
<td>82 2.57 (0.703)</td>
<td>3.253</td>
<td>122</td>
<td>.001*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Singing Experience</td>
<td>40 3.10 (0.778)</td>
<td>84 2.55 (0.684)</td>
<td>4.020</td>
<td>122</td>
<td>.000*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instrument Experience</td>
<td>22 3.14 (0.889)</td>
<td>102 2.64 (0.701)</td>
<td>2.883</td>
<td>122</td>
<td>.005*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Singing and/or Instrument Training</td>
<td>52 2.90 (0.748)</td>
<td>72 2.60 (0.744)</td>
<td>2.259</td>
<td>122</td>
<td>.026**</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*p < .01, ** p < .05

These results suggest that respondents with tertiary music training, with singing and/or instrument experience or with singing and/or instrument training teach on average at a higher level than those respondents without this training and/or experience. Independent-sample t-tests did not produce significant results on teaching approaches and respondents with singing training and respondents without singing training. This suggests that singing training possibly needs to be combined with additional experience or instrument training for there to be a significant increase in the average level of teaching. This result possibly also reflects the multiplicity of skills required for teaching school (group) singing.

As secondary music teachers carry the expectation of having music training and experiences, the tests were repeated using only the primary sample where the expectation is that primary respondents may have music training and experiences.
Utilizing the hierarchy borne out by progressive increases in component inclusion and the progressive increases of proficient coding, independent-sample t-tests were conducted on teaching approaches and primary respondents who had and did not have singing/music training and/or singing/music experience. Means were tabulated on the teaching approach scale (1 = sing-along to 5 = developmental). Significant differences were again revealed between respondents with tertiary music training, respondents with singing experience, respondents with musical instrument (excluding voice) experience and respondents with singing and/or instrument training and teaching approaches (see Table 6.19).

Table 6.19: Independent-sample t-tests on teaching approaches and primary respondent singing training/experience and non-singing training/experience

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Group 1: Identified</th>
<th>Group 2: Not identified</th>
<th>T-value</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>n</td>
<td>Mean (SD)</td>
<td>n</td>
<td>Mean (SD)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tertiary Music Training</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>3.33 (0.796)</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>2.56(0.712)</td>
<td>4.334</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Singing Experience</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>3.11 (0.796)</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>2.51(0.710)</td>
<td>3.905</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instrument Experience</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>3.26 (0.872)</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>2.59(0.721)</td>
<td>3.504</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Singing and/or Instrument</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>2.96 (0.767)</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>2.53(0.766)</td>
<td>2.779</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*p < .01, ** p < .05

These results suggest that primary respondents with tertiary music training, with singing and/or instrument experience or with singing and/or instrument training teach on average at a higher level than those primary respondents without this training and/or experience. Although independent-sample t-tests suggested a level of significance for primary respondents with singing training and primary respondents without singing training and teaching approaches, the sample was less than 15 (n=12) and was therefore considered inadequate for inclusion.

6.7.5 Teaching Approaches and Respondent Context

Independent-sample t-tests were conducted on respondent context such as respondent gender, years teaching experience, school size and location, priority funded schools\textsuperscript{114},

\textsuperscript{114} The study identified priority funded schools in the respondent sample. Priority funded schools are schools awarded financial assistance due to the high concentrations of students from low socio-economic backgrounds.
and the teaching approach scale. No significant differences were revealed. There were also no significant differences when testing in a general context between primary and secondary respondents and teaching approaches. However, there was an implication that the larger Class 2 school (enrolments from 451 to 700 students) taught on average at a higher level than Class 5 (enrolments from 26 to 159 students) primary schools, however the respondent sample contained 15 or less Class 5 schools ($n=9$) and was therefore considered to be an inadequate sample. Similarly, there was an implication that the respondents who had taught between 10 and 15 years taught at a higher level than teachers who had been teaching for less than 5 years. However the respondent sample contained 15 or less ($n=15$) respondents with teaching experience between 10 and 15 years and was therefore also considered to be inadequate for inclusion.

### 6.8 Summary and Discussion

Whether students are taught a song or taught how to sing (it), the primary research question of “how is singing taught in Sydney government schools?” is addressed.

> “Seek help and learn how to teach singing vs [verses] learning a song.”
> PGT [Ch] Respondent 68

#### 6.8.1 Are children and adolescents taught a song or are they taught how to sing?

Determining whether students are taught a song or taught how to sing (it) in NSW government schools in Sydney, formed one of the major areas of impetus and focus for the study. The distinction between learning a song and learning how to sing was not only evident in the literature, it was also expressed in respondent data. As the literature also suggests, vocal technique is viewed by leading pedagogues and voice experts as a prerequisite for singing development and longevity. It has also been through experience as a singer, singing teacher, vocal assessor\(^{115}\) and observer of vocal competitions, that the learning of songs devoid of technique limits singing ability and potential.

The findings outlined in this chapter (see Figure 6.20, section 6.5) indicate that in the

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\(^{115}\) The researcher notes that her capacity as vocal assessor has included auditions for vocational training.
majority of respondent approaches to teaching singing (n=78; 62.9%), students received instruction that went beyond the learning of vocal music. However, instruction that embodied a balance of vocal technique, musical instruction and the learning of vocal music was evident in only 13 respondent (functional or developmental) approaches. While the results also indicate that choir teacher respondents on average taught singing at a higher level than non-choir respondents (see Table 6.15, p.197), choir teacher respondents were teaching closer to a song dominant range but were still on average within the song range. The study determined that in a singing-along approach, a song approach and a song dominant approach, students were predominantly taught a song, not necessarily how to sing (it).

6.8.2 When teaching primary and secondary school singing, are the developmental stages of child and adolescent voices considered?

There is an obligation for all teachers to fulfill the directive of the BOS NSW and impart skills to enable student learning. School singing at the very least, occurs as an activity related to primary and secondary music syllabuses, and as such, teaching approaches should convey content that will lead to student progress. If students are not afforded strategies for acquiring singing skills, they will possibly never reach their potential in singing and may not be even confident to sing in front of others. Of equal relevance to vocal development is the embodiment of vocal care in teaching strategies. While the data contains generic references to vocal care and the avoidance of vocal strain, only 10 respondent vocal health strategies were identified at a proficient level. This, together with the term ‘vocal health’ being unfamiliar to some respondents, suggests that there is little emphasis on aspects of vocal care in respondent teaching strategies.

There was however an awareness of adolescent boys changing voices in respondent data. These were expressed as:

…the boys can be a little more resistant and at the top end of the school when their voices are starting to break - it can be embarrassing.
(PET [Ch] Respondent 1)

Their [boys] voices changing = a bit too conscious.
(SMT [Ch] Respondent 117)

Specific references discussing strategies for boy and girl vocal changes and/or development were not present in the data, although one respondent noted using an analogy of musical instruments breaking in their teaching:
Breaking is common to many instruments and voice[s].
(SMT, Respondent 118)

Respondent data also contained strategies for preventing young singers from forcing their voices (n=5). While four respondents discussed this in relation to voice projection, one respondent discussed the prevention of forcing in relation to vocal range:

If parts are high and low - [assign] parts according to child’s natural unforced range.
(PST [Ch] Respondent 95)

This respondent also noted that the vocal range of repertoire needed to suit “young children’s voices” and avoid a “high or low tessitura” and “tighter vowels on high notes” (PST [Ch] Respondent 95). This was the only reference to tessitura in respondent data, and yet the tessitura of vocal music should be suited to the vocal development of students.

As some primary choral repertoire was noted by respondents as being selected by festival committees or by the Arts Unit, the onus of selecting suitable vocal music was not always the responsibility of choir teaching respondents. However, most choir respondents at some stage noted the selection of vocal music. For classroom teachers, the selection of suitable vocal music was predominantly their responsibility. Exceptions to this were secondary music teacher respondents who chose vocal music in conjunction with elective music students (n=11) and students (n=3). Respondents - Year 3 classroom respondents (75.0%), secondary classroom music teachers (83.3%), Primary choir respondents (86.3%) and secondary choir respondents (50.0%) - noted the criterion of student age in their selection of vocal music. This criterion implies suitability of repertoire; however it is unclear from multiple choice responses as to whether suitability was in relation to musical and/or lyrical content.

A sequential programme that caters to student developmental stages requires musical discernment and a range of expertise. Teaching school singing is highly contextualised, with school singing activities usually occurring in groups and for a variety of purposes. As such, the expertise required for teaching school singing differs from that of teaching singing privately to individual students. Group strategies are an example of the additional expertise required; the skill to provide individual vocal feedback is essential to student development.
Berliner (1988) discusses the ways in which levels of expertise can be closely aligned to five stages of skill acquisition – novice, advanced beginner, competent, proficient and expert (Dreyfus & Dreyfus, 1986). As expertise related issues are often cited in the literature and as respondent approaches to teaching school singing are determined through their inclusion of skill related components, a comparison between established levels of skill acquisition, expertise and teaching approaches is warranted. Table 6.20 identifies the stages of skill acquisition, expertise/content, content delivery and corresponding approaches to teaching school singing.

Table 6.20: School singing teaching approaches and corresponding stages of expertise

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teaching School Singing</th>
<th>Stages of Skill Acquisition</th>
<th>Expertise/Content</th>
<th>Content Delivery</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sing-along Approach</td>
<td>Novice</td>
<td>The song</td>
<td>Osmotic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Song Approach</td>
<td>Advanced Beginner</td>
<td>The song</td>
<td>Deliberate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Song Dominant Approach</td>
<td>Competent</td>
<td>Elemental exercises and the song</td>
<td>Purposeful</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Functional Approach</td>
<td>Proficient</td>
<td>Proficient exercises and vocal music</td>
<td>Experienced</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Developmental Approach</td>
<td>Expert</td>
<td>Proficient exercises, vocal music embodying vocal development</td>
<td>Inherent</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Student vocal development and the acquisition of vocal technique should be prime considerations in school singing teaching strategies. Approaches to school singing that embody and impart vocal technique relevant to developing voices reflect a higher level of singing teaching. For the purposes of this study, it was the content of respondent strategies and the process by which the content was disseminated that determined the singing teaching approach. Independent-sample t-tests of singing training/experience and non-singing training/experience and teaching approaches showed that respondents with tertiary music training, with singing and/or instrument experience or with singing and/or instrument training teach on average at a higher level than those respondents without this training and/or experience. Embodied in these results is the implication that the pre-service musical training of teachers impacts on the expertise with which teachers approach school singing.
6.8.3 Are there different approaches to teaching school singing?

The findings in this chapter present the five approaches to teaching school singing present in respondent data. At a sing-along level, the singing activity is totally focused in singing ‘the song’. The process is osmotic and there is no instruction in technical or expressive components. Singing may involve the singing of familiar repertoire or the song may be acquired through repeated listening of recorded modeling. In the song approach, the focus is also centred on the song. There is no inclusion of exercises or activities to engender individual singing development. Minimal technical and expressive components are addressed in relation to student delivery of the vocal music. In this context, the process of learning singing is episodic and deliberate.

The next three approaches are delineated from the sing-along and song approaches by the inclusion of vocal exercises and by a progressive increase in the inclusion rate of additional technical and expressive components. However, in the song dominant approach, the focus continues to be on the delivery of the vocal music. In this approach, the exercise component typically consists of vocal warm-ups and group focusing exercises. Any additional technical and expressive components are usually addressed through vocal music delivery.

In the functional approach, technical and expressive components are included in proficient exercises and in vocal music delivery. The process of teaching singing appears to be intuitive. The developmental approach includes proficient exercises and other components that are predominantly included at a proficient level. The approach to teaching singing embodies student vocal development and vocal care which is inherent in the teaching delivery strategies.

It may be argued that the sing-along and song approaches to teaching school singing are less formal approaches to school singing. Certainly, a school environment provides opportunities for both formal and informal singing activities and there are many social and community benefits to be gained through both. However, there needs to be a balance between the informal and formal to ensure that students learn more than how to sing a song or how to sing a particular song in a particular way. To do so denies students the development of their individual singing ability.
6.8.4 How is school singing taught?

The research findings presented in this chapter revealed five approaches for teaching singing in Sydney government schools as presented in Figure 6.2: MODEL 3 – Approaches to teaching singing in Sydney government schools (over page).

6.9 Précis: Chapter 6

Chapter Six addressed the question of “how is singing taught in Sydney government schools?”. Components of teaching school singing were identified through an analysis of qualitative data of individual respondent teaching strategies. Descriptive statistics, univariate statistical analysis of components and the results of independent sample t-tests were presented in relation to component inclusion and teaching approaches. The chapter concluded with a discussion on levels of expertise, addresses subset questions and presents a model on the approaches to teaching singing in Sydney government schools. Chapter Seven addresses the question of “why is singing taught in Sydney government schools?”. The chapter presents the exploration of qualitative data of the inter-relationships of contributory factors as to why singing takes place in schools. The chapter concludes with a discussion on levels of expertise and addresses subset questions. A model of school singing participation is generated.
Figure 6.21: MODEL 3
Approaches to teaching singing in Sydney government schools
Chapter 7: Why Sing in School?
The Broad Study: Rationales, Contributory Factors and Inter-relationships

7.1 Introduction

Chapter 6 discussed the components present in teaching strategies and the five approaches to teaching singing evident in the study. In this chapter, the issue of why singing takes place in Sydney NSW government schools is discussed and respondent rationale identified. This chapter is based on qualitative exploratory data and is the investigation of the inter-relationships between contributory factors of why singing takes place in schools from which a model is generated. The data was collected through questionnaire responses (N=127). The findings presented in this chapter provide insight into the range of issues that impact on school singing activities in respondent schools and address the research questions 4.i to 4.ii:

4.i What are the purposes of singing in schools?
4.ii Is school singing part of a K-12 continuum of learning in music?

Present in respondent data were contributory factors of school singing identified as support for school singing, objectives of school singing, the aptitude for school singing and the constraints restricting school singing. As this chapter presents these contributory factors and their inter-relationships, the figures related to each contributory factor build towards a simplified overall model. The following discussion does not separate into specific primary and secondary respondent sections. Rather, each contributory factor is discussed and where appropriate, their relevance to primary and secondary school singing explored. This discussion begins with a teacher focus, then continues with a student focus and concludes with a focus on school culture.

"Singing is purely aimed at giving the students pleasure in what is quite [a] poor socio-economic area where they have limited experiences and even less encouragement to experience new things."
PST [Ch] Respondent 71
7.2 Teachers of School Singing

As presented in Chapter 4, the respondents - classroom teachers, specialist teachers, and teachers on school executives - established a link between themselves as teachers of school singing and school singing activities (see Figure 7.1). Data analysis revealed this link to be two-way. An activity such as whole school singing dictated the involvement of teachers. In contrast, teachers chose to initiate school singing activities and in this respect, it was principally the teachers who determined the types of singing activities and indeed if singing activities occurred at all:

- It [singing] doesn’t happen in some classes.
  (PGT, Respondent 15)

- I as head teacher emphasise its [singing] importance and have made it compulsory.
  (SMT [Ch] Respondent 105)

Figure 7.1: Teachers and school singing activities

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7.2.1 Supporting Teachers of School Singing

Respondents indicated several types of support that influenced their involvement in school singing activities. As Figure 7.2 shows, support for teachers was available either from within the school environment or externally to the school environment.

Figure 7.2: Support for teachers of school singing
Internal support from the school executive, the school principal and fellow teachers was seen to encourage and/or allow singing activities to occur both in the classroom and in school choirs. One respondent indicated the support from the principal and from other teachers at the school aided school choir activities:

> Our principal is amazingly supportive of the choral programme, as are most of the teachers. This helps enormously.
> (PST [Ch] Respondent 12)

In other cases, it was fellow teachers at respondent schools with an interest in singing or music reported as being those that primarily supported school singing activities. In some cases, it was these teachers and their confidence in teaching singing that allowed singing activities to occur in the classroom:

> [Teachers] Exchange classes as only 5 teachers [are] confident to teach singing activities.
> (PGT [Ch] Respondent 18)

Another respondent who had previously taught the school choir noted that it was the support from other teachers at the school that played a vital role in the accessibility and profile of the school choir:

> To incorporate students from a range of classes, the staff must be flexible re. supervision in choir; doing extra duties for the choir teachers and rearranging some school routines for it [rehearsals] to happen in class time, not at lunch. This last one has raised/changed the profile of choir.
> (PGT, Respondent 15)

In contrast, some respondents expressed feelings of isolation that were precipitated by a lack of internal school support:

> I am a parent who takes choir. There is no liaising with me in that regard.
> (PST [Ch] Respondent 31)

> I am a class teacher and work on choir alone.
> (PGT [Ch] Respondent 42)

One respondent stated that the lack of internal support impacted on the standard of the school choir:

> It [school singing] could be so much better. Two teachers look after choir and it rarely receives much support or recognition.
> (PGT [Ch] Respondent 102)

Some respondents noted that inexperienced teachers, or teachers uncomfortable in modeling singing, were able to access internal school mentoring. This type of support was particularly relevant for inexperienced teachers:

> [A primary generalist classroom teacher] Mentor was musical and the class loved her chosen songs. I used her lead to help me.
> (PGT [Ch] Respondent 102)
Other respondents utilised the internal support of students “who can sing” (PST [Ch] Respondent 94), students who could “be models” (PGT [Ch] Respondent 20) and modeling by “students who know it [the song]” (PGT [Ch] Respondent 46).

In addition to the internal support that stemmed from the school executive and/or teachers at the school, one respondent indicated the relevance of the significance parents placed on school singing:

Parents value involvement.
(PST [Ch] Respondent 17)

Similarly, other respondents made reference to parental encouragement and parents’ view of school singing being a “great experience” (PGT [Ch] Respondent 2). In contrast, one respondent indicated that some parents did not support singing in the school choir:

Some parents of a range of cultural backgrounds believe that choir is a waste of time and that children should be studying.
(PGT [Ch] Respondent 42)

Secondary teacher respondents did not express levels of support required for school singing activities to occur. Perhaps this was because they were music teachers and were teaching an area that was familiar to them. However, one secondary respondent noted that:

I would love to incorporate more singing into the school and classroom but find it difficult to do because 1) my own experience is minimal and 2) no time in lieu given to start a choir.
(SMT, Respondent 123)

The frustration expressed by this respondent was in part due to their own inexperience. It was also in part due to an apparent lack of support from the school executive as there was no choir at the respondent school at the time of data collection.

Figure 7.3 (over page) represents the types of internal support present in respondent data that influenced school singing participation. Teachers and teacher mentoring appear as two separate contributory factors because teacher mentoring was present in the data as a distinct factor that enabled a then inexperienced teacher to teach classroom singing.

In addition to the internal support present in the data, support externally to respondent schools was reported as enabling some school singing activities to occur. Respondent
teaching strategies were supported by the use of NSW DET resources, specifically curriculum support texts such as *Vocal-Ease* \(n=9, 9.3\%\), festival choral music \(n=23, 18.5\%\) and choral music selected by the NSW DET Arts Unit \(n=10, 8.1\%\):

> It is really helpful to have good repertoire chosen by PAU\[116\] [NSW DET Arts Unit] for festivals etc. This school has no recent choral tradition. (SMT [Ch] Respondent 109)

**Figure 7.3: Internal support for teachers of school singing**

Musica Viva \(n=7, 5.6\%\) was an external resource used for singing activities and commercially produced resources such as ABC *Sing! Series* \(n=43, 34.7\%\) enabled teachers to either instigate or supplement their singing activities:

> All categories covered by ABC *Sing!*. (PGT, Respondent 37)

> Choir teacher leads singing in assembly. Music teacher teaches assembly songs from *Sing* ABC. (PGT [Ch] Respondent 87)

In contrast to existing external resources, one respondent indicated that video resources could support teaching strategies:

> Maybe some study of professional singers, videos etc. (PGT [Ch] Respondent 5)

In-service choral training was also valued as an external support to teachers with one respondent indicating that the NSW DET Arts Unit in-service training impacted on the...
school’s vocal music selection:

The criteria [for vocal music selection] are based on recommendations from the Arts Unit.
(PGT [Ch] Respondent 91)

Other respondents indicated that in-service opportunities would support the teaching of school singing:

I would like to have the opportunity to attend in-services or a course re: conducting etc.
(PGT [Ch] Respondent 99)

Perhaps support from the talented people at the Performing Arts Unit [NSW DET Arts Unit] could be put to better use or maybe a task force of consultants to go into schools once a week (like they do for gymnastics) so skills are taught.
(PGT [Ch] Respondent 100)

As Figure 7.4 shows, there were two types of opportunities of external support present in the data - resources and in-service training.

Figure 7.4: External support for teachers of school singing

7.2.2 Teaching Objectives

The data revealed that the purpose of school singing was often dictated by the type of singing being taught or by the ways in which singing was incorporated into school activities:

Different teachers use singing for different purposes.
(PGT, Respondent 37)

Encompassed within the teaching objectives were specific communal, educational, recreational and personal objectives present in the data. Figure 7.5 (over page) illustrates the link between these objectives and the teachers of school singing.
Communal objectives of school singing were present in the data as community and/or commemorative singing. Community singing involved respondent schools in singing activities to mark community celebrations such as Harmony Day (n=5), Grandparents Day (n=3), Education Week (n=3), Mother’s Day (n=1), Father’s Day (n=1) and Seniors Week (n=1). Community school singing also marked Christian religious celebrations such as Easter (n=4) and Christmas (n=14) (9 x Christmas and 3 x Carols and 2 x Xmas). Community singing for celebrating other religions was not present in the data. Commemorative singing involved the selection and teaching repertoire for commemorative occasions such as for ANZAC Day (n=9), Federation Day (n=1) and D-Day (n=1).

Educational school singing was determined to be singing with the objective of acquiring musical and non-musical skills through syllabus singing, co-syllabus singing or non-syllabus singing. One respondent referred to the “educational value” of school singing (PST [Ch] Respondent 61) and other respondents described using school singing to reinforce “teaching points” (PGT [Ch] Respondent 45). Other primary and secondary respondents described singing activities in relation to exploring musical concepts:

All music is used to teach the outcomes of K-6 syllabus.
(PST [Ch] Respondent 81)
The most prevalent example of non-syllabus school singing was choral singing with 20.0% \((n=18)\) of all choir respondents indicating that singing in their school choirs did not relate to any syllabus. Secondary choirs were linked to syllabus singing by providing “backing vocalists” for assessments (SMT [Ch] Respondent 113) and by allowing singers to be part of “an ensemble” (SMT [Ch] Respondent 119). Non-syllabus singing was also found to be team-building \((n=4)\) and to “re-focus [student] attention” (PGT, Respondent 103). However, some forms of non-syllabus classroom singing were determined to be recreational such as singing for a lesson break activity \((n=8)\).

Personal objectives for teaching school singing were also present in the data. The accessibility of the voice was cited as a personal choice for some teachers with one secondary music respondent indicating that:

[Singing is the] easiest way to teach concepts of music which are [the syllabus] requirements.
(SCT, Respondent 122)

References to singing enjoyment and singing for pleasure were frequently cited as a collective purpose of singing that included respondents and their students:

We sing for interest and enjoyment.
(PCHT, Respondent 85)

Five respondents indicated the personal pleasure and fulfillment they derived through “the shared experience” (PST [Ch] Respondent 15) of school singing activities:

We love it!
(PGT [Ch] Respondent 7)

I love it!
(PGT [Ch] Respondent 35)

I love to teach it. Both in class and in my choir. Our involvement in festivals is amazing.
(PGT [Ch] Respondent 98)

7.2.3 Teacher Aptitude

The data revealed that teacher aptitude for school singing impacted on school activities:

[School singing is] Generally governed by interests and talents of teaching staff.
(PGT [Ch] Respondent 3)

Encompassed within the concept of aptitude were teacher expertise, teacher interest and the facility to sing constructively. Figure 7.6 (over page) illustrates the link between
Individual respondents indicated a lack of relevant music training and/or singing experience that prevented themselves and other teachers from effectively teaching school singing.

It’s [school singing] not done very well – overcrowded curriculum, teachers are enthusiastic but cannot be skilled at everything.  
(PGT [Ch] Respondent 67)

It would be wonderful if teachers could be trained to teach singing properly.  
(PGT, Respondent 13)

I cringe when I hear assembly teachers/conductors (untrained) encouraging children to shout instead of singing.  
(PST [Ch] Respondent 95)

I am a general practitioner.  
(PGT [Ch] Respondent 40)

We all like to think we are a ‘jack of all trades’. I am not a musician therefore I do not have the required technical expertise I would like. You can tell the difference between ‘sing along with Mitch’ and someone who knows what they are doing.  
(PGT [Ch] Respondent 100)

In contrast, other respondents indicated that they had the training and experience necessary to teach school singing:

We already provide enough input, older children could benefit more.  
(PGT [Ch] Respondent 5)

I can teach them all they need to know at school level.  
(PST [Ch] Respondent 61)
In a crowded primary curriculum or in secondary music experiences where the school musical emphasis may be more on band participation than singing, teacher interest must certainly play a vital role in whether school singing occurs and how it occurs. Respondents who were enthusiastic about school singing also showed keen interest in school singing in their responses. While two respondents specifically noted that a lack of teacher interest negatively impacted on school singing, other respondents viewed teacher confidence ($n=4$) as impacting on school singing activities. Two respondents commented on the differences in the amount of time spent singing in classes and noted that classroom singing was dependant upon "confidence of teacher" (PGT [Ch] Respondent 88) and “teacher confidence and expertise” (PGT [Ch] Respondent 45). Another respondent said that teachers generally were “not confident enough to teach singing/music” (PGT, Respondent 80). The ability to sing publicly is certainly related to individual confidence, but it is also in possessing the musical capability, the facility, to provide appropriate vocal modeling:

They [the students] know I love to sing…
(PGT [Ch] Respondent 44)

### 7.2.4 Teacher Constraints

The data revealed that the constraints of time, resources and priorities impacted on school activities. Figure 7.7 illustrates the link between the constraints and the teachers of school singing.

**Figure 7.7: Constraints impacting on teaching school singing**
Inadequate time ($n=17$) was the most frequently reported constraint that impacted on school singing.

Sadly, time restraints have seen singing in schools dwindle significantly. Whole school tone is raised when children have the opportunity to singing together.
(PGT [Ch] Respondent 3)

Would like more time to devote to singing (crowded curriculum).
(PGT [Ch] Respondent 91)

Time issues were also evident in relation to timetabling “choir” within the school day. Several respondents advocated for choir activities to be programmed into the school day and/or into the curriculum:

In schools, it would be better if choir was made part of the curriculum. It is better to have practice scheduled in school time at a certain time, rather than having to practise at lunchtime.
(PET [Ch] Respondent 1)

I could do so much more if choral work was timetabled within school day.
(PGT [Ch] Respondent 96)

Another respondent noted that not timetabling school singing within school hours lowered its standing and perhaps its relevance within a school environment:

[Singing] really needs to be in school time to give it ‘status’.
(PGT [Ch] Respondent 89)

For another, inherent in a teacher’s workload was the time factor that prevented choir singing activities from occurring at the respondent’s school as no time in lieu for these activities was given:

All teachers have full class loads. If choir is conducted in a particular year, [choir] teacher still has full load and choir - when we have choir.
(PGT, Respondent 37)

These sentiments echoed those of the secondary music teacher who lamented that no time in lieu was given to even start a choir (SMT, Respondent 123).

The impact of time constraints was not only felt in the time spent singing, but also in the way school singing was taught to primary students and the reason why it was taught to secondary students.

Time is too limited [at school for children] to thoroughly develop singing skills.
(PGT [Ch] Respondent 45)

Due to a lack of time, we all sing soprano.
(PGT [Ch] Respondent 41)

More time so I could have a Junior and Senior choir.
(PST [Ch] Respondent 38)
Compulsory [singing] in the class lesson. Not able to learn [an] instrument in two years. (SMT [Ch] Respondent 122)

Time constraints were also implicit in several responses such as when commenting on whether private singing lessons would benefit students, a respondent stated that private singing teachers would be “able to do more than I can currently offer them [the students who sing]” (PGT [Ch] Respondent 24).

Internal school financial resources that impacted upon school singing activities were expressed by one primary respondent:

We have had a specialist music teacher for the past three years. Lack of funds has cancelled this programme at the moment. We are looking to re-introduce this later in the year. (PGT, Respondent 79)

As music specialist teachers were evident in 20.7% of respondent primary schools, internal school financial constraints may be more prevalent than suggested by respondents. Similarly, the ability to access and appoint staff with a combination of skills, including singing, may also be an unspoken constraint. A lack of internal school resources such as accompanists \(n=3\) was an additional constraint respondents expressed that impacted on school singing.

At times a pianist would be very handy so as to reinforce parts and with ease of practicing singing. (SMT [Ch] Respondent 44)

Another primary choir teacher respondent regretted the impending retirement of the only piano player at the school (PGT [Ch] Respondent 102). The predominant use of primary respondents of recorded CD backings may perhaps, in part, be due to a lack of available piano accompaniment with one respondent noting that “individual piano players (other students)” (PGT [Ch] Respondent 6) were available to accompany the school choir. Secondary respondents did not express piano accompaniment constraints possibly as most secondary respondents indicated that they played the piano. One respondent indicated that students at the respondent’s school were able to provide accompaniment for singing with both the school band and individual piano players available to the choir.

7.3 **Students who Sing in School**

The inter-relationship between teachers and students of school singing is obvious.
What is possibly not so obvious is that in some cases, it is the students at respondent schools that provide the impetus for various school singing activities occur:

I have only taken over choir since Term 2 this year. I am only feeling my way but I figure it is better to provide some ‘fledgling’ form of choir for the eager students than nothing at all!
(PST [Ch] Respondent 33)

Other non-choir teaching respondents noted that:

[Children] They love singing.
(PGT, Respondent 8)

[Children participate] Because they love to sing.
(PGT, Respondent 13)

7.3.1 Supporting Students who Sing in School

As Figure 7.8 shows, support for students who sing was available either from within the school environment or externally to the school environment. Internal support from the school executive, the school principal and teachers was seen as support that encouraged or enabled students to participate in school singing activities:

Support from executive staff in school.
(PGT [Ch] Respondent 17)

Internal school support was also seen to promote singing through inviting visitors to schools:

Guest speakers who come to sing with them.
(PGT [Ch] Respondent 54)

Figure 7.8: Support for students of school singing
Primary teachers were found to encourage student singing in other ways such as recommending that specific students attend performing arts high schools for their secondary education (PGT [Ch] Respondent 3), advising parents of choir opportunities available in high schools (PGT [Ch] Respondent 17) or telling parents that their child has a “talented voice to develop” (PGT [Ch] Respondent 17). Several respondents indicated their own limitations of teaching singing and noted the limitations imposed by teaching singing to a group of students. However, internal school support was also evident in the primary and secondary respondent schools where private vocal tuition was available (n=7) for students at their schools.

Students themselves were also seen to be internal support to one another in acting as mentors to help facilitate school singing:

[Year 3 students have] Year 1 buddy class groups for singing for Assembly items.
(PGT, Respondent 79)

Peer modeling was also present as a form of student mentoring:

More confident [student] to help the others hold the part.
(PGT [Ch] Respondent 18)

External student support was seen in the value parents placed on school singing:

Parents see it as a great experience.
(PET [Ch] Respondent 1)

Other respondents said that it was the parents who encouraged students to participate in school singing:

Some [children] because parents encourage.
(PGT [Ch] Respondent 2)

External student support was also seen in primary and secondary student participation in NSW DET music festivals and Arts Unit initiatives. Support from these external sources, but initiated as internal to students within schools, was in relation to the learning of vocal music:

CD [of vocal music/vocal part] made for home use.
(PGT [Ch] Respondent 75)

7.3.2 Student Objectives of School Singing

Encompassed within student objectives as expressed by respondents were specific communal, educational, recreational and personal objectives present in the data. Figure
7.9 (over page) illustrates the link between these objectives and the students of school singing.

