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Knowledge Practices: Changing Perceptions and Pedagogies in Choral Music Education

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Abstract

Preparing choral music educators who are sociocultural pedagogues requires the development of a knowledge base of diverse singing traditions, the meaningful inclusion of culturally diverse content in the choral curriculum and rehearsal, and thoughtful adaptation in the delivery of instruction that shows a sensitivity both to the learners and the represented music cultures. The purpose of this case study was to analyze the outcomes of a newly designed graduate course for choral conducting students as they engaged in singing traditions from marginalized and lesser-known music cultures. The research focused on inequities in music education based on race, ethnicity, and music cultures that have resulted in asymmetric power relationships between choral directors and students.

I applied Maton's (2016) Legitimation Code Theory (LCT), a research framework inspired by Bourdieu's (1986) work with "rules of the game" and Bernstein's (2000, 2003b) work with knowledge codes. LCT allows examination of knowledge practices and can be used to shape teaching practice and curricular content. The research was guided by the following questions: (a) what beliefs do music educators hold about repertoire and music cultures that they do and do not include in their choral curricula in relation to the place and time in which they teach, and (b) what can be discovered regarding successful pedagogical strategies based on knowledge and knower structures. Two relevant themes emerged including the impact of cultural elitism in the choral conducting community with subthemes of perfectionism and concerns related to performance practice, and the development of a reflective praxis.

Key Words:

legitimation code theory, perfectionism, authentic performance practice, ethnomusicology, cultural capital, choral music educators

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In spite of a long agenda of research and advocacy promoting the importance and challenges of representing diverse peoples and musical practices in music education (Bradley, 2009; Campbell, 2004; Hess, 2018; Howard, 2018; Lundquist, 1982, 1986; Lundquist & Sims, 1996; Swanwick, 1984), choral directors in the United States continue to focus extensively on music and performance practice related to Western European art music traditions. Along with this practice comes a strong emphasis on notation literacy and a frequent de-emphasis of aural learning and sociocultural and sociohistorical contexts (Howard, 2018; Schippers, 2010). Preparing choral music educators who are socioculturally and musically competent requires the development of a knowledge base of diverse singing traditions, the meaningful inclusion of culturally diverse content in the choral curriculum and rehearsal, and thoughtful adaptation in the delivery of instruction that shows a sensitivity both to the learners and the represented music cultures.

Literature Review

There is a small but growing body of extant literature regarding diversifying repertoire and teaching strategies in choral settings. This includes meaningful findings related to culturally responsive teaching in choir (Shaw, 2019), and experiences of immigrant students in high school choir (Carlow, 2006). The importance of including sociocultural and sociohistorical context was found to benefit student learning and understanding of the particular music cultures (Abril, 2005; Bradley, 2009; de Quadros, 2009; Hess, 2013; Howard, 2018). Great benefit has also been found through choral ensembles that are inclusive rather than exclusive (de Quadros, 2015). Despite this growth of interest in diversifying the content of and even decolonizing pedagogical practices in music education, relatively little research has focused on what choral directors perceive and believe regarding sociocultural and ethnomusicological constructs as related to choral singing in schools and community (de Quadros, 2019). The following literature review is structured to first explore teaching and learning music through a sociomusicological and ethnomusicological lens. Next is an analysis of specific work related to sociological theories of cultural capital and knowledge codes as related to challenges of creating a music education rooted in an ethnomusicological perspective.

At the Crossroads of Music Education and Ethnomusicology

Lundquist was an early voice in the calls for music curriculum reform (1982) by supporting the notion that sociological considerations of the people and related cultures were integral to meaningful music education. In 1996, Lundquist and Sims reflected on successes and failures of their work together in the early 1970s attempting to diversify the music offerings at a local high school in order to attract a larger representation from the African American, Latino American, and East Asian American student populations. In seeking successful

strategies for the transmission of music cultures in university programs, Lundquist (1987) identified four barriers. The first barrier is a lack of consensus among university faculty with no common conception of musical competence or which music repertoire should be included. This is followed by the reality that school curricula may not provide equal access to such symbol systems as music and language which utilize culture codes that provide access to power in society. The third barrier centers on the concern that without schooling in music, educated citizens will not be available to offer support to existing traditional music cultures. Finally, a lack of understanding on the effects of training in multicultural musics on either one's musical development or in sustaining a musical tradition can impede the teaching and learning process.

