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An Investigation of Middle School Music Teachers' Rationale and Procedure Relating to
Instrumental (Band) Repertoire Selection in Southern Ontario: A Case Study.

by

Yang Chen

A Thesis

Submitted to The Faculty of Graduate Studies
through the Faculty of Education
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Degree of Master of Education
at the University of Windsor

Windsor, Ontario, Canada

2018

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An Investigation of Middle School Music Teachers' Rationale and Procedure Relating to
Instrumental (Band) Repertoire Selection in Southern Ontario: A Case Study.

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May 2, 2018

DECLARATION OF ORIGINALITY

I hereby certify that I am the sole author of this thesis and that no part of this thesis has been published or submitted for publication.

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ABSTRACT

Repertoire selection plays a crucial role in beginners' instrumental learning, and music teachers agree that it is a challenging task. However, there is no national music curriculum and the Ontario Arts Curriculum does not provide teachers with specific repertoire-selection guidelines. Research suggests that music educators have numerous suggestions and perspectives relating to repertoire selection, based on informed expert opinions. However, empirical evidence is needed to identify the strategies and determine the individual criteria for repertoire selection. Therefore, this case study investigated in-service teachers' rationale, strategies, and procedure for selecting instrumental (band) repertoire. Eight music teachers with 6 to 29 years of teaching experience in grade five to eight were selected and interviewed. Their experiences and perspectives were explored to determine their rationale for repertoire choices and identify the challenges and strategies associated with this selection process. The present study found that teachers face numerous challenges with respect to defining the quality and difficulty level of music, and struggle to include multicultural music in their selections. To overcome these challenges and engage their students in the learning process, participants suggested a variety of strategies, such as involving professional networking and sharing, soliciting students' input, and using multiple sources to procure music.

Keywords: case study, middle school music teacher, and repertoire selection

DEDICATION

To my parents

To all participants who generously contributed to this thesis

To Dr. Jonathan Bayley and Janet Bayley

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CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION

General Statement of the Problem

In music education, there is a long history of music educators selecting repertoire to support their instruction (Volk, 2007). For music teachers, the fundamental purpose is to help students to build knowledge and enrich their learning experiences through music education (Reynolds, 2000). Therefore, repertoire selection is regarded as a fundamental step in preparing students for an education in music. Repertoire is a medium through which students may be able to understand and grasp basic musical concepts relating to theory, history, and advanced performance techniques. It is also the vehicle “through which students begin the development of discriminatory skills with regard to qualitative elements in music, which in turn leads to greater aesthetic awareness and sensitivity” (Forbes, 2001, p. 102). In addition, the process of selecting repertoire reflects band directors’ abilities and their priorities regarding programming, as well as their knowledge of the musical literature (Hayward, 2004). According to Sheldon (1996), “These selections reflect the musical values of the teacher and, at the same time, facilitate the students’ music learning” (p. 6). Apfelstadt (2000) identifies the importance of this task in the following statement:

The selection of repertoire is the single most important task that music educators face before entering the classroom or rehearsal room. Through the repertoire we choose, we not only teach curricular content to our students, but we also convey our philosophy in terms of what we believe students need to learn to achieve musical growth (p. 15).

Moreover, Brunner (1992) and Lamb (2006) emphasize that selecting appropriate repertoire guides musical production, and helps to shape the musical tastes of young people who will soon grow to be adult musicians. The reason for this is that students will have more opportunities to associate “the academic music of the school ensemble with the outside world where they live” (Weller, 2014, p. 26). Forbes (2001) speaks of the process of selection by stating, “Given the significant impact that repertoire selection has on the curriculum, the way that repertoire is selected is of crucial importance for music teachers” (p. 102).

Most music teachers agree that repertoire selection is also one of the most challenging tasks (Bauer, 1996; Hayward, 2004), so the majority of teachers spend a large amount of time in locating and choosing repertoire (Broeker, 2000; Hayward, 2004). Sheldon (1996) states, “Although teachers can choose literature originally written for concert band, many of the available selections are arrangements of music originally written for other mediums” (p. 6). To some extent, “the abundant supply of repertoire currently in publication can be somewhat daunting with when it comes to making informed decisions” (Byo, 1988, p. 19). With respect to quality choices, Hayward (2004) states, although there are many respectable school instrumental bands “performing quality literature, there are also many other programs in which the repertoire choices of the directors are questionable, especially among inexperienced teachers” (p. 11). According to Rosene (2004), “Inexperienced teachers tend to either be too influenced by the publishers’ lists and buy all the latest music or use only material presented in methods classes or used by college [university] ensembles” (p. 35). For music teachers and directors of school band ensembles, published music literature lists often serve as a

source for repertoire selection and they are able to access many resources with the help of the Internet (e.g., Google, ApRo Music, YouTube). However, these lists do not always accurately represent the difficulty level of compositions (Miller, 2013), as well as educational and academic goals. In addition, several music educators have suggested additional challenges relating to repertoire selection, such as appropriateness (Apfelstadt, 2000; Miller, 2013), teachability (Apfelstadt, 2000; Berz, 2000, Miller, 2013), technical challenges and elements such as rhythm, melody, texture, harmony, and form (Battisti, 1995; Miller, 2013; Ostling, 1978). Therefore, it can be very challenging for music teachers to select appropriate repertoire for their students.

Some countries, such as the United States of America and People's Republic of China, publish their own music curriculum and repertoire to guide the music teaching, where the majority of music teachers refer to the music curriculum. For example, Chinese music educators compile and publish national music textbooks to support music instruction. Most music teachers in China are required to teach students using authorized textbooks that include selected repertoire and teaching materials (Du, 2006). Similarly, in America, music teachers can refer to the National Standards to support and guide their teaching. Apfelstadt (2000) identifies the following five standards found in the American National Standards for Arts Education that relate to repertoire selection:

Performing on instruments, alone and with others, a varied repertoire of music; improvising melodies, variations, and accompaniments; composing and arranging music within specified guidelines; understanding relationships between music, the other arts, and disciplines outside the arts; understanding music in relation to history and culture. (p. 22)

Bauer (1996) believes that students can learn musical concepts and skills through the selected repertoire in the curriculum. Also, Apfelstadt (2000) suggests the following: Given curricular goals and standards, we as teachers must select the means through which those goals are met. Even when the selection process is narrowed down—as in general music, where we may have a textbook series provided by the school district, or on performance-based ensembles, where the state contest list can determine at least some of our choices—it is ultimately our responsibility to select the music through which we teach musical elements, help students develop understandings or concepts, and enable them to grow in sensitivity. (p. 19)

In contrast, Canada has not published a national music curriculum, but each province has its own music curriculum. For example, in the province of Ontario, the Ministry of Education published the revised Arts Curriculum in 2009, but this document does not provide educators with specific guidelines with respect to repertoire selection. As a result of having limited knowledge and experience, teachers often face numerous challenges when selecting repertoire for their students.

Need for the Study

It is important for music teachers, and especially music teachers in middle schools, to pay careful attention to instrumental repertoire selection because it plays a crucial role in beginners' instrumental music learning. Jørgensen (2001) states that students starting instrumental learning early are more likely to achieve a high level of instrumental performance. Byo (1988) suggests that music teachers can use method books, which may establish a beginning band curriculum. "Making informed choices is critical in any endeavour, especially one that represents a fundamental approach to music

learning” (p. 19). Correspondingly, Broeker (2000) emphasizes, especially in beginners’ music classes, that repertoire selection influences their musical insights and often stimulates children with a lifetime interest and passion for participating in the music experience. However, Budiansky and Foley (2005) note that school band teachers always complain that few music works by prestigious composers are appropriate for beginners in particular. Similarly, Harris and Walls (1996) argue that some dissertations have addressed the repertoire of the band at the high school level and higher, and “very few lists include any works that are appropriate for a second- or third-year instrumentalist” (p. 1). Thus, it is necessary to investigate and summarize the perspectives of teachers who have rich experiences related to repertoire selection for beginning band students.

An increasing number of music researchers have identified strategies for choosing repertoire. Many researchers state that a variety of repertoire choices are vital in order to keep students’ interest. Other researchers have identified the musical interests of students as being important. They believe that most students like to play the repertoire that they are interested in and familiar with. Some research suggests that teachers should consider the age and playing level of their students, thus enhancing these students’ successful performance (Wilson, 2003; Abril, 2006). Despite these suggestions provided by music educators/researchers, little research investigates the challenges faced or strategies implemented by in-service music educators in Ontario when selecting appropriate repertoire. Therefore, it is necessary to identify the potential challenges, in order to provide meaningful strategies for educators to use when making repertoire selection.

Many of the perspectives relating to repertoire selection come as a result of informed expert opinions. Empirical evidence is needed to clearly identify the

procedures/strategies that experienced educators' use when selecting repertoire, and their individual criteria for selection.

Findings from the present research study could benefit pre-service and in-service teachers as they undertake this very important task. An in-depth understanding of practitioners' repertoire selection practices will supplement the expert opinion literature. In addition, Harris and Walls (1996) note that many college teachers are unfamiliar with music for young bands, and inadequate appropriate repertoire for young bands highlights the problem. Given this information, music educators and professors, teaching in a Faculty of Education¹ could be made more aware of the challenges encountered by per-service music teachers, and in-turn provide more meaningful instruction relating to repertoire selection.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to investigate in-service teachers' strategies, process and rationale for selecting repertoire. More specifically, this investigation identifies the nature of the educational and musical experiences, which occur prior to choosing appropriate repertoire.

The inspiration for this research initially came from a course, entitled "Music Teachable" at the University of Windsor during the winter of 2017. I was the graduate assistant for this class. During the semester, all students were required to conduct the rehearsal for a Level 1 assigned band piece. To my surprise, none of the students asked questions as to why we choose this music, or what was the educational and musical rationale for selecting this work. When I asked them how they selected repertoire during

¹ Or a Faculty of music, or School of Music

their teaching practicums, they replied that they followed the instructions from their associate teachers and used the repertoire they were familiar with. Based on my observations, they could not state the reasons and strategies for repertoire selection. Furthermore, there was a course assignment, which required the students to analysis the arts curriculum. Unfortunately, none of the students could connect the curriculum requirements with repertoire selection. Therefore, it is the hope of this researcher that this study will provide pre-service as well as in-service teachers' guidance as to how best to select repertoire for their students.

Research Questions

The purpose of the study was to investigate in-service teachers' strategies and rationale for selecting repertoire. More specifically, this investigation identified their criteria and challenges that occur prior to choosing appropriate repertoire. The four central research questions:

1. How do in-service music teachers select repertoire for their ensembles?
2. What is the rationale for their choices?
3. What resources do music teachers use/access when making repertoire selection choices?
4. What are the learning goals of in-service music teachers when they select repertoire for their students?

Researcher Positionality

My interest in the area of repertoire selection stems from the experiences I had as a piano teacher who had taught in at the high school and college level. I realized that

repertoire selection is a complex and challenging process for music teachers. When I taught piano in a high school, I chose piano pieces for my students to perform at auditions when they applied for universities. All of the high school students were at a beginning piano level, having had no previous piano training before. Therefore, I could select simpler pieces for them. However, I also needed to consider another aspect that they would apply for universities, and I should select pieces that featured some technique and musical skills. In addition to my high school teaching, I also worked at a college. These undergraduate students were at different levels: some students had studied piano for 10 years, while others had not studied it before. Therefore, I sought to select varied repertoire for different students so they could achieve their individual goals. In fact, I chose repertoire based on my experience, I did not receive any guidance as to how to select repertoire for students. When I started learning the piano, I always asked my piano teacher whether I could play a particular piece. While at university my piano teacher and I selected pieces together for my recitals. Consequently, these experiences established my knowledge and gave me valuable experience to successfully teach beginning students using a variety of repertoire.

My motivation for conducting research about instrumental repertoire selection is the result of the opportunity I had to be a graduate assistant for the Music Teachable course in the Faculty of Education. All of the students were required to do a micro-teaching class, and they selected the content by themselves based on the Ontario Arts Curriculum. This music experience was different than what I was taught in China. Chinese teachers generally use assigned music textbooks to teach pieces, but Canadian music teachers in Ontario have more freedom to select music by themselves. As a part of

my responsibilities, I should mark and give comments relating to students' assignments and presentations. This different experience not only increased my interest in repertoire selection, but also encouraged me to be more proficient in this research study.

Delimitations

The present study investigates the current practices relating to the instrumental repertoire selection process. This study is limited to middle school music teachers who were responsible for beginning band programs in the province of Ontario, Canada. These instrumental music programs began in either grade five, six, seven, or eight.

Additionally, this study will utilize a case study research design. According to Creswell (2015), "the 'case' may be a single individual, several individuals separately or in a group, a program, events, or activities, such as several teachers" (p. 469). In my study, I will interview several music teachers who taught in Southern Ontario, so the number of participants is small. Since the sample size is small and distinctive, and "the data is predominantly non-numerical, there is no way to establish the probability that data is representative of some larger population" (Hodkinson & Hodkinson, 2001, p. 10).

Definition of the Terms

Instrumental Repertoire

Instrumental repertoire refers to the published musical works that are at an appropriate performance level for middle/junior high school band.

In-Service Teachers

The term "in-service teachers" refers to educators who are full-time employees in a school board.

Pre-Service Teachers

Pre-service teachers are university students, enrolled in a Bachelor of Education degree and participate in school-based field experience (practicum).