Communal objectives of school singing were present in the data as social and team-building singing activities. The social objectives of student involvement in primary and secondary classroom and/or choir school singing activities were varied and included group involvement of friends and peers \((n=20)\):

- Social interaction. There are a lot of peer groups within the choir that work well together. (PGT [Ch] Respondent 53)
- Their friends are involved. (SMT, Respondent 110)

One secondary respondent noted that singing in a group was also preferable to singing solo:

- [Some students] enjoy singing in a group rather than solo. (SMT [Ch] Respondent 117)

**Figure 7.9: Student objectives of school singing**

The sense of belonging to a school team \((n=4)\) was also expressed as a student objective:
In addition to performance aspects of syllabus singing, respondents indicated that some student participation was encouraged by student opportunities, and/or student aspirations, to perform ($n=26; 20.5\%$). Responses included:

- The children here are going out and performing. They participate in Festivals and perform at retirement homes. Performance is a big thing. (PET [Ch] Respondent 1)

- Many need to be pushed into singing. Most continue because it makes them feel good and they love to perform. (PGT [Ch] Respondent 14)

- They enjoy the experience and love performing for parents and peers. (PST [Ch] Respondent 27)

- The main aim is to share enjoyment of singing with others, and experience the ‘buzz’ of performance. (PGT [Ch] Respondent 82)

The data revealed that educational objectives of student involvement in school singing were primarily related to whether the singing activities were mandatory or elective. Mandatory educational activities included classroom singing that was a compulsory classroom task or a task to meet syllabus outcomes. The data suggested that some primary classroom singing activities were elective. This was evident in the modification of Year 3 classroom ratios between the actual gender ratios and the approximated gender ratios of those students who sang in Year 3 classroom activities. At secondary level, opportunities for elective singing were related to secondary music syllabuses when singing was a musical instrument of choice. Elective singing was also evident in student participation in non-syllabus primary and secondary choir activities. Educational objectives, whether mandatory or elective, encompassed student acquisition of skills that included “self-directed” learning of lyrics and melodies (PGT [Ch] Respondent 57), “self-regulation” of pitch (PGT [Ch] Respondent 12) and skills that promoted student “self-confidence” (PGT, Respondent 25). One respondent noted that, in part, students

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117 PSSA is primary competitive sports between schools administered by the Primary School Sports Association.

118 The three ‘R’s: reading, writing and arithmetic (mathematics) are known colloquially as the areas of student academic pursuit of reading, ‘riting and ‘rithmetic.
participated in school singing to aid “memory skills” (PGT [Ch] Respondent 26).

The personal objectives of students participating in school singing were present in the data and included student development, student status and student enjoyment. Personal development encompassed several factors such as the development or acquisition of musical and/or performance skills, but also included personal enrichment. As well as aiding in the development of student musical and performance skills, several respondents noted that student participation in school singing aided in the development of student self-expression (n=3), student self-esteem (n=5), student cultural activities (n=1) and student accomplishment (n=3). Responses included:

- [School singing participation is] Mostly for their own enjoyment and expression/interest. (PGT [Ch] Respondent 53)
- [School singing participation] enriches children’s growth in themselves. It gives them more self-esteem. (PGT [Ch] Respondent 94)
- [School singing participation is] Cultural element of their lives. It’s enjoyable. It is perceived as worthwhile - prestigious even. (PST [Ch] Respondent 95)

In the context of student development, self-expression was seen to go beyond musical expression and was considered to foster a maturity in performance (SMT, Respondent 123) and the building of individual self-awareness (PGT, Respondent 103).

Student gratification expressed as either enjoyment or fun was the most frequently reported contributory factor by respondents (n=88; 69.3) to student participation in school singing. A typical response included:

- Enjoy singing. Enjoy performing. Enjoy group activities. Enjoy mixing with different students from class. (PST [Ch] Respondent 57)

One secondary respondent made the following distinctions:

- Juniors have to [mandatory] or for fun (choir) [recreational]. Seniors because they enjoy doing it [elective]. (SMT, Respondent 107)

Four additional respondents indicated that student participation was because students loved to sing (n=3) or loved music (n=1). Another respondent indicated that students participated in school singing because “it is uplifting to the soul” (PST [Ch] Respondent 78). Elective singing was also viewed as an enjoyable diversion from the traditionally
academic areas of study \((n=3)\) and included:

It's a chance to represent the school, they enjoy performing. They have the chance to go on excursions.  
(PGT [Ch] Respondent 76)

It adds fun to their school life.  
(PST [Ch] Respondent 94)

Relaxation, [student] achievement in non-academic area.  
(PGT [Ch] Respondent 92)

Contributory factors that precipitated an elevation in student status were present in respondent data. Respondents noted that the recognition school singing received from within their schools was either by the school community (teacher and parents) or by student peers. Some student performances were seen to possess a “special” status (PGT [Ch] Respondent 40) and as such, reaped praise and kudos:

Recognition - they are awarded lots of positives and incentives.  
(PGT [Ch] Respondent 29)

[School singing] It is perceived as worthwhile - prestigious even.  
(PST [Ch] Respondent 95)

One respondent noted that some students wanted to participate in school singing because of the status of others involved:

We have a dance group that includes boys of high social status; they’re in the School Choir too and so others join in.  
(PGT [Ch] Respondent 89)

Representing the school in school singing activities embodied “school spirit” (PGT [Ch] Respondent 43) and was viewed as a student privilege:

…its an honour to represent the school!.  
(PGT [Ch] Respondent 18)

Some elements of school singing reflected popular culture, affording it status. References attributed \textit{Australian Idol} to making school singing performances more “prominent” (PGT [Ch] Respondent 73) and more “appealing” (PGT [Ch] Respondent 46). Wanting to replicate the success of elite school singers was another contributory factor:

We have lots of students in School Spectacular and young singers want to be like them.  
(SMT [Ch] Respondent 108)

Containing similar sentiments were students wanting to replicate the success of pop singers:
Secondary music students] Enjoy singing with artists on CDs. Pop singing is thought to be glamorous.
(SMT [Ch] Respondent 116)

7.3.3 Student Aptitude for School Singing

Encompassed within student aptitude for school singing were student confidence, behaviour, interest and ability (see Figure 7.10). Student confidence was noted to effect student singing in various ways. More confident singers were seen as being more vocally reliable and were selected to sing vocal solos \((n=27)\), to sing specific vocal parts \((n=9)\) and to join the school choir \((n=2)\). For solo singing selection, two respondents noted:

Choose whom I know will confidently sing.
(PST [Ch] Respondent 116)

Confident students who show initiative.
(PGT [Ch] Respondent 29)

Three respondents stated that feedback to students about their singing was in part to aid in the development of student confidence \((n=3)\).

Figure 7.10: Student aptitude for school singing

Embedded in a lack of student confidence was the perception of awkwardness experienced by some students in relation to school singing participation:
Boys and girls can both feel embarrassed when singing, but often it is more boys than girls.
(PGT, Respondent 30)
The observation that more boys feel embarrassed about singing than girls, even in Year 3 classes, suggests that confidence in singing activities for boys may be present as an issue at a young age and may be irrespective of the developmental stage of their voice. However voice change issues effecting student confidence were present in the data:

…at the top end of the [primary] school when their [male] voices are starting to break it can be embarrassing.
(PGT [Ch] Respondent 1)

The prospect of humiliation, possibly in relation to voice change, was one reported issue that also affected confidence and participation. A secondary respondent noted:

Boys consider they will be laughed at especially as they get older.
(SMT, Respondent 127)

The perception and impact of peers was present in the data as a considerable limitation of school singing participation and as such, is also discussed as a student constraint in the next section.

Student confidence was linked to individual student singing development ($n=5$) and private singing lessons were viewed by some respondents ($n=7$) as a vehicle for improving individual student confidence. The data also revealed a link between student confidence and student singing ability. Students were seen to gain confidence through the acquisition of skills. In addition to school singing activities, skills acquisition and confidence could be gained through private singing tuition which would in turn affect the standard of school singing:

[Private singing lessons] Give the students more skills and confidence so we could attempt more part singing.
(PGT [Ch] Respondent 71)

Student singing ability that effected school singing participation was discussed generically ($n=13$). It was also linked to the acquisition of specific skills that included an accuracy or awareness of pitch ($n=15$), singing with appropriate tone ($n=15$), aural awareness ($n=4$) and the ability to read or to follow musical notation ($n=4$). Accuracy of rhythm, diction and phrasing, together with an appropriate vocal range, the ability to sing vowels and musical ability were also noted. Student “natural” singing ability was linked to innate talent ($n=12$) and 4 respondents, all of whom were primary choir teachers, suggested that in these cases, private singing lessons would be appropriate
to develop that talent or ability:

(PGT [Ch] Respondent 3)

[Private singing lessons] Only if child is talented. Most parents take children out of school.
(PGT [Ch] Respondent 39)

Individuals [primary children] that show some talent could benefit from individualized instruction tuition.
(PGT [Ch] Respondent 6)

[Private singing lessons] ...only suitable for a few talented students.
(PGT [Ch] Respondent 83)

Similarly, respondents suggested that students participated in school singing activities because, in part, they were talented or possessed the ability to be successful. Responses included:

They enjoy singing [and] are talented in that area.
(PGT, Respondent 19)

They enjoy singing and often have talent.
(PGT [Ch] Respondent 91)

[Children have] Confidence and ability to be successful.
(PGT [Ch] Respondent 1)

Student interest in singing was also seen as a contributory factor to student participation (n=32). While most responses were positive expressions of student interest, one respondent indicated that students at their secondary school seemed “not to be interested” in school singing (SMT, Respondent 125) and there was no choir at the respondent’s school. Student behaviour was also a contributory factor in singing participation with respondents indicating that appropriate behaviour (n=8) was a criteria for selective singing opportunities. One respondent noted:

I also seem to have a few behaviour issues with children. This can mean fluctuating numbers at times.
(PGT, Respondent 101)

Two respondents also noted gender differences in student behaviour:

Girls are generally more focused from the behavioural point of view.
(PST [Ch] Respondent 21)

Harder to get boys involved. They find the discipline of standing/focusing etc. harder.
(PST [Ch] Respondent 17)
7.3.4 Student Constraints

Encompassed within student constraints affecting school singing were financial and time constraints (see Figure 7.11). Respondent references included constraints posed by the financial resources of parents. In some cases, the low socio-economic standing of parents \( (n=5) \) influenced the degree of parental support for activities like singing. In low-socio-economic environments, respondents indicated that students were given “even less encouragement to experience new things” (PST [Ch] Respondent 71) and that school singing provided students with “opportunities they [students] may not get at home” (PST [Ch] Respondent 21). However, one respondent also reported that financial constraints impacted on student singing by preventing participation in school choirs:

> Low socio/economic area - children do not go into festival choir because of cost (between $20 - $50).
> (PGT, Respondent 57)

In contrast, one respondent reported that parents at their school were from an upper middle class socio-economic environment and would support their children singing by paying for private lessons (SMT, Respondent 118).

**Figure 7.11: Constraints impacting on student participation in school singing**

Time constraints, both through student priorities and in the number of activities available to children, were also reported by respondents \( (n=7) \) as limiting singing participation:

> Time restrictions due to other after/before school activities.
> (PGT, Respondent 51)
Time - other commitments.
(PGT [Ch] Respondent 52)

Children already committed after school hours.
(PGT [Ch] Respondent 20)

Respondents noted the existence of “sport and conflicting activities” (PST [Ch] Respondent 32). Two respondents noted that there would be “not enough time” (PST [Ch] Respondent 97) and “too much else going on” (PST [Ch] Respondent 87) for students to have private singing lessons. Another respondent felt that because of the commitments children already had, parents were reluctant to “overburden” students (PST [Ch] Respondent 20). One respondent noted that time constraints made students choose between choir and dancing at their school:

…sometimes kids have to choose between eg choir/dance lessons due to time constraints.
(PGT [Ch] Respondent 85)

Teacher observations of student gender perceptions (see Figure 7.12, over page) were also present in the data. When asked if there were differences in boys and girls singing participation in schools, respondents noted that in many cases \((n=43; 37.8\%)\) there were differences between boy and girls participation in school singing activities. Seven of the “modified” responses (see Table 7.1) noted actual gender differences such as recreational preferences, sporting preferences and boys’ apparent hesitancy to sing:

Not really, but less boys are interested maybe because they are asked to give up lunchtimes. If practice was in school time there maybe more [boys] interested.
(PGT [Ch] Respondent 6)

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No. The opportunity is the same. If choir is held at same time as football, footy often wins.
(PGT [Ch] Respondent 61)

No - all are involved but boys may sometimes need a little more encouragement than girls to ‘go for it!’.
(PGT [Ch] Respondent 70)

After totaling the affirmative and modified responses almost half of the respondents \((n=57)\) that provided gender data, observed gender differences which impacted on student singing participation. Of the six “not applicable” responses, five respondents were teachers at single sex secondary schools.

**Figure 7.12: Perceptions impacting on student participation in school singing**

The majority \((n=13; 54.2\%)\) of secondary respondents \((N=24)\) observed gender differences which indicated that gender perceptions limiting school singing participation were more apparent in secondary schools, than in primary schools:

- Generally [secondary] girls are more comfortable with singing.
  (SMT, Respondent 116)

- More [secondary] girls choose to sing.
  (SMT [Ch] Respondent 119)

- [Secondary] Boys will not be in a vocal group outside of [music] class.
  (SMT [Ch] Respondent 104)

A minority \((n=35; 34.0\%)\) of primary respondents \((N=103)\) observed gender perceptions of school singing activities. Observations included primary girls being more eager to participate \((n=2)\) as school singing was “more accepted by girls than boys” (PGT [Ch]...
Respondent 92). Primary girls were also perceived as being “a bit more vocal” than boys (PGT [Ch] Respondent 76).

The impact of boys changing voices on school singing, together with perceived humiliation and behavioral issues, was previously discussed in relation to student singing ability and student confidence. However, there were several other gender issues and biases present in the data. The combination of student age and gender was seen as a contributory factor that affected boys’ enthusiasm for singing:

As boys get older, their enthusiasm wanes.
(PGT [Ch] Respondent 33)

Unfortunately, the boys get fewer as the years progress.
(PGT [Ch] Respondent 65)

...boys in Grade 6 not as keen [to sing].
(PGT [Ch] Respondent 12)

However, this trend was reversed in two respondent secondary schools where there were more senior secondary boys singing than in junior years:

We have Junior group [choir] (only 1 boy and girls). Senior [choir] there are more boys than girls.
(SMT [Ch] Respondent 105/12)

...most boys are hesitant to sing in Stage 4 and 5. Some overcome this in Stage 6.
(SMT [Ch] Respondent 118)

While it can be argued that that boys’ waning enthusiasm for singing may be due to adolescent changing voices, particularly relevant during late primary years and in Stage 4/5 secondary education, other factors were also present in the data. While one respondent of a Year 3 class reported no apparent gender difference with boys “treated equally and expected to participate on equal footing” (PGT, Respondent), two other Year 3 respondents observed gender biases already apparent in relation to their Year 3 boys:

Some boys feel singing is a 'girl' thing to do and are embarrassed to join in.
(PGT, Respondent 19)

Some boys think it's silly to sing.
(PGT, Respondent 30)

The gender bias of girls participating in singing, rather than boys, was also reported by primary choir teachers with one respondent referring to primary boys that sing being
stereotyped as “effeminate” males (PGT [Ch] Respondent 40). Other respondents reported:

Boys think that singing is just for girls and often shy away from participating.
(PGT [Ch] Respondent 42)

[School singing is] Not always seen as a boys activity.
(PGT [Ch] Respondent 100)

Many male students believe that singing is for females.
(PGT [Ch] Respondent 56)

Additional observations included primary girls being more eager to participate ($n=2$) as school singing was “more accepted by girls than boys” (PGT [Ch] Respondent 92). Primary girls were also perceived as being “a bit more vocal” than boys (PGT [Ch] Respondent 76). One respondent reported biases of “girls and music” and “boys and sport” (PGT [Ch] Respondent 27). The preference of boys and sport, over singing, was reported by 4 primary respondents.

Student perception of singing being for girls was noted particularly in reference to the types of vocal music that boys preferred ($n=11$; 8.7%). One primary respondent noted that while “sensitive” songs were acceptable to boys, “girlie girlie” songs were not and were therefore avoided (PST [Ch] respondent 95). Another respondent indicated that boys responded better to singing songs that were “modern” and included “movement, costume and story telling” (PGT [Ch] respondent 57). Additional responses included:

…the boys enjoy beatbox and rap. If I could teach this, perhaps I would have more boys.
(PGT, Respondent 101)

Find that girls are often more willing to take risks in singing than some boys who prefer known songs.
(PGT, Respondent 103)

One secondary respondent noted:

Boys generally do heavy rock. Girls like pop style.
(SMT, Respondent 107)

Secondary boys were also noted to prefer playing musical instruments such as drums or guitar instead of singing (SMT [Ch] Respondent 117).

Respondents also observed that boys did not think school singing was “cool” ($n=3$):

Some primary boys have a beautiful voice, but not cool to sing at school.
(PGT [Ch] Respondent 16)
Boys usually don’t think it’s cool to be in the choir - but will enjoy more than they care to admit.
(PGT [Ch] Respondent 20)

Another respondent implied that peer pressure, particularly for boys, meant that boys had to be “strong in their enjoyment of being in the choir” (PGT [Ch] Respondent 56)

However, unrelated to gender (n=9), was the connection between the perception of school singing being “uncool” and peer pressure:

…if it’s not ‘cool’ that impacts on the singing.
(PGT [Ch] Respondent 65)

One respondent noted this specifically as a ‘negative’ contributory factor:

Peer pressure, ‘coolness’ - negative.
(PGT [Ch] Respondent 65)

Student enthusiasm for singing was reported as sometimes waning during the course of a year. A lack of enthusiasm resulted in a drop of participating numbers (PGT [Ch] Respondent 102) and was noted particularly in reference to boys’ participation. Boys were described as dropping out quickly (PGT [Ch] Respondent 20) and for requiring “a lot of positive reinforcement to participate” (PGT [Ch] Respondent 89) in singing activities. One respondent noted that house point rewards for participation were positive incentives for boys to participate in singing:

In Assembly students are awarded House Points for participation which has encouraged a very positive response, especially from some reluctant senior boys.
(PGT [Ch] Respondent 87)

7.4 School Culture

A school’s culture is largely determined by the school community - by the school executive, the teaching staff and the student population. It is the school community and the focus of musical and/or performing arts activities within the school culture, which was found to either support or constrain school singing activities (see Figure 7.13, over page). Where the school culture actively encouraged musical activities, respondents reported that school singing was supported:

They [children] enjoy singing and performing as it is highly valued in this school and something they can all do as well. … [School singing is] Actively encouraged all the way through from K-6 as it is embedded in the school’s culture.
(PGT [Ch] Respondent 7)

The culture of the school is for everyone to sing or be part of the choirs - class time is allocated for it. We won money at a competition and this really helped.
(PGT [Ch] Respondent 12)
We have a school ethos of celebrating the performing arts - dance, drama, music students are involved K-6. … Being part of the vocal group is considered important by students and the school community. (PGT [Ch] Respondent 70)

Small school …87% NESB [non English speaking background] but most cultures participate. *Islanders keenest. (PGT [Ch] Respondent 57)

**Figure 7.13: School Culture**

The cultural background of the student population was at times seen to impact on school music and singing activities with two respondents noting that singing may be part of the participating student’s “own culture” (PGT [Ch] Respondent 40) and “part of the culture of many students electing music” (SMT, Respondent 89). Other respondents noted:

- Asian children participate [in singing] as it is regarded as a positive learning experience. (PGT [Ch] Respondent 26)
- Many of our students are naturally interested as it is a big part of their culture. (PGT [Ch] Respondent 96)
- All ethnic cultures seem to value music. … Most families value the arts. Large Asian population - all keen to achieve in the arts. (PGT [Ch] Respondent 95)

Respondents specifically noted the predisposition of islander students to primary and secondary school singing activities \((n=6)\), noting that singing was part of Polynesian/islander culture:

- Island culture - they sing at Church. It is encouraged at home. (PGT [Ch] Respondent 96)
… a lot of Pacific Islanders for whom singing and playing guitar is part of life. (SMT, Respondent 116)

Polynesian students are more likely to sing without any fear. (SMT, Respondent 122)

Cultural reasons [students participate in singing] eg Pacific Islanders, they enjoy it. (SMT, Respondent 126)

Islanders – [singing] groups of 2-5. …Islanders love to sing, but don’t join mixed vocal groups. (SMT [Ch] Respondent 104)

However, the cultural background of students was sometimes noted to impinge on student involvement in school singing:

Some varied cultures at school especially islanders (Tongan etc) Arabic, Indian, Maori, but tend to dance rather than sing. (PGT [Ch] Respondent 18)

Cultural factors impact on whether students can be involved with out of school performances. (PGT [Ch] Respondent 74)

Large Asian community, very shy at performing have to cajole them to participate. (SMT [Ch] Respondent 121)

Similarly, student religion was seen to impact on how some students were able to participate in school singing:

… students from a Muslim background cannot perform/learn songs of a Christian background eg Christmas, Easter. (PGT [Ch] Respondent 98)

Jehovah children do not participate in choir in Term 4 as this is the lead up to Christmas and they can not sing Christmas carols. (PGT [Ch] Respondent 74)

The cultural background of students was also reported as making structured or formal school singing somewhat “alien” as singing in some cultures represented at the respondent’s school was more “spontaneous” (PGT [Ch] Respondent 46).

Impingements on school singing that stemmed from the culture at respondent schools included a school’s focus not being “musically orientated” which resulted in music/singing not being “a priority” (PGT [Ch] Respondent 102). One secondary respondent noted that singing had become a passive observing activity, not an active participatory activity:
People see singing as something to watch more now. People now watch a song.
(SMT, Respondent 125)

These sentiments contrasted to those expressed by a primary choir teacher:

… choir members love music and see themselves as musicians.
(PGT [Ch] Respondent 46)

### 7.5 Summary and Discussion

The findings presented in this chapter address the question of “why is singing taught in Sydney government schools?”.

#### 7.5.1 What are the purposes of singing in schools?

Present in respondent data were contributory factors of school singing identified as support for school singing, objectives of school singing, the aptitude for school singing and the constraints restricting school singing (see Figure 7.14, over page). The findings presented in this chapter provided insight into the range of school singing activities that occur due to a multiplicity of reasons.

The types of school singing present in respondent data, found their origin in the purpose of the activities. Syllabus singing was linked to teaching objectives present in outcomes based musical learning. Syllabus singing was itself, at times, a musical outcome. In some cases, syllabus singing was the vehicle used for student attainment of the musical skills required to fulfill learning outcomes. Co-syllabus singing brought school singing activities into non-musical subjects for illustrative or supportive learning purposes. Non-syllabus singing occurred to meet community objectives and personal fulfillment. The incidental purposes of non-syllabus singing were teacher initiated.

The purposes of singing were often dictated by the motivation of those responsible for or participating in school singing activities: teachers, students and the school community. In some cases, the school culture also determined the types and purposes of school singing. Where school singing was established within the school culture, singing activities were reported as being well supported and the school culture was such that it encouraged or even enabled singing activities to occur. Underpinning the culture of school singing was the school executive and the willingness of teachers at the school to act cooperatively in their support of activities. In schools with an established
Figure 7.14: Why is singing taught in schools?
singing culture, much of the school singing was community driven and the resulting ethos was seen to ‘uplift’ the school and its students (PGT (Ch) Respondent 20; PST (Ch) Respondent 78). In this context, school singing was valued beyond its syllabus relevance and students themselves were reported as being enthusiastic participants. In contrast, establishing a singing culture within a school was largely determined by dedication, perseverance and interests of individual teachers and the interests of the students at their respective schools. Community objectives, together with teacher and student fulfillment, were often the mitigating factors present in respondent data that facilitated school singing activities. For students, peers and the ‘cool’ factor were often seen as both negative and positive contributory factors.

Many of the contributory factors of school singing identified in the study were supported in the literature. Teacher aptitude and issues of effective training were evident (Russell-Bowie, 1997; Jones 2003). The relevance of vocal music selection to school singing participation (Mizener, 1993; Kennedy 2002, p.30) was also evident. The reporting of predominantly female participation in singing activities in many respondent schools and the social and emotional effects on singing participation of boys’ changing voices is supported in the literature (Harrison, 2001; Crabbe, 2005; Stupple, 2007). Contributory factors were particularly evident in the National Review of School Music Education (Australian Government, 2005) which contained elements of support, objectives, aptitude and constraints in relation to school music. Support for school music was evident in the National Review of School Music Education as that which was generated both within and externally to schools. Similar objectives of school music included personal, communal and educational aims. The ‘cool’ factor associated with the success of school music was also evident. The National Review of School Music Education viewed aptitude as potential (pp.28-29) rather than ability or talent, however in this study in relation to singing, aptitude encompassed facility and expertise. Financial constraints, accessibility of resources and time issues which either limited or precluded participation in school music were also evident.

7.5.2 Is school singing part of a K-12 continuum of learning in music?

Singing was present in respondent data in all Years and Stages of education in this study. While syllabus singing was present in relation to a continuum of learning in music, whether singing itself was part of the continuum in terms of student acquisition of
sequentially based singing skills was not apparent. However, a continuum of learning in music implies a coherent progression of skill acquisition and as singing is a syllabus mandated musical activity, there is a duty for that activity to be conducted within a responsible progressive strategy. If singing is a school activity devoid of sequential progression, then the distinction is made between using the voice and learning to use the voice. This distinction is present in primary and secondary respondent data when respondents view choir singing and private singing tuition as providing opportunities for students to develop their singing skills. It could be argued that learning to use the voice is like learning other musical instruments and as such, requires individual tuition. However the singing voice, unlike any other musical instrument, is the musical instrument accessed by all students in a school setting.

7.5.3 Why is school singing taught?

The research findings presented in this chapter revealed a multiplicity of reasons why singing is taught in Sydney government schools as presented in Figure 7.15: MODEL 4 – Singing participation in Sydney government schools (over page).

7.6 Précis: Chapter 7

Chapter Seven addressed the question of “why is singing taught in Sydney government schools?”. The chapter presented the exploration of qualitative data on the inter-relationships of contributory factors as to why singing takes place in schools. The chapter concluded with a discussion on levels of expertise and addressed subset questions. A model of school singing participation is generated. Chapter Eight begins with a summary of the key issues identified in Part 1 of the research that helped form the research questions for Part 2 of the research. Presented in this chapter are the findings of Part 2 research. The findings from participant interviews are discussed separately, and the chapter concludes with a discussion that incorporates the key issues and further insights in school singing.
Figure 7.15: MODEL 4
Singing participation in Sydney government schools
Chapter 8: The Dichotomy of Formal and Informal School Singing

In-depth Interviews: Participant Summaries and Emergent Findings

8.1 Introduction

Chapters 4, 5, 6 and 7 presented, summarised and discussed Part 1 research findings through which key issues of teaching singing in Sydney government schools emerged.

In this chapter, the key issues from Part 1 are considered and additional research questions posed. Part 2 findings are presented in the form of participant summaries. The final section in this chapter discusses these findings collectively and addresses the key issues.

8.2 Key Issues and Part 2 Research Questions

The interview questions were devised to address not only the main research questions of “who?”, “what?”, “how?” and “why?” in relation to school singing, but were used to probe in depth the key issues that emerged from the findings and key variables of Part 1 of the research. A full interview schedule is attached as Appendix E. The key issues are presented below in the context of the relevant interview questions posed.

8.2.1 Key Issue 1: Access to specialist teachers

The key issue of access to specialist teachers, both primary and secondary teachers with an interest in singing, varied greatly between Part 1 respondent schools. Whether and/or how specialist teachers were accessed and appointed, and the relevance of an interest in singing, were principally determined through the following Part 2 questions:

“For choir, we’re learning to sing it [the vocal music] properly; we’re singing it how it should be sung. So I guess I would have more of a focus on actually singing it properly and singing technique in choir as opposed to singing it for the musical information sake [in classroom music], for what can be taken out of it, would be the difference.”

SMT [Ch] Participant 8
● Why does the school involve students in singing?  
(Appendix E: Question 7)  
● How is singing taught at your school?  
(Appendix E: Question 8)  
● How relevant is it for teachers to be competent singers?  
(Appendix E: Question 8)  
● How relevant is it for teachers to be interested in singing?  
(Appendix E: Question 8)

8.2.2 Key Issue 2: Formal and Informal School Singing

The key issue of the types of singing experienced by children and adolescents in Part 1 respondent schools varied greatly. Whether the teaching approach dictated the types of school singing or whether the types of singing dictated the teaching approach was principally determined through the following Part 2 questions:

● How is singing taught at your school?  
(Appendix E: Question 8)  
● Can you describe the relevance of the singing at your school?  
(Appendix E: Question 12)  
● How important/relevant is repertoire selection?  
(Appendix E: Question 35)  
● Is it appropriate to address vocal (singing) technique in your teaching?  
(Appendix E: Question 45)  
● Are singing activities that relate to curriculum different to extra-curricular singing activities?  
(Appendix E: Question 57)

8.2.3 Key Issue 3: Student Gender

The key issue of student gender and school singing participation was addressed through the following Part 2 questions:

● Does gender impact on repertoire selection?  
(Appendix E: Question 39)  
● Are there any factors including gender, cultural and financial, that may influence singing participation at your school?  
(Appendix E: Question 76)
More specifically, do you think there are any differences between girls and boys participating in singing at school?
(Appendix E: Question 77)

Do you think that girl only or boy only singing activities/choirs would be beneficial?
(Appendix E: Question 78)

### 8.2.4 Key Issue 4: The Relevance of School Singing

The key issue of the relevance of school singing was raised through the different types of approaches present in Part 1 respondent data. Whether school singing was relevant was principally determined through the following Part 2 questions:

- Can you describe the relevance of the singing at your school?
  (Appendix E: Question 12)
- Is singing included in the K-12 continuum of musical leaning?
  (Appendix E: Question 55)
- Would it be beneficial and/or appropriate for choral/school singing to be included in the curriculum?
  (Appendix E: Question 58)
- Do you think that singing should form the foundation of music curriculum?
  (Appendix E: Question 64)
- Can you suggest other strategies to ensure student participation in singing activities?
  (Appendix E: Question 74)
- Do you think it is beneficial for students to sing at school?
  (Appendix E: Question 75)

### 8.2.5 Key Issue 5: The Value of School Singing

The key issue of the perceived and described value of school singing in Part 1 respondent data varied greatly. Whether school singing was valued was principally determined through the following Part 2 questions:

- Why do students participate in singing at school?
  (Appendix E: Question 71)
• What are your experiences of children's/student attitudes to singing?
  (Appendix E: Question 72a)
• Is school singing 'cool'? Should school singing be 'cool'?
  (Appendix E: Question 72b)
• If singing was a whole school or perfectly normal school activity, or a
  singing culture existed at the school, would this adequately address any
  student hesitancy to sing?
  (Appendix E: Question 73)
• Do you consider the school singing voice to be a musical instrument?
  (Appendix E: Question 80)

8.3 The Participants

For Part 2 of the study, a variety of participants from a range of school types, locations
and sizes was sought. For this purpose, 45 schools were determined as either having
no apparent singing culture, an establishing school singing culture or an established
singing culture and as such, were contacted over a five month period for possible
interview inclusion.

School singing culture information was largely obtained from researching individual
school websites. Additional information was obtained through eisteddfod programmes,
school reputations and the researcher’s own experience. Of the 45 schools contacted,
10 participants from 10 schools consented to interviews. Table 8.1 (over page) shows
the diversity of the Part 2 sample. Each of the four NSW DET Sydney metropolitan
regions was represented by at least two participants. The participant sample was also
representative of all school sizes (P1-P5; S8-S9). Coeducational and single sex schools
(girls)\(^{119}\), male and female teachers and choir and non-choir teachers were also
included. To protect the anonymity of participants, the corresponding school region and
school size was not included in the following Table.