Lundquist (1986) continued to advocate for sociomusical and ethnomusicological research in higher education promoting the application of such lenses as beneficial for researching intelligence, auditory perception, preference, music analysis, mass media, tradition and change, social stratification, social and cultural reproduction, cultural capital, acculturation, sociomusical behavior, interaction between musicians, and politics. In defining an ethnomusicological perspective, Lundquist and Sims (1996) defined it as "relativistic; that is one music culture...it is just different from the others, adding its own insights on musical expression" (p. 314). This point was taken further to propose that music educators "with a relativistic perspective discover that their personal preferences are less likely to suppress their recognition and appreciation of others' musical expression" (p. 314).

Lundquist's work led to further research working to honor diversity in music education through a sociomusical and ethnomusicological approach (Campbell, 1991, 1996, 2004; Howard, 2018; Klinger, 1996). Bradley's (2009) work pushed for more than simple diversification of repertoire. She emphasized the importance of the tensions in programming "global songs", finding benefit in the opportunity such music presented to "interrogate issues of power, self-aggrandizement, and colonialism" (p. 106). Turning toward an examination of the factors that keep certain music cultures dominant over others in music education leads to considerations of cultural capital.

Cultural Capital

In analyzing sociomusicological goals, it is clear that they are impacted by Bourdieu's (1986) sociological theory of cultural capital and the attendant rules of the game. By valuing a culture's musical way of being, it is endowed with a form of capital. The opposite applies for devaluing a culture's music traditions. Bourdieu situated cultural capital in three states: embodied, objectified, and institutionalized, originally intended to perhaps explain achievement discrepancies between student groups. In response to Bourdieu's claims, Walthier (2014) found that:

Bourdieu understands practice as the result of social structures on a particular field where certain rules apply and also of one's habitus or agency...i.e. the em-

bodied history that is manifested in our system of thinking, feeling, perceiving and behaving. The habitus assures the collective belief in the rules of the social game and that actors act in accordance with their position on the field which depends on their relative amount and structure of economic, cultural and social capital. (p. 15)

Choral music educators operate within the structures that they grew up in and worked amidst, thereby continuing a cycle of cultural reproduction.

Code Theory

Bernstein (2003a) developed a knowledge code theory that has been applied across education disciplines. His code theory referred to elaborated codes and restricted codes that reflect one's interaction with content based on background and experiences. Teaching choral music within a restricted code keeps the pedagogical alternatives limited as the range of experiences and knowledge is reduced. Giroux (2001) viewed Bernstein's work with knowledge codes as "attempts to illuminate how curriculum, pedagogy, and evaluation constitute message systems whose underlying structural principles represent modes of social control rooted in the wider society" (p. 96). This supports Lundquist's ideas that schools embody an educational code as they organize the ways in which authority and power are to be mediated in all aspects of school experience.

Bernstein's knowledge codes were based on classification and framing. Classification refers to the relationship between content categories while framing refers to what Giroux (2001) described as "the degree of control teacher and pupil possess over the selection, organization, pacing and timing of the knowledge transmitted and received in the pedagogical relationship" (p. 96). Individual learners and teachers may be stronger or weaker in these concepts with different results thereby creating an educational code. Bernstein believed that teaching and learning situations constructed around integrated codes had the most potential for progressive pedagogy (Giroux, 2001).

This research is based on a qualitative case study that examined the perceptions and experiences of graduate students in a required course focusing on global choral traditions for those pursuing a Master of Arts in Music Education degree at a university in the Midwestern U.S. The purpose of this case study was to analyze the outcomes of a newly designed course for choral conducting majors as they engaged in singing traditions from marginalized and lesser-known music cultures. The research was guided by the following questions: (1) what beliefs do choral directors hold about repertoire and music cultures that they do and do not include in their curricula in relation to the place and time in which they teach, and (2) what can be discovered regarding successful pedagogical strategies based on knowledge and knower structures.

An examination of these questions was intended to provide insight into the capacity of choral directors to engage meaningfully with singing traditions and relevant sociocultural

context of less or unfamiliar music cultures. To address this intersection of longstanding perceptions of what being a choral director is and marginalized music traditions, music educators need more information about how individual ways of building knowledge impact their own teaching and learning. My intention was to better understand how choral directors navigate a continuing learning process in which they feel like beginners, or out of their comfort zones, as well as to understand for myself how to collaborate with the students to create a musically intense experience that placed emphasis on sociomusicological and ethnomusicological perspectives.

Method

My experiences working with choral directors led to my perception that there was a common conflict between a clear desire to learn diverse repertoire, singing styles, and pedagogical strategies and a fear of not knowing how or of being perceived as less than by community and peers for making such choices. To address this, I focused the research on inequities in choral music education practices and content that have resulted in asymmetric power relationships between choral directors, students, repertoire, and pedagogical practices. This choice was influenced by hooks' (1994) claim that teachers need a place to express their fears when engaging with diverse content. hooks also noted that while teachers may acknowledge the need for change in curricula, that "it is difficult for individuals to shift paradigms and that there must be a setting for folks to voice fears, to talk about what they are doing, how they are doing it, and why" (p. 38).