Middle Schools

Middle schools “generally cover two to three years that form the bridge between elementary and high school. In most provinces, middle school includes grades 6-8, and students then continue on to secondary school in grade 9” (Schools in Canada, 2017, para. 1).

CHAPTER II REVIEW OF LITERATURE

A review of extant literature provided many insights regarding repertoire selection, including selection criteria, and methods of selection. In this chapter, I will present perspectives related to repertoire selection that affect beliefs about process of selecting repertoire and its place in the curriculum, and explore the views of music teachers, composers, conductors, and researchers on the topic of repertoire selection. This chapter will be organized into four sections: 1) selecting high-quality repertoire, 2) selecting multicultural repertoire, 3) challenges relating to repertoire selection, and 4) strategies for repertoire selection.

Selecting High-quality Repertoire

With respect to selecting high-quality repertoire, it is important to consider the significance, difficulties, and criteria associated with it.

Significances of selecting high-quality repertoire. Some research emphasizes selection of high quality music repertoire (Budiansky & Foley, 2005; Forbes, 2001; Gaines, 1998; Geraldi, 2008; Grashel, 1989; Hayward, 2004; Hopkins, 2013; Rardin, 2000; Rosene, 2004; Young, 1998). “The subject of selecting quality music in an educational setting is not a new one, and it has been established as an important task for music educators” (Miller, 2013, p. 8). Over the past three decades, the poor quality of school music repertoire, and band repertoire in particular, has been the subject of numerous studies. Budiansky and Foley (2005) have argued that much of the music composed specifically for school band is extremely dull, educationally superficial, and lacks innovation and they further state that ‘bad’ music reflects insecurity and ignorance,

which fails to engage students. They state the repertoire selection process has been negatively impacted by three key factors: music teachers' reluctance to make aesthetic judgments, music publishers' assertive promotion of new repertoire, and the increasing influence of "non-musical elements, such as contests" (p. 25). In contrast, Hayward (2004) and Hopkins (2013) demonstrate that the selection of high-quality repertoire plays the primary role in repertoire selection for music teachers. Geraldi (2008) compares high-quality repertoire to high-quality ingredients that are beneficial for our health: because the ingredients of fast-food are unhealthy, they provide no benefits; whereas high-quality ingredients are beneficial because they provide nutrients. Similarly, high-quality repertoire is positive for students' musical experience. Consequently, Rosene (2004), notes that by selecting poor-quality music, even exceptional teachers and conductors will seem average. This is reinforced by Dvorak, who argues that students can only gain an understanding and appreciation of the value of music when playing great music (as cited in Hayward, 2004, p. 11). By studying of "quality literature, the student not only learns musical skills, but also learns and experiences musical concepts" (Hayward, 2004, p. 14). This statement is supported by Hopkins (2013), who states that it will ideally perform three functions:

It will develop students' technical skills (e.g., tone quality, articulation, intonation, phrasing and dynamics, and rhythmic precision); provide students with musical understanding about composers, historical periods, culture contexts, and musical genres and styles; and offer more opportunities for structured or free improvisation or challenges will be provided for students in order to expand their thinking about the very nature of music (p. 69).

Thus, the selected repertoire can facilitate two key components of music learning: it can shape students' musical growth (Hayward, 2004), and with the help of quality literature, "programming for the concert band can attain an integrity equal to that of the symphony orchestra and result in the same aesthetic expectations for audiences" (De Young, 1977, p. 29).

Difficulties of selecting high-quality repertoire. The task of identifying musical quality is more challenging, so music teachers may have difficulty selecting high-quality repertoire. The primary reason is that several authorities agree that musical quality can be regarded as a difficult aspect to assess (Budiansky & Foley, 2005; Del Borgo, 1988; Hash, 2005; Hopkins, 2013; Miller, 2013; Rosene, 2004; Young, 1998). Del Borgo (1988) and Young (1998) explain that educators have different views regarding quality music literature, because the understanding of quality is chiefly a subjective aspect of individual taste. Budiansky and Foley (2005) note that artistic quality cannot be defined because it is a subjective matter and "such judgments are contingent on individual preferences and subject to revision" (p. 20). Youngblood argues that different judgments derive from different understandings of music, "different kinds of values, and different levels of response to those values" (as cited in Miller, 2013, p. 6). Because of people's subjective nature, the quality of music repertoire lacks a clear and uniform definition. Therefore, an individualistic perspective makes the task more difficult when music teachers consider the quality of music to be performed with middle school band ensembles.

Furthermore, tastes and original judgments relating to quality music change over time (Budiansky et al., 2005). In Hayward's (2004) dissertation, she refers to the phrase

“stand the test of time” to sum up the phenomenon. After extensively reviewing the literature, she states that it is difficult to determine which types of music will “stand the test of time,” and concludes that “historical significance is often a measure of quality because time is able to sort out the music of true quality from among the many works being composed for the contemporary wind band” (p. 17). In terms of new music, it can be a challenge to determine whether it is true quality music. Hayward (2004) adopts suggestions from the composer Brian Balmages to demonstrate that great music will stand the test of time since “historical significance and longevity are qualities that define greatness in music.” These wonderful works provide more opportunities for “musicians to perform and conduct them” repeatedly because there are always “new ideas to discover about the pieces” (p. 17). Regardless of performers and audiences, they will learn more about these masterpieces with every performance.

In addition, Hayward (2004) argues that there are a numbers of reasons that explain why selecting quality music is difficult. These include the brief history of wind bands and their repertoire, the magnitude of substandard music published for these bands, the debate between ‘art’ and ‘education’ as it relates to music, over-reliance on popular music, and the choice of quality music for beginning bands. She argues that these issues are worsened by young music teachers who lack exposure to great art music. Therefore, it is vital to provide educators with meaningful guidance relating to high-quality repertoire selections.

Criteria for selecting high-quality repertoire. Because of the significance and difficulty of high-quality repertoire selection, a large number of music educators establish their own criteria for determining high-quality repertoire (Apfelstadt, 2000; Battisti,

1995; Berenson, 2008; Del Borgo, 1988; De Young, 1977; Forbes, 2001; McCallum, 2007; Miller, 2013; Hayward, 2004; Hopkins, 2013; Roseboom, 2006; Scruggs, 2009; Weller, 2014). Weller (2014) states that music teachers should establish their own criteria for evaluating quality in music before selecting repertoire. Del Borgo (1988), in his article entitled “Selecting Quality Literature for Bands and Orchestras,” introduces three aspects in selecting quality repertoire, which are variety, contrast, and musical interest. In fact, variety is not a new criteria created by Del Borgo. As long ago as 1977 De Young published an article entitled “Music Literature for Band and Wind Ensembles” to demonstrate that “variety can be achieved in a musical way by programming music from different periods, styles, and countries” (p. 29). Some music educators in the field have emphasized that variety is critical for selecting repertoire, and an increasing number of music teachers suggest choosing a wider range of repertoire that incorporates, not only different categories of music, but music from a variety of periods (Forbes, 2001; McCallum, 2007; Berenson, 2008). Forbes (2001) suggests that students are encouraged to perform varied repertoire including classical compositions, folk compositions, and popular works. Similarly, McCallum (2007) explains that music from different periods represents music works from the Renaissance, Baroque, Classical, Romantic, and contemporary eras, and she encourages directors to “consider original works, transcriptions, and arrangements for winds” from these periods (p. 105). This makes possible that students can comprehend a rich musical history, various musical styles and different performance practices (Battisti, 1995). However, this kind of “variety may pique the audience’s interest and stretch the players’ musical abilities into their zone of proximal development” (Scruggs, 2009, p. 55). Hopkins (2013) has written:

Many directors strive to program a diverse selection of works that represents a balance of historical periods, differing tempos, and eclectic styles. Of great importance is selecting repertoire that will challenge our students in the varied domains of learning without stretching them to the point where they become frustrated and lose interest. (p. 69)

Consequently, selecting repertoire with varied styles and periods provides more needed variety for the directors, students, and audiences (Weller, 2014).

In addition, variety also occurs in other musical elements of quality repertoire. Battisti (1995) quotes Ostling's criteria to indicate that "the composition is consistent in its style, reflecting a complete grasp of technical details, clearly conceived ideas" (p. 46). He states that technical details, such as melody, harmony, texture, rhythm, form, etc. should be interesting when selecting quality music. Similarly, Del Borgo (1988) asserts that "dynamics, rhythmic material, tempo, instrumentation, mode and key, create contrast," which is important for determining quality repertoire (p. 24). He summarizes that careful attention to these parts will give better insight into the value of the repertoire. This opinion is reinforced by Apfelstadt (2000), she believes that students need adequate musical content consisting of several musical elements "such as pitch, form, and dynamics to heighten their expressions in performance" (p. 20).

Furthermore, Del Borgo (1988) stresses the importance of variety as it applies to melody, timbre, balance, and texture. He suggests that music teachers need to consider whether the piece contains melodies of varied character, such as counter melody, and note whether the melodic material can be shared in the middle and lower parts; diverse timbres represent a wide variety of instrumental colours. In other words, music teachers

should consider the varied instruments in their bands. Similarly, De Young (1977) also suggests that “the size and instrumentation of groups can be varied” (p. 29). While Battisti (1995) states comparable ideas in a different way, writing “the composition reflects craftsmanship in orchestration, demonstrating a proper balance between transparent and tutti scoring, and also between solo and group colours” (p. 46). Although instruments can be varied, Del Borgo (1988) advises music teachers to choose repertoire that “provides a balance of background and foreground material” (p. 24), and Battisti (1995) states that directors need to affirm that all instruments can preserve the musical integrity of the piece.

Current studies also concentrate on variety of repertoire selection. These statements discussed above are highlighted by Hayward (2004), who cites Alfred Reed’s statement to emphasize that rhythm and melody are important factors to grab at first when directors consider the quality repertoire, and by Berenson (2004), who identifies the importance of contrast, and she has written: “Being able to contrast different compositional approaches and stylistic sounds creates wonderful teaching moments (for example, to make music by Brahms sound different than that of Bartók requires a very different approach to each)” (p. 4). In conclusion, variety in repertoire can be achieved by different textures, contrast tempos, and modal tonalities (Weller, 2014).

Other educators also emphasize the other criteria of quality repertoire selection. Roseboom (2006), in his dissertation “Criteria for Curricular Literature Selection Among Florida Band Directors,” cites two main criteria that are craftsmanship and expressiveness in repertoire selection. In fact, the two criteria from Leonard and House have been cited in many articles. Based on Leonard and House’s statements, Roseboom

(2006) explains that “all good music is expressive in” its form and content something of depth, which “embodies the composer’s conception of the stress-release form of the human experience, and craftsmanship can be defined as the element that facilitates expressiveness” (p. 4). Also, Apfelstadt (2000) believes high-quality and “good” music retains craftsmanship and expressivity. Well-written music may release the tension, and make listening and performing in a worthwhile experience. In Miller’s dissertation (2013) and Weller’s article (2014), they note four criteria for assessing the quality of art work developed by Reimer (1989), including “craftsmanship, sensitivity, imagination, and authenticity” (p. 134). Reimer (1989) believes these four criteria can offer guidelines teachers selecting repertoire for the purposes of study, performance, and experience.

Therefore, McCallum (2007) suggests that for music teachers, “choosing and analyzing good-quality repertoire, instruction sequencing, and assessment structuring are time-intensive activities that require extensive preparation and organizational skills” (p. 106).

Selecting Multicultural Repertoire

The Government of Canada (2012) notes that, in 1971, Canada officially adopted multiculturalism before any other country, and that this policy guaranteed the rights of all Canadian citizens regardless of social markers such as race, religion, or language. Most provinces have officially accepted multiculturalism for implementation in their education programs, but each has dealt with it differently. Because of the diversity between provinces with respect to language and religion, there is no one model of multicultural education in Canada (Volk, 1998). According to the Ontario Canada (2017), Ontario is the most culturally diverse province in Canada and is the place where most new

immigrants settle. Thus, in the 1980s, the Ontario Ministry created a resource guide that offers details about multicultural and multiracial societies.

Because school communities characterize the cultural diversity of the society, “schools should cater for the diverse educational needs of their students” (Nethsinghe, 2012a, p. 58). To achieve this, “the National Policy for art education recognizes the multicultural makeup of Canada and the federal stance toward promoting a multicultural mosaic” (Irwin et al., 1996, p. 19). Based on the policy, the provincial “governments have developed a set of regulations and policies to enhance multicultural practices including a set of curriculum guidelines for schools” (Nethsinghe, 2012a, p. 57). In the mid-twentieth century, the Ontario Ministry of Education and Training supported an active educational program of multicultural and antiracist education, in particular through a thorough review process for materials (Volk, 1998). This review process was designed to assist in selecting materials that avoid bias and stereotypical representations (Volk, 1998). In 2009, the Ministry of Ontario published the revised Ontario Arts Curriculum 2009. In the Grade 6-8 music curriculum, there was a greater emphasis on studying the music of various cultures. The following example is from the Ontario Arts Curriculum 2009:

By the end of Grade 6, students will: C1.1 sing and/or play, in tune, from musical notation, unison music and music in two or more parts from a wide variety of cultures, styles, and historical periods.

C3.1 identify and describe ways in which awareness or appreciation of music is affected by culture and the media.

C3.2 compare some aspects of the music of one culture and/or historical period with aspects of the music of another culture and/or historical period. (The Ontario Arts Curriculum, 2009, p. 126-127)

By the end of Grade 7, students will: C1.1 sing and/or play, in tune, from musical notation, unison music and music in two or more parts from diverse cultures.