\(^{119}\) Six single-sex boys’ high schools were also contacted for inclusion in the study.
### Table 8.1: Interview Participants

<table>
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<th>School</th>
<th>Teacher Type</th>
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<td>Music; Band and Choir</td>
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<td>Primary Generalist classroom;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Choir</td>
</tr>
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<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Music; Senior Vocal Groups</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Music; Vocal Group; Private Vocal Tutor</td>
</tr>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Music; Band; Non-choir</td>
</tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Choir</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Non-choir</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 8.4 Participant Summaries

The following participant summaries present the findings of each interview in relation to participant expressions of teacher training, teacher experience, teacher interest, teacher perceptions, teaching delivery and teaching content through which each approach to singing teaching is determined and discussed. Findings are presented under the “who?”, “what?”, “how?” and “why?” question headings and as the analysis process involved a constant comparison between new and previous participant interviews, emergent findings encompass the key issues where appropriate and are presented at the conclusion of each summary. The summaries contain participant
quotations enclosed by quotation marks. Unlike respondent quotations previously cited in Part 1 findings, the following quotations appear only in their relevant participant summary and as such, are not assigned a participant type or number.

8.4.1 Participant Summary 1

Participant 1 is a female primary generalist classroom teacher with an interest in music having studied AMEB piano (6th Grade) and AMEB classical singing (8th Grade). Participant 1 taught syllabus and co-syllabus singing to her Year 3 class and non-syllabus choir singing to children from Year 3 to Year 6. The participant gained her singing experience through private tuition and through choral in-service opportunities. Participant 1 was previously a RFF music specialist at the same school.

8.4.1.1 Who teaches singing in Sydney government schools?

The participant implied the transitory nature of classroom teaching by noting that her appointment as a Year 3 classroom teacher was “at the moment”. In relation to specialist areas of interest, Participant 1 believed that musical and/or singing experiences were sourced by schools “fairly straight away” for the purposes of specialist teaching. The RFF music specialist teacher at the school at the time of the interview focused on band activities and on teaching syllabus music.

8.4.1.2 What types of singing are taught in Sydney government schools?

Non-syllabus whole school singing was inclusive and usually occurred in assemblies in which students sang a welcome song, their school song and the National Anthem. For specific occasions or assemblies, Year 3 to 6 students were sometimes taught the same song to sing at assembly. Exclusive co-syllabus singing occurred when students from different classes were selected to form a small singing group for a specific performance of a song. Choir was essentially inclusive, although there was an audition process. However, the participant’s attitude to choir membership was inclusive provided students showed enthusiasm and remained committed throughout the year. The choir had one scheduled rehearsal time each week during lunchtimes and rehearsed for 30 minutes each week. Other opportunities for participation in school singing were an annual school “Idol” competition and an intended inaugural school musical.

\[^{120}\text{The assignment of classrooms and additional teaching duties can vary from year to year.}\]
While vocal range and vocal tone were relevant criteria for vocal music selection, Participant 1 noted that it was also important for students to enjoy the songs “that’s purely the priority that they’re going to be able to enjoy it” and consequently the students sometimes chose their own vocal music from the ABC Sing! books. Co-syllabus thematic singing for specific performances and co-syllabus thematic singing significant to other KLAS, particularly following the introduction of Connected Outcomes Groups (COGs) (NSW DET, n.d.), were also relevant to vocal music selection.

Vocal music was discussed in terms of its audience appeal and relevance. The participant avoided rock styles, advocated the singing of “good” music and preferred songs with meaning and those that conveyed a message. Participant 1 advocated for simple vocal melodies that students could “pick up”. The participant’s classroom and choir singing teaching was usually to recorded accompaniment, although the participant noted that she intended using musical students for accompaniment in the future, but needed time to “network” appropriate students.

8.4.1.3 How is singing taught in Sydney government schools?

Students at the participant’s school participated in syllabus music classes with the music specialist teacher. Students in the participant’s Year 3 class also at times participated in classroom singing activities taught by the participant during the Year 3 allocated Creative and Performing Arts one hour class per fortnight. Syllabus singing in these classes focused on the musical concepts of pitch and rhythm. The participant used a song approach, taught songs line by line and used her own voice to model songs:

Because I’m quite happy to sing and I don’t have any inhibitions about that.

Participant 1 also used recorded modeling for vocal music and choir songs that were mostly sung in unison. The use of recorded modeling represented an osmotic process:

I’ll get them to listen to it several times just as a sort of - means of - you know, sponge type. Take it in that way.

Believing that all students “can be taught [correct pitch] if they have been given the right strategies”, the participant addressed pitch inaccuracy in these classroom singing activities by standing beside students that required assistance. The participant used
“visual” hand movements to demonstrate melodic shapes while singing. In choir, the participant used the strategies of re-grouping students and peer modeling to address pitch accuracy.

Time constraints impacted on how singing was taught in the classroom:

In my own classroom, unfortunately I do it as a simply ‘here is the book’, the ABC books we use, and it’s singing time. I might talk about pitch. I show them hand movement [gestures up and down with both hands] - but that’s about all we get, to be very honest… it’s mainly pitch, as much as I’d love to do other activities, there just never seems to be the time.

Time constraints also impacted on choir teaching. The participant stated “it’s just really been a matter of [learning the song] and not really even listening”. A second vocal part (exclusive singing) was sometimes assigned to a young male singer who could easily learn and maintain a second part. The teaching of technical elements of voice production such as posture and breathing, were secondary to the teaching of songs. Imagery was used to encourage students to find and sing in a “head voice” range.

Student progress was reinforced through positive praise “about the difference that they have made in applying some strategy - they’re [the differences] pretty basic sort of things though”. The participant focused on the overall sound of singing activities, preferring not to detract from the vocal sound or the production of sound by including such things as gesturing in performance.

Although making a distinction between adult and child voices, the participant incorporated their own vocal health experiences into their teaching:

I’ve had children come and say ‘oh I can’t sing I’ve got a cold’. In the past I would have said ‘oh well that’s all right’ but I know with my own singing teacher she would virtually ignore me and it never did me any harm, but I know with younger voices... and having that information has really helped me not really push it but just [say] ‘OK give it a go and see’ rather than ‘no, no well don’t come today’.

8.4.1.4 Why is singing taught in Sydney government schools?

The participant’s school involved students in singing because research showed that music benefited the “whole” student. Individual students were seen to participate because “children just love singing - most children”. However the participant, upon reflection, noted that children in the senior years were less likely to participate in school
singing activities:

If you ask other teachers, and I’m thinking now of assembly and how the teacher at the front is always saying he can hear the Year 3 and 4s … but once you get back to 5 and 6s … [they’re] not singing.

Time restrictions allowed the participant to lead only one school choir which was a 30 voice senior choir, Year 3 to Year 6, consisting of 28 females and 2 males. Although previously thinking that children in Kindergarten to Year 2 received enough singing opportunities in their classrooms, the participant believed that a K-2 choir would benefit the current students at the school. However, she did not have the time to teach another choir. In addition to the “joy” participating in school singing engendered, the participant believed that school singing was in part due to the accessibility of the voice “I mean you’re carrying you’re own voice - it’s so easy”.

8.4.1.5 Participant 1 emergent findings

While Part 1 respondents noted that time constraints impacted on the amount of singing, Participant 1 also said that her actual approach to teaching singing was dictated by the amount of available singing time. Limited time led Participant 1 to approach teaching singing in “a very practical way”:

… just getting them to listen. I might sing one line and then we go.

In-servicing “tips” such as placing students in a semi-circle and the re-grouping of students to stabilise pitch, added to the effectiveness of Participant 1’s teaching in this limited time frame:

There are just a couple of little tips like that, because as you can imagine in less than 25 minutes, you’ve sort of got to get this [singing] happening. Because it’s tips like that [placing and re-grouping] that are so beneficial.

Other limitations in approaches to teaching school singing expressed by the participant were children singing songs in less than optimum keys. Although this was not always the case, the participant noted:

I don’t realise until afterwards, or if I’m listening to a performance - I think that’s far too high or far too low for that age children.

While comfortable with the prospect of teaching singing on an individual basis to procure vocal development, Participant 1 advocated the need for the in-servicing of strategies for teaching singing to groups of students and advocated for NSW DET to encourage primary generalist classroom teachers to teach singing by offering such in-
services. In-servicing opportunities had previously afforded Participant 1 the opportunity to source appropriate repertoire. The participant considered it important for teachers to show enthusiasm for singing and believed that many teachers did not include singing in their teaching because they were not confident singers. In-services were seen as opportunities to build teacher confidence which in turn would benefit school singing. The participant believed that attitudes towards school singing would change if future generations of teachers were appropriately trained.

Part 1 findings revealed that the cultural background of students at times impacted on student participation in school singing activities. Participant 1 also discussed this relation to the ancillary benefits of singing participation for students from specific cultural backgrounds. Children at the participant’s school were predominantly of Asian descent and the participant noted that the children were often studious and reserved. School singing afforded these students opportunities to convey themselves in a way that was not embarrassing as students were given the words of songs and therefore could not be “wrong” in their choice of words. In this context, school singing was seen as an activity that explored language in a way that was less inhibiting than other school activities and as such, fostered student confidence.

While children received kudos from participating in the school choir, Participant 1 believed that the school choir did not have the same status as other school activities such as the school dance group. Strategies proffered to improve the status of the choir included more performance opportunities and the scheduling of choir rehearsals during school time as part of the curriculum. With regard to the latter, the participant was unsure as to the logistics of how this could happen. The participant also viewed good quality performances as bringing school singing to the “fore”. The participant raised the constraints placed on performance opportunities outside the school which required additional risk management and “bureaucratic” procedures. While the participant did not perceive the choir to be a “cool” activity, she believed that by including more popular repertoire she would attract a “heap” of other kids. However, she also thought that by doing so, she would probably compromise on the resultant standard of school singing.

While gender was also not viewed as being an issue in choir participation, the participant noted that the choir was comprised of 28 girls and 2 boys. Another
participatory factor was that students would prefer to do other lunchtime activities such as play chess in the school library. Participant 1 viewed the teaching of school music to be “extremely tiring”. With specific relevance to school singing, the participant did not view singing as being within a K-12 continuum of musical learning. Rather, it was more an activity in its own right.

8.4.2 Participant Summary 2

Participant 2, a female secondary classroom music teacher, has a background in music, principally in piano, and began singing in choirs and ensembles in high school. The participant is a music education practitioner with extensive musical experiences including classroom music teaching, piano teaching, piano accompaniment of singers, ensemble singing, choral directing, training of singers for performance and musical direction. An accomplished musician, the participant explains that while she has no vocal qualifications, she has worked with singing teachers who fulfilled a mentoring type role for her own teaching of singing. The participant’s singing teaching skills developed through observing other singing teachers, by working under master choral directors and through attending in-services.

8.4.2.1 Who teaches singing in Sydney government schools?

The participant has been involved in both primary and secondary music education. Her experience has shown her that singing does not happen in every school and that not every school has a vocal programme. In primary schools, the participant believes that much of primary school singing is the type of approach identified in Chapter 6 as the sing-along approach with primary generalist classroom teachers putting on a CD and getting students to sing-along. In some secondary schools, singing was also described as putting on a CD while students sing along loudly. Participant 2 attributed the sing-along approach to a lack of relevant pre-service training of teachers.

8.4.2.2 What types of singing are taught in Sydney government schools?

The participant was keen to develop syllabus music and syllabus singing in the school and had strategies in place to identify students with “musical intelligence” in Stage 4 for progression to Stage 5 elective music. The participant was also keen to develop a vocal elective for Stage 5 students. Wanting to ensure student participation in syllabus singing, the participant made syllabus singing mandatory for all Year 7 students and
chose simple songs for this purpose. The participant viewed this type of syllabus singing as community singing. In Stage 6 elective music classes, the participant indicated that vocal music for assessment purposes must firstly fit a specific topic area, although if a student wanted to sing a particular song it could usually be matched to an appropriate topic. The participant used keyboard accompaniment (the music room did not have an acoustic piano) and sometimes guitar. Acknowledging that backing tracks served a purpose, the participant found backing tracks extremely prescriptive for singers who may lose their place. The participant also incorporated interpretative elements in her instruction of singers. The participant intended including movement in future choir performances.

Preferring not to accompany the choir on piano, the participant chose to include more *a cappella* singing so that the participant could see the singers as they rehearsed and as they performed. The choir sang a variety of vocal music. The participant included vocal warm-ups as part of choir rehearsals and also instructed in breath management. When necessary, the participant discussed vocal health issues such as nodules. The participant included vocal exercises from the NSW DET *Vocal-Ease* books and CDs, together with her own resources from *a cappella* singing experiences.

### 8.4.2.3 How is singing taught in Sydney government schools?

The participant viewed syllabus singing to be a facilitator for easy exploration of musical styles and concepts. At the time of the interview, there were no Year 9 music students at the school so the participant taught syllabus singing to Stage 4 and Stage 6 music students. While some Year 7 students were hesitant to sing, the participant made syllabus singing a compulsory classroom activity. The participant’s approach to teaching singing to Stage 4 students was an inclusive song approach where the participant modeled what was to be sung, together with either keyboard or guitar accompaniment. The participant’s approach to teaching syllabus singing to Stage 6 students was also inclusive and while focusing on music topic related singing, a technically based functional approach included instruction in posture, breathing and placement. Instruction was also offered in individual interpretive elements and feedback was offered particularly in relation to vocal tone and pitch. In addition to using her own voice to model singing, the participant sometimes used recorded modeling because it was not possible to always replicate the required stylistic tone or musical features.
Additional HSC singing considerations identified by the participant were stylistic integrity, availability of accompaniment and musical understanding. The participant endeavoured to make singing compulsory for all Stage 6 music students and invited Year 12 students to join a senior vocal group. When Year 12 students missed a senior vocal group session, the participant would have a make-up session in the student’s music classroom time.

The participant’s approach to non-syllabus singing was inclusive, with all students at the school being invited to join the school choir. However, time restrictions limited choir singing to twice weekly lunchtime rehearsals and the participant remonstrated that students with singing ability were therefore needed to ensure that the choir would be productive in the limited time available. While there was no actual audition procedure to join the choir, a process of natural attrition was occurring within the choir as some students doubted their own singing ability and elected to leave. Non-syllabus singing was exclusive in instances where the participant selected solo singers for specific performances. The selection of a solo singer was usually determined by the demands and style of the repertoire to be sung matching the quality of the voice of the solo vocalist.

The participant was, at the time of the interview, setting up recording facilities at the school for the purpose of providing student feedback and for archival purposes. Providing opportunities for student feedback was seen by the participant as a necessary tool in the learning process as it allowed students to hear their singing. Although not teaching boys at the time of interview, the participant recognized that boys’ and girls’ voices change and as a result, boys often presented with pitch matching problems. Her strategy for helping boys through this stage was facilitating them to find their voices, to match pitch and to build their confidence.

8.4.2.4 Why is singing taught in Sydney government schools?

The principal at the participant’s school valued the potential intellectual, social and musical benefits of music education for individual student development and music was also a promotional vehicle for the school. The participant was given the directive to raise the profile of music within the school primarily through the establishment of a school band. However, the participant believed that the development of the school band
and its establishment within the culture of the school would take time and was therefore keen to also establish the school choir.

The participant viewed the establishment of the choir as an easier, immediate option. This was not only because the participant was experienced in and enthusiastic about school singing, but was also due to the student body having a high Pacific Islander population where singing and harmony singing were already part of the student cultural background.

8.4.2.5 Participant 2 emergent findings

Participant 2 made the distinction that teaching vocal music depended on the intent of the instruction and on the age of the students. In this context, the participant taught a song approach to Year 7 students that developed into a highly functional approach in her Stage 6 teaching and in choir teaching. In Stage 6, the participant’s strategy was to aid the Year 12 music students HSC preparation by teaching them to sing “properly”. This was achieved by making it mandatory for Year 12 music students to attend and participate in senior vocal group rehearsals. In this context, non-syllabus singing became additional to syllabus singing and another type of school singing was identified as ancillary-syllabus singing.

Other identified issues pertained to teacher training and expertise. While acknowledging that some Year 7 state high school students have had positive musical learning in primary school, the participant perceived a general lack of primary school teacher training in music resulting in the demise of a continuum in musical learning in many NSW government schools. The participant viewed this demise to be in stark contrast to the private school system where the K-12 continuum of musical learning existed in schools that employed music teachers to teach music to all Stages. The participant recommended that there either be more teacher training for primary music or that specialist teachers be employed. Additionally, the suggestion of mandatory testing of the musical skills of all Year 7 students as they entered high school was made.

In efforts to encourage school singing, the participant suggested vocal music selection was crucial. By using repertoire that was familiar to students, the participant recommended that teachers were able to start with “their [student] experience and then
we build on their experience”. The participant also suggested that outstanding performances provided inspiration for other students to participate in singing activities. The participant did not believe that there were enough in-service opportunities to aid teachers in their teaching of singing.

The participant also viewed the role of a sole secondary music teacher as socially and developmentally isolating. This was due to the time restrictions posed by pursuing non-syllabus music, being out of class time and therefore limiting collegiate social interaction, and also because not all schools had a Creative and Performing Arts faculty, budget or internal organisational support. To prevent the sometimes solitary nature of music teaching in secondary schools, the participant suggested the establishment of an interdisciplinary Creative Arts Department in all secondary schools. The participant pointed out that because secondary non-syllabus and performing groups tend to follow the interests of the teacher initiating the activities, and as school programmes may find their strength within their teaching faculty, when a teacher left a school it could dramatically impact on interest in and effectiveness of that programme. The internal support music received from the principal and the school executive was vital to how music was perceived within the school community. Internal support impacted on the timetabling and length of classes. The participant pointed out that there was usually some hierarchy within a school that could lead to a subject like music being viewed as inconsequential. When that occurred, the participant said that it was the “death knell” for music in that school.

Participant 2 lamented the varying standard of music between primary schools and between the opportunities offered at each school. In this context, Participant 2 advocated the appointment of specialist music teachers in primary schools saying that there needed to be “more rigour” in relation to primary teachers teaching Stage 3 music before the students progressed to high school. The additional suggestion of a standardised questionnaire for all Year 7 students may help establish student “point of entry” within a music continuum or level of skill acquisition.

8.4.3 Participant Summary 3

Participant 3, a female primary generalist classroom teacher, taught a Stage 3 composite class, Stage 3 music and the primary choir. The participant was responsible
for the school choir, most singing assembly items, and any singing performance that involved K-6 student participation. The participant has a strength in music. The participant’s musical training was syllabus piano (7th Grade) and in relation to school singing, the participant took part in in-servicing activities initiated by the NSW DET Arts Unit and by regional school music festival committees. The participant remembered receiving a couple of singing lessons within music training while during her own teacher training, but had received no formal training in singing. Her enthusiasm for music came from her own piano training and experiences. Participant 3 had previously been an RFF Music specialist at a different school. The participant sang in school choirs and was a piano accompanist for small musical school productions.

8.4.3.1 Who teaches singing in Sydney government schools?

Participant 3 stated that in primary education, it was those teachers with the ability to teach music or those who were keen to teach music who taught school singing. In contrast, those teachers without relevant interest were noted as not teaching much singing:

The teachers themselves, who don’t have that interest or qualifications, don’t teach much singing.

In schools where a suitable teacher was not located or appointed as a specialist teacher, the participant said:

…they either get a parent to help with singing or maybe teachers try to do a little bit in class.

The participant also related the ability to teach school singing to individual teacher confidence. In contrast to those teachers who were hesitant to teach school singing the participant noted that:

There are those who’ll give it a go and do a great job.

Choir teaching at the participant’s school was team taught by the participant and assisted by two parents (singer teacher and accompanist). The participant believed herself to be fortunate to have the mentoring aspect of the additional parental involvement because it had broadened the participant’s “own understanding of how to teach music/singing”. The singing teacher parent taught specific technical aspects of singing to the school choir.
8.4.3.2 What types of singing are taught in Sydney government schools?

Participant 3 was enthusiastic about singing in schools and developed strategies to raise the profile of syllabus singing, co-syllabus singing and non-syllabus singing within the school. For syllabus singing, these strategies included the in-servicing of colleagues, the instigation of showcasing singing activities to the wider school community during Education Week and the use of choral teaching strategies when teaching singing to Stage 3 Music classes. Stage 3 music classes were held on a rotational basis with drama, art and public speaking and as such, the students received one music lesson in a four week cycle. Syllabus singing and co-syllabus singing was inclusive of all students in the music classes that the participant taught. The participant stressed that teachers at the school were quite well resourced for singing activities due to the resources amassed for the school choir over several years. The participant viewed singing as a significant component of the music syllabus and explained that music resources issued by NSW DET such as Vocal-Ease also reinforced school singing as a significant component of school music. The participant perceived school singing as being able to facilitate the exploration of different musical styles.

Non-syllabus singing strategies included initiating solo or small group school singing activities for specific purposes such as Anzac Day Services, before school time-tabling of choir rehearsals so as not to regularly impinge on student lunch-times, the encouragement of boys through the holding of boy only choir auditions and the development of a choir name, logo and uniform. Participation in non-syllabus singing was by audition or through selection and was therefore exclusive singing. A subset of the full choir, 30 students out of 50 students, was selected each year to participate as the school choir in choral concerts that restricted student numbers.

Whole school singing activities included assembly singing, both in Stage 1 assemblies and in Stage 2 to Stage 3 assemblies, of the school sing and the National Anthem. Other types of school singing included singing in school musicals held every alternate year, special assemblies, and an annual music festival.

121 The participant particularly spoke of COGs unit linkage of singing activities.
8.4.3.3 How is singing taught in Sydney government schools?

The participant approached syllabus singing through the teaching of songs. Repertoire selection suited COGs units of work and as such, most classroom singing was co-syllabus singing. The participant taught vocal music by initially discussing the story of the song. This was followed by speaking the lyrics, clapping the rhythm and speaking the lyrics in rhythm. The participant viewed speaking the words first as vital to student learning because “if they can say the words, then they’ll be able to sing them”. Recorded modeling of the song also provided students with the opportunity to follow the melody and to sing along. The participant did not usually incorporate singing exercises into classroom singing and as such, the classroom singing teaching was consistent with a song approach.

Non-syllabus choir singing was team taught by the participant in conjunction with two parents, one of whom was a singing teacher. The team approach facilitated singing being taught predominantly in a song dominant manner. Repertoire for choir was mainly sourced from the NSW DET Arts Unit or from regional festivals. The singing teacher parent focused on a few bars at a time when songs were taught and also taught students elements of singing technique such as posture. In this context, the approach to teaching singing may at times have been at a functional level. Both the participant and the singing teacher sang with the students during rehearsals; the participant singing with the alto singers and the singing teacher with the sopranos. Some warm-up exercises, led by the participant, were also included in choir rehearsals. While students were not expected to sight-sing in rehearsals, they were encouraged to follow the contour of the melody in their printed music. Choir members were also issued with a CD that contained recorded modeling of songs, melody or part tracks and song accompaniment for student practice at home.

8.4.3.4 Why is singing taught in Sydney government schools?

The participant viewed familiarity as a key to successful inclusive classroom singing:

When I then continued doing these [singing] lessons with them every week, they got used to it, they got accustomed to it. They knew that they had to come in ready for the singing lesson. If you make it routine for them, the kids acquire it. If it’s something out of the blue they’re not used to it. It’s like anything - they’re not sure - they’re not sure of it. They’re unfamiliar. But once they’re familiar with it, they know what the expectations are.

The participant also saw the community value of school singing where teachers were
able to use singing as an informal recreational activity.

There was an established non-syllabus singing culture at the participant’s school where there was positive reinforcement of student singing efforts. Gender issues centred on a boys’ preference for involvement in the school band, rather than in school singing, and on boys feeling intimidated by girls who they perceived as either better singers or who outnumbered the boys in non-syllabus singing activities by 2 to 1. Performances were viewed by the participant as providing positive experiences for students and in part provided the impetus for participation:

I really believe that if you give the kids positive experiences performing and they get a real buzz out of it, they’ll want to come back.

Other motivating factors included student enjoyment and the kudos students received from being involved in performing arts activities. The participant actively sought ways of acknowledging student singing achievements through the school merit system, by issuing certificates, writing about achievements in school newsletters, putting bulletins on the school notice board and encouraging local newspaper reports on and photos of choir performances.

8.4.3.5 Participant 3 emergent findings

Participant 3 discussed a turn around in the popularity and status of the school choir. Previously the participant would remind students to attend rehearsals, whereas “now they [the students] come to us”. This turn around could partially be due to the participant scheduling rehearsals to occur before school rather than during recess or lunchtime. Being a before school activity would possibly also rely more on parental responsibility than on the students themselves and being scheduled at the beginning of the week would possibly mean that children would be less tired than later in the week. Other reasons for the turn around were found in the participant’s desire to transform the choir into something “special” using the school bands as a model:

It’s being part of a group, a really special group. We’ve raised the profile of it [the choir] over the years. I’ve watched that happen to the bands here - from what they used to be as well - and they’ve raised the profile. They have a uniform and we’re doing the same thing. It’s making the children feel as if they’re part of a group that performs. So not only do they feel that privilege to be part of it [a performing group], I want them to work towards a certain expectation that I have of them. I want them to be performers, to know how to perform, to learn how to perform. Not just to turn up and sing a few songs.

While the popularity of the participant’s school choir had risen in recent years, so had
the ratio of boys’ participation from 19(girls):1(boy) to 2(girls):1(boy). The participant has achieved this by holding boy only auditions that give “the boys the courage to come” and through encouraging child perceptions of boys’ voices:

They [the boys] feel special and they feel wanted; and they know that what they’re putting into the choir sounds really good because of them.

Underlying there is that issue [emphasized] that all boys won’t want to sing because maybe girls do it better. But I’m really pushing against that. Even when we’re in here we make it really serious and I expect the boys to sing just as well as the girls if not better. I don’t get them in trouble for restless behaviour.

Participant 3 expressed similar sentiments to those of Participant 2 in relation to the crucial role individual teachers played in the success or longevity of programmes available at schools:

When I left the other school [previous school] that choral programme just disappeared for a little bit.

The enthusiasm and expectation that teachers have for school singing was also viewed as being crucial to student perception of school singing:

I think the attitude comes from yourself. If you don’t want much out of it then you’re not going to get much out of it.

In this context, teachers assume a mentoring role for school singing. If teachers are not capable of fulfilling this role, the implication is that many students potentially miss out on experiencing school singing in positive, meaningful ways. The participant also said that some teachers may not initiate singing activities because they may not have a supervisor “telling them to teach it”. The participant suggested that a primary school needed to have a Creative Arts area, including music, which was “programmed adequately and progressively with clear outcomes/activities/evaluations”. These sentiments were similar to those expressed by Participant 2 in relation to secondary music. The participant also believed that teachers with:

... expertise or enthusiasm for Music Education have a responsibility to impart the skills/knowledge and guidelines to the rest of the staff in schools for the benefit of all students.

The participant viewed a lack of syllabus singing in Stages 2 and 3 as being due to teachers not having confidence or expertise in singing. The participant used an analogy of mathematics teaching and stated that while not specialists in mathematics, all primary generalist classroom teachers were required to teach maths and to report on it. The participant expressed the opinion that while many teachers were not expert in
singing, it should not prevent them from teaching singing and considered that many
teachers view singing, being a non-core learning area, as inconsequential. The
participant recommended that to encourage class teacher confidence and syllabus
awareness, more in-service opportunities were both relevant and necessary.

8.4.4 Participant Summary 4

Participant 4 teaches Stages 4, 5 and 6 music classes at a secondary single sex school
for girls. With experience as a professional singer and with tertiary qualifications in
music education majoring in voice, the participant promoted both syllabus and non-
syllabus singing activities at the school. In addition to her teaching, Participant 4 was
also an experienced HSC performance examiner.

8.4.4.1 Who teaches singing in Sydney government schools?

Singing was a “passion” of the current music teachers at the school. Unlike the school
music band programme that was not the responsibility of the music teaching staff,
music teachers were responsible for school singing activities.

8.4.4.2 What types of singing are taught in Sydney government schools?

The participant incorporated inclusive syllabus singing in classroom music where class
singing activities aided in students learning to sing in tune and in listening to each other.
In this way, class singing also helped to facilitate working cooperatively or
collaboratively. Non-syllabus whole school singing activities occurred with the singing of
the school song and student “ditties” that were traditional to the school.

Non-syllabus singing was included in a choral programme for both senior and junior
students at the participant’s school. The participant was responsible for two senior vocal
ensembles at the school. The senior vocal group previously viewed as being exclusive
was, at the time of interview, inclusive of those senior students wanting to join. Although
entry to the group was by audition, the participant’s attitude towards group membership
was inclusive. The a cappella group was more exclusive, with membership being
determined by audition and focused on student singing abilities. The latter group was
viewed by the student body as being the more prestigious vocal group. Solos were
assigned on the basis of the student voices that best suited the repertoire being sung.
Other issues relevant to non-syllabus singing activities were the timetabling of rehearsals and the securing of performance opportunities for the groups. Students at the participant’s school combined with male students from another single sex school in the area to work on musical productions which afforded additional opportunities for non-syllabus singing.

8.4.4.3 How is singing taught in Sydney government schools?

The participant taught music to students with a range of musical abilities, and reported that some 13 year old students already had their LMus, while other students in the same Year 7 class were beginning their music studies. While the participant expressed that teaching such as range of students is always complex, singing in the music classroom was always musically relevant:

...so I don’t sing for singing’s sake. There’s always something that’s absolutely relevant musically [emphasised] that the kids will learn from and even if it’s a repeat sign or a di capo, you know there will be something that we’ll do. And also I think that notation [emphasised] is really important.

Vocal music in the music classroom progressed from simple vocal music in Year 7 to Australian Art Music in Year 10 where students learned about overtone singing:

...the different productions of sounds that are unusual and trying to write compositions that create that.

The participant believed that music in junior secondary years should be “a wonderful experience”. In Stage 4 music classes, songs were usually learned by rote. However in senior music classes, the students were usually instructed to sight-sing the songs. The participant predominantly modeled the voice by singing for the students. Recorded versions of songs were used sometimes in classroom music, but only after students had first been taught the song. Repertoire selection and repertoire variety impacted on student singing motivation as the students tended to become bored easily when they felt they had mastered the selected vocal music. Many students at the participant’s school were good, some even sophisticated, musicians which provided a depth of accompaniment available for group singing activities and for individual singers. The participant did not use backing tracks in her teaching.

The participant always began music classes with singing exercises, using Kodaly hand signs to reinforce pitch. With singing in the music classroom always being musically relevant, singing was a means of exploring the musical concepts of rhythm, expressive
techniques, pitch and structure. Sight-singing was an important element of music classes. Beginning in Year 7, music students were taught to follow notation by singing numbers assigned to scale degrees. This method of sight-singing was preferred by the participant because it was viewed as a logical, uncomplicated sequenced application for class sight-singing activities.

The participant’s approach to teaching singing was functional with a sequential progression of the inclusion of vocal technique:

I’m not so fussy in my juniors. I can hear there are several girls who are absolutely tone deaf and I’m not sure why. And I don’t want to draw attention to it, so I’m just letting it go because I think singing should be fun in Years 7 and 8. If they choose music as an elective, then we’ll jump on it really quickly.

In contrast, in senior classes and in non-syllabus vocal groups, vocal technique was relevant. For example, in relation to pitch, the participant outlined:

Well, once again with the placement. Looking … so we all [emphasised] do this collectively, so it’s not just coming me and also the changing of the mouth, the breathing, trying to work out if someone is flat or going flat - what are they doing? Are they pushing?.

In this context, vocal technique was intrinsically delivered and implemented. Instruction in vocal technique was more detailed in the participant’s vocal groups.

Singing in a healthy manner was also apparent in the participant’s approach to teaching school singing. In relation to vocal part assignment, the participant was aware of assigning suitable parts for vocal ranges and within the context of appropriate implemented vocal technique:

… if I hear that someone, an alto is belting out in their chest voice and pushing down low I think ‘yep, I’ll move them up’. Or once again, if they’re screeching high and they feel as if they’re straining [the participant moves them to another part].