I used an intrinsic case study design to analyze the experiences of graduate choral conducting students and the instructor in a newly crafted course as they engaged in singing traditions from marginalized cultures and lesser-known traditions. Within this research design, the case was selected as it was of unique interest with its unusual structure and content (Creswell & Guetterman, 2019; Parker, 2016; Stake, 2005). The bounded case in this study consisted of the 31 participants over three summers in a graduate music class in global traditions in choir that met for 3.5 hours a day, over eight days, for a total of 25 hours each course session. As the study covered three separate offerings of the course, this resulted in 75 hours of total instruction time.

Positionality Statement

As a White music educator trained in Western European musical traditions throughout my university years, I have worked to decenter Whiteness in my own music-making and in music curricula. During my years of teaching public school vocal music and university courses in music education including choral methods, diction, and vocal pedagogy, I have also studied and performed vocal music from numerous music cultures and regularly incorporated these traditions with their attendant sociocultural features into my classes and

ensembles. This study developed out of many years of collaboration with choral directors who were seeking to grow their comfort and skill with diverse repertoire and performance practice.

As 30 of the 31 participants identified as White, and considering my own Whiteness, the findings may be viewed as biased toward White interpretations and experiences (Sleeter, 2017; Ulysse et al., 2016; Vaught & Castagno, 2008). Knowing the racial demographic of our graduate program to be predominantly White, the course was designed with this in mind. Space was made for complicated conversations regarding the Whiteness of choral music education in the U.S., and perceptions regarding a hierarchy of vocal timbres. Were the course populated with a more racially or ethnically diverse group of students, several aspects may have emerged differently. Depending on the background of the students, particular vocal timbres may have been experienced previously, languages may have been familiar, and personal perspectives and shared experiences with the represented music cultures would have likely but not certainly directed conversations in different directions. Also limiting was my own role as instructor of the course while conducting the research. It is possible that participants shaped their interview answers and journal prompts to more closely align with the goals of the course in order to satisfy or impress a perceived authority figure.

Interviews

All participants completed an online questionnaire administered using Qualtrics with closed and open-ended questions prior to the start of the course. The questions were designed to gauge participants' previous experiences and perceptions regarding choral traditions outside of the Western European canon. The choral directors were also asked to explain their beliefs about effective and healthy vocal production as related to various timbres, and views on matters of diversity and equity in choral music education as well as demographic information regarding the teachers' years of experience, type of teaching community (e.g., rural, suburban, urban) and race. Steps were taken according to IRB protocols so that I did not know which students were participating in the study until the course was over and final grades submitted. This meant that the questionnaire responses were anonymous during the course, but still provided useful information for me to consider when designing daily writing prompts.

Semi-structured post-interviews were held either in person, via video conference, through a phone call, or through e-mail depending on each participant's request. The post-interviews were conducted after the course was ended and several days had passed. I asked follow-up questions pertaining to their experiences during and since the course and allowed for a less-structured format in order to follow ideas as they arose for a conversation-like setting (Creswell & Guetterman, 2019). I was given access to the questionnaire identifying information before the post-interviews, thereby allowing me to compare their perceptions and experiences prior to the course to those after instruction was completed. I conducted member checking, and I started to organize emerging themes. The interviews were record-

ed and transcribed within 24 hours.

In order to triangulate the data on choral educators' experiences with diverse singing traditions, I continued the study for three summers to access a larger pool of participants as each summer brought a new roster of students. I video-recorded all of the in-person class meetings and transcribed them completely for close readings. At the end of each day, I journaled regarding the class focusing on participants' grasp of musical concepts, their interaction with the sociocultural concepts attached to the particular music, and their questions, curiosities, and concerns, as well as my own. Further triangulation was achieved through analysis of the participants' nightly journal responses to connect with emerging themes and to inform discussion and practice for the next class.

Participants

The study covered three summers of the course offering, with different students in each class; 10 in the first summer, 14 in the second, and 7 in the last. The 31 total participants ranged in age from 24-53 years and included 13 who identified as men and 18 as women; 30 of whom identified as White, and one as biracial (Black/White); with teaching experience ranging from 2-25 years. All participants spoke English as a first language. Their teaching settings and positions ranged from public and private school, elementary through secondary choirs, church music directors, general music teachers, and two who were on long-term child-rearing leaves from teaching. All participants completed university-approved consent forms that complied with Institutional Review Board protocols.