C3.1 analyse the influences of music and the media on the development of personal and cultural identity.

C3.2 analyse some historical, cultural, and technological influences on style, genre, and innovation in music. (p. 141-142)

By the end of Grade 8, students will: C1.1 sing and/or play, in tune, music in unison and in two or more parts from a variety of cultures, styles, and historical periods. (p. 153)

These expectations suggest that music teachers incorporate the histories, texts, values, beliefs, and perspectives of students from different cultural backgrounds into their music classes. Volk notes that teaching multicultural music may not only allow students to explore the external workings of cultural groups, but also encourage them to gain an understanding of how others view themselves musically (as cited in Cain, Lindblom, & Walden, 2013, p. 81). Consequently, it is important for music teachers to “infuse the curriculum with music of various styles and from various cultures” (Abril, 2006, p. 38).

Significances of selecting multicultural repertoire. Whether selecting a repertoire for choirs, bands, or orchestras, music teachers are strongly encouraged to adopt multicultural pieces (Brisson, 2015; Cain et al, 2013; Gozete, 2000; Lamb, 2006; Weller, 2014). Multicultural music is not a new concept. For in 1989, Elliott pointed out

that multicultural music means music which is culturally diverse. Goetze (2000) further explains that diverse music refers to all music that originated in Western and non-Western art tradition. Similarly, Lamb (2006) advocates the selection of diverse music and integration of all music literature including Western and non-Western music and states that music from cultures not generally associated with the Western arts music tradition have come to be the primary choices of repertoire selection. Diverse music repertoire promotes cultural comprehension for those who are eager to experience it; therefore, the diverse repertoire deserves an important place in a musical setting (Lamb, 2006). Canadian music educator Wendy McCallum (2007) supports this position: “a multicultural approach could include music with a variety of scale patterns and modes, and may incorporate unusual percussion instruments, compositional techniques, or singing” (p. 106). Correspondingly, Goetze explains that some music from other cultures cannot be accurately performed using Western instruments or Western harmonic structure, such as pentatonic (as cited in Weller, 2014, p. 27). These different experiences are important for students to appreciate music from other countries. Likewise, Cain et al. (2013) suggest that music teachers should “diversify their programs to reflect the individual cultural composition of the diverse learning communities in which they teach and give students a sense of ‘what’s out there’” (p. 81). This approach “shows students that there are different ways of experiencing music, and opening the avenues to intercultural understanding and empathy are of the greatest importance, particularly if no such diversity exists in the educational setting” (p. 81). More importantly, Bradley argues that gaining an understanding of multicultural music may hold the potential to build communities that are more open to and accepting of cultural differences by giving

performers the opportunity to interact with and mediate those differences through musical performance (as cited in Brisson, 2015, p. 30).

In addition, music teachers should pay more attention on the selected music that makes tight cultural connections with their own country (Weller, 2014). Brisson (2015) notes that because music is a mode of cultural expression, it has important symbolic significance for those who play it and can help to define group identity. In addition, music educators like Sæther suggest that one of the reasons that encouraged music teachers to select multicultural repertoire is that children can be allowed to experience music from their own culture (as cited in Cain et al., 2013, p. 81). Similarly, Grant, Kinder, and Reynolds (2004) state that there are a number of advantages to fostering the culture of students' native countries through music selection, and thus conclude that national identity should be taken into considerations by music teachers as they provide diverse repertoire for their students. Consequently, they created the Canadian Band Repertoire, assessing 16 recommended Canadian band compositions and emphasized that there are benefits inherent in promoting the culture of one's own country, including the nurturing of artists and the development of a strong national self-image. Even though Canada has produced some fine wind-band music, this repertoire tends to be overshadowed by American and European influences. Thus, Canadian music teachers need to "more effectively embrace the efforts of Canadian composers and promote their music" (Shand, 2005, p. 9).

However, some current music educators argue that although many multicultural pieces have the potential to introduce students to a wide variety of music outside of the Western classical tradition, much of the repertoire is arranged or composed by a Western-

trained musician and are typically set for a Western instrumental ensemble (Brisson, 2015; Weller, 2014). Weller (2014) suggests that music teachers do not avoid these pieces because the understanding of “the culture and seeking out authentic performances can help determine teachers’ choices and instruction, and create a meaningful experience for the students” (p. 27).

Suggestions of selecting multicultural repertoire. Many authorities of multicultural music education have already provided several suggestions for selecting materials and adopting teaching methods that are appropriate for the culture being studied (Abril, 2006; Brisson, 2015; Lamb, 2006). For example, Abril (2006) notes that “teachers might have presented students with impressions of a culture that were superficial, inaccurate, or stereotypical” because of “limited music and information found in textbooks” (p. 39). Likewise, Brisson (2015) argues:

It is not enough for music teachers to uncritically select and teach students multicultural repertoire. Music teachers have a responsibility when teaching the musical traditions of other cultural groups to ensure those groups are accurately and respectfully represented to their students. (p. 30)

Lamb (2006) agrees, stating that teachers should respect cultural expressions derived from the selected music by “helping their [students] perform repertoire with as much integrity as possible” (p. 9). As a result, “the need for guidelines on the selection and teaching of multicultural musical repertoire arose” (Brisson, 2015, p. 31).

Although some teachers may be concerned that they are not able to adequately meet such expectations, Abril (2006) suggests that “multicultural music and materials selections should not be viewed as an insurmountable obstacle” (p. 38). Music materials

should approach some level of authenticity as they make efforts to help students appreciate music within its cultural context. To achieve this, Abril (2006) suggests that teachers consider three key factors: “music, with respect to the formal properties of the sound; meaning, which speaks to the context of the music; and behavior[ur]s, which refers to how the music is taught, learned, and performed” (p. 39).

Abril (2006) emphasizes that ‘authentic’ music cannot simply be viewed as “a valid concept because music is continually evolving and being reshaped by culture” (p. 40). It is necessary to consider the goals for selected multicultural music. Thus, the musical teaching, learning and performance should be representative of culture from which the music came when it is selected to represent a cultural group. Likewise, “music teachers should strive to provide more opportunities for students to appreciate and perform music with valid diverse culture if the goal is to experience a particular musical culture” (Abril, 2006, p. 40). Moreover, Abril (2006) suggests that in order for music teachers to use multicultural materials to create culturally valid musical experiences for their students, they must consider four important factors: publisher, who should be trustworthy and those who have reliable multicultural products; musician, who needs to have an in-depth understanding in the culture and musical style; context, which should be integrated with original cultural elements, such as language, dance, history, and politics; and performance, to which should be paid more attention in materials selection to produce high cultural validity.

Brisson (2015) cites guidelines for music teachers as suggested by a music educator who specializes in multicultural music education (Judith Cook Tucker), and suggests music teachers consider the following:

Whether the musician or scholar who arranged the materials is actually from the original culture, to consider whether cultural context, such as the cultural group and its attendant history and geography, is included, and to verify whether the materials contain adequate instructions, and how much adaptation have been done to the arrangements. (p. 32)

Likewise, Volk (1998) highlights that it is important to confirm that “the materials should include an audiotape for listening and performance” (p. 177).

Many studies promote multicultural music in choral settings (Goetze, 2000; Lamb, 2006; Abril, 2006), but little research focuses on instrumental ensembles. Goetze (2000) provides additional suggestions for instrumental ensembles. She states that accepting suggestions from musicians, native to a given culture, would ensure that the students’ culture is honoured. In order to “determine the appropriateness of the ensemble learning the music and performing it for others, it is also essential to speak with a native artist or cultural representative” (Goetze, 2000, p. 25). She suggests that teachers should learn as much as they can about the culture from written and video sources and share the information with their students. If at all possible, teachers could invite a cultural representative to meet the ensemble in order to foster a personal connection with the group. Finally, Goetze (2000) suggests that the students “learn the music aurally—especially if it is transmitted that way within the culture” (p. 25).

Although these guidelines provide teachers with basic criteria for selecting culturally diverse materials, they still cannot ensure an accurate interpretation of the culture being studied. Therefore, Brisson (2015) states that teachers should “conduct

independent, scholarly research in order to ensure that unfamiliar musical traditions are respectfully and accurately presented in their classrooms” (p. 32).

Repertoire Selection Challenges

While selecting high-quality and diverse repertoire for students are two significant challenges for music teachers, there are other issues with respect to repertoire selection that make it a challenging process for many music teachers. Berenson (2008) states that music teachers will encounter two challenging tasks: “selecting appropriate repertoire and providing their students with the tools and strategies” required to independently gain “control over that repertoire” (p. 4). She also emphasizes that at the beginning of a new scholastic year, music teachers need to assess the abilities of new students, the progress of older students, acknowledge students’ strengths and weaknesses, set goals, and identify new activities that will serve to inspire and make lessons more stimulating. In this context, these two challenges can be placed into five categories: selecting appropriate repertoire to match student’s ability and their physical limitations; selecting repertoire to develop students’ musical and technical abilities; exposing students to a variety of repertoire; finding a balance of new and old repertoire; and selecting repertoire to stimulate students’ creativity.

Other studies support these findings and outline the importance of considering not only students’ abilities, but also their interests. For example, Hopkins (2013) observed his colleagues and identified common problems when they selected repertoire. He found that some music teachers select repertoire that exceeds students’ abilities because they are unfamiliar with their students. Therefore, he recommends that teachers either use sight-reading with his students or consult other colleagues in order to assess the difficulty of

repertoire. In addition, he observed that music teachers sometimes choose excessively long and difficult pieces, which in turn diminish students' concentration and interests. Hopkins (2013) noted that there are large bodies of repertoire that are written specifically for advanced adult players, so music teachers need to consider musical and technical appropriateness when selecting this type of repertoire. Similarly, Freer (2006) noted that adolescents in grade eight are more independent and often express their dislike for selected repertoire by their teacher. Therefore, students' interests should be taken into consideration as a means of maintaining their commitment to music learning.

A lack of rich experience may make repertoire selection challenging. Reynolds (2000) states that the "more experience one has, the easier the task of repertoire selection becomes" (p. 31). He states that repertoire selection is easier for him due to his rich experiences. Because preservice music teachers lack experience, repertoire selection is often challenging for them. Likewise, Hayward (2004) states that preservice music teachers who intend to "become band directors should be given opportunities to study standard literature and should receive training in the development of skills for choosing quality repertoire" (p. 48). "Teacher training is currently undergoing re-evaluation in many universities, and several authorities are recommending that the study of repertoire be included" in the curriculum (Hayward, 2004, p. 49). Sheldon demonstrates that preservice music teachers can better select repertoire to increase their instrumental students' musical experiences when they improve their analytical skills during the undergraduate years (as cited in Hayward, 2004, p. 48). This is especially true when selecting multicultural repertoire, as demonstrated by Cain et al. (2013). They argue that the majority of preservice music teachers have no training in multicultural music from a

music education perspective, and note that some programs have not introduced multicultural music due to limited experience in performing music of other cultures. Therefore, Hayward (2004) suggests that “knowledge of repertoire should be included in preservice music teachers’ studies” (p. 49).

Although music teachers often encounter difficulties during this process, the literature identifies numerous helpful strategies when selecting repertoire.

Strategies of Repertoire Selections

It is a challenging task for a music teacher to select repertoire because repertoire has an influence on the musical development of their students (McCallum, 2007). Reynolds (2000) states that “a well-planned repertoire creates the framework for an excellent music curriculum that promotes the musical growth of students” (p. 31). Therefore, many authors provide useful strategies relating to repertoire selection, including asking themselves questions, finding repertoire balance, making repertoire lists and worksheets, using a wide range of resources, and employing sight-reading.

Asking questions to self. Reynolds (2000) introduces several strategies to guide music teachers when they select repertoire. In his study, “Repertoire is the curriculum,” he suggests that music teachers need to be engaged in the same process every year. When these music teachers consider whether this music work is appropriate for students, they are encouraged to consider whether a piece has special educational goals, and if the piece is too difficult for students to achieve their goals in this year. This is also supported by Hopkins (2013), who suggests music teachers ask themselves some “reality check questions.” These questions should be considered in order to determine if the students are “at a level of maturity where they will have the patience to learn it” and whether they will

“have the stamina to perform the entire program” (p. 73). These questions will be beneficial for music teachers to study the appropriateness of selected repertoire. Before the repertoire selection ends, music teachers should continually consider these factors (Reynolds, 2000).

Finding repertoire balance. The concept of ‘balance’ can be found in many articles relating to repertoire selection and is approached in different ways. For example, McCallum (2007) encourages music teachers to establish a balanced approach to the study of music. This balance can be achieved by appropriate amounts of unity and variety. “Music needs to have elements of unity, repetition, and variety. Unity and repetition provide a sense of cohesion, while variety provides interest” (Pearson, 2001, p. 49). When students study their music, they should have a clear learning goal, which can be approached in a variety of ways. The establishment of learning outcomes should precede final repertoire choices (McCallum, 2007).

Furthermore, Hopkins (2013) demonstrates two psychological theories associated with balancing students’ educational needs and their technical and musical abilities.: flow theory and the zone of proximal development (ZDP). He states, “Flow is most likely to occur when there is a balance between skill and challenge” (p. 70). When selecting repertoire, music teachers need to consider whether the challenges can improve students’ skills, and whether students will finally achieve the goals after they overcome the challenges. McCallum (2007) also recommends that music teachers need to understand the level of difficulty of a piece. It is essential to avoid the lowest and highest technical requirements in any scores because these scores cannot provide rich opportunities for students relating to musical elements and varied goals.