In regard to vocal music selection for individual singers the participant considered tonal aspects:

… we will work hard to find the right key and the right balance so they can produce the best tonal quality throughout.

Feedback for HSC singing students was in keeping with the criteria for all instrumental assessments and as such, was primarily based on student understanding of musical concepts and their musical expression rather than on vocal technique. In this context, the emphasis was on developing the student’s musical skills and in relation to teaching singing, the participant’s approach remained functional.
8.4.4.4 Why is singing taught in Sydney government schools?

The participant sang "all the time" during music classes and viewed singing as an important component of music and of music education:

It's really important. I was always taught if you can't sing it you can't play it.

The participant, being an experienced HSC music performance marker, regarded singing as a popular choice for HSC students. However, not many students at the participant’s school chose singing for assessment performances as many students were proficient with other musical instruments that they had studied for years. The participant referred to the high level of commitment and abilities of the student body at the school and believed that the students themselves could “see and feel” that studying music and/or singing enhanced their learning.

8.4.4.5 Participant 4 emergent findings

The value of music was clearly apparent at the participant’s school where the parent body (P & C\textsuperscript{122}) actively supported the school band programme. Students at the participant’s school also highly regarded involvement in musical activities and as such, participated in non-syllabus singing activities. The types of students involved in the participant’s singing activities reflected the view that singing at the participant’s school was a ‘cool’ activity.

When asked if singing should be the foundation of music education, the participant indicated that while it was a crucial component, it was not necessarily the foundation:

I would have to say no, because people have gifts in other areas and I think if you weren’t happy with the way that you sang, you wouldn’t go off and become a singer, you would prefer to play clarinet. So therefore your focus would be instrumental rather than vocal. But I think it should absolutely be in there as maybe an equal component.

The participant acknowledged that having taught extensively in single sex secondary schools for girls, gender issues in relation to school singing had not been apparent in her teaching. When asked what skills teachers of school singing may require, the participant stressed the relevance of “an awareness of young voice” and “a basic awareness of how not to force”.

\textsuperscript{122} Each NSW government school typically has a Parents and Citizens Association whose function is to support the school community.
8.4.5 Participant Summary 5

Participant 5 was a female secondary coeducational classroom music teacher. The participant's school is a "disadvantaged" school. In addition to training in tertiary music and music education, the participant had been trained in piano for 13 years and had received vocal training for approximately 10 years. The participant had also worked professionally as a singer. In addition to classroom teaching, the participant also provided private vocal tutoring for those students at the school who elected to sing for Stage 6 music.

8.4.5.1 Who teaches singing in Sydney government schools?

The participant was well supported by the school principal who viewed school singing as important element of the school culture:

Our school is quite a singing school. We really promote it and the Principal really supports it.

The participant also stated that students at her school expected that if they had her as their music teacher, they would sing.

8.4.5.2 What types of singing are taught in Sydney government schools?

The participant was enthusiastic about both syllabus singing and non-syllabus singing in schools and the ensuing student benefits of both. During her employment as a teacher of music at her current school, the participant had developed strategies to raise the profile of both syllabus singing and non-syllabus singing at the school. Inclusive singing was particularly seen in classroom music activities where the participant strove to motivate and encourage singing. Whole school inclusive singing was evident in the singing of the Australian Anthem at assembly.

Classroom music singing was in groups and was usually topic related. When class singing was not directly topic related, singing was used to explore musical concepts which the participant viewed as being extremely relevant. Strategies included dividing the class into gender groupings, singing repertoire by alternating lines for each gender group and by allocating a solo line to those students who wanted to try singing a solo.

123 The school contained high concentrations of students from low socio-economic backgrounds.
Non-syllabus singing was in the form of a 24 member vocal group which sang pop repertoire. The vocal group had grown in popularity between the first and second years of the participant’s appointment at the school. Whereas in the fist year, the participant had 30 students audition, the number doubled for auditions in the subsequent year. However, the participant was limited to 24 members which was the number of seats available for transport on the school bus. The participant also let “not so strong” singers into the choir if she needed to build the strength of a particular vocal part. In addition to the vocal group, opportunities for students to sing occurred in the school band, school concerts and a talent quest. There was a Council initiated talent identification programme in the local school area. There was also potential for on-going involvement in School Spectacular and Talent Development Project. The school vocal group entered competitions.

8.4.5.3 How is singing taught in Sydney government schools?

Voice modeling for syllabus and non-syllabus singing occurred through the participant modeling using a call and response technique and through using recorded CDs. Melody lines were played on a keyboard and recorded by the participant where original song versions were not available. The participant sometimes issued students with their own CDs that included copies of songs with recorded voice modeling, backing tracks and melody lines. Technical aspects of singing at an individual level were not covered in music classes as the sizes of the classes and the time involved made it prohibitive. However, the participant did include physiological instruction in music classes as a unit on voice function and production. Additionally, the school supported the participant to provide private vocal tutoring to Year 12 music students who were singing for their HSC music assessments. Assessment feedback for elective music students that sang (Year 9 and above) was offered in the form of assessment sheets devised by the participant, video playback of the performances being assessed and group discussion of these performances.

The methods of musical accompaniment varied between classes and with the vocal group:

For classes, depending on what class it is, there is a small band with my own students playing you know bass, guitar, drums, keyboards, to accompany singers. Then you have piano if it’s played by me or by some of the talented students we have there. Backings. And then we have just the original CD, just the song to play to sing along to...yes, vocal group. We normally just have piano or they are quite good with their pitch. We do a lot a
with choir so they have themselves to accompany each other.

8.4.5.4 Why is singing taught in Sydney government schools?

The school community supported singing activities, with students from Pacific Islander, Arabic and Aboriginal cultural backgrounds enthusiastically rehearsing and performing songs and dances from their respective cultures for a school performance.

Both syllabus singing and non-syllabus singing were viewed by the participant as being able to help build student confidence, with many students at the school being described as “shy”. Additional benefits of school singing were viewed in relation to student involvement in a group activity, student enjoyment and an opportunity for students to make friends.

8.4.5.5 Participant 5 emergent findings

The participant cited age as a contributing factor in school singing participation with student hesitancy being apparent by Year 9, particularly amongst boys. While traditionally the boys at the school eagerly participated in football, the participant’s strategies were making singing a ‘cool’ activity as well. The school promoted performing arts and offered music and dance scholarships to selected students entering the school in Year 7. Scholarships covered student fees and uniforms, however scholarship students were expected to commit to their area of ability and in relation to music, this included non-syllabus singing activities.

While the intensity of the approach to teaching singing changed and was dependant on the level of student education, the participant used singing to teach musical concepts and listening skills. The participant also ensured that students produced “sound properly”. In Year 7, the participant used singing to also orientate the students:

    Just having fun as well. Just breaking out, especially in Year 7 when they’re new and they don’t know anyone. And I make them to do silly things with their singing. It just gets them to know each other as well.

Noting that there was a tendency for students to be shy and in an effort to address any hesitancy to sing, the participant divided classes into gender groupings while rehearsing vocal music:

    Then I divide boys and girls into groups because they’re very shy on their own … sort of
in their own genders. And I sort of I give them songs where the boys sing a line first and
the girls sing a line. We usually have one or two people who want to try a solo bit. So
then we have, you know, the girls sing in the group thing, boys, and soloists sing a line
or two each.

At the beginning of each year, for Stage 4 and 5 music classes, the participant asked
students to complete a survey on their preferences for musical instruments to be
studied and musical genres. This survey provided the participant with information about
musical preferences which aided the participant in engaging students in singing through
the implementation of a number of relevant strategies. For both syllabus and non-
syllabus singing, the participant encouraged the singing of predominantly pop
repertoire, singing repertoire chosen by the students themselves and repertoire that the
participant believed the students would enjoy. Non-syllabus singing strategies consisted
of involving students who were respected by the school community and by the
participant meeting student costs where there was financial need:

The main thing is financial at our school. The school will have to help out and when the
school doesn’t, because I love my choir so much, I will pocket it because I just really
want them to succeed. So to the point where they can’t eat on an excursion, that’s
where it comes in - like the parent won’t let them go because they’ve got no money…to
pay for the train or anything. So the financial is the major thing, but I always try to find a
way so they can go ‘cause they’ve worked hard.

In addition to performance motivation, non-syllabus singing held the enticement of
excursions and the challenge to succeed in competitions.

Unlike other participants whose teaching was based on fortnightly year long timetabling
of classroom music where the frequency and duration of the classes varied between
participant schools, at Participant 5’s school, the timetabling of Years 7 and 8 classes in
particular included dividing students into two groups so that they received more
concentrated music time over a shorter, half year period:

But now they’ve split them so we see half the lot of 7 and 8 in Terms 1 and 2 and we
have them about four times a week and we swap over with another half of completely
different students in Terms 3 and 4.

Participant 5 expressed similar sentiments to Participant 2, in that she used vocal music
that was familiar to students to initially draw the students into music and to focus them:

For our kinds of kids we have, we are a disadvantaged school, it is critical to choose
what they like... I always fit it into the syllabus, but I try to make it an enjoyable
experience... especially if we are doing Baroque or classical, I always try to find a
popular version as well so we get to do a bit of both.
Regarding vocal technique, the participant presented voice physiology as a unit within classroom music. However, she noted the constraints of particularly time and numbers that prevented her from focusing on individual students within the group:

   "I do a small unit where I give laminated sheets. When we start the voice - I've laminated this huge sheet and they pass it around. You know what the larynx is and the head, and we look at the body and how that helps, posture and everything. I work on different ways to get sounds, you know, palate and I do introduce them all but it's really hard to go around individually and show them. Like we do things as a group, how to move your palate and with the vowel sounds, but not individually."

Vocal health issues such as warming the voice to prevent injury and the effects of smoking were also addressed in the participant's teaching.

8.4.6 Participant Summary 6

Participant 6 was a male Head of Department (Music) at a coeducational secondary school, and taught secondary music to students in Year 7 to Year 12. With tertiary qualifications in music education, the participant also completed conducting courses. However, the participant had received no training in singing. At the time of interview, over 10% of the school population was involved in a band programme.

8.4.6.1 Who teaches singing in Sydney government schools?

The participant had no formal training in singing or singing teaching, and their experiences of singing were limited to:

   "... though first year Uni we did primary school, we did primary education and we did do some singing. But it wasn't something that big. There was the odd singing activity we had to do. But they actually taught percussion, guitar, wind and brass, but there was no singing class. We had to sight sing as aural activities, but there was no actual singing class, no."

8.4.6.2 What types of singing are taught in Sydney government schools?

Singing was viewed by the participant as providing opportunities for students. Syllabus singing occurred in secondary music classes from Years 7 to 12; however classroom singing activities varied and were largely dependent on the Year level. Inclusive classroom singing occurred in Years 7 and 8 when music was a non-elective subject and where classroom singing activities was confined to a few periods a term. In these classes, singing was primarily a musical tool used to explore topic areas and as a performance activity:

   "Again, there’s not a lot [of singing]. At the moment we do [sing], when we study rock music in Years 7 and 8, or when there’s relevant things, we’ll sort of sing as a class but"
there’s not direct sort of vocal coaching or anything like that. It’s just another performance activity that we use within class. Unless students from elective classes on do singing as their instrument major.

From Year 9 onwards, in elective music classes, singing became an instrument of choice as students elected to become voice “majors”, singing for assessment purposes. While explaining that singing was not actually taught, the participant described ancillary-syllabus singing available to some singers as band singing opportunities arose:

It’s not directly taught. The main avenue for usage of singers is either as vocal features with bands. We’ve got quite a large band programme. So mainly vocal opportunities through band or when we do musicals.

Whole school singing opportunities occurred at school assemblies when students collectively sang the National Anthem.

8.4.6.3 How is singing taught in Sydney government schools?

The participant acknowledged that teaching singing technique on an individual basis was beyond the scope of class music teaching. However, to aid individual student progress, technical feedback was offered for specific students when appropriate. The participant stated that to teach secondary music, teachers required knowledge of all instruments so that they could give relevant advice. The participant viewed it to be counter productive for teachers not to be interested in singing and alluded to teacher willingness and preparedness as preferred requirements in this regard.

The participant viewed the musical concept of tone colour as being of particular relevance to singers in music classes. In elective music classes, pitch accuracy became more of a focus with voice majors. Voice modeling to students occurred in the form of CD recordings. For music students who sang, backing tracks were used as a tool to learn repertoire and also for assessment purposes. Piano accompaniment was also available; however the participant viewed backing tracks as valuable practice and tools for assessment purposes. Some of the backing tracks for student use were prepared by the school music staff. The school was also purchasing equipment that would mute lead vocals on commercially produced CDs.

For secondary voice majors, appropriate repertoire selection was viewed by the participant as being crucial for assessment purposes and recommended that vocal majors selected repertoire that allowed demonstration of both singing technique and
expression. The participant encouraged voice majors to choose their own repertoire. Gender differences were apparent in the choice of song topic as the participant stated that males were less likely than females to sing a “love song”.

Non-syllabus singing occurred every two years in rehearsals and performances of a school musical. Musical cast selection for specific roles involved exclusive singing as students were auditioned. However, in this context, students were assessed not only on their vocal ability, but also on their vocal and dramatic suitability for specific roles. Students also auditioned for inclusion in the chorus, although the criteria for chorus inclusion were the ability to sing and accuracy of pitch. At the time of the interview, with more than 10% of the student population being involved in school bands, time constraints did not permit offering non-syllabus choir singing opportunities.

The participant’s view on singing within the continuum of musical learning was that singing was not a mandatory activity, that it was just one musical activity within a “range of experiences”:

I mean the requirements basically give students performance opportunities and performance opportunities in a range of experiences. The implied thing there is that we’ve got to not just stick to one instrument or one type of experience.

8.4.6.4 Why is singing taught in Sydney government schools?

Reasons for participating in school singing included musical relevance, the kudos gained through good performances and the value of being involved in a community activity such as the school musical. The participant identified a sing-along approach used in secondary classroom music where the singing activities were used to explore topic areas:

If you’re looking at in terms of actual modeling and teaching of vocal techniques, it doesn’t happen. And like I say, so in terms of the singing we do with especially the non-elective students, it’s songs relevant to the unit of work that we’re doing and they’d usually be singing along with either the CD or some other sort of piano or other accompaniment backing.

In Stage 4 and 5 elective music classes, when singing is an instrument of choice, aspects of pitch were addressed:

Pitch accuracy is more developed with the voice majors in elective classes. We’ll discuss pitch accuracy, ways of staying in pitch or trying to develop their awareness of the fact that they’re out of pitch.
In this context, the approach to singing teaching was a sing approach. No vocal exercises were evident in the teaching strategy.

8.4.6.5 Participant 6 emergent findings

The participant considered primary schooling years to be crucial to student singing development as the participant believed primary students were less hesitant to sing. Singing hesitancy, particularly by boys, was apparent at the participant’s school and was evident in Years 7 and 8. The participant explained this reluctance to sing in terms of boys wanting to maintain image, feeling self-conscious about their voice and the perceived awkwardness of singing:

With 7 and 8, there’s problems in getting Years 7 and 8 students to sing. I think if those problems didn’t exist, it’s [singing] something we’d do more of because it doesn’t cost you anything, there’s no real resources you have to purchase. But boys in particular are a bit shy about singing and having their voice heard which makes singing activities difficult so we tend not to do them as much. Not so much that it’s not relevant to the syllabus, but the actual delivery of it is problematic.

Peer pressure could also result in class singing being an unpopular activity as the participant stated that, while vocal majors were positive towards singing, constructive participation in class singing activities could depend on the majority of students in the class being unperturbed by singing. The participant found that “academic” students could also be shy about singing activities.

The participant presented ideas on vocal music selection for the elective singers that found their basis in the participant’s time constraints:

I try and encourage it as much as possible - making the students responsible for looking for their own songs, picking their own songs. It also takes a lot of the responsibility off us [the teachers]. If we pick the song, we’ve got to provide the music, the accompaniment, the backing and all that.

Vocal technique was also not included due to time constraints as the participant explained:

I think it’s too much to take on board the actual teaching and pedagogy of every instrument within class just as much through time constraints, but wherever possible and relevant, we do give general advice. But we’ve often referred students to go and get lessons, get private lessons because there’s just not enough time or the scope to teach that individual pedagogy.

The addressing of vocal health issues was in the same “generic fashion”.

While the participant expressed the view that some singing activities were ‘more cool’
than others, he said that being cool was dependant on whether music was a cool activity within the culture of the school. He also related the cool aspect to repertoire selection:

Well I think it falls under the more general thing 'is the music in general cool at the school?' and that depends a lot on the school culture. Though again I think it does come down to the director of the ensemble. If the director of the ensemble is picking, picking the right repertoire and it's got the support of the school, it will be cool.

While describing his own singing ability as singing “really awfully” and an ability that would possibly benefit from singing lessons, the participant said that in regard to student hesitancy to sing:

I think the biggest hesitancy to sing is image and you know, the awkwardness of singing. When you get up and sing, it's pretty exposed. Unless it's a full choir, you can't sort of hide behind an ensemble.

More specifically in relation to gender issues and singing, the participant noted that perhaps boys' hesitancy to sing was due to puberty and their voices breaking where “you can't rely on your voice to do what you want it to”.

The view of singing within a musical continuum was that the syllabus implied that students were required to be given a range of musical experiences:

The implied thing there is that we we've got to not just stick to one instrument or one type of experience.

With more than 10% of the student population at the participant's school being involved in a band programme, the participant commented on individual teacher personalities that initiated and drove non-syllabus music activities:

If DET decides to staff a music faculty different to everyone else [other school faculties], to give scope for all these activities to occur, we could do a lot more. So you know, it really comes down to personalities. If you've got a personality within the school who is a prolific singer, that can work with choirs, you've got a big choral programme. If you don't, then you don't. It's really like that.

Support from within the school - the senior executive - was viewed as being crucial to any non-syllabus activity and its viability in a school environment.

8.4.7 Participant Summary 7

Participant 7 was a female generalist classroom teacher with strength in singing and dance activities. The participant had primary teaching qualifications, with additional language certificates. At the time of interview, the participant taught a 4/5 composite class and a Creative Arts stream of choir singing to students in Year 3 to Year 6 in an
allocated weekly Creative Arts/Music sessions. Choir was one Creative Arts stream that students chose to participate in.

8.4.7.1 Who teaches singing in Sydney government schools?

While having no singing training, Participant 7 “started playing saxophone” in recent years and loved to sing. In addition to the in-service training offered through the NSW DET Area Music Festival, the participant undertook recorder studies and was required to teach a song in their undergraduate teacher training. The participant cited time constraints as the reason for being unable to attend additional in-service opportunities that occurred during school hours and after school. The participant acknowledged that the NSW DET Area Music Festival committee provided additional support for teachers should they require it.

8.4.7.2 What types of singing are taught in Sydney government schools?

The participant predominantly taught syllabus inclusive singing in the form of a Senior Choir to students from Years 3 to 6. The Senior Choir rehearsed in an allocated 45 minute Creative Arts Music/Art period once a week. This was the same allocated time for Band rehearsals, Dance Group and Art with Music. As rehearsals occurred concurrently, the participant developed strategies to include band students that were also interested in the choir participation. These strategies included two to three lunchtime rehearsals a term with the possibility of additional rehearsals prior to performances.

Entry to the Senior Choir was inclusive, however the participant used choir auditions as an opportunity to offer encouragement, reinforcement and incentive. Peer affirmations of choir experiences from the previous year were also included for additional motivation. Performance opportunities were viewed as crucial to overall student motivation and commitment. Solo singing was exclusive singing for more advanced singers selected by the participant. Small group singing opportunities were selective and invitational.

In addition to being a 4/5 composite classroom teacher, the participant also taught language studies where co-syllabus singing activities were included as supplementary language songs. Whole school singing was assembly singing where the national Anthem was sung by the school community, followed by a song sung in the local
Aboriginal dialect and “I Am Australian” was sung at the conclusion of assemblies.

8.4.7.3 How is singing taught in Sydney government schools?

From the outset, the participant presented her teaching in terms of her “limited” singing knowledge and as such, presented a programme of singing which primarily was structured on festival music repertoire. From Term 1 until a Term 3 Music Festival, the participant used repertoire selected for the local NSW DET Music Festival in her teaching. The repertoire was given to the participant as musical scores and was also recorded on a CD. The CD included vocal demonstration tracks of songs, separate vocal part tracks and instrumental piano accompaniment tracks. The CD and written music scores were distributed at a one-day in-service training led by the Festival Committee and Festival Coordinator. The participant used these resources in her teaching. Individual copies of the CDs and scores were made for each choir member at nominal cost per member. There was an additional full-day rehearsal of the combined choirs leading up to the Festival and an additional rehearsal on the day of the performances.

Up until the Music Festival performances, the participant predominantly used the current Festival Resources. Additional resources used for the Senior Choir, particularly during Term 4, were Vocal-Ease, former Music Festival repertoire and ABC Sing! Books. Singing in a language other than English, although predominantly used in language classes, was also sometimes offered to the Senior Choir in rehearsals that followed the Music Festival.

The participant preferred a balance of repertoire, including slow and fast songs, when teaching. The participant used a song dominant approach which sometimes initially entailed teaching the whole song and then working on individual parts, before combining them. Warm-up exercises were sometimes included. The participant emphasised the relevance of listening, both in learning the repertoire from the recording CD and in assigning choral parts. In relation to boys changing voices, the participant sometimes used forms of modeling, both the participant’s voice and peer voices, to demonstrate accessing high and low notes. The participant expressed concern that in some instances, repertoire and adult voice modeling seemed too high for the vocal range of young voices.
Whole school singing activities occurred when students sang the National Anthem at assemblies. The participant, having previously taught infants classes, viewed infant singing activities as having more focus than singing activities occurring at primary Years 3 to 6 levels. However, in addition to the inclusion of co-syllabus language songs, the participant viewed singing as a means of engaging students in many areas and offered an example of co-syllabus supplementary singing of multiplication tables.

8.4.7.4 Why is singing taught in Sydney government schools?

The participant indicated that not much singing occurred in her classroom unless she was preparing students to sing a song in assembly. However, she also stressed that singing was an integral part of education:

> I just think it’s really an integral part of their education. You start off in Kindy and everyone has singing at some stage in their classroom throughout the year … whether it’s just two or three times a year for their performances and assembly or whatever.

8.4.7.5 Participant 7 emergent findings

The participant acknowledged that girls predominantly participated in voluntary school singing activities. However, this was not necessarily viewed as a gender bias. In an effort to promote boys’ singing participation, the participant would stand next to the older boys who were hesitant to sing during school assemblies and encourage them to sing. The participant also counseled students of both sexes who faced potential teasing because of their involvement in singing activities.

While classroom singing was minimal and usually occurred in relation to the preparation of assembly items, co-syllabus supplementary classroom singing was presented as singing in language classes:

> I try to align it [singing] with what I am teaching [language]. So if it’s body parts, I’ll teach them a song about that.

The participant described the syllabus relevance of choir singing to the inclusion at times of NSW DET Vocal-Ease resources.

Additional benefits of school singing activities were seen in supplementary co-syllabus singing such as for primary maths:

> I think even like singing your times tables to music, make a game out of music, kids will...
remember that quicker than sitting there doing rote once one is one, once two is two. You know, we make a game with singing out of it.

This type of supplementary activity was also seen to help students who were otherwise reticent about learning.

Similar to the sentiments expressed by Participant 5, Participant 7 also saw the types of students included in the choir contribute to student perceptions of school singing:

It depends on who you are … if you’re one of … the cool kids, yes.

8.4.8 Participant Summary 8

Participant 8 was a male music teacher at a secondary single sex school for girls. The participant’s background in music included tertiary studies in music education, clarinet and choral conducting training as well as experiences as a choral member during tertiary studies. The participant had been teaching at the school for three years prior to being interviewed. During his employment at the school the participant witnessed a change in the music culture. Class music developed from mandatory Year 7 and 8 classes and a Year 11 class at the beginning of his employment, to school music being offered to all secondary years in 2006. HSC students were reported to usually undertake Music 1 however in 2007, Music 2 would also be offered.

8.4.8.1 Who teaches singing in Sydney government schools?

School music initiatives, both syllabus related and non-syllabus, included singing activities. The participant established and conducted a non-syllabus choir and a school band, offered syllabus related music performance nights for Year 11 and 12 music students, was in the process of organising and staging an inaugural annual music concert for both non-syllabus and syllabus school music at the time of interview and was incorporating non-syllabus singing performances into school assemblies. The participant also conducted a combined school choir for the local area music festival and was on the festival committee that selected the vocal music.

8.4.8.2 What types of singing are taught in Sydney government schools?

Singing in class music was varied and dependant upon the level of study. In Year 7 and 8 mandatory music classes, inclusive class singing was used to facilitate the exploration
of musical concepts and was not assessed. In Years 9 and 10, in elective music classes, class singing was related to topic areas. In Years 11 and 12, elective music classes, singing became an instrument of choice for assessment purposes.

The participant was enthusiastic about school singing, particularly in relation to his 35 member choir that comprised of girls from Years 7 to 10. Inclusion in the school choir was by audition, however the participant was also inclusive of students who he believed would benefit by participating in choir. The choir rehearsed for one lunchtime each week. For almost three terms, the choir prepared repertoire for participation in the local music festival. During Term 4 and at the start of each year, the participant chose additional repertoire that he believed students would relate to and that potential audiences would enjoy. Repertoire was also selected on the basis of being suited to the choir’s sound. The participant noted that Term 4 choir retention rates had improved and was possibly due to a music concert scheduled for late in Term 4.

Technical aspects of singing were a focus of choir singing. The choir sang predominantly in two parts and part assignment was usually ascertained through student knowledge of their voice and whether they suited a soprano or alto grouping. Part assignment was monitored by the participant and students sometimes approached the participant if they felt their parts were too high or too low. In addition to the participant’s choir, there was a vocal ensemble at the school. This ensemble was smaller than the choir and focused on layered harmony. Solos for school singing were usually in relation to solos within the vocal ensemble or for actual performances. The participant, in an effort to encourage lesser known singers at the school, would sometimes choose singers not typically recognised within the school community for their singing to sing specific solos.

The participant believed it somewhat relevant for teachers to be competent singers and taught singing through the modeling of his own voice. The participant avoided the use of recorded vocal tracks so as to minimize the potential for students to mimic other vocalists. He did however use backing tracks as accompaniment to performance items, particularly assembly items when the school band did not play the accompaniment. The participant also used backing tracks for full festival choir rehearsals.
8.4.8.3 How is singing taught in Sydney government schools?

Whilst not focusing on technical singing per se, the participant continually referred to elements of singing technique in class singing activities and in senior music classes, technically based singing was particularly relevant for those students presenting vocal pieces for assessment. Assessment feedback for these singers was offered through verbal critique by the participant prior to actual assessments, written assessment evaluation and recorded DVDs of assessment performances for student critique. With an emphasis on the performance of pieces, the approach to teaching singing was consistent with a song dominant approach.

8.4.8.4 Why is singing taught in Sydney government schools?

The participant was very enthusiastic about school singing and was possibly a motivating voice for student participation in school singing. In addition, the school Principal was keen for a school choir to be established:

I know … [the principal] boss was very keen for singing to be involved. I know when she interviewed me she wanted to make sure that I’d be willing to do choir which I was, that was no problem … it’s a girls’ school, girls sing.

Other purposes of singing included the exploration of musical concepts and topic related performances. The participant also used singing to aid in the aural memory of instrumentalists:

I know that when I’m teaching an instrumentalist, I find myself singing all sorts of things and I know that when I was practising, often singing or humming the melody gave me aural memory and gave me a much better chance of remembering it. I’ll even do it with my students because I’m clarinet trained foremost and I play piano.

The participant said that students participated in singing partially because they saw the success of other students. This has also helped in the establishment of singing within the school culture:

I think in terms of singing culture at our school, for the last few years there have been some very talented vocal soloists.

8.4.8.5 Participant 8 emergent findings

Although the participant made the distinction between classroom singing “for the musical information sake… for what can be taken out of it” and choir singing where students were taught to sing properly, he was intrinsically aware of vocal development. In relation to the vocal range and tessitura of song selection, the participant specified:
Occasionally there might be one high note and someone sings it. But I would never pick a song that has a high tessitura the whole way... I tend to pick a song that has the occasional high note in there so that we can get up to it...

Gender issues were not apparent to the respondent although he had included four to five boys from a neighbouring secondary school in his choral activities because there was no one who taught choir at the boys' school. This may have been due to insufficient student numbers wanting to participate in a choir. However, the participant also raised the issue of effective male modeling noting that when he taught in a primary school “the boys had no problem singing, maybe because I was a male teacher”.

When asked about the relevance of singing within a continuum of musical learning, the participant responded with ideas generated through practical teaching experiences also while at a primary school. The participant noted that it was during his time in a primary school that he told primary teachers to “sing with” students because:

...if you're a school that doesn't have instruments, they'll love it, like they absolutely love it... we actually used songs like recordings and everything, but [we] actually used our songs as a basis for class work...

The participant believed that the success of singing in any school depended on the culture of the school. When singing was established within the school culture, the participant thought there were flow on effects that included a positive impact on student behaviour which was seen in the rise of student attentiveness during assemblies and singing performances.

8.4.9 Participant Summary 9

The participant was a female casual relief, generalist classroom teacher with strength in music. The participant had an AMus in piano and had reached Advanced Level ballet. She was previously a full-time generalist classroom teacher and had spent one year as a Music specialist teacher. With a reputation as a performing arts primary school, and with choral activities being a “priority” feature of the school, there were three non-syllabus related choirs at the participant’s school.

8.4.9.1 Who teaches singing in Sydney government schools?

Participant 9 had a background in music (piano) and dance (ballet), and was encouraged to teach singing activities:
I think you’ve got to have the desire to do it and be encouraged by someone, because I was encouraged to do it.

In this context, the encouragement the participant received mentored her into teaching singing.

8.4.9.2 What types of singing are taught in Sydney government schools?

With an interest in performing arts, and being encouraged by a Regional Arts Director, the participant became responsible for a Stage 2 choir with student members from Years 3 and 4. She had taught choir for 4 years. The participant’s choir consisted of two parts, alto and soprano, although some songs were sung in unison. The participant explained that while the alto part was not necessarily lower than the soprano line, it was more structured to provide harmony and as such the altos sang less melody than the sopranos. For this reason, the alto part was not as popular. The choir rehearsed before school, once each week, as the participant found that boys would not turn up for lunchtime rehearsals.

Repertoire for the participant’s choir was predominantly selected and presented by the NSW DET Arts Unit as part of the Primary Schools Choral Programme. Involvement in this programme culminated in one performance by the participant’s choir at the Primary Schools Choral Festival to which the participant was permitted to take 30 students: 15 sopranos and 15 altos. The participant had 50 students in her choir which fostered inclusive singing. She then auditioned the 50 students to select the 30 students for Festival singing. At the first choir rehearsal, the participant taught a song to the whole choir and then students individually sang a few lines. Using both pitch and voice quality as the selection criteria, the participant selected the 30 students for inclusion in the Festival. Acknowledging that even though some student voices developed progressively over the year, the participant held auditions at the beginning of the year as financial and student commitments needed to be finalised early to ensure festival participation. There were other performance opportunities at the school and through the school throughout the year for the 50 member choir to perform the Festival repertoire.

The participant distinguished between syllabus and non-syllabus related school singing, when reflecting that syllabus related singing had more to do with learning a song than learning singing technique. Syllabus “informal” singing occurred in the release weekly
Music classes, with every class having a dedicated Music lesson. Recorders, tuned and untuned percussion, glockenspiels and xylophones, together with other instruments, were available at the school. Some teachers also played the acoustic guitar. Two classrooms (1 classroom and 1 hall) had pianos and there were keyboards that could be moved to different rooms. Inclusive co-syllabus thematic school singing was relevant when linked to other KLAs, particularly to HSIE units of work, although generalist classroom teachers chose whether to include such singing in their teaching.