The participants were all U.S. citizens, but four taught in separate countries in Europe, South America, and Asia. A total of seven other students not represented in this data chose to not participate in the formal study. This course, though new, was required for graduate students with a choral conducting emphasis, and it was also taken by those pursuing continued professional development. While the content of the course featured marginalized choral music cultures, the focus was on understanding how to teach, perform, and conduct the various styles.

I acted as a participant-observer by designing the course including music, readings, journal prompts, and I presented much of the musical material during the course. I administered blind questionnaires with the participants to get a sense of general impressions and experiences with non-Western European choral traditions, and what they were hoping to get from the course. In order to lessen the power dynamic that is often present between teacher and students, their journal prompts were only read by me. They were not graded on their responses, only on whether they submitted a response or not. When discussions emerged that seemed more emotionally charged, I allowed my language to follow the flow common among teachers. Participants were reminded that I was not concerned with right or wrong responses, accurate musical performances, or exact replicas of cultural nuances. It was also made clear there were no particular responses or reactions that I hoped to hear.

Participants completed nightly journal prompts (Table 1) in response to the content and conversation covered during the day's session. I crafted the prompts to cover topics related to the featured music and cultures in the course, including race, stereotyping, historic events, matters of gender representation in choral performance, and issues of self-efficacy related to personal musical and pedagogical abilities. Using a technique designed by Vavrus (2002), the prompts ranged from practical to provocative in order to stimulate thoughtful responses to content in the readings, scores, and class discussions. These prompts were intended to allow participants to directly address tensions that arose between what was familiar and comfortable to them, and what they were learning.

Table 1. Daily Journal Prompts.

Day 1
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Please include your thoughts/feelings about the particular music cultures, repertoire, and inclusion of cultural information. • What steps do you feel that you would need to take in order to feel comfortable including repertoire from Macedonia and Romania? or to discuss issues regarding Roma? • How might you approach theoretical instruction regarding the possibly new meter of 7/8, or the hijaz scale? or pronunciation? • How might you arrange such material for your particular choirs/settings?
Day 2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • After reading and thinking about music that has controversial roots, such as Bulgarian Women's Choir music, how shall we address this type of music? • Can you make connections with other similar music cultures, or non-music cultures to help you and your students relate to this situation? • How do we justify/rationalize/explain performing music without such background information? • Is undergraduate preparation (as it is typically found today) enough to encourage pre-service and new teachers to continue learning/practicing/growing as a musician and educator? • Is graduate and post-collegiate study seen as a luxury? • How do we break the cycle of training educators the same as always?

Day 3

- After spending some time learning music without notation, please reflect on your experience.
 - What was challenging?
 - What was easier than you expected?
 - What benefits do you perceive that your students would gain from experiences with intense aural learning?
 - What are your thoughts about helping choral music educators who are neither African American nor experienced in the type of singing we did today?
 - What do you think that you would need to do in order to feel comfortable teaching music in this manner (including not having a score for yourself to begin with)?
 - What are your thoughts about the general bias in the choral music world against timbres/tones/choral sounds such as we aimed for today? Is it merited? Are we accountable for addressing this bias? Or is it someone else's problem?
-

Day 4

- How can we create choral environments that allow all students to potentially “see” themselves represented?
-

Day 5

- What do you see as 1) benefits of competition? 2) disadvantages or flaws?
 - Any thoughts on alternative options?
 - Does it impact repertoire choices?
-

A daily process of transcription and analysis allowed for the customization of instruction in order to follow both the direction of the intended lesson plans and the choral directors' inquiries, insecurities, and celebrated self-discoveries. The process of my own journaling at the end of each day created a cumulative account that produced an initial rendering of the significant events in the course design, implementation, and students' experiences. I was able to process my own curiosities and frustrations with perceived teaching successes and failures. By using a three-phase coding process (Emerson, Fretz, & Shaw, 2011), I carefully reviewed all journal entries, interview texts, and lesson transcriptions to discover sociomusicological themes. The first phase consisted of reading the data with close attention to recurring themes. A second focused phase was dedicated to the most relevant themes. Once these themes were identified, a third coding phase involved application of a theoretical framework for a thorough interpretation of the participants' perceptions and experiences, as well as my own, as a result of the course.

Theoretical Lens

Bernstein's (2003b) conception of codes as regulators of the relationships between and within contexts greatly impacted the work of Maton (2016) who created Legitimation Code Theory (LCT). LCT allows examination of knowledge practices and can be used to shape teaching practice and curricular content. Using Maton's "specialization codes" designed to assist in understanding why some students are more successful than others in given educational settings, I examined epistemic relationships between knowledge practices and objects (pedagogical approaches and content), and social relationships between knowledge practices and subjects (pedagogical approaches and students) as presented throughout the questionnaire, post-interviews, journals, and class sessions.