Hopkins (2013) cites Vygotsky's concept of 'ZDP' to describes that "what the child is able to do in collaboration today he will be able to do independently tomorrow" (p. 70). This means that students will grasp the knowledge and solve problems independently after receiving guidance from their music teachers. In other words, when students learn new repertoire, they can overcome the technical problems with the help of music teachers. When they encounter similar problems, they will know how to deal with them independent of their teacher. Therefore, when selecting repertoire, teachers should assess the levels of challenges and consider how to use these challenges to stimulate and improve students' potential skills. Grading systems, relating to performance levels, are available from some publishers, sheet music suppliers, and in the form of state/provincial festival lists. Hopkins (2013) states that teachers should do three things:

Familiarize [themselves] with the grading systems used by different organizations, study the score carefully and think about the musical demands of a piece of repertoire, and create a folder with a selection of graded literature ranging from easiest pieces to hardest pieces. (p. 72)

Moreover, Hopkins (2013) emphasizes that it is important for music teachers to "find a balance between the technical and aesthetic goals of music education" (p. 73). He suggests that the problem with this approach is that if students are required to learn progressively difficult technical pieces, they will learn that music learning is defined by continually performing increasingly difficult works. This will cause students to focus on technical goals at the expense of music aesthetics. In contrast, if students simply concentrate on the quality of the sounds they are producing, they may not successfully overcome the technical problems. Hopkins (2013) provides the following example:

If [students] cannot perform a piece with great intonation, tone, rhythm, and with expression so that the audience is emotionally moved by our musical offering, then the piece must still reside deep inside the zone of proximal development for our ensemble and is not ready to be performed. (p. 73)

Likewise, McCallum (2007) states that technical and musical difficulties should be determined spontaneously because music at a certain technical level of difficulty does not necessarily have the same aesthetic. Thus, she suggests that music teachers do not simply avoid pieces that appear to be too simple. Consequently, appropriate repertoire that “is well matched to the musical and technical level of the ensemble” will not only help music teachers better educate students and “generate great enthusiasm toward their programs” (Hopkins, 2013, p. 74), but also stimulate students ultimately to higher levels of musical growth, understanding, and motivation.

Making repertoire lists and worksheets. Making lists is very helpful for music teachers in the process of repertoire selection as it allows them to record selected music (McCallum, 2007; Reynolds, 2000; Rosene, 2004). Lists are helpful because “a list of good repertoire is not necessarily the right combination of music for your ensemble unless the works are grouped and coordinated in a sequence that facilitates musical growth” (McCallum, 2007, p. 105), and making a list of repertoire allows teachers to keep track of their preferred composers and arrangers (Rosene, 2004). Likewise, if a teacher creates repertoire lists every year, he or she will find that it is helpful to keep a running list of music because these pieces are valuable musical choices over the years (Reynolds, 2000).

McCallum (2007) suggests that “it is possible for music teachers to establish a

‘core’ repertoire” (p. 105). Gerald (2008) defines core repertoire as a few selected value works that music teachers believe students can play or sing over time and provides several suggestions of qualifying a piece for a core repertoire, such as the quality of a piece. However, Gaines (1998) argues that core repertoire lists published by different music organizations may present some problems. He conducted research to determine the appropriateness of core repertoire for high school bands, and concluded that music teachers should judge their own choice of literature compared to an agreed core repertoire.

In addition, Gerald (2008) suggests that “once repertoire lists are developed, they can be used to create a long-term vision of what students will accomplish in terms of developing their technique and their musicianship” (p. 77). After rehearsing repertoire with his students, he devised a worksheet to help him to decide if the repertoire was appropriate for his students. Similarly, McCallum (2007) recommends that music teachers prepare a detailed record of every musical element that they should be familiar with when choosing a program. She also suggests that music teachers should spend significant time confirming the value of works. This type of worksheet encourages music teachers “to brainstorm, think through the conceptual areas where their ensembles are strong or weak, and project future lessons to the point that a particular core work might be performable” (Gerald, 2008, p. 77).

Berenson (2008) states that balance can be represented in both new and old repertoire. She found that a few teachers would use new repertoire to stimulate students’ interests, and bring them to as high a level as possible. There are times, however, that a new work requires additional time to determine if it is worth using. It is beneficial to

expand the repertoire through acknowledging a student's best interest, gaining exposure to new music, musical concepts and technical demands, and blending both old and new repertoire to stipulate greater self-confidence during a performance (Berenson, 2008).

Using a wide range of resources. In order to acquire repertoire, music teachers are encouraged to use various resources. For example, Reynolds (2000) emphasizes that music teachers should continue to learn because the world is rapidly changing, and he encourages teachers to use a wide range of resources such as networking to discover new repertoire. Regardless of level of experience that teachers have, he believes that published state/provincial repertoire lists and MENC's Web site are good references for them in order to create their own personal repertoire lists. Similarly, Rosene (2004) advises music teachers to refer to festival lists. "Some excellent sources can be found on the Internet . . . and most state MEAs offer comprehensive, graded lists" (Rosene, 2004, p. 36). In Canada, provincial lists such as Alberta Band Association (ABA) and Saskatchewan Band Association (SBA) can also be used.

Furthermore, Rosene (2004) advises educators to "look at new music reviews from publishers and in periodicals such as *The instrumentalist*, *School Band and Orchestra*, and *Orchestra Product News*" (p. 36). This can be a good way for less experienced music teachers to learn about available repertoire because these reviews are reliable and often written by trained music directors. Similarly, Geraldini (2008) agrees that music teachers can discover appropriate repertoire through many publications, such as "Thomans Dvorak's *Best Music for Young Band* or GIA's *Teaching Music Through Performance* series" (p. 77).

Moreover, many music educators agree that discussing music scores with

colleagues, attending concerts, and consulting with music researchers and professors are also good sources for selecting repertoire (Geraldi, 2008; McCallum, 2007; Rosene, 2004). Geraldi (2008) suggests that music teachers “ask their local professors, ensemble conductors, and other colleagues of music education” when they “need ideas for pieces that might qualify for their core list,” and he believes that these professors would reply to emails and answer calls when music teachers ask suggestions in repertoire selection (p. 77). In this way, music teachers can not only attain resources from others, but also acknowledge and understand others’ experiences in repertoire selection (McCallum, 2007).

In addition, many authors recommend that educators perform a variety of genres. For example, Rosene (2004) recommends to “use high-quality transcriptions of orchestral music with you band” because “such materials will assist in the development of style, maturity, interpretation, blend, and rhythmic stability” (p. 36). However, when employing these resources, Rosene (2004) also suggests to add “popular standards in the jazz program,” and encourages educators to select materials by prestige composers and arrangers, but “the typical Top 40 presented weekly on the radio and TV,” and “fads and popular music should be excluded in formal band and orchestra repertoire” (p. 36). Similarly, Hopkins (2013) states that music teachers should consider that a school band or orchestra is different from a professional ensemble. In order to concentrate on the musical aspects of the repertoire, “most selections should be well within the technical limits of the members of the ensemble” (Hopkins, 2013, p. 72).

Engaging in sight-reading. Sight-reading is a highly recommended strategy for music teachers to choose repertoire. In McCallum’s (2007) article, “Repertoire as

Curriculum,” she concludes that sight-reading is important, and depending on what repertoire is chosen, will improve students’ music abilities. Similarly, Crocker (2000) also supports that young students should improve sight-reading skills. When young students are proficient in sight-reading, their engagement will be increased.

At the same time, sight-reading is a good method to assess the difficulty of selected repertoire. If students “sight-read a new piece” with a lot of difficulties, it may mean that the selected repertoire is too difficult (Hopkins, 2013, p. 70). If the selected music is at an appropriate level, the exercise will also increase players’ confidences. Nevertheless, Hopkins (2013) states that teachers should not select every piece that their students are assigned to sight-read, and they may postpone some of them “for later in the year. Both of these practices will help keep concerts to a reasonable length” (Hopkins, 2013, p. 72).

Other strategies of repertoire selections. Besides the strategies discussed above, Richardson (2009), a director of a wind ensemble, recommends that music teachers intentionally select slow repertoire:

Slow music ideally has fewer technical demands, so it provides a great opportunity for students to concentrate on fundamental performance skills. With minimal attention required for technique and more attention directed towards interpretation/style, students will experience the piece’s emotional import more easily. Both the director and the students are more likely to be in the musical moment when musical events feel unhurried and manageable. (p. 35)

Moreover, Hopkins (2013) recommends that “music teachers establish a baseline in the first days of the school year by using auditions, skill checks, or playing tests that will help

inform you when considering repertoire selection for ensembles” (p. 72). After performing, music teachers and students should engage in assessment and reflection as a means of evaluating the repertoire.

Summary

Repertoire selection is a crucial step in music education planning. It is evident that many composers, music educators, and music critics provide a large number of suggestions for selecting appropriate repertoire. There is an abundance of research that concentrates on the significances and difficulties of selecting high-quality literature, and the numerous authors have demonstrated several strategies for selecting high-quality repertoire. In particular, musical variety should be a primary consideration when music teachers choose repertoire.

Moreover, many authorities agree that multicultural repertoire plays an important role in band education. Multicultural music not only provides more opportunities for students to experience global culture, but also develops students’ individual national identity.

In addition to these important ideas, this chapter also includes previous research that identifies strategies for repertoire selection. It is useful for music teachers to adopt practices, such as asking oneself questions, using a wide range of resources, and consulting with others professions to determine the appropriateness of selected repertoire. Although many recommendations can be found in the extant literature, more empirical evidence is needed to identify challenges that in-service music teachers might encounter. Future findings may benefit both in-service and pre-service teachers as they prepare for a career in music education.

CHAPTER III METHODOLOGY AND RESEARCH DESIGN

In this chapter, I outline the rationale for choosing a qualitative case study. I then outline the procedure taken for this study, and the steps involved in it. Included in this chapter are a description of the participants and a rationale for selection as well as the method for data collection, and final storage. Finally, I will identify some ethical issues relating to this investigation and discuss credibility.

Qualitative Case Study

The purpose of this study was to explore the challenges, strategies, and procedure faced by middle school music teachers when selecting instrumental (band) repertoire. In general, qualitative research methods are especially useful in discovering the meaning that people give to events they experience (Creswell, 2015). Furthermore, “case study is a qualitative approach that can be used to research that facilitates exploration of a phenomenon within its context using a variety of data sources” (Baxter & Jack, 2008, p. 544). Therefore, I will employ a qualitative case study approach to explore music teachers’ perceptions and experiences with regard to locating and selecting repertoire for their ensembles.

A qualitative case study approach offers several benefits for this type of study. First, this study belongs to the field of music education. Roulston (2006) states that music educators have widely adopted qualitative research to explore phenomena in music education. “The first of Yarbrough’s suggestions to music education researchers in her 1996 article is that researchers in music education broaden themselves by ‘developing interdisciplinary knowledge and skills’” (p. 154). She also states that the predominant purpose of qualitative work published in music education seeks an understanding of the

phenomenon under investigation. For example, researchers provide descriptive accounts of participants' experiences from various theoretical perspectives (Roulston, 2006).

In addition, Yin (2014) states:

Compared to other methods, case study research is the preferred method in situations when the main research questions are “how” or “why” and these questions should be asked about a contemporary set of events, over which a researcher has little or no control. (p. 45)

For my study, the main research question is how do elementary music teachers go about selecting instrumental (band) repertoire. Specifically, I asked music teachers a range of questions pertaining to what kinds of instrumental repertoire they like to select, the rationale for their choices, and where they access repertoire possibilities. These questions concentrate on a contemporary event that is repertoire selection, and the researcher in this study did not control participants' understandings and choices because these questions are exploratory.

Third, “A case study is an in-depth exploration of a bounded system (e.g., activity, process, or individuals) based on extensive data collection. Bounded means that the case is separated out for research in terms of time, place, or some physical boundaries” (Creswell, 2015, p. 492). Similarly, Yin (2014) states:

A case study allows researchers to focus on a ‘case’ and retain a holistic and real-world perspective—such as in studying individual life cycles, small group behaviour, organizational and managerial processes, neighborhood change, school performance, international relations, and the maturation of industries. (p. 34).

For my study, the bounded system is the music teachers (a ‘case’) who worked in

Southern Ontario and have at least 10 years teaching experiences in instrumental (band) repertoire selection. More specifically, I was interested in deeply investigating their perspectives and processes as it relates to the phenomenon - repertoire selection. Based on these three reasons, a qualitative case study is appropriate for my study.

Procedure

This study took seven months to complete (November 2017 to May 2018). The following are steps taken at each stage of the process to ensure the procedure and completion of this study.

1. After the proposal defense, I originally designed 18 interview questions consisting of four categories based on a review of the extant literature. After discussing with my advisor, Dr. Jonathan Bayley, the original 18 interview questions were expanded into 39 questions. These additional questions addressed students' abilities and interests, which are closely linked to the main interview questions.
2. The target population who I would want to interview was eventually identified (criteria: instrumental music educators who have taught from grade five to eight with at least 10 years of teaching instrumental experience in Southern Ontario).
3. I completed and submitted the original REB protocol including the letter of information, the consent for audio taping form, and the consent form to participate in the proposed research.
4. Three weeks later, I received the comments from the REB office. Based on their questions and comments related to my rationale, procedure, and participants of my research, I revised the submitted responses and revised the REB protocol within one week.