8.4.9.3 How is singing taught in Sydney government schools?

The participant modeled singing using her own singing voice and included various technical aspects of singing, such as mouth shape, posture and articulation, in her teaching. Choir rehearsals began with warm-ups such as humming or sustaining long notes chromatically. The participant taught using a song dominant approach. When teaching Primary Schools Choral Festival repertoire, she used the CDs with vocal lines prepared by the Arts Unit. Students were issued with their own copies of CDs and song books with lyrics to aid in their learning of songs. These resources could be taken home.

The participant would sometimes teach problematic phrases by using the keyboard. If selecting additional repertoire for the choir, the participant looked at vocal range and sang the vocal music through first before teaching it to the choir. For non-festival related repertoire, such as Christmas songs, the participant used additional instrumentation available at the school as musical accompaniment.

8.4.9.4 Why is singing taught in Sydney government schools?

Performances were viewed as being crucial to students’ motivation towards school singing activities. The participant viewed singing as part of the performing arts available in schools and as such, school singing activities should be performed and shared through performances. The participant also believed that school singing allowed students to experience an art form and that school singing experiences allowed the students to then appreciate singing later in life.

8.4.9.5 Participant 9 emergent findings

Sequential programming of vocal music supplied by the NSW DET Arts Unit was
evident when the participant commented:

Well, coming from me who is not a choir trained person, the performing arts repertoire is
good. It’s simpler than the Stage 3 repertoire they prepare.

The participant used a progressive programme when describing the types of repertoire
she taught in her capacity as a casual classroom teacher across K-6 stages of
education.

…I guess if it’s infants I’ll do something that involves body movement as well as singing.
In terms of other class activities, I’d maybe go towards the Orff-Schulwerk ways of doing
the rounds…More vocal I suppose, rather than singing.

The participant made the distinction between formal music lessons with a music
specialist teacher and informal music in generalist classrooms:

Music is allocated and there’s informal music depending if the teachers want to do it in
their classrooms.

Further distinction was proffered in a reference to syllabus singing, the participant
commenting:

I think it’s [syllabus singing] more just the words and singing that’s what I think, rather
giving them vocal technique.

The participant scheduled choir rehearsals for before school, noting that the boys “just
don’t come” when rehearsals are scheduled at lunchtimes.

8.4.10 Participant Summary 10

Participant 10 was a female primary school principal who also had a part-time teaching
load as a generalist classroom teacher of a Year 4 class. The participant provided an
overview of singing within the school and also presented her own strategies for
ensuring that students participated in singing as she was a ‘non-singer’. She had a
teacher’s certificate, but had no tertiary musical or singing training or experiences.

8.4.10.1 Who teaches singing in Sydney government schools?

To ensure her own students received appropriate music and singing instruction, the
participant had developed a strategy of exchanging classes with other teachers. With
the exception of the choir teacher who sometimes modeled repertoire using her own
voice, recorded voice modeling was used throughout the school.
8.4.10.2 What types of singing are taught in Sydney government schools?

Instrumental tuition was available at the participant’s school. Students in Year 2 studied the recorder and students from Years 3 to 6 were taught to play either the clarinet or the flute in music groups by an instrumental music teacher. Inclusive syllabus related singing was taught by individual generalist classroom teachers to their classes and was usually achieved through students listening to and singing along with ABC Sing! recordings. The participant described these recordings as having a good range of appropriate songs, as well being accessible and providing a programme that was different each year. The participant valued such resources, particularly for generalist classroom teachers who may not have musical training, experience or confidence, and for facilitating singing activities in a multifarious primary curriculum. The participant also discussed the relevance of COGs and the possible linking of curriculum outcomes. Additional inclusive co-syllabus singing activities occurred at the participant’s school as supplementary language songs were taught by the ESL (English as a second language) and LOTE (language other than English) teacher.

The participant described a progressive complexity of singing repertoire that began with simple tunes at infants level (K-2) and progressed to more complex songs, often pop songs, in upper primary classes. She believed that there were age and cultural considerations when selecting repertoire. Accompaniment to singing repertoire was usually recorded, although a piano was available and the participant stated that students sometimes also used percussion and body percussion.

Opportunities for students to sing outside their own classrooms occurred at school assemblies, at an annual music concert and at Presentation Day. Whole school singing was usually at assemblies when students sing the National Anthem and the School Song.

8.4.10.3 How is singing taught in Sydney government schools?

The Year 4 class comprised predominantly of boys and only 2 girls. The entire Year 4 class was selected as the school choir for the year and as such, participated in non-syllabus singing activities that included participation in the NSW DET Area Music Festival. The Year 4 choir was not taught by the participant, but was taught by another
generalist classroom teacher at the participant’s school. The class was selected as the school choir because the students enjoyed singing and being an entire class, rehearsals were scheduled for 30 minutes every week during class time. In previous years, school choir rehearsals had been unpopular with students when scheduled during lunchtimes.

8.4.10.4 Why is singing taught in Sydney government schools?

Singing performances were viewed by the participant as being central to student motivation to sing. However, the participant also considered that students participated in singing at school because they were instructed to do so by their teacher. The participant had not seen any recent in-service opportunities in relation to singing or music and attributed a lack of in-service training opportunities, together with a lack of confidence and pre-service training, as negatively impacting on the inclusion of school singing activities. Another limiting factor in school singing participation was the impact of scheduled rehearsals which the participant noted required care and planning:

You've got to be careful. They [the students] love singing in the class. When you come down to whole school singing, or the choir, you've got to be very careful, because you can't impinge on the teacher's time and consequently a lot of these things have then have got to be done in lunch hours. If you start impinging on their [student] lunch hours, they all start to complain.

8.4.10.5 Participant 10 emergent findings

The participant viewed singing as a mandatory school music activity, but one that occurred concomitantly with musical appreciation. School singing activities had additional benefits as they involved reading, enunciation, breathing and participating in a group. The participant disliked the use of recorded vocal tracks for singing performances, preferring the use of instrumental only tracks. She believed that students from K – Year 3 enjoyed singing and performing, but that by Year 6, students became self-conscious and were hesitant to sing.

Just as several previous participants noted, Participant 10 discussed the impact that the individual teacher had on the content and delivery of school singing teaching:

That would really depend on the teacher. In the choir they certainly would [address pitch], but in terms of me, I wouldn't know if their pitch was accurate or not because I'm tone deaf. So it would really depend on the individual teacher, how good their musical ear is.

In addition to the impact of individual teachers, vocal music selection was viewed by the
participant as being particularly relevant:

Well I don’t know which comes first, the horse or the cart because you’ve got to have children who like singing to want to sing. Then you’ve got to have songs that the children like to sing to motivate them to sing them. Each year it's very noticeable with the choir, that the sort of songs definitely changes how they go [how the students sing]. This year they were super songs and the kids loved them and they all sang up. Even though my boys liked singing anyway, they all just sang up so well.

8.5 Summary and Discussion

The findings presented in this chapter add clarity into the “who?”, “what?”, “how?” and “why?” of school singing. In addition, the findings provide insight into the key issues identified in Part 1. The following summary and discussion encompasses four of those key issues under the remaining two subset research questions of 4.iii (8.5.1) and 4.iv (8.5.2). The additional key issue of formal and informal school singing is addressed in their connection to both the relevance and value of school singing.

8.5.1 Is school singing relevant in an educational environment?

The relevance of singing in contemporary education is very different from the historical relevance of singing in schools. Prior to the mass availability of musical instruments, school singing was school music. It was also ‘civilising’ and at times in NSW education, was a priority. In contemporary education, the findings reveal that the relevance of school singing is very much dependant upon how school executives and individual teachers view the educational objectives and the needs of their students being met.

8.5.1.1 Student Gender

Encompassed under the broad term of relevance is whether school singing is relevant for both boys and girls in a school environment. Certainly, it is an activity that both will do at some stage during their schooling. However, the findings of Part 2 research suggest that for boys, singing is an activity that generally occurs in the two extremes of education: Stage 1 as a classroom music activity and Stage 6 as an elective activity.

Several participant teaching strategies sought to redress the apparent gender
imbalance in school singing activities. At primary level, Participant 3 developed the profile of the school choir within the community, included boy only choir auditions and selected boys to sing solo in her efforts to redress the balance. These strategies had procured a dramatic turnaround in the number of boys participating in the school choir. Participant 5, would stand next to boys in assembly and encourage their singing. Participant 10 encouraged her entire class of Year 4 boys (as they enjoyed singing) and 2 girls to form the school choir. Primary boys were particularly noted as enjoying their lunchtimes, so the scheduling of rehearsals was seen crucial to their involvement. Similarly, vocal music selection was seen to either attract or disinterest boys.

At secondary level, redressing the imbalance was not as apparent. Participant 2 talked of offering adolescent boys strategies to ‘find’ their voices and to develop their singing confidence. Participant 5 encouraged the ‘cool’ boys at the school to participate in the vocal group. Participant 6 described boys as being more interested in playing musical instruments. Participant 8 highlighted the expectation that “girls sing” and consequently, in a single sex school for girls, did not report on any particular gender issues. He did however take interested boys from a single sex local high school to join his girl choir, and therefore facilitated the boys’ involvement in massed choral events.

If part of the gender imbalance in school singing activities is due to the ‘awkwardness’ of voice change, only Participant 2 talked of ways that physically helped boys to keep singing through their period of voice change. In an educational environment, where boys may feel intimidated or self-conscious, they are surely not going to want to sing publicly and must themselves question the relevance of school singing. A possible flow on effect could be that if the boys do not sing in the classroom, then why should the girls?

8.5.1.2 The Relevance of School Singing

The relevance of school singing was seen through the different types of school singing occurring in Sydney government schools. Musically relevant syllabus singing occurred in primary and secondary classrooms. In addition, primary co-syllabus singing saw the linkage of non-musical areas of study to singing activities. Participants 4 and 10 viewed singing as enabling students to work cooperatively and collaboratively together as a team.
In relation to school co-syllabus singing, Participant 7 used singing to explore language studies and advocated its use in primary maths; in Participant 10’s school, singing was also used to explore languages other than English. Participants 3 and 10 talked of the syllabus linkage of school singing activities in connected syllabus outcomes. Participant 10 also viewed singing activities to aid in student reading (of lyrics), in the annunciation of words and in the development of breathing skills.

With the exception of Participant 1, Participant 7 and Participant 10 who viewed the act of syllabus singing as being a musical activity, the relevance of syllabus singing was described by participants as being primarily a vehicle for the exploration of musical concepts. In Stage 6 music, the relevance of syllabus singing expanded in relation to the exploration of specific topic areas.

Whether the relevance of school singing genuinely enables students to acquire singing skills within a continuum of musical learning and facilitates students to develop singing skills that engender a lifelong interest in singing, is questionable. Certainly for those students whose school singing experiences are constructive and developmental, the expectation would be that school singing is relevant as a facilitator and also within a continuum of learning. However as several participants discussed, the interest and support to teach school singing is not always accessible in Sydney government schools.

Participants 2, 6 and 8 in particular, stressed the relevance of primary singing activities within the continuum of musical learning. Each of these participants was a secondary teacher, and yet each believed that teaching singing skills and access to singing experiences should be occur in primary schooling. Participant 2 advocated the use of primary specialist teachers, believing that many primary teachers were not trained to teach music or singing. Irrespective of the method of instruction, the inference from these participants is that if teaching singing and progressive singing activities occurred in all primary schooling to all students, then the student culture in high schools may be more receptive to singing activities. Underlying this was the belief that children are more likely to participate willingly in singing activities than adolescents.
8.5.2 Is school singing valued in an educational environment?

The perceived and realised value of school singing was dependant upon those responsible for singing activities occurring, those teaching the singing activities and those potential participants of the singing activities.

8.5.2.1 Access to specialist teachers

The key issue of access to specialist teachers is particularly relevant to primary education. However, in relation to teaching school singing, the interview data revealed that being a music specialist teacher at primary level or a music ‘specialist’ teacher at secondary level, may not necessarily facilitate the teaching of singing to rise above a sing-along or song level. Teaching directives, interests and experiences were seen to play a vital role in the level of approach to teaching singing.

Participant 2 described the type of sing-along singing that she had witnessed and believed prevalent in both primary and secondary schools. Participants 1 and 6 revealed that school band activities were a priority over singing activities at their schools. Participant 2 was instructed to establish a school band as a priority, however had elected to concurrently establish a school choir as a more easily achievable option. In these cases, school directives were implicit in each school’s prioritising of school musical activities.

Participants 1, 2, 4, 5 and 8 had experience as singers and Participants 4 and 5 had performed professionally. In these approaches, teaching non-syllabus singing in particular was more skilled based and focused towards singing as a musical art form, irrespective of the genre of vocal music being sung. Additionally, Participants 3 and 9 discussed how their musical backgrounds facilitated their leading non-syllabus school singing activities. Participant 7 was the only participant identified with a non-musical background who sought to become involved in singing activities and who “loved” to sing. Participants 6 and 10 had no singing experiences or training and did not teach choir singing activities; Participant 10, although developing strategies to ensure her students sang, did not actually teach any form of school singing.
8.5.2.2 The Value of School Singing

While the realised value of school singing within a school community was largely determined by those responsible for ensuring that school singing occurred and by those actually teaching school singing, the perceived value of school singing expressed by some participants was not always reflected in their outcomes. Present in participant interviews were expressions of constraints of time, finances, resources, peer pressure and student cultural backgrounds that, at times, precluded participant perceptions and intentions from being realised. The value of school singing was also seen to be consistently upheld by school communities where there was an established school culture of singing. This was particularly seen in the school cultures as described by Participants 3, 4 and 9. The establishing of a school singing culture as expressed by Participants 5 and 8, was seen to largely depend on student interest and the appeal that singing activities conveyed.

Possibly one of the most noteworthy issues to emerge from the participant interviews, which has a direct relationship with how school singing is valued, was the existence of the self-proclaimed ‘non-singer’ at both primary and secondary levels. Participant 10, although devising strategies to ensure that her primary students experienced singing, emphasized that only 1 teacher at the school really had a “musical ear”. For many students, their experiences of singing would therefore possibly be limited to singing along with CDs. In an environment with few singing models, singing activities may not be valued as highly as other activities and learning outcomes. Involvement in singing activities may also be dreaded by ‘non-singing’ teachers. Participant 6, another ‘non-singer’, was committed to a school band programme. The school did not have a choir as there were no resources to either lead a choir or to fund it. While there was a school musical, there were few opportunities for non-syllabus singing or instruction in syllabus singing. Believing that the pedagogy of any instrument was beyond the scope of classroom teaching, students were referred to private singing teachers to learn how to sing.

In contrast to the concept of the non-singer, were the participants who although not having a singing background, valued school singing and as such were committed to the task of raising the profile of singing within their schools. Participants 3 and 7 encouraged school singing through syllabus singing, non-syllabus singing and co-
syllabus singing activities; Participant 9 focused on non-syllabus singing. All 3 participants saw the benefits students gained through participating in school singing activities.

### 8.5.3 Formal and Informal School Singing

Formal and informal school singing was a dichotomy found to exist in the types of school singing occurring in Sydney government schools and in the types of school singing at times occurring within individual Sydney government schools. Participant interviews 2, 3, 4, 7, 8 and 9 also revealed that formal and informal school singing sometimes precipitated the level of teaching approach used in teaching a particular singing activity.

If formal singing relates to school singing activities and practices where singing technique is embodied and included in instruction, that is, where singing is taught “properly” (SMT [Ch] Participant 8), then the more formal approaches to school singing occurred predominantly in non-syllabus choir singing activities and in Stage 6 music activities where students chose to sing as an elective. In contrast, informal singing, or singing that did not embody technical aspects of singing, occurred when singing was a vehicle for musical exploration (syllabus singing) or was an activity where the actual singing was incidental to the learning outcome (co-syllabus singing). Implied in Participant 9’s interview were the sentiments that formal music classes and informal music activities, co-syllabus linkage, did not involve formal singing experiences.

There are inherent benefits of both formal and informal school singing activities. In 1871, a report on school music in NSW contained:

> …a burst of joyous song acts as a safety valve to children of excitable temperament, and enlivenes those who are sluggishly disposed. The practical and more solid features of school-work would in no way be injured by contact with the humanizing [emphasis in text] influences of singing of an informal character; the regular singing lesson is ineffective for the purposes to which I have alluded.\(^{125}\)

In this context, there was an imbalance between the infrequent informal “burst of joyous song” and the formal “regular singing lesson”. In contemporary NSW education the imbalance is present but reversed with predominantly only those students participating

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in formal schools choirs that incorporate instruction in how to sing. If current education fails to instruct students in how to sing appropriately, then the standard of and participation in school singing activities must surely be compromised. In addition, the syllabus directive of positive experiences so as to engender lifelong skills may not be realised.

8.6 Précis: Chapter 8

Chapter Eight began with a summary of the key issues identified in Part 1 of the research that helped form the research questions for Part 2 of the research. Presented in this chapter were the findings of Part 2 research. The findings from participant interviews were discussed separately, and the chapter concluded with a discussion that incorporated the key issues and further insights in school singing. Chapter Nine begins with conclusions from Part 1 and Part 2 research, through which a model of teaching singing in NSW government schools that addresses the research questions is presented. Conclusions for teachers of school singing are drawn and implications for teaching school singing are raised. Recommendations for further research conclude the thesis.
Chapter 9: Beyond the Song
Conclusions, Implications, Limitations and Recommendations

“I believe some students would benefit from a trained tutor. I sometimes wonder if I am teaching singing the right way.”
PST [Ch] Respondent 101

9.1 Introduction

This chapter begins with a summary that draws together the results of Part 1 and Part 2 of the study. The implications for approaches to teaching school singing, for the pre-service and in-service training of teachers, for those responsible for school singing activities and for those writing syllabus, syllabus related documents and teaching resources are discussed and limitations of the study outlined. The chapter concludes with recommendations for future research.

9.2 Conclusions

School singing is an activity occurring in Sydney government schools that may or may not have syllabus connections. Syllabus singing is a typically expected musical performance experience, and yet the position of singing within student learning experiences is school and teacher driven. The study found that singing was taught at a higher level by specialist teachers and that choir teachers taught singing more comprehensively than non-choir teachers. However, not all schools have specialist teachers, nor do all schools have choirs. The reality is that for many students, school singing begins with teachers who may not have experience, interest or confidence in singing. Where singing is not a priority or where singing is not included in school activities in constructive ways, the issue of negative transference and whether students will emulate these traits is raised.
9.2.1 Teachers of singing in Sydney government schools

The study found that at primary level, the majority of teachers teaching school singing were primary generalist classroom teachers. The musical training of generalist classroom teachers ranged from those with tertiary music qualifications or those who had studied a music component as part of a tertiary degree, to the majority of generalist classroom teachers who had no tertiary music qualifications which is consistent with studies reviewed in the literature. The majority of generalist classroom teachers also had no singing training and/or experiences.

A minority of music and/or singing specialist primary teachers, as distinct from generalist primary teachers, were identified in this study as those also teaching primary school singing. The five types of specialist teachers identified included dedicated music specialist teachers, designated music specialist teachers, dedicated choir specialists, dedicated performing arts specialist teachers and designated singing specialist teachers. As only 11 dedicated primary music specialist teachers were identified in the study, the appointment of specialist teachers may be based on their ability to teach in a variety of areas and/or generalist teaching which includes music and/or singing. The study also found that, in a few schools, parents also taught or team taught singing.

Secondary classroom music teachers were those found to teach, either solely or at some schools in conjunction with singing tutors, secondary school singing. The majority of secondary classroom music teachers in this study had no singing training and/or experiences. A higher percentage of secondary classroom music teachers indicated that private singing lessons would be of benefit to secondary students. This may be due to student singing being an accessible musical instrument at secondary level, but may be equally due to the view that singing teaching is a specialist area. Participant 6 expressed the opinion that secondary classroom music did not allow for the individual pedagogy of any instrument. Other secondary participants, particularly Participants 4 and 5, did include singing instruction in secondary classroom music.

Secondary music teachers and primary music specialist teachers were similar in that they all had an interest or expertise in music and/or singing. Music specialist primary teachers and secondary music teachers in the study were distinct from peripatetic or private school singing teachers who were not included in the study. However peripatetic
or private singing tutors were identified as teaching at a few primary and secondary Sydney government schools \( (n=7) \) and as such, they featured as a ‘silent voice’ in the models on teaching singing. A respondent and an interview participant also taught singing privately to Stage 6 music students. However, their private singing teaching was beyond the scope of the pre-determined schedule of questions. Included in the study was the collection of data on whether private singing lessons would be of benefit to students. An analysis of the benefits and/or disadvantages of private singing lessons provided insight into teaching perceptions that included the view that ‘real’ teaching of singing would occur through private tuition.

### 9.2.2 Types of singing in Sydney government schools

The types of school singing determined in the study encapsulate a variety of physical localities in which school singing occurs, vocal music styles and participatory factors. It was through the analysis of the school localities in which singing occurs and the types of vocal music styles sung in schools that insight was provided into the types of school singing activities available to children and adolescents. The study determined that there is a marked difference in the types of school singing activities occurring in respondent primary and secondary schools. In primary schools, children participate in a range of singing activities with a performance focus. In addition to opportunities to sing in the school choir, many types of primary singing activities occur in performance preparation and in singing performances for school assemblies and school concerts. In contrast, singing activities in secondary schools primarily occur in the music classroom and for music assessments. Although apparent in both primary and secondary schools, whole school singing in school assemblies is less prevalent in secondary schools than in primary schools. Singing to the broader community is also more likely to occur in primary schools than in secondary schools.

In addition to the types of singing initiated at respondent schools either in response to BOS NSW syllabuses or as non-syllabus singing, the study identified sources external to respondent schools that impacted on the types of school singing occurring within some Sydney government schools. The NSW DET Arts Unit and music festivals organized either through NSW DET Regional or Area committees, in addition to providing opportunities for children and adolescents to participate in massed choral events, provide in-service training opportunities for teachers that are of particular
relevance to the selected vocal music. The NSW DET Arts Unit also offers programmes and performance opportunities for individual student singing participation.

While the types of singing activities children participated in were syllabus singing, co-syllabus singing and non-syllabus singing, both in Year 3 classroom and in primary choirs, the most frequently reported type of primary singing that at times related to BOS NSW syllabuses was co-syllabus singing. Co-syllabus singing was found to be either thematic or supplementary singing, and occurred more frequently in Year 3 classrooms than in primary choirs. The predominant type of primary singing present in respondent data was non-syllabus related choir activities. Secondary school singing was found to be syllabus related singing, ancillary-syllabus singing and non-syllabus singing. No example of co-syllabus singing was apparent, although one respondent noted that school religious groups sometimes prepared items for scripture classes. The mean of secondary syllabus singing occurred just below the “always” range in secondary music classrooms. In addition to defining the types of school singing in relation to both primary and secondary syllabuses, there was evidence of a dichotomy in school singing between teaching singing where students are taught how to use the voice (formal singing) and the teaching of or inclusion of singing activities where students use the voice (informal singing).

9.2.3 Approaches to teaching singing in Sydney government schools

Determining whether students are taught a song or taught how to sing (it) in NSW government schools in Sydney, formed one of the major areas of impetus and focus for the study. The distinction between learning a song and learning how to sing was not only evident in the literature, it was also expressed in respondent data. After identifying 19 components present in respondent data, comparison and inclusion rates of those components identified five levels of teaching approaches present in respondent data – sing-along, song, song dominant, functional and developmental. At a sing-along level, the singing activity was totally focused in singing ‘the song’. The process was osmotic and there was typically no instruction in technical or expressive components. In the song approach, the focus was also centred on the song. There was no inclusion of exercises or activities to engender singing development. Minimal technical and expressive components were addressed in relation to student delivery of the vocal music. In this context, the process of learning singing was episodic and deliberate. The
next three approaches were delineated from the sing-along and song approaches by the inclusion of vocal exercises and by a progressively higher inclusion rate of additional technical and expressive components. However, in the song dominant approach, the focus continued to be on the delivery of the vocal music. In this approach, the exercise component typically consisted of vocal warm-ups and group focusing exercises. Any additional technical and expressive components were usually addressed through vocal music delivery. In this context, the teaching emphasis was remained on ‘the song’. In the functional approach, technical and expressive components were included in proficient exercises and in vocal music delivery. The process of teaching singing appeared to be intuitive. The developmental approach included a proficient exercise component and other components were predominantly included at a proficient level. This approach to teaching singing embodied student vocal development and vocal care which was inherent in the teaching delivery strategies. In the latter two approaches, functional and developmental, the approach to teaching singing was beyond ‘the song’ focus.

The findings determined that singing instruction that embodied a balance of vocal technique, musical instruction and the learning of vocal music was evident in 13 respondent approaches and 2 participant approaches. While the results also indicated that choir teacher respondents on average taught singing at a higher level than non-choir respondents, choir teacher respondents were teaching slightly below, but close to, “song dominant”. The study determined that in a sing-along approach, a song approach and a song dominant approach, students were predominantly taught a song. Strategies embodying components to ensure progressive student singing development were evident in only 3 respondent strategies and although 2 participant strategies were at times highly functional, a progressive programme was not clearly evident in participant strategies. Apparent in some participant strategies was the impact of the purpose of the singing activity that often dictated the teaching approach.

9.2.4 Participatory factors of singing in Sydney government schools

Present in respondent data were contributory factors of school singing identified as support for school singing, objectives of school singing, aptitude for school singing and constraints restricting school singing. The types of school singing found their origin in the purpose of the singing activities. The purposes of singing were often dictated by the
motivation of those responsible for, or participating in, school singing activities: teachers, students and the school community. In some cases, the school culture also determined the types and purposes of school singing. Where school singing was established within the school culture, singing activities were reported as being well supported and the school culture was such that it encouraged or even enabled singing activities to occur. Underpinning the culture of school singing was the school executive and the willingness of teachers at the school to act cooperatively in their support of activities.

9.2.5 Model of Teaching Singing in Sydney government schools

The final model (see Figure 9.1, p.301) is drawn from the collective findings and conclusions presented in this thesis. Primary generalist teachers, primary specialist teachers and secondary music teachers teach school singing in Sydney government schools. Private singing tutors, although identified in the study as being present at a few primary and secondary schools, were not included in the study. The types of school singing – syllabus, ancillary-syllabus, co-syllabus and non-syllabus – occur in primary classrooms, inside and outside primary and secondary music classrooms and in primary and secondary choirs. Singing within primary and secondary music classes is, at times, a mandatory class activity. The predominant focus of primary singing is performance, whereas secondary singing is predominantly focused in and through music classroom activities.

Five levels of teaching approaches were present in Part 1 of the research – sing-along, song, song dominant, functional and developmental. The emphasis in both primary and secondary singing was the vocal music, with the song dominant approach and the song approach being the most prevalent approaches to teaching school singing. Although singing in primary and secondary choirs was usually an elective activity, it can in some instances, also be mandatory. Similarly, singing in elective secondary music classes can also be an elective student choice. Although no gender differences were identified in Early Stage 1 to Stage 1, some male students were reported to lose interest in singing in early Stage 2 Year 3 classes. However, recurring in the data was the reporting of both male and female students losing interest in upper primary Stage 3 classes. Participatory factors in school singing were therefore aligned with student age and gender. However, the appeal of singing activities or the “cool” factor and peers
were also participatory factors that limited participation in singing.

The key issues borne out in the research are presented within the context of a continuum of learning where the expectation is that students will acquire lifelong skills for the participation in or appreciation of music which may include singing. The *National Review of School Music Education* (Australian Government, 2005) suggests that participation in school music is associated to a continuum or a “spectrum of quality” (p.79) which includes a sequential progression of pedagogy for participation, pedagogy for extension and pedagogy for expertise. The study found that sequentially progressive singing pedagogy was not typically evident in Sydney government schools. However, the study determined that within a learning continuum the group focus of primary singing transitioned to the solo singing experiences in the upper stages of elective secondary music classes. The study found that if singing was not viewed as relevant or was not valued within the school culture, there were minimal opportunities for student participation or for student progression within a continuum. In contrast, where student singing was relevant and valued, there were many opportunities for student participation and progression. However, school singing that was selective and did not engender equity in student participation fostered the participation and progression of a minority of students.

Teachers were crucial to the inclusion of singing activities within a school environment. Part B of the research revealed that the level of teaching approach was not only determined by the teacher, but was also determined by the purpose of the activity. Participants also revealed a change of teaching approach was dependant on the formal or informal nature of the singing activity. Where there is a balance of formal and informal school singing, as advocated by Ashmore (1995), within a sequential progression of student learning, then there is likely to be an attainment of lifelong skills.
Figure 9.1: MODEL 5
Teaching singing in Sydney government schools
9.3 Implications

The study revealed that teacher priorities and teacher interests impacted on the types of singing activities offered, on the Stages of education in which singing is offered and on the length of time spent singing. Participatory factors for both children and adolescents in school singing activities included whether the type of school singing was inclusive, such as classroom singing or whether it was selective, such as an auditioned choir. The study identified that in some primary and secondary classrooms, singing did not happen or rarely happened. In contrast, singing in some school choirs was taught at a developmental level by a specialist teacher. If the reality is that ‘singing’ happens outside the classroom and is specialist activity for a selection of students, several implications are apparent.

Firstly, there is an obligation for all teachers to fulfill the directive of the BOS NSW and impart skills to enable student learning. If government education provides education to all children and adolescents for acquiring skills, then all areas of education should be equitable and access to skill development should be unbiased. This means that all students in Sydney government schools should have access to learn how to sing, not just a select few or only those students deemed to be talented singers. Secondly, as singing is an expected performance activity in syllabus music, and as syllabus music is mandated as a subject for study by students in Early Stage 1 through to Stage 4, then educators must be responsible for ensuring that students receive instruction in how to use their voices and how to care for their voices for optimum results to be achieved. Teacher expertise is crucial and certainly, the issue of teacher training, as identified by Stevens (1978) in relation to the teaching of singing in NSW in the mid-1800s, is still relevant today.

Even though syllabus singing in relation to a continuum of learning in music was present in respondent data covering all Years and Stages of education, whether singing itself was part of the continuum in terms of student acquisition of progressively based singing skills was not apparent. However, a continuum of learning in music implies a coherent progression of skill acquisition and as singing is a syllabus mandated musical activity, there is a duty for that activity to be conducted within a responsible progressive
teaching strategy. If singing is a school activity devoid of sequential progression, then the distinction is made between informal school singing as using the voice and formal school singing as learning to use the voice. Informal school singing does not reinforce that singing, when effectively taught, can aid in the optimum vocal development of each student. It could be argued that learning to use the voice is like learning any musical instrument and as such, requires individual tuition. However unlike any other musical instrument, the singing voice is the musical instrument expected to be used and accessed by all students in a school setting. Of prime concern is that the literature shows there is potential not only to limit vocal development, but to also damage the vocal instrument through inappropriate voice usage.

Student vocal development and the acquisition of vocal technique should therefore be prime considerations in school singing teaching strategies. If students are not afforded strategies for acquiring singing skills, they will possibly never reach their potential in singing and may not be confident to sing in front of others. Of equal relevance to vocal development is the embodiment of vocal care in teaching strategies. For the purposes of this study, it was the content of respondent strategies and the process by which the content was disseminated that largely determined the singing teaching approach. Independent-sample t-tests of singing training/experience and non-singing training/experience and teaching approaches showed that respondents with tertiary music training, with singing and/or instrument experience or with singing and/or instrument training teach on average at a higher level than those respondents without this training and/or experience. Embodied in these results is the implication that the pre-service musical training of teachers impacts on the expertise with which teachers approach school singing. At the very least, regular in-servicing opportunities for teachers would in part meet the needs posed by teaching school singing in a highly contextualized environment.