Students' perceptions, experiences, and achievements are the outcomes of their dispositions, relating to their contexts (Maton, 2014). Maton determined that these dispositions, general attitudes about life, are not sufficient for deep knowledge building. This framework was intended to avoid knowledge blindness—the idea that students succeed or fail because of who they are, not because of what they learned or how someone taught them. Maton (2014) went further to show that dispositions by themselves are not enough for knowledge-building. This "apprenticeship into a new gaze requires prolonged experience, immersion in exemplary models, and intimate pedagogic relations with an expert" (p. 8) as were the intentions of this course and related study. The participants were viewed as knowers with their own ways of approaching diverse musics and teaching strategies.

The LCT framework was inspired by Bourdieu's (1986) "rules of the game" and Bernstein's (2003a) knowledge codes, and its application can help educators understand how different ways of knowing work with or against each other in a teaching and learning environment. Using LCT in the analysis phase of the study allowed me to see and examine knowledge practices, and to relate said practices to students. Maton (2014) perceived that LCT connected to what Bourdieu thought of as the meeting of two histories: ways of acting, thinking and being brought to a particular setting and the very setting itself.

Specialization Codes

Maton (2016) identified five dimensions within LCT, each representing a type of legitimation code. These dimensions include specialization, semantics, autonomy, temporality, and density. For this study, I focused on specialization that:

explores practices in terms of knowledge-knower structures whose organizing principles are given specialization codes comprising strengths of epistemic relations and social relations which are mapped on the specialization plane (Fig. 1).

(p.11)

Epistemic relations in music education include specialist knowledge for our particular disciplines. In the case of choral music educators, that includes the musical and pedagogical skills needed. Social relations in music education include the particular attributes of the students. What are their personal experiences, their musical abilities, their personalities, and various social categories they might belong to including gender and class?

There are four main specialization codes. If the teaching and learning emphasize specialist knowledge skills (stronger epistemic relations) above who a person is (weaker social relations), this is a *knowledge code*. If who one is or social relations matter more than teaching techniques and content, this is a *knower code*. If one is both a specialist and the right kind of knower, this is an *élite code*. Finally, if the teaching and learning practices minimize the importance of being a specialist and having particular attributes, this is a *relativist code*. Maton (in press) focused on the question of why some students are more successful in education than others. He believed that one reason is “that the legitimation codes brought by some students match those of their educational context while the legitimation codes of other students clash with their context” (p. 17). Participants were given opportunities to interrogate their own ways of engaging with pedagogy and some found that their particular skills (knowledge code) had not kept up with their understanding of ways of knowing (knower code). Most expressed desire to strengthen the way of knowing that seemed weaker, thereby leading toward a more well-rounded expertise and right way of knowing for their choral settings (élite code).