5. After one week, I received the permission from the Research Ethics Board at the University of Windsor, and individually contacted the public school board and Catholic school board to determine who was responsible for approving research in their school districts.
6. The approved REB protocol and interview questions (Appendix E) were sent to the two school boards to request their permission to proceed with my research on the second day after receiving the permission from the Research Ethics Board at the University of Windsor.
7. One day later, I received permission from the public school board and the Catholic school board, and then separately contacted the Arts Consultant (public school board) and the Superintendent (Catholic school board) from these two school boards to receive a few potential participants' names.
8. After communicating with the Arts Consultant and the Superintendent and being noticed the policy relating to conducting a research in two school boards, and based on the information they provided, I was able to identify the potential elementary school teachers and instrumental programs through the internet.
9. After potential participants were identified, a letter of invitation, including an introductory letter (Appendix A) and the letter information for consent to participate in research (Appendix B), was either mailed or delivered to every music educator in two days. The total number of invitation letters was 40; 24 letters were sent to the public school board and other 16 letters were sent to the Catholic school board.

10. Three days later after sending all invitation letters, I received two responses. One teacher could not participate in my research because of his schedule but thanked me for my invitation, and another teacher was willing to take an interview. On the second day, I phoned to this teacher to make an appointment to decide on the date and place to be interviewed, and he was the first teacher participating in my research. After receiving the permission from this participants, two consent forms, interview questions, interview information including date, time and location were sent to his email.
11. In preparation for the actual interviews, I practiced interviewing with my advisor, which helped me anticipate possible responses from participants and eliminate any vague questions. This exercise prepared me to ask effective and useful follow-up questions in the formal interview.
12. One week later after I mailed and delivered all invitation letters, I phoned 9 schools randomly in an attempt to contact other teachers directly to encourage them to participate in my research. Fortunately, I got two responses and decided on a time and place for an interview with one of the participants who was my second participant. Also, two consent forms, interview questions and interview information were sent to the second participant after getting his permission. Another teacher was interested in my study and asked me to send some information to her email, but she had a concert during that period and then did not reply to my email.
13. Two weeks later after I mailed and delivered all invitation letters, I phoned other 10 schools in an attempt to contact more teachers to encourage them to participate

in my research. Subsequently, I also got one response from the phone call and received one response via email. The consent form to participate in research (Appendix C), the consent for audio taping form (Appendix D), guided interview questions (Appendix E), and interview information were sent to these two participants after getting their permission.

14. In the following two weeks, I received three responses via emails. One teacher was interested in this study, but he stated he might not be a good participant because of lack of experiences of repertoire selection. I tried to make an appointment with him, but he did not reply finally. The other two participants were interviewed during the week before the Christmas break.
15. On the first week in 2018, two teachers contacted me to participate in this study via email. Shortly after, both of them received to my interviews.
16. In total, I received a positive response from 11 interested music teachers. I then contacted them individually to arrange a convenient time and location where they could be interviewed. Also, prior to the formal interview, I sent a copy of the interview questions and two consent forms to each willing participant in order to provide more time to for participants to review and think about these questions, and reduce any uncomfortable feeling during the formal interview.
17. Prior to beginning the interview, I reviewed the content of the consent forms with each interviewee and asked if they have any questions. If they did not have any questions, I asked them to sign both consent forms of which I kept one copy for my records.

18. I carefully transcribed each interview and sent a copy to each interviewee by e-mail giving them an opportunity to revise their own the original interview. The researcher accepted any changes made by them because the researcher wanted to ensure that their perspectives were accurately represented. If they did not return their revised transcript before the required date (three weeks), I did not accept the revised transcript and the original transcript was used for this study.
19. After I carefully reviewed the transcript that the participant revised, it was determined that follow-up questions were necessary for two music teachers. The follow-up questions were done via e-mail and telephone.

Participants

Participant criteria. “In qualitative research, we identify our participants and sites on purposeful sampling based on places and people that can best help us understand our central phenomenon” (Creswell, 2015, p. 204). I initially intended to interview five to seven teachers who are in-service middle school music teachers teaching in Canada and have at least 10 years teaching instrumental music. However, the criteria cannot effectively limit the potential pool of participants because Canada has many provinces, and each province has different teaching curriculum and teaching requirements. Also, it is difficult to approach music teachers who can meet the criteria out of Ontario. After discussing this with my advisor and my second reader, the final criteria was determined. It was decided that the researcher would contact in-service and full-time music teachers who are teaching instrumental music in Grade 5 to Grade 8 in Southern Ontario, and have at least 10 years teaching experiences. The target participants were limited to these criteria because the teachers who can meet the predetermined criteria have rich

experiences (knowledgeable) in instrumental teaching and repertoire selection. These in-service teachers are very familiar with teaching environment in Southern Ontario in recent years.

Participant recruitment. Forty invitation letters were mailed or delivered to 34 teachers who work in two school boards. Because six teachers are working in different schools, they received at most two same letters. To date, I have received 9 replies from the public school boards and 1 response from the Catholic school board in a two-month period. Based on the order that they contacted me, the first eight music teachers who taught instrumental music in middle schools in Southern Ontario were interviewed. Among these eight participants, there is only one teacher who has been teaching instruments and bands in Grade 5 - 8 for six years, and the other 7 participants taught instruments in middle schools at least 10 years ranging from 11 years to 29 years. In addition, there were two males and six females. All participants were Canadian citizens. I made this statement to indicate that non-Canadian teachers (e.g., Chinese teachers) would not be asked to participate in this study. This research involves teachers who are employed by a school board.

Data Collection

According to Creswell (2015), “qualitative data collection is more than deciding on whether you will interview people” (p. 203). It involves a multiple-step process, addressing issues of how to collect data and what types of data to collect. In my study, I adopt an interview method with several interview questions. I used two digital recorders to collect the data. After collecting data, I put it in a folder with a password in my laptop.

Interviews. “In qualitative research, our approach relies on general interview or

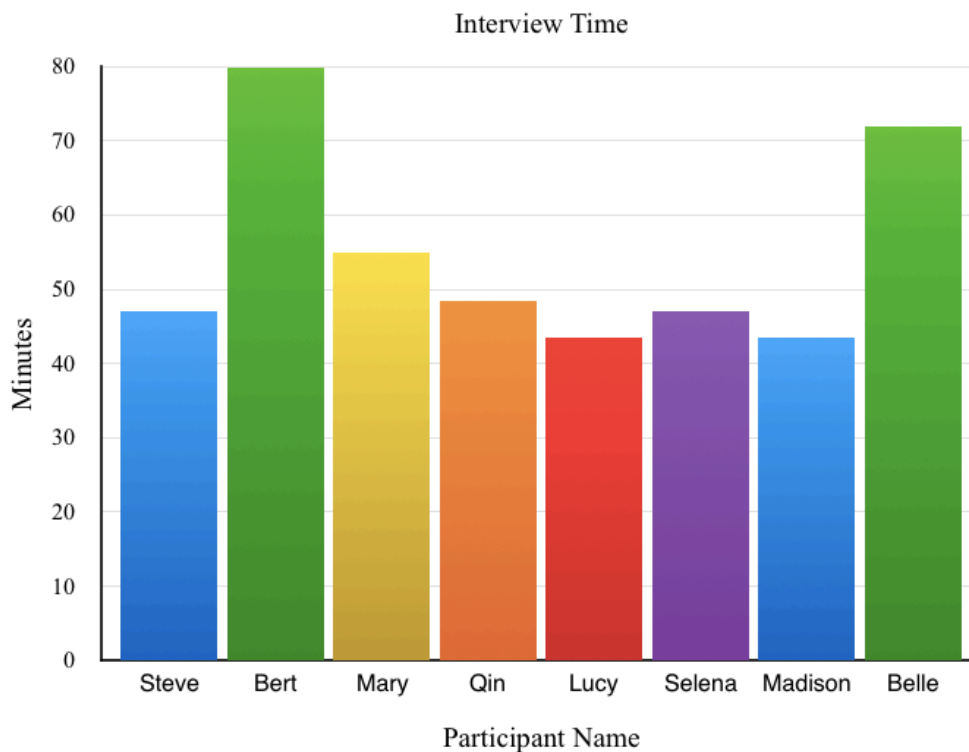
observations so that we do not restrict the views of participants” (Creswell, 2015, p. 204). This recognition of the importance of the participant’s perspective is the hallmark of qualitative interviewing. Qualitative interviews take several forms (Van den Hoonaard, 2014). In this study, I used the semi-structured interview approach. This approach is more manageable for me as a novice in a qualitative researcher. “A semi-structured interview creates space for exploring the unexpected and has proven to be effective in enabling interaction between an interviewer and a participant and allows the interviewer to improvise follow-up questions based on the participant’s responses” (Seidman, 2013, p. 20).

In addition, qualitative interviews have many forms of interviewing including one-on-one interviews, focus group interviews, telephone interviews, and email interviews (Creswell, 2015). In my study, research data have been collected through one-on-one interviews and email interviews. According to Creswell (2015):

The one-on-one interview is a data collection process in which the researcher asks questions to and records answers from only one participant in the study at a time. . . . One-on-one interviews are ideal for interviewing participants who are not hesitant to speak, who are articulate, and who can share ideas comfortably. (p. 217)

Similarly, McIntosh and Morse (2015) state that the face-to-face interview enables an interviewer to detect any negative physical presence of the participants and also offers emotional support during the interview process. As a result, one-on-one interview was the primary method that I used to explore music teachers’ rationale, perspectives and procedure with respect to repertoire selection. Among 8 interviews, two interviews lasted

more than 60 minutes, which are 80 minutes and 72 minutes respectively, and other six interviews lasted around 45 minutes each. On average, each interview lasted 55.6 minutes.



Furthermore, e-mail was used to complete the follow-up interviews. According to Creswell (2015), E-mail interviews help researchers rapidly approach the interviewees and obtain the rich and detailed data. In my follow-up interview process, in order to make it more convenience for participants and receive more data, one to three follow-up questions were individually sent to each participant's email after I received permissions from these participants that they received my follow-up interviews.

Interview questions. Creswell (2015) states that the qualitative research data will be collected through a few open-ended questions that the researcher designs. "In qualitative research, you ask open-ended questions so that the participants can best voice their experiences unconstrained by any perspectives of the researcher or past research findings" (Creswell, 2015, p. 216). Therefore, in my interviews, I adopted a set of open-

ended questions. These open-ended questions have been asked and the focus was on the 'how' and 'what' of teachers' experiences in order to uncover the perspectives of participants. 'How' and 'what' questions are more likely to elicit answers that contain both motive and process (Van den Hoonaard, 2015). The main interview question based on the research question is: What comes to mind when they think of repertoire selection? In other words, how do they make repertoire choices and what is their rationale/logic for such choices? These were divided into two main categories: selection criteria and music resources. Also, there were several follow-up questions that inquired about subjects such as which resources teachers use/access when making repertoire selection choices, and what learning goals in-service teachers have when selecting repertoire for their students. Each of these multiple questions has been closely linked to the primary research question. Thus, this served to focus the interview questions and guide the participants' responses in order to acquire the data the researcher hopes to collect (Agee, 2009).

Data recording. In regards to data recording and collection, I audiotaped and transcribed each interview. Each interview was carried out in a conversational style. In addition to using two electronic recording devices, note-taking was also used, not only as data backup during the interviewing process, but also to record the names of pieces and composers. Moreover, I used an interview protocol, which serves the purpose of reminding me of the questions and provides a means for recording notes. According to Creswell (2015), "An interview protocol is a form designed by the researcher that contains instructions for the process of the interview, the questions to be asked, and space to take notes of responses from the interviewee" (p. 224). Similarly, each participant was

given a hard copy of the interview questions, so they could write down the names of composers and pieces or thoughts they might have that relate to specific questions.

Data storage. Throughout the study, I maintained the raw data in an organized manner through audio and paper files to allow for efficient retrieval and analysis. The audio files were uploaded from the recording devices onto my computer and kept in a secure folder that was only accessible by a password. The audio files were manually transcribed within a few days of each interview and the paper files were kept in a locked cabinet.

My advisor and I were the only persons who can access to the data. Before the interview, I asked each participant whether they were willing to review their own transcript (i.e., member checking). Two participants stated that they trusted the researcher, so they did not need to review the transcripts, while others agreed to review their own transcript. I also asked the participants if I could contact them throughout the data analysis process if follow-up questions arose and what pseudonym they might use in this study. All participants were receptive to the possibility of follow-up contact.

Ethical Issues and Confidentiality

With respect to confidentiality, the Arts Consultant and the Superintendence were not informed as to who participated in this study (who were chosen). Also, the researcher assured participants that any personal information (e.g., name, address, e-mail, telephone number, school name, and district) would not be made public and only shared with the researcher's thesis advisor.

For this research, the participants chose to take part in the interviewing process voluntarily. Each person who agreed to be interviewed was asked to sign two consent

forms (Appendix C & D) before participating in this study. In order to assure confidentiality, one participant was assigned a pseudonym because this teacher did not reply me to choose a pseudonym, and other seven participants chose their own pseudonym themselves. They were also told that they could withdraw from the study at any time without our prejudice until they returned the transcript. Fortunately, nobody chose to withdraw from this study.

Audio recordings were transferred to the researcher's password protected computer and transcribed in the researcher's office. With respect to data storage, privacy and confidentiality have been protected by securely storing collected information in a locked filing cabinet. Two years after finalizing data collection the digital audio files will be deleted; and the transcribed interviews have been de-identified and kept by the researcher.