The issue of predominantly female singing participation was present in all Stages (Stage 2 to Stage 6) of education in this study. Of particular relevance pertaining to gender issues in school singing, was that the study found in secondary choirs, the tabulated average age of adolescent boys participating in choir to be higher than that of adolescent girls. This higher average age possibly reflects that boys' voices are more stable at a later age and hence, that boys have greater post-voice change singing
capabilities. The implication here is that some boys may continue singing through voice change and others may come back to singing post-voice change. However, many boys may possibly never sing post voice change. Participant 2 was the only teacher involved in the study to describe their use of teaching strategies to aid boys through transitioning voice. Surely, boys have the right to be offered strategies that facilitate their keeping singing through changing voice, or at least be made to feel secure about singing through periods of voice change.

As advocated by Cooksey and Welch (1998), there are cogent reasons for school curriculum to incorporate the stages of vocal development. There are equally cogent reasons for teachers to be trained in voice physiology and function. If all teachers were trained, then perhaps approaches to teaching singing in school would contain strategies for guiding students through voice change. There could also be a flow on effect in the treatment and care of teachers’ voices as well. The accessibility, and high use, of ABC Sing! and NSW DET Vocal-Ease resources, together with some respondents’ and participants’ requests for in-service opportunities, shows that it is also relevant to provide pre-service and in-service training opportunities to workshop suitable repertoire for unison and simple part singing. Finding suitable repertoire that is particularly appealing to boys was viewed by several respondents as being crucial to boys’ participation in singing. Respondent and Participant data also revealed that singing was more likely to frequently occur in Stage 1 activities than in other Stages of education. Perhaps the implication here is that younger children can express themselves without inhibitions; perhaps it is also, as Participant 3 noted, that many teachers are comfortable to sing in front of younger children and do not feel they will be ridiculed.

In addition to the limitations imposed by teacher interest and training, the constraint of time was expressed by many respondents and participants as limiting how they taught singing, when they taught singing and if they taught singing. Several respondents and participants believed that timetabling singing to occur within class time would raise the standard of singing and make it a priority for all students. Another limitation in relation to school singing was the use of the singing voice purely because it was accessible and available at no financial cost. In primary school, singing was viewed by some as being the instrument that everyone has. At secondary level, singing was sometimes viewed
as the 'soft' option or only option for those students wanting to undertake elective music who had never formally studied any musical instrument. In both of these instances, the true nature of the singing voice and the training required to sing at an optimum level was underestimated.

The use of sound reinforcement for singers is another area that possibly requires preservice or in-service training. As evident in the literature, the use of sound reinforcement is particularly relevant for secondary contemporary popular singers whose repertoire is meant to be delivered using sound reinforcement. Ideally, sound reinforcement equipment should include some form of monitoring for singers usually in the form of foldback speakers that face back towards the performance area of singers and their musicians. Without monitors or foldback, singers may have a tendency to 'over-sing'. Most sound equipment usage was noted in relation to student use of amps and speakers, not references to full systems and monitors; nor were there specific references to a technically trained person to operate the equipment. A singer's use of an individual amp and speaker/s will potentially compromise a singer's quality. In this context, resources of appropriate reinforced sound equipment and the training in its use, is warranted.

Almost all secondary class music respondents indicated that at some time during classroom music or as a consequence of classroom music, their students who sang experienced singing using sound reinforcement. The high percentage use of sound reinforcement in secondary classroom music is possibly reflective of singers singing with bands or the singing of contemporary popular repertoire. The use of sound reinforcement is also an issue for singers in HSC assessments. If using a full sound reinforcement system, a singer must stand behind the front of house speakers to avoid feedback. It is a very complicated task for singers to balance their own levels during a performance. A technically capable sound technician to operate the equipment seems warranted.

HSC singing is currently assessed on the same criteria and procedures used to assess all instrumentalists, however any assessment of adolescent singing should take into account the individual development of singers and any other variances that potentially jeopardize a singing performance such as singers operating their own sound
equipment. The implication here is that it would possibly benefit HSC students of school singing and school singers being assessed, to have the BOS NSW assessment criteria modified in relation to the assessment of singers.

The researcher notes that nearly all respondents and participants - with the exception of 2 respondents and 1 participant – included singing in some form, in their teaching activities. The sample possibly represents those teachers who are interested in school singing and consequently the percentage of teachers who are neither interested in nor include singing activities in their teaching may be higher than the study suggests. This is further implied by the number of respondents and participants who shared the opinion that many of their colleagues did not teach any formal or informal school singing.

It may be argued that the sing-along and song approaches to teaching school singing are less formal approaches to school singing. Certainly, a school environment should provide opportunities for both formal and informal singing activities. However, there needs to be a balance between the informal and formal to ensure that students learn more than how to sing a song or how to sing a particular song in a particular way. To do so denies students the development of their individual singing ability. A progressive singing programme that caters to student developmental stages requires musical discernment and a range of expertise. While it may also be argued that the singing voice is not ready to be a vocal instrument until post-puberty, foundational skills and an understanding of the vocal mechanism can be instilled at primary level and a singing culture engendered. At present, the singing of a song in a Sydney government school does not guarantee that the manner of singing will be developmentally appropriate. Also the act of initiating a singing activity does not in itself constitute teaching singing and in this regard, the study makes the distinction between the teaching of school singing (formal) and the inclusion of school singing activities (informal singing). For the teaching of school singing to increase in occurrence and delivery, there needs to be a paradigm shift in the approach to teaching school singing that is beyond the song.

9.4 Limitations

The researcher notes that there were several limitations of the study. These are discussed separately when confined specifically to Part 1 or Part 2 research. Where the
limitations are relevant to both, they are discussed collectively as the scope and design of the study.

9.4.1 Part 1: The Broad Study

In Part 1 of the research, the emailing process was problematic. The successive postal versions of the questionnaires produced higher response rates. However, the subsequent time required and financial cost of the postal versions prevented a postal reminder being sent to potential respondents prior to completion dates.

The length and detail of the questionnaire, although designed to generate qualitative data through open-ended questions, may have been prohibitively disconcerting for some potential respondents. The length and detail may have accounted for the incomplete answering of questions by some respondents. Two respondents also noted that there was not enough room provided to answer the question/s posed. In addition, the ranking system for repertoire selection criteria was not always completed and in some cases was completed inappropriately. This ranked data was therefore not included for analysis and suggests that a reformulation of the question or ranking system was warranted.

Part 1 questionnaire also varied to suit the categories of respondents. As such, the question on co-syllabus singing activities was not included for secondary respondents as it was assumed that if it did occur, it would be listed as “other” in the school singing activities question. However, as only 1 respondent indicated that secondary school singing occurred in “other” religious activities, direct questioning should have been included to ascertain possible singing connections to secondary subjects such as drama.

9.4.2 Part 2: The Interviews

The NSW DET requirement of pre-determined question approval made the probing of participant answers difficult at times and precluded the posing of some additional questions during the course of an interview. Access to private locations within participant schools to conduct interviews was also an issue that resulted in the interruption of interviews and the relocation of 3 participant interviews.
9.4.3 The Scope

The design and scope of the study researched singing teaching perspectives and the content of teaching strategies. Time restrictions did not permit the inclusion of singing outcomes. In this context the researcher acknowledges that the perception of student outcomes expressed by respondents and participants, and the reality of student outcomes, may differ. The researcher also acknowledges that viewing some aspects of singing within a continuum would possibly be more appropriate for longitudinal research studies. In the continuum context, research into Early Stage 1 and Stage 1 singing practices is warranted. Another limitation of the study pertains to the assessment of singers. While the study included the assessment of singers, questions did not generate enough detailed data on possible connections between vocal music selection and the assessment of singers.

9.5 Recommendations

The BOS NSW music curriculum writers and developers of the music syllabuses on which school syllabus singing is founded, should offer clear directives as to the care and assessment of developing voices. In this context, research on what constitutes ‘best singing practice’ for developing voices in a school environment is recommended.

Directions for future research on singing in schools should involve studies on teaching strategies and programmes that raise the level of approaches to teaching school singing, strategies and programmes aimed to redress imbalances between formal and informal school singing activities, the assessment of student singing outcomes and music curriculum relevance and/or effectiveness in relation to school singing practices. Longitudinal studies that trace student singing progress throughout the varying stages of education may possibly be the most appropriate manner of researching singing within a music continuum. There is also scope to research the function of peripatetic and private singing teachers in schools. Research into the non-singer in primary education and in secondary music education also seems warranted.

The researcher acknowledges and applauds the work of the NSW DET Arts Unit in relation to fostering interest in school singing in NSW government schools and in
providing singing teaching resources to interested schools. While the scope of this study researched the teaching of singing within schools, the study determined that in some schools singing teaching practices were modeled on the opportunities and resources provided by the NSW DET Arts Unit and as such, there is scope for future research on the development and implementation of these practices. This type of teaching model may be beneficial for inclusion in many Sydney government schools.
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 **Legislation**

List of Appendices

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This research study focuses on singing activities in Sydney NSW Government Schools (primary and secondary). At present, other than the NSW Board of Studies Creative Arts/Music Syllabuses and related documents, there is little information or research on the teaching of singing within Sydney schools.

The Department of Education and Training has approved this research project SERAP Number: [Number]

To Year 3 Class Teachers and/or Primary Choir Teachers,

I am a PhD student at the University of Western Sydney and this questionnaire is part of research into the teaching of singing in Sydney NSW Government Schools. I am very interested in finding out about singing activities at your school. Your participation in this research is voluntary. Your privacy and that of your school will be ensured as participants’ names are not required and your school will be coded during data collection and entry. Sources of information will therefore remain confidential. Information from completed questionnaires will be compiled into a PhD Thesis, report and papers for publication.

Your assistance in completing this questionnaire is greatly appreciated. Please complete the questionnaire as soon as possible and return it by [date]. Post the completed questionnaire to Diane Hughes, [postal address]. Return of the completed questionnaire is taken as an indication of your voluntary consent. Should you require any information regarding this research or the questionnaires, please contact me by telephone on [mobile phone number] or by email [email address].

Yours faithfully,

DIANE HUGHES
PhD Student, University of Western Sydney

Diane Hughes notes that she practices professionally as a singer and singing teacher under the name “Diana Hunter”.

NOTE: This study has been approved by the University of Western Sydney Human Research Ethics Committee. The Approval Number is [number]. If you have any complaints or reservations about the ethical conduct of this research, you may contact the Ethics Committee through the Research Ethics Officers [telephone numbers]. Any issues you raise will be treated in confidence and investigated fully, and you will be informed of the outcome.

SINGING IN SCHOOLS 3: Year 3 CLASS TEACHERS & PRIMARY CHOIR TEACHERS

This questionnaire is designed to be completed in hard copy using pen. Complete the questionnaire by ticking the appropriate response boxes and answering the questions. Please answer all questions and indicate with N/A (not applicable) any questions that are not relevant to you or your teaching.

Year 3 Class Teachers are asked to complete all questions as indicated. If you teach primary Choir activities and you are not a Year 3 Class Teacher complete:
1. Section A (page 1)
2. Section B (page 2)
3. Section D (pages 6 – 9)

SECTION A: CONTEXT

1. Name of School ______________________________ 2. Date completing questionnaire _________
3. What are your i) teaching qualifications, ii) music/singing training and iii) music/singing experience?

4. Are you □ Male or □ Female? 5. How many years have you been teaching in primary schools? _______
B-2

6. Do you teach anything other than Year 3 or choir? ☐Yes ☐No  If Yes, what do you teach? _______

SECTION B: SCHOOL SINGING ACTIVITIES

B1. What singing activities take place at your school?
☐None ☐Music Class ☐Music Assessments
☐Assembly Class Performance ☐Assembly Choir Performance ☐Whole school at assembly
☐Concert Class Performance ☐Concert Choir Performance ☐Concert Solo Performance
☐Other activities where students sing. describe these activities (eg school musical, Sing NSW):

B2. Describe the positions (eg class teachers, specialist teachers) and duties of teachers who teach singing activities at your school (do not include teacher names):

B3. Do any choirs from your school represent your school at festivals or competitions?  
Choir at festivals: ☐Yes ☐No ☐Do not know  Choir at competitions: ☐Yes ☐No ☐Do not know

B4. Do any students who sing represent your school at festivals or competitions?  
Student at festivals: ☐Yes ☐No ☐Do not know  Student at competitions: ☐Yes ☐No ☐Do not know

B5. What Years/Stages of students participate in singing activities at your school?
☐Kindergarten ☐Year 1 ☐Year 2 ☐Year 3
☐Year 4 ☐Year 5 ☐Year 6

Choir teachers who are not Year 3 Class Teachers now go to SECTION D (page 6).

SECTION C: YEAR 3 CLASS SINGING

CLASS SINGING: Singing activities during Year 3 classes (not private singing lessons or choir)

C1. i) How many Year 3 Classes are there at your school? _______
   ii) How many years have you been teaching Year 3? _______
   iii) How many Year 3 students are in your class? _______
   iv) Is it a composite Year 3 class? ☐Yes ☐No  If Yes, what are the composite Years? _______

If you are a Year 3 teacher of a composite class, complete the questionnaire in relation to your Year 3 students only.

C2. In your Year 3 class:
   i) How many Year 3 boys are there? _______
   ii) What is the age range of the Year 3 boys? _______
   iii) What is the average age of the Year 3 boys? _______
   iv) How many Year 3 girls are in there? _______
   v) What is the age range of the Year 3 girls? _______
   iv) What is the average age of the Year 3 girls? _______

C3. Do you incorporate singing activities or teach singing in your Year 3 lessons? ☐Yes ☐No
   If Yes, describe the singing activities: __________________________________________________________
C4. Do Year 3 students combine with other age groups for class singing (not choir)? ☐ Yes ☐ No
   If Yes, describe the combined class singing activities and the Years involved:
   ____________________________________________________________________

C5. What is the approximate **ratio of boys and girls** participating in singing activities in your Year 3 class? (eg Boys > Girls: more boys than girls participate in singing activities)
   ☐ Boys > Girls ☐ Girls > Boys ☐ Boys = Girls

C6. i) For what **purpose/s** do your students sing in music classes? ____________________________
   ____________________________________________________________________
   ii) On average, how long (in minutes) do your students sing for in class? ________________
   iii) Is the time spent singing in class different for each Year or Stage? ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Do not know
   If Yes, describe the difference/s: ____________________________________________

C7. i) Do your students **sing exercises** or participate in **exercises related to singing**? ☐ Yes ☐ No
   ii) If Yes, describe the exercises:_______________________________________________
   iii) Do you lead the exercises? ☐ Yes ☐ No   iv) If No, who does?__________________________
   v) What is the purpose/s of the exercises?: _________________________________________

C8. Do you address any **vocal health issues** or concerns? ☐ No ☐ Rarely ☐ Sometimes ☐ Often ☐ Always
   If you do address vocal health issues or concerns, describe these: ____________________________

C9. i) Do you address **pitch accuracy** with students? ☐ No ☐ Rarely ☐ Sometimes ☐ Often ☐ Always
   If you do address pitch accuracy, describe how:_________________________________________
   ii) Do you address other **musical aspects** with students? ☐ No ☐ Rarely ☐ Sometimes ☐ Often ☐ Always
   If you do address other musical aspects, what are they?: ________________________________

C10. Do you use **imagery** or **metaphor** in relation to singing? ☐ No ☐ Rarely ☐ Sometimes ☐ Often ☐ Always
    If you do use imagery or metaphor, describe their use: ________________________________

C11. Name the **resources and texts** you use when undertaking singing activities in music classes
     (eg singing texts, curriculum support documents, piano, guitar, sheet music, recordings):
     ____________________________________________________________________
C12. i) Are class songs related to the Creative Arts K-6 Syllabus?☐ No ☐ Rarely ☐ Sometimes ☐ Often ☐ Always
ii) Are class songs related to other subjects? (eg thematic) ☐ No ☐ Rarely ☐ Sometimes ☐ Often ☐ Always
iii) If songs are related to curricula, describe the ways in which they relate to curricula:
______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________

C13. Who selects the vocal music for classroom singing activities?

C14. In class, what types of singing repertoire are A) sung and also what types of singing repertoire are B) predominantly sung (mostly sung):

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<td>Student Compositions</td>
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<td>Other, describe:</td>
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C15. When making singing repertoire selections, describe the criteria you use:
______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________

C16. Answer the following Yes or No. If Yes, rank (1 to 5): 1 (most relevant) to 5 (least relevance) where appropriate; there may also be equal ranking (eg “=3”) or no relevance which will reduce the overall numbers ranked.

Are the following relevant when making singing repertoire selections?:

i) Student cultural background ☐ Yes ☐ No Ranking: _____
ii) Student age ☐ Yes ☐ No Ranking: _____
iii) Student singing ability ☐ Yes ☐ No Ranking: _____
iv) Student gender ☐ Yes ☐ No Ranking: _____
v) Student interests ☐ Yes ☐ No Ranking: _____

C17. How do students learn to sing the selected repertoire?
______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________

C18. Do you include interpretation or performance skills when teaching singing? ☐ Yes ☐ No

If Yes, describe these:______________________________________________________________

C19. Do you assign different singing parts in class singing activities? ☐ Yes ☐ No

i) If Yes, what criteria do you use to assign singing parts? ____________________________

ii) If Yes, what types of singing parts are assigned? (eg harmony, rounds)

Do you assign a singing part because:

| iii) the student has a soft singing voice? | ☐ No ☐ Rarely ☐ Sometimes ☐ Often ☐ Always |
| iv) the student has a loud singing voice? | ☐ No ☐ Rarely ☐ Sometimes ☐ Often ☐ Always |
| v) the student can sing high notes? | ☐ No ☐ Rarely ☐ Sometimes ☐ Often ☐ Always |
| vi) the student can sing low notes? | ☐ No ☐ Rarely ☐ Sometimes ☐ Often ☐ Always |
| vii) of the gender of the student? | ☐ No ☐ Rarely ☐ Sometimes ☐ Often ☐ Always |
B-5

C20. i) Do you **accompany** your students on piano in class? □ No □ Rarely □ Sometimes □ Often □ Always
ii) Do you accompany singers on piano in performance? □ No □ Rarely □ Sometimes □ Often □ Always
iii) Do your students sing unaccompanied? □ No □ Rarely □ Sometimes □ Often □ Always
iv) Do your students use recorded backing tracks? □ No □ Rarely □ Sometimes □ Often □ Always
v) Describe other musical accompaniment available for your students who sing:

C21. i) Do your students who sing use **amplification**? □ No □ Rarely □ Sometimes □ Often □ Always
ii) If using amplification, describe the equipment (eg amp and microphone or PA system) and the purpose/s for using it (eg for assessment, for performance):

| iii) Do students operate the equipment when in use? | □ No □ Rarely □ Sometimes □ Often □ Always |
| iv) Who is responsible for equipment settings and volume levels? |

C22. i) Do you **record** your students singing in audio format? □ No □ Rarely □ Sometimes □ Often □ Always
ii) Do you record your students singing in video format? □ No □ Rarely □ Sometimes □ Often □ Always
iii) If you do record your students singing, for what purpose/s do you record them?:

C23. What **directions or advice** do you offer students regarding their singing progress?

C24. For what purpose/s is singing **assessed** at your school? (eg music assessments, choir selection)

C25. Do students have the opportunity of **private singing lessons** at your school? □ Yes □ No
C26. Do your students have private singing lessons outside school? □ Yes □ No □ Do not know
C27. i) Would private singing lessons be of benefit to students in school music classes? □ Yes □ No
   ii) Why/why not?

C28. Why do you think students **participate in singing** at school?

C29. Is participation in singing activities at school **different for boys and girls**?

C30. Describe **other factors** (eg cultural, social) that influence singing participation at your school:

C31. Is there anything about singing in your school or singing in schools that you would like to add?
B-6

Year 3 Class Teachers are asked to complete questions D1 i) and D1 ii) and continue completing SECTION D if they also teach choir activities. Choir teachers complete SECTION D.

SECTION D: CHOIR SINGING

“Choir” in this study refers to group singing. Choir activities can include singing in a choir, a singing group or vocal ensemble. Choir activities do not include group singing in class music lessons.

D1. i) Does your school have a choir/s?  □Yes □No
ii) Do you teach any choir activities at your school? □Yes □No

If No, you do not teach choir activities, you have completed this Questionnaire. Thank you for your participation. Please return the questionnaire to Diane Hughes, [postal address].

D2. What Years of students participate in choir activities at your school?
□Kindergarten □Year 1 □Year 2 □Year 3 □Year 4 □Year 5 □Year 6

D3. What is the approximate ratio of boys and girls participating in choir activities? (> is greater than)
□Boys = Girls □Boys > Girls □Girls > Boys □Boys Only □Girls Only

D4. What is the age range and average age of students participating in choir activities?
   i) Age range of boy participants: ______________ Average age of boy participants: _____
   ii) Age range of girl participants: ______________ Average age of girl participants: _____

D5. i) Do any students from other schools participate in your school choir activities? □Yes □No
   ii) Do teachers from your school join in singing in your school choir activities? □Yes □No
   If Yes to D5 i) or ii), describe the additional participation:
   ___________________________________________________________________________________

D6. Do your singers audition for entry into the choir/s? □Yes □No
   If Yes, what criteria are used in choir selection:
   ___________________________________________________________________________________

When answering the following questions, if you are responsible for more than one choir or vocal group at your school, please label each group A, B, C etc.

D7. i) Describe the group/s that you are responsible for and the number of students involved in each:
   ___________________________________________________________________________________
   ii) Are there any additional singing groups at your school? □Yes □No
      If Yes, describe these groups:
      ___________________________________________________________________________________

D8. i) In minutes, how long do your choir members sing for during rehearsals? __________
   ii) How many times does your choir/s rehearse each week? (eg 1 per week) __________

D9. Name the resources and texts you use when undertaking choir activities (eg singing texts, curriculum support documents, piano, guitar, sheet music, recordings):
   ___________________________________________________________________________________

D10. What are the main criteria you use to assign singing parts in choir activities?

   Do you assign a singing part because:
   i) the student has a soft singing voice? □No □Rarely □Sometimes □Often □Always
   ii) the student has a loud singing voice? □No □Rarely □Sometimes □Often □Always
   iii) the student can sing high notes? □No □Rarely □Sometimes □Often □Always
   iv) the student can sing low notes? □No □Rarely □Sometimes □Often □Always
   v) of the gender of the student? □No □Rarely □Sometimes □Often □Always
D11. What are the main criteria you use to assign a solo singing part in choir activities?

D12. Who selects the choral repertoire for choir activities?

D13. At your school, what types of choral repertoire are A) sung and also what types of singing repertoire are B) predominantly sung (mostly sung):

A: B: Traditional children’s songs
A: B: Contemporary children’s songs
A: B: Classical
A: B: Songs from Musicals
A: B: Pop
A: B: Film
A: B: Jazz
A: B: Music of a Culture
A: B: Student Compositions
A: B: Religious
A: B: Other, describe:

D14. When making choral repertoire selections, describe the criteria used:

D15. Answer the following Yes or No. If Yes, rank (1 to 5): 1 (most relevant) to 5 (least relevance) where appropriate; there may also be equal ranking (eg “=3”) or no relevance which will reduce the overall numbers ranked.

Are the following relevant when making choral repertoire selections?:

i) Student cultural backgrounds
   Yes No Ranking: ____

ii) Student ages
    Yes No Ranking: ____

iii) Student singing abilities
     Yes No Ranking: ____

iv) Student gender
    Yes No Ranking: ____

v) Student interests
   Yes No Ranking: ____

D16. How do choir students learn to sing the selected choir songs and choral parts?

D17. Do you include song interpretation or performance skills when teaching choir repertoire?

   Yes No

   If Yes, describe these:

D18. i) Do you accompany your choir on piano in rehearsals?

   No Rarely Sometimes Often Always

ii) Do you play the piano for choir performances?

   No Rarely Sometimes Often Always

iii) Do your choir/s sing unaccompanied?

   No Rarely Sometimes Often Always

iv) Do your choir/s use recorded backing tracks?

   No Rarely Sometimes Often Always

v) Describe other musical accompaniment available for your choir/s or vocal groups:

D19. For performances, do you conduct your group/s?

   No Rarely Sometimes Often Always

D20. i) Do your choir/s use amplification?

   No Rarely Sometimes Often Always

ii) If using amplification, describe the equipment (eg amp and microphone or PA system) and the purpose/s for using it (eg for assessment, for performance):

   iii) Do students operate the equipment when in use?

   No Rarely Sometimes Often Always

   iv) Who is responsible for equipment settings and volume levels?

D21. i) Do you record your choir/s in audio format?

   No Rarely Sometimes Often Always

ii) Do you record your choir/s in video format?

   No Rarely Sometimes Often Always

iii) If you do record your choir/s, for what purpose/s do you record them?:
D22. What directions or advice do you offer choir singers regarding their singing progress?

______________________________________________________________________________

D23. i) Are choir activities related to Creative Arts K-6? □ No □ Rarely □ Sometimes □ Often □ Always
ii) Are choir songs related to other subjects? eg thematic □ No □ Rarely □ Sometimes □ Often □ Always
iii) If choir activities or songs are related to curricula, how are they related?:
______________________________________________________________________________

Choir teachers, who are not Year 3 class teachers, are to complete all questions D24-D34. For Year 3 Class Teachers who also teach choir activities, answers to the following questions may be the same as previously answered in Section C. If the answer to a question is the same, please tick the response box to indicate “As previously answered in Section C” or complete the question.

D24. i) Do your singers participate in singing exercises or exercises related to singing? □ Yes □ No □ As previously answered in Section C (C7)
ii) If yes, describe the exercises: _____________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________

iii) Do you lead the exercises? □ Yes □ No
 iv) If No, who does? __________________________________________________
v) What is the purpose/s of the exercises? ___________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________

D25. Do you address any vocal health issues or concerns? □ No □ Rarely □ Sometimes □ Often □ Always □ As previously answered in Section C (C8)
If you do address vocal health issues or concerns, describe these: _________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________

D26. i) Do you address pitch accuracy with students? □ No □ Rarely □ Sometimes □ Often □ Always □ As previously answered in Section C (C9i)
If you do address pitch accuracy, describe how: _______________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________

ii) Do you address other musical aspects with students? □ No □ Rarely □ Sometimes □ Often □ Always □ As previously answered in Section C (C9ii)
If you do address other musical aspects, what are they?: _______________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________

D27. Do you use imagery or metaphor in relation to singing? □ No □ Rarely □ Sometimes □ Often □ Always □ As previously answered in Section C (C10)
If you do use imagery or metaphor, describe their use: _________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________

D28. Do students have the opportunity of private singing lessons at your school? □ Yes □ No □ As previously answered in Section C (C25)
D29. Do your students have private singing lessons outside school? □ Yes □ No □ Do not know □ As previously answered in Section C (C26)
D30. i) Would private singing lessons be of benefit to students in school music classes? □ Yes □ No □ As previously answered in Section C (C27)
   ii) Why/why not?:
D31. Why do you think students participate in singing at school?
☐ As previously answered in Section C (C28)

D32. Is participation in singing activities at school different for boys and girls?
☐ As previously answered in Section C (C29)

D33. Describe other factors (eg cultural, social) that influence singing participation at your school:
☐ As previously answered in Section C (C30)

D34. Is there anything about singing in your school or singing in schools that you would like to add?
☐ As previously answered in Section C (C31)

You have completed this Questionnaire. Thank you for your participation.
Please return the questionnaire to Diane Hughes, [postal address].
APPENDIX C: Secondary Coeducational Questionnaire (SCQ)

Singing in Schools

This research study focuses on singing activities in Sydney NSW Government Schools (primary and secondary). At present, other than the NSW Board of Studies Creative Arts/Music Syllabuses and related documents, there is little information or research on the teaching of singing within Sydney schools.

The Department of Education and Training has approved this research project SERAP Number: [Number]

To Secondary Class Music Teachers and Secondary Choir Teachers,

I am a PhD student at the University of Western Sydney and this questionnaire is part of research into the teaching of singing in Sydney NSW Government Schools. I am very interested in finding out about singing activities at your school. Your participation in this research is voluntary. Your privacy and that of your school will be ensured as participants’ names are not required and your school will be coded during data collection and entry. Sources of information will therefore remain confidential. Information from completed questionnaires will be compiled into a PhD Thesis, report and papers for publication.

Your assistance in completing this questionnaire is greatly appreciated. Please complete the questionnaire as soon as possible and return it by [date]. Post the completed questionnaire to Diane Hughes, [postal address]. Return of the completed questionnaire is taken as an indication of your voluntary consent. Should you require any information regarding this research or the questionnaires, please contact me by telephone on [mobile phone number] or by email [email address].

Yours faithfully,

DIANE HUGHES
PhD Student, University of Western Sydney

Diane Hughes notes that she practices professionally as a singer and singing teacher under the name “Diana Hunter”.

NOTE: This study has been approved by the University of Western Sydney Human Research Ethics Committee. The Approval Number is [number]. If you have any complaints or reservations about the ethical conduct of this research, you may contact the Ethics Committee through the Research Ethics Officers [telephone numbers]. Any issues you raise will be treated in confidence and investigated fully, and you will be informed of the outcome.

SINGING IN SCHOOLS: SECONDARY CLASS MUSIC TEACHERS & CHOIR TEACHERS

This questionnaire is designed to be completed in hard copy using pen. Complete the questionnaire by ticking the appropriate response boxes and answering the questions. Please answer all questions and indicate with N/A (not applicable) any questions that are not relevant to you or your teaching.

Secondary Class Music Teachers are asked to complete all questions as indicated. If you teach secondary Choir activities and you are not a Class Music Teacher complete:

1. Section A (Questions 1 - 6, page 1)
2. Section B (page 2)
3. Section D (pages 6 - 9)

SECTION A: CONTEXT

1. Name of School ______________________________      2. Date completing questionnaire _________
3. What are your i) teaching qualifications, ii) music/singing training and iii) music/singing experience? ______________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________
4. Are you □ Male or □ Female? 5. How many years have you been teaching in secondary schools? ______
6. Do you teach subjects other than music or choir? ☐ Yes ☐ No  If Yes, what subject/s? ______________

7. If you teach class music, what Years and Courses of music students do you currently teach?
☐ Year 7, Stage 4  ☐ Year 9, Stage 5  ☐ Year 11, Stage 6 Music 1  ☐ Year 12, Stage 6 Music 1  
☐ Year 8, Stage 4  ☐ Year 10, Stage 5  ☐ Year 11, Stage 6 Music 2  ☐ Year 12, Stage 6 Music 2  
☐ Year 12, Stage 6 Extension

SECTION B: SCHOOL SINGING ACTIVITIES

B1. What singing activities take place at your school?
☐ None ☐ Music Class ☐ Music Assessments  
☐ Assembly Class Performance ☐ Assembly Choir Performance ☐ Whole school at assembly  
☐ Concert Class Performance ☐ Concert Choir Performance ☐ Concert Solo Performance  
☐ Other activities where students sing, describe these activities (eg school musical, Sing NSW):
______________________________________________________________________________

B2. Describe the positions (eg class music teachers, specialist teachers) and duties of teachers who teach singing activities at your school (do not include teacher names):
______________________________________________________________________________

B3. Do any choirs from your school represent your school at festivals or competitions?
Choir at festivals: ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Do not know  Choir at competitions: ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Do not know

B4. Do any students who sing represent your school at festivals or competitions?
Student at festivals: ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Do not know  Student at competitions: ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Do not know

B5. What Years/Stages of students participate in singing activities at your school?
☐ Year 7, Stage 4  ☐ Year 8, Stage 4  ☐ Year 9, Stage 5  ☐ Year 10, Stage 5  
☐ Year 11, Stage 6  ☐ Year 12, Stage 6  ☐ Other:


Choir teachers who are not Class Music Teachers now go to SECTION D (page 6).  
Class Music Teachers are asked to complete SECTION C.