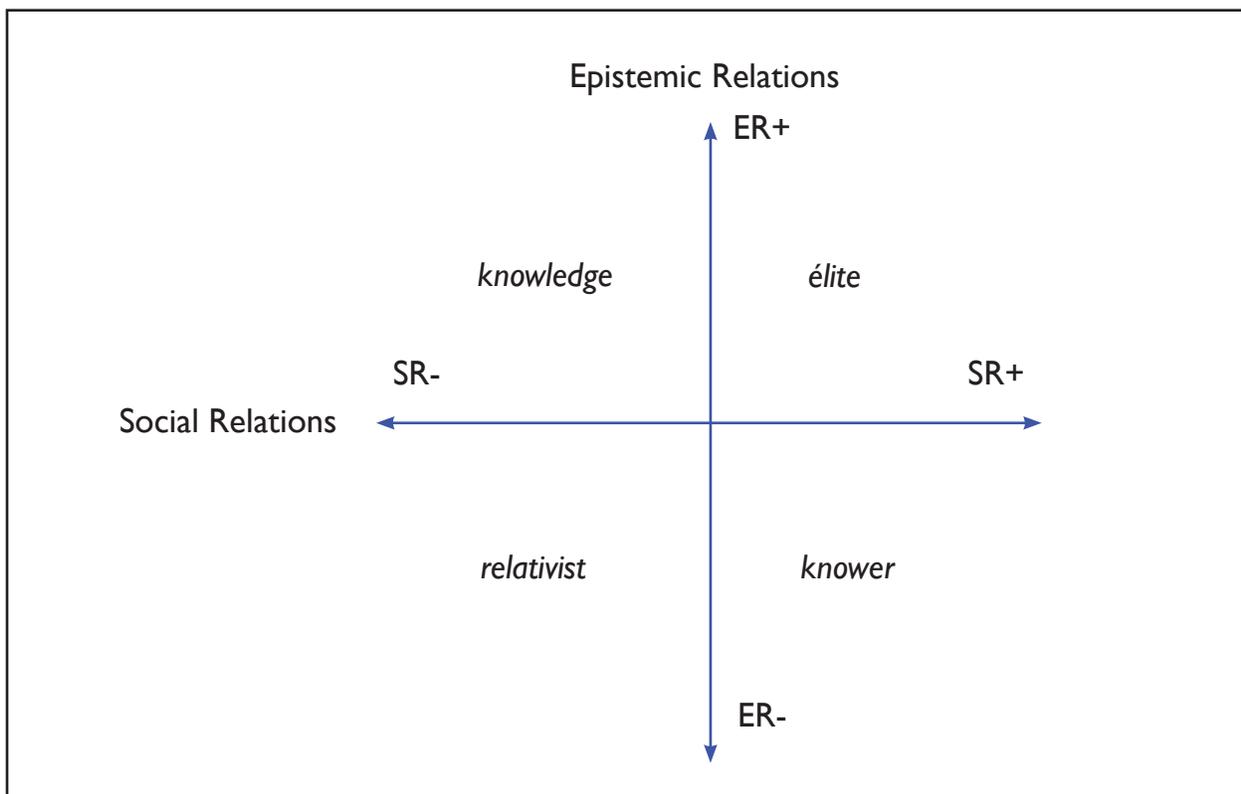


Figure 1. Specialization plane (Maton, 2016, p. 12)

Findings and Interpretation

Analysis of the data revealed two overarching themes. Consequences of cultural elitism including subthemes of perfectionism and matters of authentic performance practice related to participants' fears of not meeting perceived standards; and a reflective praxis emerged as participants navigated new material both physically, psychologically, and pedagogically.

The themes related to choral directors' beliefs about repertoire and music cultures before and after their experiences in the course, and what an understanding of knowledge-building may offer for improved pedagogy.

Theme I: Consequences of Cultural Elitism

An affliction of musical and cultural elitism impacted the emotional well-being of several of the participants who were more sensitive, and it interfered with taking risks with new repertoire, techniques, rehearsal content, and difficult conversations regarding sociocultural content. Several mentioned a sense of needing to fit a certain mold as a choral music educator. This created a tension that was present in selecting repertoire, and in attempting to incorporate genres not before attempted for fear of not being good enough. This was demonstrated in Lamont's and Maton's (2010) examination of the reasons behind low enrollment in advanced music classes in England. They found that in the elementary years, a knower code was dominant and then it shifted to a knowledge code in secondary school, and to an élite code to enter university music programs. This sort of abrupt shift may cause some previously successful students to struggle.

Perfectionism

Choral music educators often referenced a fear of making mistakes or of causing offense as main barriers to trying new techniques, sounds, repertoire, and growing their personal understandings of the sociocultural context of the music cultures their groups perform. de Quadros' (2009) findings regarding the teaching of unfamiliar musics in schools emphasized the importance of educators understanding of geographical considerations of a music culture, the "difference between regional diversity and class, socio-economic variation within a country, and the artificiality of borders" (p. 6). Sheila's¹ fears of not being perfect, while strong in wording, were not unique among the participants:

My anxiety is hella triggered by perfectionism and I am learning that sometimes I have to be ok with not being where I want to be and realize that every time my eyes are opened further to something, especially related to Culturally Responsive Teaching, or multicultural education, or race issues and my own privilege, and

¹ All participants' names have been replaced with pseudonyms.

that something creates that visceral guilt, it's ok to say I'm doing enough right now.

Sheila, a middle school choral music educator, acknowledged that she was trying to allow space for her growth, although she was often overcome with self-imposed pressure to meet standards set by those she perceived as significant or better than her in the field of choral music, thereby interfering with her progress toward her stated goals. Powers et al. (2011) found such a negative association between self-criticism and perfectionism with goal pursuit (p. 964). This is supported by Maton's (2014) description of the struggles that arise when a code clash is present, in this case between the way that Sheila was trained in her own schooling, and what her work in choral music education demanded of her.

Randy, a middle school choral director, noted this disconnect between his goals and actions as well, "Sometimes the brain gets in the way of the musical soul." Alison, a high school choral music educator, acknowledged a desire to give herself permission to make mistakes and to feel alright about imperfect performances. Brendan, co-director of an esteemed boys' choir and a high school choral music educator, irritated himself, "I'm kind of obnoxious about having this idea that I need to know everything about something before I can discuss it." Following Maton's (2014) suggestions, this fear and hesitation could be alleviated through course design that took into consideration previous understandings, and the likely conflict with relevant cultural demands.