Credibility

Connelly (2016) states that credibility in qualitative research is similar with validity in quantitative research. According to Noble and Smith (2015), "Validity in qualitative research means researchers can clearly and accurately presents participants' perspectives, and reliability relates to the trustworthiness by which the methods have been undertaken and is dependent on the researcher maintaining a decision-trail" (p. 3). The researcher has taken every precaution to ensure that the audio interviews were transcribed accurately.

The transcribing and coding scheme enhances the credibility of the research. Since I am the principal investigator (PI), I transcribed each transcript by hands. According to Creswell (2015), "The hand analysis of qualitative data means that

researchers read the data, mark it by hand, and divide it into parts” (p. 239). Also, in order to ensure the accuracy of each transcript, I reviewed each transcript three times, and I also invited my advisor who is proficient at transcribing to check the data that I had transcribed, so the analysis has a consistent approach throughout. In addition, as a part of data recording, analysis, and reports, the participants had an opportunity to review their own transcript to ensure accuracy. Connelly (2016) stated that member-checking is one way to determine credibility. In my study, I sent a transcript to each participant. None of the participants chose to revise their transcripts and they agreed that their experiences and perceptions had been accurately represented, thus suggesting that this qualitative research established an acceptable level of credibility.

After reviewing each transcript carefully, I wrote down some ideas in the margins and assign “a code word or phrase that accurately describes the meaning of the text segment” (Creswell, 2015, p. 243). Creswell (2015) explains that codes are two to three words adopted to indicate the meaning in a section of transcript. By examining codes, I identified the seven themes that the participants discuss most frequently. Creswell (2015) indicates, “the use of themes is another way to analyze qualitative data” (p. 247). As a result, “describing and developing themes from the data consists of answering the major research questions and forming an in-depth understanding of the central phenomenon through description and thematic development” (Creswell, 2015, p. 246).

CHAPTER IV RESULTS

In this chapter, participants' demographic information will be presented (i.e., educational background, grades taught, and teaching experience). I then summarize a variety of perspectives from participants pertaining to repertoire selection. These are divided into four categories: students' abilities and interests, as well as the level and quality of the repertoire. In keeping with Canada's multicultural makeup, participants were asked questions and provided their opinions relating to multicultural repertoire selection. In this chapter, the challenges and strategies for repertoire selection will be identified before concluding with statements relating to music categories that participants selected.

Demographic Information of the Participants

The eight participants have diverse educational backgrounds. Seven participants have two degrees in different majors: five with bachelors' degrees in education and music, and two with bachelors' degrees in fine arts and education. One participant stated that he did not receive formal post-secondary music training. In addition, the participants have a range of music teaching experience, ranging from 6 to 29 years, and have taught students from grade 5 to grade 8, including choir and band. These different educational and teaching backgrounds could have an important impact on their perspectives relating to repertoire selection.

The first interview was with Steve, who was also the first respondent. The interview took place in his office at his school on the afternoon of November 28, 2017. At the time of the interview, he had six years of experience teaching instrumental music

from grade five to grade eight. He graduated from the university, but his major was not music. He received only informal music training and played in bands when he was in an elementary school and a high school. He took piano lessons after graduation and taught himself music using different resources. After being interviewed, he showed the researcher some pieces he wrote for his instrumental students and gave me a program of a concert that featured Canadian compositions, which the previous teacher had organized.

Bert was the second participant of this study and was interviewed on the afternoon of December 5, 2017, in advance of his busy Christmas-concert schedule. Though he initially only agreed to be interviewed for one hour, his interview was the longest of all participants, lasting 80 minutes. Before the interview was recorded, I told him of my music background and stated the rationale and purpose of this study. He offered a few ideas relating to his experiences with repertoire selection and he printed out and gave thought to the interview questions in advance. He has a Bachelor of Fine Arts and Music with a minor in English, though he had originally enrolled to earn a Bachelor of Music Performance. After graduation, he had attended “teachers’ college” for a year and took a few more courses to enhance his music knowledge in percussion and wind performance. He has 15-years of teaching experience, and 11 of those years have been spent teaching instrumental music in grades five to eight.

I interviewed Mary on the afternoon of December 11, 2017. When I arrived at her school, she was preparing for a concert to be held in the following day and so the interview opened with questions about the concert. Unfortunately, she did not have the printed program at that time. Mary learned the flute when she was very young. Her education included a double major in music and sociology. She then went to “teachers’

college” where she earned a Bachelor of Education degree (BEd), thus qualifying her to teach primary, junior, and intermediate students. She has been teaching instrumental music, grades five to eight, for 15 years. After completing the interview, she showed me two method books and several scores that she selected for her students representing different levels.

Qin was the fourth participant who graciously agreed to participate in my research. She was interviewed on the afternoon of December 14, 2017 at a restaurant before her choir rehearsal. After the interview, she gave me the notes she made relating to the interview questions. Because of the background music in the restaurant, the recording was not clear, so we made an additional appointment to tape a follow-up interview on the afternoon of January 26, 2018.

Qin has an Honours Bachelor of Music Education degree and a Bachelor of Education (BEd). She also participated in several additional courses (e.g., Royal Conservatory of Music (Early Childhood Music, Orff Part 1), Diploma in Fine Arts (specializing in Kodaly Pedagogy), and the Ministry of Education Additional Qualification courses (Honours Music Specialist, Instrumental Music; Principal Qualifications, Part 1 and 2; and Core French, Part 1). She had taught instrumental music in grades five to eight for 15 years, but she currently only teaches vocal music to grade four-and-five students. Qin also taught some recorder from grade two to five for about 22 years of her 30 years of teaching.

I went to Lucy’s school to tape the interview on the afternoon of December 18, 2017. Before the formal interview questions, she told me that she has an Honour’s degree in Music Education, and has a Bachelor of Education degree with two teachable subjects:

Music and English. She presently teaches kindergarten through to grade eight. She has been teaching grade five to eight instrumental music for 10 years.

Selena was the last interviewee who accepted my interview before the Christmas break. I interviewed her at her office on the afternoon of December 21, 2017. Before the interview, she printed a colourful copy of the program for the Christmas concert she held at her school on December 8th, 2017. Her first Bachelor's degree was in music performance (trumpet), and then she received a Bachelor of Education. She has taught music from grade one all the way through to grade 12. Currently, she is teaching instrumental music from grade one to grade eight. She is in her 19th year of teaching instruments in grades five to eight.

I interviewed my seventh participant (Madison) on the afternoon of January 8, 2018 at a coffee shop. She received her Bachelor's degree of Education. In her first year of teaching, she taught grade eight and then senior/kindergarten for two years. She presently teaches music from senior/kindergarten to grade eight. Madison has been teaching instrumental music (grade five to eight) for 29 years.

Belle was the last participant to agree to an interview. I interviewed her at her office on the afternoon of January 12, 2018. I began the interview, which lasted 72 minutes, by introducing my research to Belle. She stated that she has two university degrees, a Bachelor of Fine Arts (BFA) in Musical Theatre, and a Bachelor of Education specializing in vocal and instrumental music. She has experience teaching from kindergarten to high school. Belle also provides instruction to teachers who register for additional qualification courses online. In terms of teaching instrumental music from grades five to eight, she has 14-years of teaching experience. The researcher asked for a

copy of a concert program, but she did not have a hardcopy for environmental reasons, and she indicated that she was willing to send the researcher an electronic version. However, she did not provide the researcher with an electronic copy of a concert program.

Participants' Perspectives Relating to Repertoire Selection

The participants have diverse opinions when speaking of repertoire selection. Students' abilities and interests are primary elements that these participants consider during the repertoire selection process. In addition, they also considered the difficulty and the quality of the repertoire. Moreover, one participant suggested that repertoire selection was an expression of freedom and an opportunity for teachers and students to be creative.

Students' abilities. Bert, Lucy, and Madison considered students' abilities when they selected music for their students, but they have slightly different perspectives about students' abilities. Bert stated that the first thing he considered was "obviously students' ability." He believed that the abilities of middle students differ every year. Therefore, "considering the spectrum of the abilities in the room is one of the issues in the elementary school." Lucy, who noted that she chose repertoire "based on classroom make up," supports this. She added, "some years, you get a grade 7 class that are very strong players; and some years, like this year, my grade 7 [students] are very weak players. So [it] usually depends on the students." Madison and Selena also chose music based on students' ability, but noted that they did it "according to the strength in sections." For example, Madison stated:

Last year, I had a really outstanding flute section, so I chose music that would highlight my flute section. This year, for example, they are just OK. My clarinet

section is really strong, so I've chosen some songs, some selected repertoire that will highlight them.

Likewise, Selena expressed a similar idea:

I also consider the instrumentation of particular groups. Like this year, I have a fairly strong percussion, section, so the piece that I pick for the grade 8 has some really cool percussion, the parts that are challenging; whereas in a different year, if I knew I had a weak percussion section, I could never consider doing this piece.

Selena added, "I want them to be challenged, but not the point that I'm leaving some others behind, there is no way that they are equal to perform well." Therefore, she stated that acknowledging the students' ability in a particular class was a factor for her when choosing music for students.

Even though students' abilities are taken into consideration, it is possible that some aspects of a repertoire will challenge or exceed students' abilities. By considering their unique circumstances, participants developed different solutions to address this concern. This sometimes took the form of demonstration, as noted by Selena:

I also do a lot of demonstrating for them, so that's a part of having trouble with them, I will pick up my instrument and play it, so that they hear it. . . . They don't really know what it should sound like, sometimes just hearing it, really helps accelerate their learning in their regard.

Alternately, Bert, Selena, Qin, Belle, and Mary offered instruction to help students overcome difficult parts. This is exemplified by Selena: "Sometimes it's a matter of teaching them how to practice a different part, so it's not just like you play over and over again, how we're going to approach this, so you can learn, this is a hard part." Belle often

used questions to encourage students to consider the challenges they face, such as “What’s the problem? How do we figure this out? or How do we solve that?” These stimulated students and encouraged them to actively consider solutions to the problem. Thus, giving students appropriate direction, either through demonstration, instruction, or by posing questions that encourage critical reflection, helps students to overcome these challenges.

In addition, Bert, Mary, and Selena pointed out that they “pre-teach” both the rhythm and melody in the difficult parts for the students. For example, Bert pre-taught (isolated) the rhythm of the difficult portion to establish a rhythm, and then examined the individual notes. Mary took a similar approach during her warm-up exercises: “My warm up (scales and rhythms) may include the particular rhythm that is difficult.” Likewise, Selena used the method book *Standard of Excellence* to improve a difficult section. “We might do some exercises in class or we might . . . use that method book, so I make sure that we were doing things at the method book.”

In addition to pre-teaching rhythms, participants stated that they also broke challenging sections of their chosen repertoire into smaller parts. For instance, when speaking to his students, Bert compared a composition or an arrangement to a puzzle stating that, “we have to be able to work with all the pieces before [we] put them together.” Similarly, Mary stated that she worked “on the difficult section in small parts” one measure at a time, and practiced “the section slowly” before speeding it up. Qin, Bert, and Belle stated that they organized students in different working sections to work out the particular part. For example, Bert indicated, “I might break them up and have them led by a section leader working through a phrase that might be specifically

challenging, and sections that might be . . . challenging, and then bring them back together.” Belle encouraged her students to work together because she believed, “they can have communication with each other, and sometimes that the problem-solving skills that come out of that alone are pretty amazing.” These approaches highlighted how breaking difficult sections into smaller, more manageable pieces, could help develop students’ abilities.

Other participants noted that they would re-write challenging parts for their students. Madison indicated that she would re-write the challenging part for another instrumental section to help weaker students. She stated that she “will take that part and . . . if there is a trumpet part that they need some help [with] . . . [She] will rewrite [it] to alto-saxophone to be fit a little bit.” Likewise, Lucy said she would sometimes “recompose it . . . [to] make it simpler for them.” This may include “changing rhythms, or . . . note patterns or which notes you’re using.” She offered trumpets as an example, observing that she changed a high octave C, which was challenging to students, to a lower octave C, which was easier for them. Steve also changed a difficult part in one of his Jazz band pieces: “the end of this Jazz band piece is about four measures or four phrases, which are too hard for them, so we just go back and do something different.” Re-writing the material allows students to engage with a difficult piece in a manner that is more suited to their existing abilities.

Students’ interests. Students’ interests are also regarded as an important aspect in repertoire selection. Steve, Bert, Selena, Madison, and Qin clearly stated that they preferred to choose music that aligns with students’ interests, so they would engage with the music rather than being bored. Steve said that he did not want his students to be bored

and tried “to play something that the kids find interesting.” The most important goal for Steve was that “students [love] and appreciate music with teachers.” Likewise, Madison advocated choosing interesting material, noting that students were more engaged when the music appealed to them. Selena believed the selected music “should be something that students are going to enjoy and play.” She added that if the selected repertoire stimulates students’ interests, “students will be willing participants when they start learning that music.” Similarly, Bert’s approach to repertoire selection sought to appeal to students’ interests, by including music that students are familiar with. He claimed this facilitated “high-interest repertoire” and connected with students, even if it was mainstream music from the radio or a movie. Qin combined this approach with the Kodaly philosophy, opting to include children’s folk songs in order to develop their interests. However, she also noted the importance of considering the instructor’s interest as she selects songs that she would enjoy hearing multiple times.

Participants recognized the significance of students’ interests and so encouraged students to be involved in repertoire selection. Steve, Mary, Lucy, and Belle encouraged their students to offer suggestions and participate in repertoire selection. Because his students expressed an interest in participating in repertoire selection, Steve gave them an opportunity to select the music they wanted to play. However, there were two problems that he encountered with this approach: there was not always the music available that his students requested, and if there were preferred arrangements, they might be too difficult for his students to play. In these instances, Steve would sometimes slightly modify the music himself or create a new arrangement that his students would be able to perform.