SECTION C: CLASS SINGING

CLASS SINGING: Singing activities during school music classes (not private singing lessons or choir)

C1. What is the ratio of boys and girls in your:  (> is greater than, = is equal to)
   i) Stage 4 music classes?
   ☐ Boys > Girls ☐ Girls > Boys ☐ Boys = Girls ☐ Do not teach
   ii) Stage 5 music classes?
   ☐ Boys > Girls ☐ Girls > Boys ☐ Boys = Girls ☐ Do not teach
   iii) Stage 6 music classes?
   ☐ Boys > Girls ☐ Girls > Boys ☐ Boys = Girls ☐ Do not teach

C2. i) What is the smallest number of students in a music class _______ ? Which Year? _______
ii) What is the largest number of students in a music class _______ ? Which Year? _______

C3. In classroom music activities, including assessments, what is the ratio of music students who sing to non-singing music students in:
   i) Stage 4 music classes?
   ☐ Singing > Non-singing ☐ Non-singing > Singing ☐ Singing = Non-singing ☐ Do not teach
   ii) Stage 5 music classes?
   ☐ Singing > Non-singing ☐ Non-singing > Singing ☐ Singing = Non-singing ☐ Do not teach
   iii) Stage 6 music classes?
   ☐ Singing > Non-singing ☐ Non-singing > Singing ☐ Singing = Non-singing ☐ Do not teach

C4. In classroom music activities, including assessments, what is the ratio of boys and girls who sing in:
   i) Stage 4 music classes?
   ☐ Boys > Girls ☐ Girls > Boys ☐ Boys = Girls ☐ Do not teach
   ii) Stage 5 music classes?
   ☐ Boys > Girls ☐ Girls > Boys ☐ Boys = Girls ☐ Do not teach

XVI
C-3

C5. Answer for each curriculum stage:
A) How many music classes are there each fortnight?
B) How long is a single music class in minutes?
C) In how many classes each fortnight would students sing?

i) Stage 4 music classes:
A) _____________ B) _____________ C) _____________

ii) Stage 5 music classes:
A) _____________ B) _____________ C) _____________

iii) Stage 6 music classes:
A) _____________ B) _____________ C) _____________

C6. i) For what purpose/s do your students sing in music classes?

______________________________________________________________________________

ii) On average, how long (in minutes) do your students sing for in class?

iii) Is the time spent singing in class different for each Year or Stage?  
   Yes ☐ No ☐ Do not know

If Yes, describe the difference/s:

______________________________________________________________________________

C7. i) Do your students sing exercises or participate in exercises related to singing?  
   Yes ☐ No ☐

ii) If Yes, describe the exercises:

______________________________________________________________________________

iii) Do you lead the exercises?  Yes ☐ No ☐

iv) If No, who does?

v) What is the purpose/s of the exercises?

______________________________________________________________________________

C8. Do you address any vocal health issues or concerns?  
   No ☐ Rarely ☐ Sometimes ☐ Often ☐ Always

If you do address vocal health issues or concerns, describe these:

______________________________________________________________________________

C9. i) Do you address pitch accuracy with students?  
   No ☐ Rarely ☐ Sometimes ☐ Often ☐ Always

If you do address pitch accuracy, describe how:

______________________________________________________________________________

ii) Do you address other musical aspects with students?  
   No ☐ Rarely ☐ Sometimes ☐ Often ☐ Always

If you do address other musical aspects, what are they?

______________________________________________________________________________

C10. Do you use imagery or metaphor in relation to singing?  
   No ☐ Rarely ☐ Sometimes ☐ Often ☐ Always

If you do use imagery or metaphor, describe their use:

______________________________________________________________________________
C11. Name the **resources and texts** you use when undertaking singing activities in music classes (eg singing texts, curriculum support documents, piano, guitar, sheet music, recordings):

______________________________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________________________

C12. Is class singing related to the **Board of Studies NSW Music Syllabuses**?

☐ No  ☐ Rarely  ☐ Sometimes  ☐ Often  ☐ Always

If class singing is related to syllabuses, how is it related?: ____________________________

C13. Who selects the **singing repertoire** for classroom singing activities:

i)  **Stage 4** singers? ☐ Do not teach  ☐ Do not teach

ii) **Stage 5** singers? ☐ Do not teach  ☐ Do not teach

iii) **Stage 6** singers? ☐ Do not teach  ☐ Do not teach

C14. What types of singing repertoire are **A) sung** and also what types of singing repertoire are **B) predominantly sung** (mostly sung):

i)  in **Stage 4** music classes? ☐ Do not teach

   A:  ☐ Classical, describe: ____________________________

   A:  ☐ Songs from Musicals  A:  ☐ Film  A:  ☐ Jazz

   A:  ☐ Music of a Culture  A:  ☐ Rock  A:  ☐ Pop

   A:  ☐ Student Compositions  A:  ☐ Religious  A:  ☐ Other:

ii)  in **Stage 5** music classes? ☐ Do not teach

   A:  ☐ Classical, describe: ____________________________

   A:  ☐ Songs from Musicals  A:  ☐ Film  A:  ☐ Jazz

   A:  ☐ Music of a Culture  A:  ☐ Rock  A:  ☐ Pop

   A:  ☐ Student Compositions  A:  ☐ Religious  A:  ☐ Other:

iii)  in **Music 1, Stage 6** music classes? ☐ Do not teach

   A:  ☐ Classical, describe: ____________________________

   A:  ☐ Songs from Musicals  A:  ☐ Film  A:  ☐ Jazz

   A:  ☐ Music of a Culture  A:  ☐ Rock  A:  ☐ Pop

   A:  ☐ Student Compositions  A:  ☐ Religious  A:  ☐ Other:

iii)  in **Music 2 and Music Extension, Stage 6** music classes? ☐ Do not teach

   A:  ☐ Classical, describe: ____________________________

   A:  ☐ Songs from Musicals  A:  ☐ Film  A:  ☐ Jazz

   A:  ☐ Music of a Culture  A:  ☐ Rock  A:  ☐ Pop

   A:  ☐ Student Compositions  A:  ☐ Religious  A:  ☐ Other:

C15. When making singing repertoire selections, describe the criteria you use: ____________________________

______________________________________________________________________________

C16. **Answer the following Yes or No. If Yes, rank (1 to 5): 1 (most relevant) to 5 (least relevance) where appropriate; there may also be equal ranking (eg “=3”) or no relevance which will reduce the overall numbers ranked.**

Are the following relevant when making **singing repertoire selections**?

i)  **Student cultural background**  ☐ Yes  ☐ No  Ranking: _____

ii) **Student age**  ☐ Yes  ☐ No  Ranking: _____

iii) **Student singing ability**  ☐ Yes  ☐ No  Ranking: _____

iv) **Student gender**  ☐ Yes  ☐ No  Ranking: _____

v) **Student interests**  ☐ Yes  ☐ No  Ranking: _____
C17. How do students learn to sing the selected songs?

C18. Do you include song interpretation or performance skills when teaching songs? ☐ Yes ☐ No
If Yes, describe these:

C19. Do you assign different singing parts to music students in music classes? ☐ Yes ☐ No
i) If Yes, what criteria do you use to assign singing parts?

ii) If Yes, what types of singing parts are assigned? (eg harmony, canons)
Do you assign a singing part because:
   iii) the student has a soft singing voice? ☐ No ☐ Rarely ☐ Sometimes ☐ Often ☐ Always
   iv) the student has a loud singing voice? ☐ No ☐ Rarely ☐ Sometimes ☐ Often ☐ Always
   v) the student can sing high notes? ☐ No ☐ Rarely ☐ Sometimes ☐ Often ☐ Always
   vi) the student can sing low notes? ☐ No ☐ Rarely ☐ Sometimes ☐ Often ☐ Always
   vii) of the gender of the student? ☐ No ☐ Rarely ☐ Sometimes ☐ Often ☐ Always

C20. i) Do you accompany your singers on piano in class? ☐ No ☐ Rarely ☐ Sometimes ☐ Often ☐ Always
   ii) Do you accompany singers on piano in performance? ☐ No ☐ Rarely ☐ Sometimes ☐ Often ☐ Always
   iii) Do your singers sing unaccompanied? ☐ No ☐ Rarely ☐ Sometimes ☐ Often ☐ Always
   iv) Do your singers use recorded backing tracks? ☐ No ☐ Rarely ☐ Sometimes ☐ Often ☐ Always
   v) Describe other musical accompaniment available for your students who sing:

C21. i) Do your students who sing use amplification? ☐ No ☐ Rarely ☐ Sometimes ☐ Often ☐ Always
   ii) If using amplification, describe the equipment (eg amp and microphone or PA system) and the purpose/s for using it (eg for assessment, for performance):
   iii) Do students operate the equipment when in use? ☐ No ☐ Rarely ☐ Sometimes ☐ Often ☐ Always
   iv) Who is responsible for equipment settings and volume levels?

C22. i) Do you record your singing students in audio format? ☐ No ☐ Rarely ☐ Sometimes ☐ Often ☐ Always
   ii) Do you record your singing students in video format? ☐ No ☐ Rarely ☐ Sometimes ☐ Often ☐ Always
   iii) If you do record your singers, for what purpose/s do you record them?:

C23. What directions or advice do you offer students regarding their singing progress?

C24. For what purposes are singers assessed at your school? (eg music assessments, choir selection)
C25. In relation to the assessment of singers, answer for each curriculum stage:

A) Is singing a popular assessment choice?
B) Who assesses the singing students?
C) How is assessment/progress feedback given to students?
D) What criteria are used to assess singing?

<table>
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<th>Answer</th>
<th>Stage 5 singers?</th>
<th>Answer</th>
<th>Stage 6 singers?</th>
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C26. Do students have the opportunity of private singing lessons at your school? ☐Yes ☐No

C27. Do your students have private singing lessons outside school? ☐Yes ☐No ☐Do not know

C28. i) Would private singing lessons be of benefit to students in school music classes? ☐Yes ☐No

ii) Why/why not?
______________________________________________________________________________

C29. Why do you think students participate in singing at school?
______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________

C30. Is participation in singing activities at school different for boys and girls?
______________________________________________________________________________

C31. Describe other factors (e.g., cultural, social) that influence singing participation at your school:
______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________

C32. Is there anything about singing in your school or singing in schools that you would like to add?
______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________

Class Music Teachers are asked to complete questions D1 i) and D1 ii) and continue completing SECTION D if they also teach choir activities. Choir teachers complete SECTION D.

**SECTION D: CHOIR SINGING**

“Choir” in this study refers to group singing. Choir activities can include singing in a choir, a singing group or vocal ensemble. Choir activities do not include group singing in class music lessons.

D1. i) Does your school have a choir/s? ☐Yes ☐No

ii) Do you teach any choir activities at your school? ☐Yes ☐No

If No, you do not teach choir activities, you have completed this Questionnaire. Thank you for your participation. Please return the questionnaire to Diane Hughes, [postal address].

D2. i) What Years of students participate in choir activities at your school?
☐Year 7 ☐Year 8 ☐Year 9 ☐Year 10 ☐Year 11 ☐Year 12

ii) What is the approximate ratio of boys and girls participating in choir activities? (>) is greater than)
☐Boys = Girls ☐Boys > Girls ☐Girls > Boys ☐Boys Only ☐Girls Only
D3. What is the age range and average age of students participating in choir activities?
   i) Age range of boy participants: _____________ Average age of boy participants: _____
   ii) Age range of girl participants: _____________ Average age of girl participants: _____

D4. Do non-music students participate in choir activities at your school? Yes No
If Yes, what is the approximate ratio of music students to non-music students in choir activities?
   Music students > Non-music students
   Non-music students > Music students
   Music students = Non-music students

D5. i) Do any students from other schools participate in your school choir activities? Yes No
    ii) Do teachers from your school join in singing in your school choir activities? Yes No
    If Yes to D5 i) or ii), describe the additional participation:

D6. Do your singers audition for entry into the choir/s? Yes No
If Yes, what criteria are used in choir selection?

When answering the following questions, if you are responsible for more than one choir or vocal group at your school, please label each group A, B, C etc.

D7. i) Describe the group/s that you are responsible for and the number of students involved in each:

   ii) Are there any additional singing groups at your school? Yes No
       If Yes, describe these groups:

D8. i) In minutes, how long do your choir members sing for during rehearsals? _____________
    ii) How many times does your choir/s rehearse each week? (eg 1 per week) _____________

D9. Name the resources and texts you use when undertaking choir activities (eg singing texts, curriculum support documents, piano, guitar, sheet music, recordings):

D10. What are the main criteria you use to assign singing parts in choir activities?
    Do you assign a singing part because:
    i) the student has a soft singing voice? No Rarely Sometimes Often Always
    ii) the student has a loud singing voice? No Rarely Sometimes Often Always
    iii) the student can sing high notes? No Rarely Sometimes Often Always
    iv) the student can sing low notes? No Rarely Sometimes Often Always
    v) of the gender of the student? No Rarely Sometimes Often Always

D11. What are the main criteria you use to assign a solo singing part in choir activities?

D12. Who selects the choral repertoire for choir activities?

D13. At your school, what types of choral repertoire are A) sung and also what types of singing repertoire are B) predominantly sung (mostly sung):

   A: B: Classical       A: B: Songs from Musicals       A: B: Film
   A: B: Jazz           A: B: Music of a Culture       A: B: Religious
   A: B: Pop            A: B: Student Compositions    A: B: Other:

D14. When making choral repertoire selections, describe the criteria used:
C-8

D15. Answer the following Yes or No. If Yes, rank (1 to 5): 1 (most relevant) to 5 (least relevance) where appropriate; there may also be equal ranking (eg “=3”) or no relevance which will reduce the overall numbers ranked.

Are the following relevant when making choral repertoire selection?:

i) Student cultural backgrounds  □ Yes □ No  Ranking: _____

ii) Student ages  □ Yes □ No  Ranking: _____

iii) Student singing abilities  □ Yes □ No  Ranking: _____

iv) Student gender  □ Yes □ No  Ranking: _____

v) Student interests  □ Yes □ No  Ranking: _____

D16. How do students learn to sing the selected choir songs and choral parts?

______________________________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________________________

D17. Do you include song interpretation or performance skills when teaching choir repertoire?

□ Yes □ No

If Yes, describe these:

______________________________________________________________________________

D18. i) Do you accompany your choir on piano in rehearsals?  □ No □ Rarely □ Sometimes □ Often □ Always

ii) Do you play the piano for choir performances?  □ No □ Rarely □ Sometimes □ Often □ Always

iii) Do your choir/s sing unaccompanied?  □ No □ Rarely □ Sometimes □ Often □ Always

iv) Do your students use recorded backing tracks?  □ No □ Rarely □ Sometimes □ Often □ Always

v) Describe other musical accompaniment available for your choir/s or vocal groups:

______________________________________________________________________________

D19. For performances, do you conduct your choir/s?

□ No □ Rarely □ Sometimes □ Often □ Always

D20. i) Do your choir/s use amplification?

□ No □ Rarely □ Sometimes □ Often □ Always

ii) If using amplification, describe the equipment (e.g., amp and microphone or PA system) and the purpose/s for using it (e.g., for assessment, for performance):

______________________________________________________________________________

D21. i) Do you record your choir/s in audio format?

□ No □ Rarely □ Sometimes □ Often □ Always

ii) Do you record your choir/s in video format?

□ No □ Rarely □ Sometimes □ Often □ Always

iii) If you do record your singers, for what purpose/s do you record them?:

______________________________________________________________________________

D22. What directions or advice do you offer students regarding their singing progress?

______________________________________________________________________________

D23. Are choir activities related to the Board of Studies NSW Music Syllabuses?

□ No □ Rarely □ Sometimes □ Often □ Always

If choir activities are related to syllabuses, how are they related?:

______________________________________________________________________________

Choir teachers, who are not class music teachers, are to complete all questions D24-D34.

For Class Music Teachers who also teach choir activities, answers to the following questions may be the same as previously answered in Section C. If the answer to a question is the same, please tick the response box to indicate “As previously answered in Section C” or complete the question.

24. i) Do your singers participate in singing exercises or exercises related to singing?  □ Yes □ No

□ As previously answered in Section C (C7)
ii) If Yes, describe the exercises: ____________________________

iii) Do you lead the exercises? □ Yes □ No

iv) If No, who does? ____________________________
v) What is the purpose/s of the exercises? ____________________________

D25. Do you address any vocal health issues or concerns? □ No □ Rarely □ Sometimes □ Often □ Always
As previously answered in Section C (C8)
If you do address vocal health issues or concerns describe these: ____________________________

D26. i) Do you address pitch accuracy with students? □ No □ Rarely □ Sometimes □ Often □ Always
As previously answered in Section C (C9i)
If you do address pitch accuracy, describe how: ____________________________

ii) Do you address other musical aspects with students? □ No □ Rarely □ Sometimes □ Often □ Always
As previously answered in Section C (C9ii)
If you do address other musical aspects, what are they?: ____________________________

D27. Do you use imagery or metaphor in relation to singing? □ No □ Rarely □ Sometimes □ Often □ Always
As previously answered in Section C (C10)
If you do use imagery or metaphor, describe their use: ____________________________

D28. Do students have the opportunity of private singing lessons at your school? □ Yes □ No
As previously answered in Section C (C26)

D29. Do your students have private singing lessons outside school? □ Yes □ No □ Do not know
As previously answered in Section C (C27)

D30. i) Would private singing lessons be of benefit to students in school music classes? □ Yes □ No
As previously answered in Section C (C28)
ii) Why/why not?: ____________________________

D31. Why do you think students participate in singing at school? □ As previously answered in Section C (C29)

D32. Is participation in singing activities at school different for boys and girls? □ As previously answered in Section C (C30)

D33. Describe other factors (eg cultural, social) that influence singing participation at your school: □ As previously answered in Section C (C31)
D34. Is there anything about singing in your school or singing in schools that you would like to add?  
☐ As previously answered in Section C (C32)

-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

You have completed this Questionnaire. Thank you for your participation.  
Please return the questionnaire to Diane Hughes, [postal address].
APPENDIX D: Secondary Single Sex Questionnaire (SSQ)

Singing in Schools

This research study focuses on singing activities in Sydney NSW Government Schools (primary and secondary). At present, other than the NSW Board of Studies Creative Arts/Music Syllabuses and related documents, there is little information or research on the teaching of singing within Sydney schools.

The Department of Education and Training has approved this research project SERAP Number: [Number]

To Secondary Class Music Teachers and Secondary Choir Teachers,

I am a PhD student at the University of Western Sydney and this questionnaire is part of research into the teaching of singing in Sydney NSW Government Schools. I am very interested in finding out about singing activities at your school. Your participation in this research is voluntary. Your privacy and that of your school will be ensured as participants' names are not required and your school will be coded during data collection and entry. Sources of information will therefore remain confidential. Information from completed questionnaires will be compiled into a PhD Thesis, report and papers for publication.

Your assistance in completing this questionnaire is greatly appreciated. Please complete the questionnaire as soon as possible and return it by [date]. Post the completed questionnaire to Diane Hughes, [postal address]. Return of the completed questionnaire is taken as an indication of your voluntary consent. Should you require any information regarding this research or the questionnaires, please contact me by telephone on [mobile phone number] or by email [email address].

Yours faithfully,
DIANE HUGHES
PhD Student, University of Western Sydney

Diane Hughes notes that she practices professionally as a singer and singing teacher under the name “Diana Hunter”.

NOTE: This study has been approved by the University of Western Sydney Human Research Ethics Committee. The Approval Number is [number]. If you have any complaints or reservations about the ethical conduct of this research, you may contact the Ethics Committee through the Research Ethics Officers [telephone numbers]. Any issues you raise will be treated in confidence and investigated fully, and you will be informed of the outcome.

SECTION A: CONTEXT

1. Name of School ______________________________      2. Date completing questionnaire _________

3. What are your i) teaching qualifications, ii) music/singing training and iii) music/singing experience?

4. Are you □ Male or □ Female?  5. How many years have you been teaching in secondary schools? _____

Secondary Class Music Teachers are asked to complete all questions as indicated.

If you teach secondary Choir activities and you are not a Class Music Teacher complete:
   1. Section A (Questions 1 - 6, page 1)
   2. Section B (page 2)
   3. Section D (pages 6 - 9)

Secondary Class Music Teachers are asked to complete all questions as indicated.

If you teach secondary Choir activities and you are not a Class Music Teacher complete:

   1. Section A (Questions 1 - 6, page 1)
   2. Section B (page 2)
   3. Section D (pages 6 - 9)
6. Do you teach subjects other than music or choir? □ Yes □ No   If Yes, what subject/s? _____________
7. If you teach class music, what Years and Courses of music students do you currently teach?
□ Year 7, Stage 4         □ Year 9, Stage 5         □ Year 11, Stage 6 Music 1         □ Year 12, Stage 6 Music 1
□ Year 8, Stage 4         □ Year 10, Stage 5         □ Year 11, Stage 6 Music 2         □ Year 12, Stage 6 Music 2
□ Year 12, Stage 6Extension

SECTION B: SCHOOL SINGING ACTIVITIES
B1. What singing activities take place at your school?
□ None □ Music Class □ Music Assessments
□ Assembly Class Performance □ Assembly Choir Performance □ Whole school at assembly
□ Concert Class Performance □ Concert Choir Performance □ Concert Solo Performance
□ Other activities where students sing, describe these activities (eg school musical, Sing NSW):
______________________________________________________________________________

B2. Describe the positions (eg class music teachers, specialist teachers) and duties of teachers
who teach singing activities at your school (do not include teacher names):
______________________________________________________________________________

B3. Do any choirs from your school represent your school at festivals or competitions?
Choir at festivals: □ Yes □ No □ Do not know   Choir at competitions: □ Yes □ No □ Do not know
B4. Do any students who sing represent your school at festivals or competitions?
Student at festivals: □ Yes □ No □ Do not know   Student at competitions: □ Yes □ No □ Do not know
B5. What Years/Stages of students participate in singing activities at your school?
□ Year 7, Stage 4         □ Year 8, Stage 4         □ Year 9, Stage 5         □ Year 10, Stage 5
□ Year 11, Stage 6         □ Year 12, Stage 6         □ Other:

Choir teachers who are not Class Music Teachers now go to SECTION D (page 6).
Class Music Teachers are asked to complete SECTION C.

SECTION C: CLASS SINGING
CLASS SINGING: Singing activities during school music classes (not private singing lessons or choir)
C1. What is the gender of your students? □ Boys □ Girls
C2. i) What is the smallest number of students in a music class ________? Which Year? ________
   ii) What is the largest number of students in a music class ________? Which Year? ________
C3. In classroom music activities, including assessments, what is the ratio of music students who
sing to non-singing music students in:
   (> is greater than, = is equal to)
   i) Stage 4 music classes?
      □ Singing > Non-singing □ Non-singing > Singing □ Singing = Non-singing □ Do not teach
   ii) Stage 5 music classes?
      □ Singing > Non-singing □ Non-singing > Singing □ Singing = Non-singing □ Do not teach
   iv) Stage 6 music classes?
      □ Singing > Non-singing □ Non-singing > Singing □ Singing = Non-singing □ Do not teach
C4. Answer for each curriculum stage:
   A) How many music classes are there each fortnight?
   B) How long is a single music class in minutes?
   C) In how many classes each fortnight would students sing?
   i) Stage 4 music classes:
      A) ____________   B) ____________   C) ____________
   ii) Stage 5 music classes:
      A) ____________   B) ____________   C) ____________
iii) **Stage 6** music classes: □ Do not teach
   A) □□□□□□□□ B) □□□□□□□□ C) □□□□□□□□

C5. i) For what **purpose/s** do your students sing in music classes?

______________________________________________________________________________

ii) On average, how long (in minutes) do your students sing for in class? ______________

iii) Is the time spent singing in class different for each Year or Stage? □ Yes □ No □ Do not know

If Yes, describe the difference/s: _________________________________________________________________________________________

C6. i) Do your students **sing exercises** or participate in **exercises related to singing**? □ Yes □ No

ii) If Yes, describe the exercises: _________________________________________________________________________________________

iii) Do you lead the exercises? □ Yes □ No   iv) If No, who does?__________________________

v) What is the purpose/s of the exercises?: _________________________________________________________________________________________

C7. Do you address any **vocal health issues** or concerns? □ No □ Rarely □ Sometimes □ Often □ Always

If you do address vocal health issues or concerns, describe these: _________________________________________________________________________________________

C8. i) Do you address **pitch accuracy** with students? □ No □ Rarely □ Sometimes □ Often □ Always

If you do address pitch accuracy, describe how: _________________________________________________________________________________________

ii) Do you address other **musical aspects** with students? □ No □ Rarely □ Sometimes □ Often □ Always

If you do address other musical aspects, what are they?: _________________________________________________________________________________________

C9. Do you use **imagery** or **metaphor** in relation to singing? □ No □ Rarely □ Sometimes □ Often □ Always

If you do use imagery or metaphor, describe their use: _________________________________________________________________________________________

C10. Name the **resources and texts** you use when undertaking singing activities in music classes (eg singing texts, curriculum support documents, piano, guitar, sheet music, recordings):

______________________________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________________________

C11. Is class singing related to the **Board of Studies NSW Music Syllabuses**?

□ No □ Rarely □ Sometimes □ Often □ Always
C12. Who selects the **singing repertoire** for classroom singing activities:

i) **Stage 4** singers? __________________

Do not teach

ii) **Stage 5** singers? __________________

Do not teach

iii) **Stage 6** singers? __________________

Do not teach

C13. What types of singing repertoire are **A) sung** and also what types of singing repertoire are **B) predominantly sung** (mostly sung):

i) in **Stage 4** music classes? □ Do not teach

A: □ B: □ Classical, describe:

A: □ B: □ Songs from Musicals A: □ B: □ Film A: □ B: □ Jazz

A: □ B: □ Music of a Culture A: □ B: □ Rock A: □ B: □ Pop

A: □ B: □ Student Compositions A: □ B: □ Religious A: □ B: □ Other:

ii) in **Stage 5** music classes? □ Do not teach

A: □ B: □ Classical, describe:

A: □ B: □ Songs from Musicals A: □ B: □ Film A: □ B: □ Jazz

A: □ B: □ Music of a Culture A: □ B: □ Rock A: □ B: □ Pop

A: □ B: □ Student Compositions A: □ B: □ Religious A: □ B: □ Other:

iii) in **Music 1, Stage 6** music classes? □ Do not teach

A: □ B: □ Classical, describe:

A: □ B: □ Songs from Musicals A: □ B: □ Film A: □ B: □ Jazz

A: □ B: □ Music of a Culture A: □ B: □ Rock A: □ B: □ Pop

A: □ B: □ Student Compositions A: □ B: □ Religious A: □ B: □ Other:

iv) in **Music 2 and Music Extension, Stage 6** music classes? □ Do not teach

A: □ B: □ Classical, describe:

A: □ B: □ Songs from Musicals A: □ B: □ Film A: □ B: □ Jazz

A: □ B: □ Music of a Culture A: □ B: □ Rock A: □ B: □ Pop

A: □ B: □ Student Compositions A: □ B: □ Religious A: □ B: □ Other:

C14. When making singing repertoire selections, describe the criteria you use:____________________________

C15. *Answer the following Yes or No. If Yes, rank (1 to 5): 1 (most relevant) to 5 (least relevance) where appropriate; there may also be equal ranking (eg “=3”) or no relevance which will reduce the overall numbers ranked.*

Are the following relevant when making **singing repertoire selections**?

i) Student cultural background □ Yes □ No Ranking:_____

ii) Student age □ Yes □ No Ranking:_____

iii) Student singing ability □ Yes □ No Ranking:_____

iv) Student gender □ Yes □ No Ranking:_____

v) Student interests □ Yes □ No Ranking:_____

C16. How do students learn to sing the selected songs?

C17. Do you include **song interpretation** or **performance skills** when teaching songs? □ Yes □ No
D-5

If Yes, describe these:__________________________________________________________

C18. Do you assign different **singing parts** to music students in music classes? □ Yes □ No
   i) If Yes, what criteria do you use to assign singing parts? _______________________________
   ii) If Yes, what types of singing parts are assigned? (eg harmony, canons)________________________

Do you assign a singing part because:
   iii) the student has a soft singing voice? □ No □ Rarely □ Sometimes □ Often □ Always
   iv) the student has a loud singing voice? □ No □ Rarely □ Sometimes □ Often □ Always
   v) the student can sing high notes? □ No □ Rarely □ Sometimes □ Often □ Always
   vi) the student can sing low notes? □ No □ Rarely □ Sometimes □ Often □ Always
   vii) of the gender of the student? □ No □ Rarely □ Sometimes □ Often □ Always

C19. i) Do you **accompany** your singers on piano in class? □ No □ Rarely □ Sometimes □ Often □ Always
   ii) Do you accompany singers on piano in performance? □ No □ Rarely □ Sometimes □ Often □ Always
   iii) Do your singers sing unaccompanied? □ No □ Rarely □ Sometimes □ Often □ Always
   iv) Do your singers use recorded backing tracks? □ No □ Rarely □ Sometimes □ Often □ Always
   v) Describe other musical accompaniment available for your students who sing:

C20. i) Do your students who sing use **amplification**? □ No □ Rarely □ Sometimes □ Often □ Always
   ii) If using amplification, describe the equipment (eg amp and microphone or PA system) and the
       purpose/s for using it (eg for assessment, for performance):

   iii) Do students operate the equipment when in use? □ No □ Rarely □ Sometimes □ Often □ Always
   iv) Who is responsible for equipment settings and volume levels? _________________________

C21. i) Do you **record** your singing students in audio format? □ No □ Rarely □ Sometimes □ Often □ Always
   ii) Do you record your singing students in video format? □ No □ Rarely □ Sometimes □ Often □ Always
   iii) If you do record your singers, for what purpose/s do you record them?:

C22. **What directions or advice** do you offer students regarding their singing progress?

C23. For what purpose/s are singers **assessed** at your school? (eg music assessments, choir selection)

C24. In relation to the assessment of singers, answer for each curriculum stage:

   A) Is singing a popular assessment choice?
   B) Who assesses the singing students?
   C) How is assessment/progress feedback given to students?
   D) What criteria are used to assess singing?

   i) for **Stage 4** singers? □ Do not teach
      A) □ Yes □ No   B) ___________________________ C) ___________________________
      D) ___________________________
D-6

ii) for **Stage 5** singers? □ Do not teach
   A) [ ] Yes  □ No  B) ____________________________  C) ____________________________
   D) __________________________________________________________________________

iii) for **Stage 6** singers? □ Do not teach
   A) [ ] Yes  □ No  B) ____________________________  C) ____________________________
   D) __________________________________________________________________________

C25. Do students have the opportunity of **private singing lessons** at your school?  □ Yes  □ No
C26. Do your students have private singing lessons outside school? □ Yes  □ No  □ Do not know
C27. i) Would private singing lessons be of benefit to students in school music classes? □ Yes  □ No
   ii) Why/why not?
   ______________________________________________________________________________

C28. Why do you think students **participate in singing** at school?
   ______________________________________________________________________________

C29. Is participation in singing activities at school **different for boys and girls**?
   ______________________________________________________________________________

C30. Describe **other factors** (eg cultural, social) that influence singing participation at your school:
   ______________________________________________________________________________

C31. Is there anything about singing in your school or singing in schools that you would like to add?
   ______________________________________________________________________________

---

**Class Music Teachers** are asked to complete questions D1 i) and D1 ii) and continue completing
SECTION D if they also teach choir activities. **Choir teachers complete SECTION D.**

**SECTION D: CHOIR SINGING**

“**Choir**” in this study refers to group singing. Choir activities can include singing in a choir, a singing group
or vocal ensemble. Choir activities do not include group singing in class music lessons.

D1. i) Does your school have a choir/s?  □ Yes  □ No
    ii) Do you teach any choir activities at your school?  □ Yes  □ No

If No, you do not teach choir activities, you have completed this Questionnaire. Thank you for your
participation. Please return the questionnaire to **Diane Hughes**, [postal address].