Bailey & Davidson (2005) examined the elitist model of performance. They found that most of the research into performance practice and elitism focused on performers and teachers within Western art music traditions, meaning other traditions were not considered. Holding on to one's expert musician, performer, and conductor status according to the standards in the choral community has led to extensive bouts of perfectionism. Jackson realized that his previous experience in multimodal teaching as an elementary music teacher gave him the tools to introduce his new secondary singers to unfamiliar sounds and concepts, but he admitted to concern that his peers would judge these techniques as "less than", alluding to the rarely-mentioned but omnipresent hierarchy that holds secondary choral directors atop a questionable pedestal. Jackson's description exemplifies a code clash between how he learned to teach and what he developed as his personal style of pedagogy and that which he perceived from the secondary choral community. Serena, a high school choral music educator, eloquently described the impact of chasing what choral director social media posts² have told us is perfect, "I fear that in a rush to commodify, market, and 'go viral', we are losing our sense of ourselves as whole, imperfect, sloppy, joyful, complex humans with agency to impact the world around us."

² Social media groups managed by choral director associations as well as individual's personal posts seemed to be trigger points for many of the participants. In some cases it was not the content of the original post that caused a dip in confidence and comfort but rather the negativity in some of the comments, or the sub-conversations that arose.

Matters of Authentic Performance Practice

A common thread throughout the courses was the participants' expressions of concern over "getting it right" regarding history, translation, musical styling, and ornamentation. Also of concern was avoidance of cultural appropriation as modeled by Landon's mention that his training in Western European classical music left him with a very narrow lens through which to judge other music traditions in his high school choral position. Alison's journal entry after a day of learning Black gospel tunes without notation and with a timbre that was new left her feeling emotionally vulnerable, leading to uncertainty regarding her ability to teach it:

I feel so much more intimidated by the idea of teaching Black music than anything else we've talked about... I don't want to be that all-White choir with a White director doing Black music and be accused of appropriating and being disrespectful, or of being laughed at by people who know how ridiculously wrong our interpretation is.

While it may seem that Alison is expressing White fragility (DiAngelo, 2018), her willingness to name her fears and work to increase her knowledge and skills is the very step that can increase her competence in navigating such a sensitive subject. Serena described a similar fear and a trapped feeling when approaching the complicated context that may surround a particular piece or culture:

If I don't say anything, I regret that I passed an opportunity to speak up. If I do say something, I often worry that what I said was stupid, or ignorant. Too passionate or not passionate enough. The thought of having those conversations as a teacher terrifies me, that I would say the wrong thing to negatively impact a student. But silence is also powerful.

Kelsey, a middle school choral music educator, was left wondering if what she uncovered about a piece on her own would ever be enough to be considered respectful of a culture. This related to her students' reception of negative feedback from a clinician at a festival regarding their choreography that was learned via a video performance by a famous South African youth choir. Richard grappled with time management with his high school choir, worrying that if he did not spend enough time exploring music of other cultures, that when he did introduce a new tradition, it would seem like a novelty. Maton (2014) would ascribe these worries to Kelsey's and Richard's particular legitimation codes being unmatched, clashing, with their previous choral education and teaching contexts.

Theme 2: Reflective Praxis

Reflection on their own praxis, their own ways of being as teachers and learners, proved

to be key in grappling with struggles connected to perfectionism, acceptance by the larger choral community, and worries of simply being incorrect in performance choices. Alison's concerns of being an "ignorant White person" reflected the kind of "well-intentioned teachers" identified by Tatum (1999) who "do not want to be seen as promoting bigotry" (p. 29). Yet, the participants also discussed that even though they felt pressure to craft performances based on a limited understanding of a culture of origin, consideration must be given to the authenticity of the choir's own culture – that born between the director and singers. They discussed the culture of their choirs as worthy of celebration. Kylie expressed the importance of having the opportunity and requirement within the course to reflect on one's own work and the broader field of choral directing:

We are able to gaze upon "other" singing cultures with a critical eye, yet it is difficult for us to analyze the current prevailing concept of "choir" and "choral music education" in the U.S...If we could take the time to "gaze upon" our contemporary choral tradition and its roots, we might learn a lot about cultural assumptions and practices inherent in the structure of choirs and pedagogy.