Similarly, Mary and Belle often asked for students' opinions at the beginning of repertoire selection process and incorporated some of their suggestions after considering the arrangements or compositions; though each had a different approach. For example, Mary said that she would "let them make suggestions" and "ask what they want to learn." After students "come up with a play list," she considered the difficulty of the arrangements/compositions and picked those that she thought her students would be able to play. Belle encouraged her students to provide suggestions as to what they wanted to learn in a piece rather than providing an exact title of the music, asking them for "qualifying information [regarding] what they want to see or hear in a piece of music." She would do this on the first day of class. However, students would ask for music they could recognize, such as **films** scores from movies like *Marvel's Avengers* or *Harry Potter*. She stated that she selected music that her students "recognize because that's . . . where they make . . . fundamental connections." Consequently, including students in repertoire selection is an effective way to engage students.

However, Lucy noted that at times students' interests differed from teachers' perspectives when selecting repertoire. Lucy had a predetermined repertoire selection process where she selected the first piece and advanced students were given an opportunity to choose a second work from a choice of four pieces. This procedure allowed for student engagement while insuring some degree of professional standards. For example, students performing at level 1 were inexperienced, so Lucy selected the pieces for them based on their capabilities. In contrast, the grade 8 students were more advanced, so she allowed them to "choose the second piece they're working on." However, she restricted their choices as they were only allowed to "select one piece from

four selections [she] gave them.” She described this process as “interesting” because students did not always “choose what [teachers] think they might choose, and then they did not always choose the piece that was the easiest.”

Whereas Selene and Qin offered their students similar options, Madison was more hesitant to allow students to be involved in repertoire selection. Selena stated that “The only time . . . [students] have some input is grade 8, at the end of the year, [when they] played for their grade 8 graduation.” It is highly unlikely that all students will have a similar preference when it comes to repertoire selection. She identified that the problem was that no matter what piece is chosen, it might be impossible to please all of the students. As a result, she emphasized that she chose the music based on what she “wants them to be focusing on in band for that particular time and year.” Qin likewise only provided students opportunities to select one of two previously studied pieces for their concert. Madison took an even more restricted approach when acknowledging students’ interests. She guided students to sight-read the new music that she selected, and allowed them to express their opinions about the music, which she took into consideration when choosing pieces.

When teachers select repertoire, there is the possibility that some students might become disengaged or dislike the repertoire that the teachers have selected. Selena, Belle, and Qin reported that they had not encountered this problem. To ensure her students were engaged, Selena noted that she spent “a lot of time listening to a lot of different repertoire” and made sure the repertoire she selected would be liked by her students. However, she noted that in some instances, students might claim that they did not like pieces when they struggled to play it. To resolve this issue, Mary encouraged her students

to be patient with pieces they dislike, asking them to reserve their judgment until they have learned the piece. By the time they mastered the piece, Mary noted that students conceded that the piece was “actually pretty good.”

Repertoire level. When selecting repertoire, the difficulty level is an important factor for teachers to consider. For example, Steve stated that “degree of difficulty was important,” and Mary indicated that when she selected the band repertoire, the first factor that she considered was the level of difficulty. Some participants pointed out that they typically chose level one for middle students because it was the beginning level. Bert, Steve, Mary, and Lucy explained that the selected repertoire for beginning students should not be “extremely challenging.” Steve and Lucy emphasized that the difficulty level should match students’ ability. If teachers only provided students with difficult repertoire, the students would be more likely to be frustrated. Bert, who claimed that “the more challenging the pieces are, the less successful the students are,” reinforced this opinion. However, Lucy and Qin indicated that the repertoire could be somewhat challenging if students were to be introduced to new musical concepts. Qin believed that slightly challenging pieces were “teachable” and promoted the development of students’ musical abilities, including “fingering, note-reading, and ear training.”

In terms of determining the level of repertoire, some participants pointed out that there are repertoire lists categorized by level of difficulties. Mary identified two strategies that she used when determining repertoire difficulty level. First, she would go to music stores that categorize music repertoire by difficulty level. In addition, she also searched online to find simple repertoire that features “easier rhythms [and] chord notes” that her students would be able to play.

High quality. Each of the participants agreed that quality repertoire offered a number of benefits to students. However, their understanding of quality differed. Some felt that celebrated composers and arrangements defined quality, while others believed that a composition with a variety of musical elements defined quality.

Benefits. Participants outlined several benefits to using quality repertoire. For example, Selena emphasized that “the selected music has to be a good music” because she believed that less valuable music wastes teachers’ and students’ time. Thus, quality music maximizes students’ practice time. She further explained that her goal was to have students enjoy the music and recognize quality music when they hear it. She realized that “few students want to pursue a career in music,” but encouraging students to “appreciate good music will make their lives better.” Similarly, Steve stated that when music had more complex and rich themes, students would gain a better experience. It should be noted that all of the participants overwhelmingly agreed that it should be the goal of music educators to select high-quality music for their students.

Celebrated pieces as ‘quality’ repertoire. Belle observed that determining “what could be considered as good repertoire selection is very difficult.” This is consistent with the current study’s findings as each participant offered their own understandings and criteria of what constituted ‘good-quality’ repertoire. High-quality repertoire, for instance, can be defined as famous pieces. Steve stated that music “from well-known composers and arrangements, such as nursery rhymes,” was high-quality. Likewise, Bert stated that “high-quality music is honoured,” and both Bert and Qin indicated, “some of the music is from the great composers in the past.” Qin suggested that folk music, such as the French song – *Frere Jacques*, is an example of high-quality repertoire. As a result of

her Kodaly educational background, she explained that traditional folk songs are high-quality repertoire because these songs “have been in our culture for many generations.” She further added that this type of folk music is “singable and recognizable. . . . If present composers could adapt [them] with the instrumental music and pieces, that’s [also] high-quality.”

Varied musical elements as ‘quality’ repertoire. Some participants stated that high-quality repertoire consisted of a variety of musical elements, which could improve students’ skills. Madison pointed out that “great pieces express some ideas from composers, such as dynamics and expression.” She used the track and field to explain, “good music doesn’t have everybody playing [at] the same thing.” These ideas vary as Bert stated:

High-quality composition may be less repetitive . . . they just have more variation in the section, more variation in its structure, and its tonality, and its dynamics, and definitely give more varied rather than being so straight forward and consistent to the whole arrangement.

Similarly, Qin claimed that “some of music is just that . . . you know, the chords are over and over again, and repetitive, like waste of time, and that’s to me, it’s not quality.”

Moreover, Belle indicated, “I look for skill building music, that’s to me a measure of what would be good.” In her mind, skill building means “new skills that students can acquire, like key changes.” Key changes within a piece were something she associated with high-quality music and “not a rudimentary piece of music that’s just all the same, all the way through.” Selena suggested that this kind of music “sounds more mature” because composers had used appropriate techniques to make it interesting when writing

for beginning band. These musical elements are qualities she thought that music teacher could teach.

Qin, Mary, and Steve illustrated that varied musical elements include the tempo, dynamics, key signature, rhythms, melodies, and harmony. For example, Steve mentioned tempo, stating that he selected slow or fast pieces for students, so students experienced tempo changes. Selena always focused on melodies, and preferred to select a piece using theme and variations where the melodic variations are shared by different instruments. In terms of key signatures, all of the participants pointed out that concert B flat major was the most common key for beginners. Some participants select a small number of pieces in concert E flat or F major for their students. With respect to harmonic variety, some participants stated that they were not concerned about it because they believed that younger students could not understand it. For example, Lucy stated, “They don’t understand harmony in the way we do.” Steve who noted, “The problem is the kids don’t have the proficiency in their instruments to learn more than one scale generally,” supported this idea. Furthermore, Qin and Belle believed that students needed to have prior knowledge to understand harmony. Qin claimed that, “I don’t think [students] understand it if they don’t have ears, you have to start them harmonizing, and doing rounds in their vocal music program before they do the instrumental, so they hear that.” Likewise, Belle explained, “My kids, like kids in Grade 3, can sing in three-part harmony, so when they get to instruments, they have the ear, and then already know.”

Selecting Multicultural Music

The participants unanimously agreed that multicultural music is music from different cultures and regions around the world that features different rhythms, tonalities,

structures, and instruments. They likewise agreed that it was beneficial for students to learn multicultural music; however, they collectively agreed that selecting multicultural music involved a number of challenges.

Benefits. By being exposed to multicultural music, students gain further understandings of different types of music. Steve, Madison, Selena, and Bert supported this, stating that students would realize that some multicultural sounds may be unusual and different compared to Western music, and Bert specifically added that this helps students to understand that “music is global.” Selena and Madison explained why multicultural music sounds different and is often written differently. Consequently, students will know about different scales, rhythms, and structures. Selena believed that incorporating multicultural music into the curriculum was an approach for students to experience variety in music.

This also enhances students understanding of other subjects, such as geography and history. For example, Madison indicated that she often instructed students to make connections to geography by using the map when they learnt music from other regions and cultures. Because her school is not multicultural, Madison explained that selecting a lot of multicultural music was helpful to guide students to explore the whole world. Similarly, Steve demonstrated that when he selected music representing the blues for his students, he would like to introduce the history of traditional blues relating to the poor southern areas in America. Qin likewise introduced history when using multicultural music.

Furthermore, the participants collectively stated that multicultural music could effectively increase students’ awareness of other cultures around the world. Since some

schools are characterized by their multicultural environment, Mary and Lucy pointed out that they selected multicultural music that represents students who come from different cultures in their classrooms to help them to make connections, increase understanding, and cultivate pride as it relates to their original cultures. Likewise, Bert believed that multicultural music would broaden students' horizons not only in music, but also in things worldly.

Multicultural music selection challenges. Although participants agreed as to the benefits of multicultural music, they listed a variety of challenges that inhibit multicultural repertoire selection. Belle stated that the expression multicultural music was broad because it consisted of music from many cultures. This made it difficult for teachers to choose which cultures should be taught. In addition, Qin explained that she did not know all multicultural music, and so she did not feel qualified to teach it. This is consistent with Steve's opinion, as he stated that he was reluctant to share music from other cultures because he was not familiar with them. Mary was likewise concerned that she might not be able to adequately instruct students how to play non-Western instruments or the rules that apply to them. Belle further explained that the lack of knowledge extended to her students because these beginning students might lack the ability to play the instruments from other cultures.

There are also practical challenges. Qin, for instance, indicated that some cultures do not want to share music with people outside of their cultures. It might also be difficult to locate sheet music of multicultural selections. Likewise, Belle noted that it was difficult for teachers to secure the appropriate instruments to play some multicultural music. There are also challenges with respect to cultural sensitivity. Some participants,

such as Steve and Mary, did not want to appropriate or misrepresent the music of other cultures as it may cause concern. Others, such as Mary and Lucy, expressed their concerns that some students' parents might take issue with their children engaging in multicultural music that is tied to a religion. Due to these challenges, participants stated multicultural music was not a primary consideration in selecting repertoire for beginning students.

Strategies of multicultural repertoire selection. Although these challenges discouraged some participants from selecting multicultural music for instrumental beginning students, those who chose multicultural music did so based on the sheet music and instruments that they had available to them. For example, Lucy and Bert stated that some of the pieces they selected came from a book (*World Music Drumming*) that their school boards provided for them. Madison selected multicultural music from her current "instrumental book," which included music "from around the world." Likewise, because Belle had access to a didgeridoo, she was able to incorporate this instrument into her teaching.

Steve, Mary, and Belle selected multicultural music based on the ethnic and cultural make-up of their students. Mary had a group of students from other cultures, so she encouraged students to offer some music from their original cultures because she stated that the music was new to her. After learning a variety of music recommended by her students, she briefly introduced instruments and music to other students. Likewise, Belle explained that multicultural repertoire selection "depends on the kids she has in the class year to year." She recalled that she chose a Russian piece one year because a Russian student in her class recommended the selection. Steve was also in a multicultural

school, so he selected music that could represent students in this multicultural environment.

Canadian multicultural music. Belle stated, “multicultural music is incorporating all areas of culture within like the communities . . . across Canada.” This is reinforced by Bert, who stated, “Canada is one of the most cosmopolitan diverse culture countries in the world,” adding that Canadian music includes French-Canadian culture, First Nations culture, and east-coast culture. Therefore, Canadian music is a subset of multicultural music. Although all participants agreed that incorporating Canadian music was important, this process involved a number of challenges.

Each participant expressed a belief that incorporating varied Canadian music in the curriculum is one of the responsibilities of music teachers. Qin and Mary explained that Canada is the country they live in, and Canadian music is their heritage. Selena stated that “it is good for students to hear, play and recognize Canadian music,” and Mary added that learning Canadian music was a good way to create students’ identity. This is supported by Steve, who stated that there was music that “represented the spirit of Canada.” Moreover, Madison thought that selecting Canadian music is a way to support the Canadian music industry.

Even though there are many benefits for students, Lucy and Selena pointed out that “it is not a priority for [selecting] band repertoire.” Selena explained:

If it is good, if it is well-written, absolutely. I am not going to choose something merely by the fact it is Canadian. . . . If I find a great Canadian composer, then ‘Hey, let’s go for it,’ but I am not excluding other things because it is not Canadian.