D2. i) What Years of students participate in choir activities at your school?
   □ Year 7  □ Year 8  □ Year 9  □ Year 10  □ Year 11  □ Year 12
   ii) What is the gender of your choir students?
   □ Boys  □ Girls

D3. What is the **age range and average age** of students participating in choir activities?
   Age range of participants: _______________  Average age of participants: _____

XXX
D.  Do non-music students **participate** in choir activities at your school?  
☐ Yes  ☐ No

If Yes, what is the approximate ratio of **music** students to **non-music** students in choir activities?  
☐ Music students > Non-music students  ☐ Non-music students > Music students  ☐ Music students = Non-music students

D5.  

i) Do any students from other schools participate in your school choir activities?  
☐ Yes  ☐ No

ii) Do teachers from your school join in singing in your school choir activities?  
☐ Yes  ☐ No

If Yes to D5 i) or ii), describe the additional participation:  
______________________________________________________________________________

D6.  Do your singers **audition** for entry into the choir/s?  
☐ Yes  ☐ No

If Yes, what criteria are used in choir selection?
______________________________________________________________________________  

When answering the following questions, if you are responsible for more than one choir or vocal group at your school, please label each group A, B, C etc.

D7.  

i) Describe the group/s that you are responsible for and the number of students involved in each:  
______________________________________________________________________________

ii) Are there any additional singing groups at your school?  
☐ Yes  ☐ No

If Yes, describe these groups:  
______________________________________________________________________________

D8.  

i) In minutes, how long do your choir members sing for during rehearsals?  
____________________

ii) How many times does your choir/s rehearse each week? (eg 1 per week)  
____________________

D9.  Name the **resources and texts** you use when undertaking choir activities (eg singing texts, curriculum support documents, piano, guitar, sheet music, recordings):  
______________________________________________________________________________  

______________________________________________________________________________

D10. What are the main criteria you use to assign **singing parts in choir activities**?

Do you assign a singing part because:

  i) the student has a soft singing voice?  
☐ No  ☐ Rarely  ☐ Sometimes  ☐ Often  ☐ Always

  ii) the student has a loud singing voice?  
☐ No  ☐ Rarely  ☐ Sometimes  ☐ Often  ☐ Always

  iii) the student can sing high notes?  
☐ No  ☐ Rarely  ☐ Sometimes  ☐ Often  ☐ Always

  iv) the student can sing low notes?  
☐ No  ☐ Rarely  ☐ Sometimes  ☐ Often  ☐ Always

  v) of the gender of the student?  
☐ No  ☐ Rarely  ☐ Sometimes  ☐ Often  ☐ Always

D11. What are the main criteria you use to assign a **solo singing part in choir activities**?

______________________________________________________________________________

D12. Who selects the **choral repertoire** for choir activities?  
________________________________

D13. At your school, what types of choral repertoire are **A) sung** and also what types of singing repertoire are **B) predominantly sung** (mostly sung):  

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D-8

D14. When making choral repertoire selections, describe the criteria used:
______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________

D15. Answer the following Yes or No. If Yes, rank (1 to 5): 1 (most relevant) to 5 (least relevance) where appropriate; there may also be equal ranking (eg “=3”) or no relevance which will reduce the overall numbers ranked.

Are the following relevant when making choral repertoire selections?:

i) Student cultural backgrounds  Yes ☐ No ☐ Ranking: ________
ii) Student ages  Yes ☐ No ☐ Ranking: ________
iii) Student singing abilities  Yes ☐ No ☐ Ranking: ________
iv) Student gender  Yes ☐ No ☐ Ranking: ________
v) Student interests  Yes ☐ No ☐ Ranking: ________

D16. How do students learn to sing the selected choir songs and choral parts?
______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________

D17. Do you include song interpretation or performance skills when teaching choir repertoire?
☐ Yes ☐ No
If Yes, describe these:

D18. i) Do you accompany your choir on piano in rehearsals?  No ☐ Rarely ☐ Sometimes ☐ Often ☐ Always
ii) Do you play the piano for choir performances?  No ☐ Rarely ☐ Sometimes ☐ Often ☐ Always
iii) Do your choir/s sing unaccompanied?  No ☐ Rarely ☐ Sometimes ☐ Often ☐ Always
iv) Do your choir/s use recorded backing tracks?  No ☐ Rarely ☐ Sometimes ☐ Often ☐ Always
v) Describe other musical accompaniment available for your choir/s or vocal groups:
______________________________________________________________________________

D19. For performances, do you conduct your choir/s?  No ☐ Rarely ☐ Sometimes ☐ Often ☐ Always

D20. i) Do your choir/s use amplification?  No ☐ Rarely ☐ Sometimes ☐ Often ☐ Always
ii) If using amplification, describe the equipment (eg amp and microphone or PA system) and the purpose/s for using it (eg for assessment, for performance):

iii) Do students operate the equipment when in use?  No ☐ Rarely ☐ Sometimes ☐ Often ☐ Always
iv) Who is responsible for equipment settings and volume levels?_________________________

D21. i) Do you record your choir/s in audio format?  No ☐ Rarely ☐ Sometimes ☐ Often ☐ Always
ii) Do you record your choir/s in video format?  No ☐ Rarely ☐ Sometimes ☐ Often ☐ Always
iii) If you do record your choir/s, for what purpose/s do you record them?:
______________________________________________________________________________

D22. What directions or advice do you offer choir singers regarding their singing progress?
______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________

D23. Are choir activities related to the Board of Studies NSW Music Syllabuses?
☐ No ☐ Rarely ☐ Sometimes ☐ Often ☐ Always
If choir activities are related to syllabuses, how are they related?: _______________________
______________________________________________________________________________

Choir teachers, who are not class music teachers, are to complete all questions D24-D34.
For Class Music Teachers who also teach choir activities, answers to the following questions may be the same as previously answered in Section C. If the answer to a question is the same, please tick the response box to indicate “As previously answered in Section C” or complete the question.
D-9

D24. i) Do your singers participate in singing exercises or exercises related to singing? ☐ Yes ☐ No
☐ As previously answered in Section C (C6)
ii) If Yes, describe the exercises:
______________________________________________________________________________

iii) Do you lead the exercises? ☐ Yes ☐ No    iv) If No, who does? _____________________
v) What is the purpose/s of the exercises? ____________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________

D25. Do you address any vocal health issues or concerns? ☐ No ☐ Rarely ☐ Sometimes ☐ Often ☐ Always
☐ As previously answered in Section C (C7)
If you do address vocal health issues or concerns, describe these: __________________________
______________________________________________________________________________

D26. i) Do you address pitch accuracy with students? ☐ No ☐ Rarely ☐ Sometimes ☐ Often ☐ Always
☐ As previously answered in Section C (C8i)
If you do address pitch accuracy, describe how:________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________

ii) Do you address other musical aspects with students? ☐ No ☐ Rarely ☐ Sometimes ☐ Often ☐ Always
☐ As previously answered in Section C (C8ii)
If you do address other musical aspects, what are they?: __________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________

D27. Do you use imagery or metaphor in relation to singing? ☐ No ☐ Rarely ☐ Sometimes ☐ Often ☐ Always
☐ As previously answered in Section C (C9)
If you do use imagery or metaphor, describe their use: ________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________

D28. Do students have the opportunity of private singing lessons at your school? ☐ Yes ☐ No
☐ As previously answered in Section C (C25)

D29. Do your students have private singing lessons outside school? ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Do not know
☐ As previously answered in Section C (C26)

D30. i) Would private singing lessons be of benefit to students in school music classes? ☐ Yes ☐ No
☐ As previously answered in Section C (C27)
ii) Why/why not?:

D31. Why do you think students participate in singing at school? ☐ As previously answered in Section C (C28)
______________________________________________________________________________

D32. Is participation in singing activities at school different for boys and girls? ☐ As previously answered in Section C (C29)
______________________________________________________________________________
D33. Describe other factors (eg cultural, social) that influence singing participation at your school:
☐ As previously answered in Section C (C30)

_____________________________________________________________________________________

_____________________________________________________________________________________

D34. Is there anything about singing in your school or singing in schools that you would like to add?
☐ As previously answered in Section C (C31)

_____________________________________________________________________________________

You have completed this Questionnaire. Thank you for your participation.
Please return the questionnaire to Diane Hughes, [postal address].
APPENDIX E: Interview Schedule

CONTEXT
1. What are your teaching qualifications?
2. Do you have any other qualifications?
3. Do you have any music or singing training?
4. Do you have any music or singing experience?
5. What classes and subjects do you currently teach?
6. Are you responsible for choral activities?
7. How many years have you been teaching?

SINGING IN YOUR SCHOOL
7. Why does the school involve students in singing?
8. How is singing taught at your school?
9. Describe any whole school singing activities offered at your school.
10. Describe class singing activities.
11. Can you describe the relevance of the singing activities at your school?

CLASS AND/OR SINGING (Firstly in relation to (1) class singing, then (2) choral then to …)
13. Do you have an allocated time in the time-table for music classes or is music included in other activities? How often are music classes scheduled?
14. In your music class how do you teach singing? How do you teach songs?
15. Do you address pitch accuracy?
16. How do you help ‘out of tune’ singers?
17. Do you use sol-fa syllables?
18. You’ve said that you demonstrate line by line, do you use any other methods of voice modeling? Recorded?
19. Is singing relevant to the musical concepts in the curriculum?
   How do you teach singing to the choir?
20. What types of musical accompaniment are available for singing activities?
21. Do you include interpretive elements when teaching songs?
22. Do you use any resources, texts, curricula and curriculum support documents for singing activities? Can you name these resources and describe their purpose?

CHORAL ACTIVITIES
28. What is the selection process for students wanting to participate in choir?
29. Do students audition for choir/s or vocal group/s?
30. Do you use any resources, texts, curricula and curriculum support documents for choral activities? Can you name these resources and describe their purpose?
31. How are choral parts assigned?
32. How are solos assigned?
REPETROIRE (Firstly in relation to (1) class singing, then (2) choral then to (3) any solo or individual singers …)

35 How important is repertoire selection for your class?
36 What criteria do you use to select songs?
37 Are there any specific considerations when making repertoire selections?
38 Does student gender impact on repertoire selection?
39 When choosing repertoire, are there any cultural, age, developmental (physiological) and/or emotional considerations?
40 Are there other considerations, such as vocal range/vocal tone, when choosing repertoire?
41 What are the most predominant repertoire styles sung by your students?
42 What are the most popular repertoire styles sung by your students?
43 Do these styles alter at different curriculum stages/ages? You’ve mentioned Year 6.
44 For you choir, how do you select songs?
45 Do students ever choose their own repertoire?
46 Does student gender impact on repertoire selection for choir?
47 Are there other considerations, such as cultural, age, developmental (physiological) and/or emotional considerations vocal range/vocal tone, when choosing repertoire for choir?

TEACHING METHODS

45 Is it appropriate to address vocal (singing) technique in your teaching? (To show students how to sing high notes…)
48 Is it appropriate to address vocal health in your teaching?
51 Do you assess singers? You do with the choir and it’s mainly pitch is it?
52 What types of assessment feedback do you offer singers?
53 Are there any specific procedures or timetabling issues relevant to the assessment of singers?

SYLLABUS RELEVANCE

54 Do any of your school singing activities relate to NSW Board of Studies Syllabuses?
55 Is singing related within the K-12 continuum of music learning?
57 Are singing activities that relate to curriculum singing different to extra curricular singing activities?
58 Would it be beneficial or appropriate for choral singing to be included in the curriculum?
59 How relevant is it for teachers to be competent singers?
60 How relevant is it for teachers to be interested in singing?
61 Are there any special vocal skills needed for teaching class or group singing?
62 Did your teacher training include these skills?
63 Did you acquire them through teaching?
64 What curriculum support is available to you?
65 Is there adequate professional development or in-service training opportunities available to you?
66 Is there adequate professional development or in-service training opportunities available to you?
67 Do you think that singing should form the foundation of music curriculum? Why/Why not?

PRIVATE SINGING LESSONS
Do any of your singing students study singing privately?
Do you think private singing lessons are beneficial?

**PERFORMANCE OPPORTUNITIES**

At your school, or through your school, are there performance opportunities for singers?
How significant are performance opportunities to student motivation, development and commitment to singing?

**SINGING PARTICIPATION**

Why do students participate in singing at school? Mandatory?
What are your experiences of children’s attitudes to singing?
Is school singing ‘cool’?
Should school singing be ‘cool’?
If singing is a whole school or ‘perfectly normal’ school activity, or a singing culture exists at a school, would this adequately address any student hesitancy to sing?
Can you suggest any other strategies to ensure student participation in singing activities?
Do you think it is beneficial for students to sing at school?
Are there any factors, including gender, cultural and financial, that may influence student singing participation at school?
More specifically, do you think there are any differences between girls and boys participating in singing at school? Boys and sport, girls and music?
Do you think that girl only or boy only singing activities/choirs would be beneficial?
Is there anything about singing in schools which you would like to add?
Do you consider that the school singing voice to be a musical instrument?
APPENDIX F: Primary Principal Information Letter (Part 1)

[Original email version; University letterhead]

To the Primary School Principal,

I am a PhD student at the University of Western Sydney and am conducting a study on how singing is taught in Sydney NSW Government Schools (primary and secondary). The Department of Education and Training has approved this research project on Singing in Schools (SERAP Number: [number]). At present, other than the published relevant NSW Board of Studies Creative Arts and Music Syllabuses and related documents, there is little information or research on the teaching of singing within Sydney schools.

Part 1 of my research involves the completion of a Singing in Schools Questionnaire by the following participants:

- Year 3 Class Teachers
- Primary Choir Teachers

I am very interested in finding out about singing activities at your school. Please print the Questionnaire and the Teacher Information Letter. Forward these to the appropriate teachers for completion. The questionnaire is designed to be completed in hard copy using pen. The questionnaires should be completed as soon as possible, or by [date], and returned by post to Diane Hughes, [postal address].

Information from completed questionnaires will be compiled into a PhD Thesis, report and papers for publication. Participation in this research is voluntary. The privacy of your teachers and that of your school will be ensured as participants' names are not required and your school will be coded during data collection and entry. Sources of information included in the PhD Thesis, report and papers will therefore remain confidential.

Should you require any information regarding this research, please contact me by telephone on [mobile telephone number], by e-mail [student email address] or by writing to Diane Hughes, [postal address].

A copy of the approval letter from the NSW Department of Education and Training Strategic Research Directorate follows this letter.

Thank you for your interest.

Yours faithfully,

[Diane Hughes, PhD Student, University of Western Sydney]

Diane Hughes notes that she practices professionally as a singer and singing teacher under the name “Diana Hunter”.

NOTE: This study has been approved by the University of Western Sydney Human Research Ethics Committee. The Approval Number is [number]. If you have any complaints or reservations about the ethical conduct of this research, you may contact the Ethics Committee through the Research Ethics Officers [telephone numbers]. Any issues you raise will be treated in confidence and investigated fully, and you will be informed of the outcome.

1 Postal version read: “This is a postal version of an email sent to you last year. I am contacting you again as the original deadline for the return of questionnaires has now been extended to [date]. I am a PhD student at the University of Western Sydney and am conducting a study on the teaching of singing in Sydney NSW Government Schools (primary and secondary)”.  
2 Postal version read: “Please forward the attached Teacher Information Letter and the Questionnaire to the appropriate teacher/s for completion”.  
3 Postal version read: “Copies of the approval letters from the NSW Department of Education and Training Planning and Innovation and the Strategic Research Directorate follow this letter”.

XXXVIII
APPENDIX G: Secondary Principal Information Letter (Part 1)

[Original email version; Printed on University letterhead]

[Date]
To the Secondary School Principal,

I am a PhD student at the University of Western Sydney and am conducting a study on how singing is taught in Sydney NSW Government Schools (primary and secondary). The Department of Education and Training has approved this research project on Singing in Schools SERAP Number: [number]. At present, other than the published relevant NSW Board of Studies Creative Arts and Music Syllabuses and related documents, there is little information or research on the teaching of singing within Sydney schools.

Part 1 of my research includes the completion of a Singing in Schools Questionnaire by the following participants:

- Secondary Class Music Teachers
- Secondary Choir Teachers

I am very interested in finding out about singing activities at your school. Please print the Questionnaire and the Teacher Information Letter. Forward these to the appropriate teachers for completion. The questionnaire is designed to be completed in hard copy using pen. The questionnaires should be completed as soon as possible, or by [date], and returned by post to Diane Hughes, [postal address].

Information from completed questionnaires will be compiled into a PhD Thesis, report and papers for publication. Participation in this research is voluntary. The privacy of your teachers and that of your school will be ensured as participants' names are not required and your school will be coded during data collection and entry. Sources of information included in the PhD Thesis, report and papers will therefore remain confidential.

Should you require any information regarding this research, please contact me by telephone on [mobile telephone number], by e-mail [student email address] or by writing to Diane Hughes, [postal address].

A copy of the approval letter from the NSW Department of Education and Training Strategic Research Directorate follows this letter.

Thank you for your interest.

Yours faithfully,

[Signature]
Diane Hughes
PhD Student, University of Western Sydney

Diane Hughes notes that she practices professionally as a singer and singing teacher under the name “Diana Hunter”.

NOTE: This study has been approved by the University of Western Sydney Human Research Ethics Committee. The Approval Number is [number]. If you have any complaints or reservations about the ethical conduct of this research, you may contact the Ethics Committee through the Research Ethics Officers [telephone numbers]. Any issues you raise will be treated in confidence and investigated fully, and you will be informed of the outcome.

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4 Postal version read: “This is a postal version of an email sent to you last year. I am contacting you again as the original deadline for the return of questionnaires has now been extended to [date]. I am a PhD student at the University of Western Sydney and am conducting a study on the teaching of singing in Sydney NSW Government Schools (primary and secondary)”.

5 Postal version read: “Please forward the attached Teacher Information Letter and the Questionnaire to the appropriate teacher/s for completion”.

6 Postal version read: “Copies of the approval letters from the NSW Department of Education and Training Planning and Innovation and the Strategic Research Directorate follow this letter”.

XXXIX
To Year 3 Class Teachers and Primary Choir Teachers,

I am a PhD student at the University of Western Sydney and am conducting a study on the teaching of singing in Sydney NSW Government Schools (primary and secondary). The Department of Education and Training has approved this research project on Singing in Schools SERAP Number: [number]. At present, other than the published relevant NSW Board of Studies Creative Arts and Music Syllabuses and related documents, there is little information or research on the teaching of singing within Sydney schools.

I am very interested in finding out about singing activities at your school. Part 1 of my research includes the completion of a Singing in Schools Questionnaire by the following participants:

- Year 3 Class Teachers
- Primary Choir Teachers

The questionnaire is designed to be completed in hard copy using pen. The questionnaires should be completed as soon as possible, or by [Date], and returned by post to Diane Hughes, [address]. Information from completed questionnaires will be compiled into a PhD Thesis, report and papers for publication.

Participation in this research is voluntary. A decision not to participate will in no way prejudice your relationship with the school and you are free to withdraw participation at any time. Return of the completed questionnaire is taken as an indication of your voluntary consent. Your privacy and that of your school will be ensured as participants' names are not required and your school will be coded during data collection and entry. Sources of information included in the PhD Thesis, report and papers will therefore remain confidential.

Should you require any information regarding this research, please contact me by telephone on [telephone number], by e-mail [student email address] or by writing to Diane Hughes, [postal address].

Thank you for your interest.

Yours faithfully,

[Signature]

DIANE HUGHES
PhD Student, University of Western Sydney

Diane Hughes notes that she practices professionally as a singer and singing teacher under the name “Diana Hunter”.

NOTE: This study has been approved by the University of Western Sydney Human Research Ethics Committee. The Approval Number is [number]. If you have any complaints or reservations about the ethical conduct of this research, you may contact the Ethics Committee through the Research Ethics Officers [telephone numbers]. Any issues you raise will be treated in confidence and investigated fully, and you will be informed of the outcome.

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7 Postal version read: “This is a postal version of an email sent to your school last year. I am contacting you again as the original deadline for the return of questionnaires has now been extended to [Date]. I am a PhD student at the University of Western Sydney and am conducting a study on the teaching of singing in Sydney NSW Government Schools (primary and secondary)”.

8 Postal version read: “The questionnaire should be completed as soon as possible, or by [Date], and returned by post to Diane Hughes, [address]”.
APPENDIX I: Secondary Teacher Information Letter (Part 1)

[Original email version; Printed on University letterhead]
[Date]
To Secondary Class Music Teachers and Secondary Choir Teachers,

I am a PhD student at the University of Western Sydney and am conducting a study on the teaching of singing in Sydney NSW Government Schools (primary and secondary)⁹. The Department of Education and Training has approved this research project on Singing in Schools SERAP Number: [number]. At present, other than the published relevant NSW Board of Studies Creative Arts and Music Syllabuses and related documents, there is little information or research on the teaching of singing within Sydney schools.

I am very interested in finding out about singing activities at your school. Part 1 of my research includes the completion of a Singing in Schools Questionnaire by the following participants:

- Secondary Class Music Teachers
- Secondary Choir Teachers

The questionnaire is designed to be completed in hard copy using pen¹⁰. The questionnaires should be completed as soon as possible, or by [Date], and returned by post to Diane Hughes, [address]. Information from completed questionnaires will be compiled into a PhD Thesis, report and papers for publication.

Participation in this research is voluntary. A decision not to participate will in no way prejudice your relationship with the school and you are free to withdraw participation at any time. Return of the completed questionnaire is taken as an indication of your voluntary consent. Your privacy and that of your school will be ensured as participants’ names are not required and your school will be coded during data collection and entry. Sources of information included in the PhD Thesis, report and papers will therefore remain confidential.

Should you require any information regarding this research, please contact me by telephone on [telephone number], by e-mail [student email address] or by writing to Diane Hughes, [postal address].

Thank you for your interest.
Yours faithfully,

[Signature]
DIANE HUGHES
PhD Student, University of Western Sydney

Diane Hughes notes that she practices professionally as a singer and singing teacher under the name “Diana Hunter”.

NOTE: This study has been approved by the University of Western Sydney Human Research Ethics Committee. The Approval Number is [number]. If you have any complaints or reservations about the ethical conduct of this research, you may contact the Ethics Committee through the Research Ethics Officers [telephone numbers]. Any issues you raise will be treated in confidence and investigated fully, and you will be informed of the outcome.

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⁹ Postal version read: “This is a postal version of an email sent to your school last year. I am contacting you again as the original deadline for the return of questionnaires has now been extended to [Date]. I am a PhD student at the University of Western Sydney and am conducting a study on the teaching of singing in Sydney NSW Government Schools (primary and secondary)”.

¹⁰ Postal version read: “The questionnaire should be completed as soon as possible, or by [Date], and returned by post to Diane Hughes, [address]”. 
APPENDIX J: Primary Principal Information Letter (Part 2)

[Printed on University letterhead]
[Date]

To the Primary School Principal,

I am a PhD student at the University of Western Sydney and am conducting a study on the teaching of singing in Sydney NSW Government Schools (primary and secondary). The Department of Education and Training has approved this research project on Singing in Schools SERAP Number: [number]. At present, other than the published relevant NSW Board of Studies Music Syllabuses, there is little information or research on the teaching of singing within Sydney schools.

Part 2 of my research involves interviews with the following participants:
- Primary Class Teachers
- Primary Music Teachers
- Primary Choir Teachers

I am very interested in finding out about singing at your school and would like to interview name of staff member. Involvement in this research would be on a voluntary basis and would require an interview of approximately one hour to be conducted at your school at a convenient date and time for name of staff member. Interview questions will cover issues such as repertoire, teaching methods, curriculum, resources and singing participation. The information from the interview will be compiled into a PhD Thesis, a report and papers for publication. As neither the school's name nor that of the teacher will be included in the PhD Thesis, report or papers, sources of information will remain confidential.

If you agree to name of staff member being interviewed as part of this research, please forward to name of staff member the attached information letter, consent form and return envelope. Forwarding of this information to name of staff member is taken as your informed consent. Should you require any information regarding this research, please contact me by telephone on [telephone number], by e-mail [student email address] or by writing to Diane Hughes, [postal address].

Attached are copies of the approval letters from the NSW Department of Education and Training Planning and Innovation and Strategic Research Directorate for your reference.

Thank you for your interest.
Yours faithfully,

[Signature]

DIANE HUGHES
PhD Student, University of Western Sydney

Diane Hughes notes that she practices professionally as a singer and singing teacher under the name “Diana Hunter”.

NOTE: This study has been approved by the University of Western Sydney Human Research Ethics Committee. The Approval Number is [number]. If you have any complaints or reservations about the ethical conduct of this research, you may contact the Ethics Committee through the Research Ethics Officers [telephone numbers]. Any issues you raise will be treated in confidence and investigated fully, and you will be informed of the outcome.
APPENDIX K: Secondary Principal Information Letter (Part 2)

[Printed on University letterhead]

[Date]

To the Secondary School Principal,

I am a PhD student at the University of Western Sydney and am conducting a study on the teaching of singing in Sydney NSW Government Schools (primary and secondary). The Department of Education and Training has approved this research project on Singing in Schools SERAP Number: [number]. At present, other than the published relevant NSW Board of Studies Music Syllabuses, there is little information or research on the teaching of singing within Sydney schools.

Part 2 of my research involves interviews with the following participants:

- Secondary School Music Teachers
- Secondary School Choir Teachers

I am very interested in finding out about singing at your school and would like to interview name of staff member. Involvement in this research would be on a voluntary basis and would require an interview of approximately one hour to be conducted at your school at a convenient date and time for name of staff member. Interview questions will cover issues such as repertoire, teaching methods, curriculum, resources and singing participation. The information from the interview will be compiled into a PhD Thesis, a report and papers for publication. As neither the school's name nor that of the teacher will be included in the PhD Thesis, report or papers, sources of information will remain confidential.

If you agree to name of staff member being interviewed as part of this research, please forward to name of staff member the attached information letter, consent form and return envelope. Forwarding of this information to name of staff member is taken as your informed consent. Should you require any information regarding this research, please contact me by telephone on [telephone number], by e-mail [student email address] or by writing to Diane Hughes, [postal address].

Attached are copies of the approval letters from the NSW Department of Education and Training Planning and Innovation and Strategic Research Directorate for your reference.

Thank you for your interest.
Yours faithfully,

[Signature]

DIANE HUGHES
PhD Student, University of Western Sydney

Diane Hughes notes that she practices professionally as a singer and singing teacher under the name “Diana Hunter”.

NOTE: This study has been approved by the University of Western Sydney Human Research Ethics Committee. The Approval Number is [number]. If you have any complaints or reservations about the ethical conduct of this research, you may contact the Ethics Committee through the Research Ethics Officers [telephone numbers]. Any issues you raise will be treated in confidence and investigated fully, and you will be informed of the outcome.
Dear Name of Primary Teacher,

I am a PhD student at the University of Western Sydney and am conducting a study on the teaching of singing in Sydney NSW Government Schools (primary and secondary). The Department of Education and Training has approved this research project on Singing in Schools SERAP Number: [number]. At present, other than the published relevant NSW Board of Studies Music Syllabuses, there is little information or research on the teaching of singing within Sydney schools.

Part 2 of my research includes interviews with the following participants:
- Primary Class Teachers
- Primary Music Teachers
- Primary Choir Teachers

I am very interested in finding out about singing at your school and would like to interview you. Your involvement in this research would be voluntary and would require an interview of approximately a one-hour duration to be conducted at your school at a date and time convenient for you. Interview questions will cover issues such as repertoire, teaching methods, curriculum, resources and singing participation. The information from the interview will be compiled into a PhD Thesis, a report and papers for publication. Your privacy and that of your school will be ensured as participants' names and your school name will be coded during data collection and entry. Sources of information included in the PhD Thesis, report and papers will therefore remain confidential. A decision not to participate will in no way prejudice your relationship with the school and you are free to withdraw participation at any time.

If you are able to participate in this research, please complete the attached consent form as soon as possible and return it in the stamped addressed envelope provided. I will contact you regarding a suitable interview time.

Should you require any information regarding this research, please contact me by telephone on [telephone number], by e-mail [student email address] or by writing to Diane Hughes, [postal address].

Thank you for your interest.
Yours faithfully,

[Signature]
Diane Hughes
PhD Student, University of Western Sydney

Diane Hughes notes that she practices professionally as a singer and singing teacher under the name “Diana Hunter”.

NOTE: This study has been approved by the University of Western Sydney Human Research Ethics Committee. The Approval Number is [number]. If you have any complaints or reservations about the ethical conduct of this research, you may contact the Ethics Committee through the Research Ethics Officers [telephone numbers]. Any issues you raise will be treated in confidence and investigated fully, and you will be informed of the outcome.
Dear Name of Secondary Teacher,

I am a PhD student at the University of Western Sydney and am conducting a study on the teaching of singing in Sydney NSW Government Schools (primary and secondary). The Department of Education and Training has approved this research project on Singing in Schools SERAP Number: [number]. At present, other than the published relevant NSW Board of Studies Music Syllabuses, there is little information or research on the teaching of singing within Sydney schools.

Part 2 of my research includes interviews with the following participants:
- Secondary Music Teachers
- Secondary Choir Teachers

I am very interested in finding out about singing at your school and would like to interview you. Your involvement in this research would be voluntary and would require an interview of approximately a one-hour duration to be conducted at your school at a date and time convenient for you. Interview questions will cover issues such as repertoire, teaching methods, curriculum, resources and singing participation. The information from the interview will be compiled into a PhD Thesis, a report and papers for publication. Your privacy and that of your school will be ensured as participants’ names and your school name will be coded during data collection and entry. Sources of information included in the PhD Thesis, report and papers will therefore remain confidential. A decision not to participate will in no way prejudice your relationship with the school and you are free to withdraw participation at any time.

If you are able to participate in this research, please complete the attached consent form as soon as possible and return it in the stamped addressed envelope provided. I will contact you regarding a suitable interview time.

Should you require any information regarding this research, please contact me by telephone on [telephone number], by e-mail [student email address] or by writing to Diane Hughes, [postal address].

Thank you for your interest.
Yours faithfully,

[Signature]
DIANE HUGHES
PhD Student, University of Western Sydney
Diane Hughes notes that she practices professionally as a singer and singing teacher under the name “Diana Hunter”.

NOTE: This study has been approved by the University of Western Sydney Human Research Ethics Committee. The Approval Number is [number]. If you have any complaints or reservations about the ethical conduct of this research, you may contact the Ethics Committee through the Research Ethics Officers [telephone numbers]. Any issues you raise will be treated in confidence and investigated fully, and you will be informed of the outcome.
APPENDIX N: Participant Consent Form (Part 2)

Name_____________________________________________________________________

Teaching  Position___________________________________________________________

School______________________________________________________________________

I am happy to participate in a study on the teaching of singing in Sydney NSW Government Schools being conducted by Diane Hughes as PhD research at the University of Western Sydney.

I agree to be interviewed by Diane Hughes and to her using information from the interview to be included in her PhD Thesis, report and papers for publication.

I have been informed that the source of such information included in the PhD Thesis, report and papers for publication will be confidential, and understand that my name will not be included.

I agree to the interview being recorded and that the recording will be used to transcribe the interview. I understand the recording will be destroyed five years after the completion of the project.

I understand that I will be issued a transcript of the interview, with a draft summary, for me to confirm and verify.

I understand that a decision not to participate will in no way prejudice my relationship with the school and that I am free to withdraw participation at any time.

Signed:______________________________   Date____________________

Diane Hughes notes that she practices professionally as a singer and singing teacher under the name “Diana Hunter”.

NOTE: This study has been approved by the University of Western Sydney Human Research Ethics Committee. The Approval Number is [number]. If you have any complaints or reservations about the ethical conduct of this research, you may contact the Ethics Committee through the Research Ethics Officers [telephone numbers]. Any issues you raise will be treated in confidence and investigated fully, and you will be informed of the outcome.

RETURN COMPLETED CONSENT FORM TO DIANE HUGHES, [postal address].