There was a participant who did not feel it was a meaningful use of time to talk with students about sociocultural content since music class time is scarce. Alex, an instrumentalist new to choral singing, asked during a group reflection in one of the class sessions, "If we start to teach choral traditions from cultures other than Western European classical music, won't we lose our future masters?" I took a moment to think before I responded as the question was in opposition to all of the knowledge building in the course. However, I was not required to say a word as several of his classmates jumped in and guided the conversation for the next 30 minutes, passionately and respectfully discussing what it means to be a "master" of a music tradition, and who that includes and excludes. The curricular and intellectual exclusion modeled by Alex's question fit de Quadros' (2015) description as "an institutionalized form of injustice" (p. 502). His attitude exemplified a code clash between his previous learning experiences and the goals of the course, and a display of the limitations of his particular knowledge building in terms of equitable choral music education. Kylie further described the ramifications of ignoring contextual discussions in order to get the notes learned, and to fit in with the profession:

Removing music from its context is problematic because we miss the conversation, the affirmation, the depth of emotion embedded with the song. We miss the opportunity for empathy and compassion, for seeing the connection between our lived experience and someone else's. We remain above the water without even acknowledging the existence of something below the surface.

Discussion

A choral director selects teaching strategies, music genres, and performance practices from a depth of experience and understanding. Choral directors' previous experiences inform their teaching practices, repertoire choices, and beliefs regarding the relevance of including sociocultural context in lessons and of engaging in a diverse range of vocal timbres. Students' and educators' perceptions, experiences, and achievements are the outcomes of their dispositions relating to their contexts (Maton, 2014). Maton determined that these dispositions, general attitudes about life, are not sufficient for deep knowledge building. The structure of the global traditions course was intended to lessen the participants' knowledge blindness and to begin to understand that what they are learning and how they are learning is as important as previously developed dispositions.

Giroux (2001) felt Bernstein's broader work with knowledge codes was useful but did not go far enough as "a theory of radical pedagogy" (p. 97) as it did not consider how different actors within education give meaning to the codes that impact their experiences. Discovering how these codes apply to oneself and to one's students can greatly inform course design, modification, improvisation, and implementation for enhanced teaching and learning experiences with perhaps richer outcomes. One may not recognize what is required in order to succeed, more than one code may be in play, and there may be struggles among singers and their choral directors over which is or should be the dominant code in a class setting. The dominant code may change throughout a course, and this shift changes the rules of the game, leading to struggles such as choral elitism. By understanding the pressure of Bourdieu's rules of the game in play for many choral directors, it allowed for instructional experiences that brought those concerns into the light, and it gave time for private introspection and group analysis.

Participants also expressed a growing reflective praxis that relates to Ladson Billings' (1994) proclamation, "It is the way we *teach* that profoundly affects the way that students perceive the content of that curriculum" (p. 13). This is supported by Maton's (2014) assertion that knowing how our students come to learn something can inform our instruction. As Lundquist (1987) encouraged music educators to consider the sociocultural environment of students and of the culture from which selected music originated, so too did the design of this course. This is supported by Larrivee's (2000) research in the development of critically reflective teachers. Choral directors who do not examine teaching strategies that match their own beliefs, or that align with their teaching styles will have "just a bag of tricks... They will stay trapped in unexamined judgments, interpretations, assumptions, and expectations" (p. 294). After experiencing this sort of teaching and learning experience, Charles' reflections led to this succinct summary, "I have always claimed that my teaching is student-centered. But as I reflect, I think my teaching has been centered around those that look and were brought up as I was." From recognizing that much of the development of notation skills in one's choir was only relevant for Western-related music systems, to relaxing into the understanding that it was possible to sing healthfully with different timbres, to

acknowledging that one's research on a culture was limited to what could fit in the program notes, these choral directors were taking a moment to see themselves in their practice, and to imagine a way forward in redefining choral excellence.

The results of music education initiatives such as the course described here may illustrate potential to change teaching practices, and they may increase teachers' commitments to incorporating ethnomusicological constructs in their learning environments, thereby allowing them to reach a broader population within their schools and community. As all of the participants bemoaned their minimal to no training in diverse musical practices, music educators would do well to consider what Lundquist & Sims (1996) identified as characteristics of effective music education with an ethnomusicological perspective including

1. Musical study that focuses directly on the transmission of a musical tradition believed by all involved to be central to the students' education and to the macrocultural consideration of music;
2. Teachers that are passionately dedicated to passing on musical traditions to all available students;
3. Teachers that emphasize exemplary music-making and introduce features of the socio-cultural context using participatory strategies;
4. Teachers that value students' individual differences, recognizing them as natural. (p. 315)

Lundquist's vision for sociomusical education still holds promise for the development of culturally competent and confident choral directors. It is fitting to share Randy's description of how he felt after singing music new to his voice and ears for a whole afternoon, "Perhaps it was just a sense of soul-shaking singing at the top of my lungs, a kind of liberating sensation in comparison. Perhaps a sense of bridging some cultural divide was in my mind."

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