Additionally, some participants pointed out that there was not much Canadian multicultural music for them to select. Therefore, it often makes it difficult to find Canadian pieces. Steve stated that the number of Canadian pieces was far fewer than American pieces. Although Steve, Bert, Mary, and Belle stated that they could locate some Canadian pieces from the websites (e.g., Hal Leonard, J. W. Pepper), they noted that accessibility was a challenge. For example, Belle stated that there were few recordings of Canadian pieces to listen to from J.W. Pepper website, and she also indicated that the number of instrumental Canadian pieces was less than that of Canadian vocal music. Belle stated, “Finding easier instrumental scores that are written by Canadians are pretty difficult.”

Music Categories

All of the participants expressed their perspectives related to a variety of music categories (e.g., established music, educational repertoire, pop and jazz music).

Established music. Some participants agreed that ‘established music’ (e.g., classical music) was beneficial for students in order to gain more knowledge and improve their music appreciation. Qin stated, “It is important to have the classical composers for [students] to be exposed to.” Mary explained that “even if [some students] don’t continue the music. . . . I think it’s important [for them to learn] because it’s a part of the history of our progression and music association now.” Similarly, Madison indicated that “it’s important, if [students] know the history, like the history of all these musicians, who founded everything that we have today.” Belle added, “you’re exposing them to the reason why the music is the way that it is now. It’s because the pioneers who paved the way for music all of these years ago.” Steve and Bert also stated that students could

understand music history and musicians from different centuries when they were exposed to this type of music. All of the participants used *Ode to Joy* with their students because they liked it.

Although there are many benefits for students to learn established music, some participants still identified some limitations. Selena claimed, “For me, especially teaching younger students, I find those repertoire, Beethoven or Bach, would be beyond the skill level of the students that I’m teaching.” Likewise, Steve stated that some established pieces are difficult for students, and he added, “if I were to pick up a more obscure piece, [students] would probably be discouraged . . . If you just stick to the greatest hits of classical music, I think that’s sufficient for elementary school.” In addition, Steve and Lucy thought students are not connected to this type of music because they do not have classical music backgrounds. Lucy explained, “[students] can’t make connection because it’s not something they are exposed to, really, so if you gave them something they can connect to, you have better results.” Belle also admitted that “[students] don’t have the connection to it”, but she suggested, “I try to show them . . . that their music can still be relevant within the contents to the stuff they listen to and watch and see today, and a lot of that, believe it or not, is in cartoons.” She used an example from her class to explain there was a media connection. “Let’s say the Christmas time, and you hear the music of ‘The Dance of the Sugar Plum Fairies,’ and the kids know: ‘Ms., is this like that guy Tchaikovsky?’ And I’m like ‘Yes. Yes, it is.’ They’ve made a connection.” Belle finally concluded, “the type of repertoire . . . I think that they can gain a lot of music appreciation from what I think that it is beyond to them.”

Educational music. Some participants stated that they preferred to select ‘educational music.’ Educational music is written for a specific purpose and context to be performed by amateurs in an educational setting. Madison advocated for ‘educational music’ because she thought that her students would be “attracted” to it. Lucy explained some perceived benefits to selecting educational music, noting that “educational repertoire is designed to be sensible to beginners,” and consequently offers several benefits, such as writing it in a manageable key, using simplified rhythms, and employing appropriate instrumental ranges. This, she stated, qualifies the music to be educational. Similarly, Selena pointed out that she selected a large quantity of educational music for several reasons:

There is some really fantastic music that’s been written for young and developing bands to play that really can sound quite good and also has a lot of value as far as the skills, and music quality that is teaching students. . . . I think these composers, when they were writing with a particular skill level in mind, are able to write music that you know is sensible to students younger, but they can also be learning things. They can learn about how to play different dynamics, [and] they can learn about ensemble playing.

Neither Lucy nor Selena saw any limitations for students if their teacher used educational repertoire. For example, Selena stated, “I don’t think there are limitations to that for me, personally.” Likewise, Lucy offered her perspective as well, noting that education music included all the aspects of repertoire that might be featured in a wind ensemble repertoire, but that it is somewhat basic. Therefore, educational music can also facilitate learning.

Pop and jazz music. Participants came up with different ideas about pop and jazz music. Some of them selected either pop or jazz music, while some teachers adopted both genres.

Selecting pop music. Mary stated that “pop music is popular” music that is commonly heard on the radio. Both Qin and Selena also agreed with this perspective, and claimed that pop music often features simple and repetitive chords. Moreover, Belle added that the simplicity and repetitiveness were easier for beginning students to grasp. As an example, Belle used the Pharrell William’s song “Happy” from the soundtrack of *Despicable Me*:

I have the very basic version of [Happy]. . . . It’s 0.5, so it’s very easy, and just because it repeats. I think it’s just 49 bars . . . so again, shorter. And that’s [the piece] they often want . . . because the younger musicians are there, you cannot give them a variation . . . But you can have them repeat, and repeat them twice.

This piece was also selected by Bert, and he identified that some pop songs are from movies. He emphasized, “It really is about identification. The kids are able to identify, connect to it and access the level of it, build the perform[ance] level of it.” Mary also believed that this identification would increase children’s interests. She always told her students that “if you can sing it, and you can play it.” She also used the song (Happy) to explain that students would play the piece more when they could identify it: “because they know it, and they can sing it, they feel like ‘I can play it now, too.’ So it helps with the learning, when they go home, they will remember what it sounds like, they practice it more.” Qin also selected one pop selection called *Sweet Caroline* for the grade 8 concert, because she thought this piece was “singable.” She explained, “[It] is [a] popular piece.”

The students were nearly done performing a band arrangement of this piece. “They really like it, and the kids, and the school can sing with it.”

However, some participants did not select much pop music. For example, Qin, Selena, and Madison stated that the purpose of selecting pop music for the grade 8 graduation concert was for fun. Madison explained that “we can’t do it at MusicFest because you can’t do pop stuff, but we’ll do [it] in this spring time, and they’ve been working on it, it’s fun.” In contrast, Mary expressed a belief: “with my band, we don’t compete at the festivals, so I can play a little more of the pop stuff.” In addition, Selena claimed:

Often when it’s a pop music, first of all I find the arrangements are usually not great, and if it’s something that the kids already know, they are not really reading, once on the page, they are kind of try to play by what they heard on the radio and often the rhythms have been simplified in a band arrangement. That doesn’t sound the way they think it’s going to sound, it’s just, very barely works well, or at least for me. I don’t very often do pop arrangements. We will do [it], usually for graduation, we will do something kind of more of fluffy, kind of piece.

This statement is also supported by Madison:

I know the trick is with pop music, if [students] don’t have enough playing experience, it sounds like garbage. Because they want to sound like the radio, and they don’t have the knowledge yet to play like the radio. So when they play it, and it sounds like a little hokey.

Selecting jazz music. Bert stated that, in the past, jazz music was a type of popular music. Compared to pop music, jazz music often involves improvisation as stated

by Qin, Belle, and Steve. Bert advocated using jazz music, and stated, “some of the repertoire, some of the arrangement that I have do honour some jazz stylings, do honour some jazz rhythms.” Including jazz rhythms, some participants also agreed with that there were other qualities in jazz music for students to learn. For instance, Selena stated, “we’ll pick something that has some jazz elements in it . . . they can learn some very good skills especially articulation, and things that they may not necessarily come across in other repertoire.” In addition, some participants indicated that they chose easier jazz pieces for middle students. For example, Steve selected a piece called *25 verse 6 to 4* for his jazz band, and explained, “This book is great for beginning bands, it’s not tough, it’s not easy, but we play . . . It repeats through a whole thing, the kids like playing it, and then it’s recognizable to audiences.”

In contrast, Mary stated that she had not selected jazz music because of the limited time. She explained that she needed to spend a large amount of time teaching them the jazz rhythms, such as swing, because her students would be confused about these rhythms at the beginning stage, but she did not have enough time. Otherwise, Madison stated, “I don’t do much Jazz.” She highlighted that the key element of a good jazz band was a good drummer, but she “hadn’t had one for a while.” Therefore, she did not select jazz music for her current students because she did not have a good drummer and her students might not play jazz pieces well.

Challenges for Repertoire Selection

Each participant agreed that repertoire selection was a complex and difficult process. When speaking of challenges related to repertoire selection, Qin was the only teacher who thought she had not encountered challenges, while other participants often

faced different challenges, such as limited instructional time, inadequate budget, selecting appropriate repertoire, and receiving effective guidance.

Limited instructional time. Bert and Belle clarified that time was a big challenge during the repertoire selection process. Bert explained that the time “with students . . . time playing, not on my own personal time is limited.” Likewise, Belle indicated that the amount of time students spent practicing is limited. She used the following example to explain it:

When you consider a group of grade six, a group of grade 6s students, they come into my room, by the time they get their chairs, they stand, they disinfect, they get their music, they sit down and we do a warm-up, that’s 15 minutes. So that’s the significant challenge when it comes to a repertoire.

Some music teachers argued that “they could not see their middle school students every day compared to high school students,” and middle students had at most two periods to learn music in each week. Bert claimed that he wanted to bring some repertoire to challenge them, but the allotted time “[was] not enough to get to the points.” Therefore, students’ limited learning time restricts teachers’ choices during the repertoire selection process.

Inadequate budget. The music budget is the second challenge for the participants. Lucy believed that the budget was a challenge for every music teacher in middle schools, and pointed out, “music teachers in grades school don’t have budgets.” As a result, she stated that she chose music “based on what she had” from books that the previous teacher left behind rather than the books she preferred to use. Similarly, Bert stated that “there are financial restrictions on obtaining the new repertoire.” Therefore,

teachers often select repertoire from what they already have. Likewise, Steve stated that “it’s hard to get music without spending money,” so it was difficult to get new music, and a lot of music got recycled to use again. Mary complained that she was “a little crazy” when students played the same music repeatedly. In order to address this issue, Bert and Lucy stated that they had to purchase music by themselves, but it also restricted their choices because Lucy expressed a fact that the currency exchange rate is high when obtaining music from the United States.

Selecting level-appropriate repertoire. In order to match students’ ability and interests, Steve, Bert, Madison, Lucy, and Belle claimed that determining the difficulty of repertoire and selecting contrasting music were challenging. Madison and Lucy pointed out that determining the level of difficulty was the big challenge. In fact, Madison stated that she “made a mistake that had selected one hard piece for her students,” and Lucy claimed that “there are always music . . . it’s kind of too hard, too challenging.” More specifically, Bert identified that “something of great magnitude, something of a large scale” in a piece “may be difficult to achieve in amount of time.” Therefore, he hoped that he could access to lists of repertoire that contains different levels, such as a board level and a provincial level.

In addition, Selena and Bert believed that choosing contrasting music was very challenging for performance. Selena explained:

I would say making sure that there’s enough of a contrast between pieces because if you’re doing a performance, and they’re playing two pieces or three pieces, you don’t want them to sound the same, you know, for the audiences, for the students, who are learning them. For me, who are teaching them for several months over a

year, you want to have some good contrast in these pieces so that I would say would be another challenge of choosing repertoire.

Receiving effective guidance. Although repertoire selection presents a number of difficulties, not every participant had been taught how to select repertoire and what criteria to use during their undergraduate education. For instance, Belle recalled that she did not get the opportunity to dive into repertoire selection during her undergraduate study. In contrast, three participants pointed out that they had assignments or discussions relating to repertoire selection in their Additional Qualifications (AQ) courses. In addition, the majority of participants had not read academic and professional articles or books to support their choices. Therefore, they selected repertoire for instrumental (band) students based on their experiences as Madison stated, “I just figure it out by myself.”

Strategies of Repertoire Selection

All of the participants explained their strategies pertaining to repertoire selection and identified places where they locate the repertoire.

Based on their collections. Some participants stated that they selected repertoire based on what they have. Mary stated, “See the stuff I have, basically.” This is supported by Selena, who explained that she had a “very extensive collection of repertoire because she has been teaching for a long time.” Other participants also collected repertoire to “build their own libraries,” and they selected repertoire from their own “libraries.” For example, Madison and Lucy showed the researcher that they have many files or cabinets to organize repertoire. Bert likewise identified, “I have inventory, and I just look through things to see if there’s anything that grabs me.”

Making a plan. Some teachers also created playlists for their students. For instance, Selena explained her selection process in the following way:

I started listening to lots of concert band music at the level that I know I'm going to teach in the new year. And I just kind of start making . . . if I feel like 'Oh, that's kind of clever, maybe I can use that,' I just write down the name of this piece and composer, and then I keep listening to lots, lots of things, and then I might go back to my short list, and say 'Okay, which of these pieces are going to meet the things I want to teach this particular group this year,' and from they're kind of determining which pieces gonna make it, to make the short list.

Steve likewise spent a lot of time listening to a variety of music to make a playlist for specific purposes:

I tried to listen as the audience would be here because it's for performance for our ensembles. Either like for the Christmas concert coming up, I am trying to pick good [pieces] like rocking, high-energy, Christmas songs, so the people won't get bored of the same song every year.

Mary also pointed out that she had "a list on the classroom board." She always selected all the music at the beginning of the year for two semesters: "one playlist is for September to December, another is for January to June."

Using a variety of resources. In order to locate much valuable repertoire, some teachers went to music stores and libraries to discover music, while others preferred to search music online. All of the participants believed that sharing with other music teachers and music educators was also an effective way to obtain repertoire.

Going to music stores. Lucy, Qin, and Bert preferred to search repertoire in the music stores. Bert thought that music stores were common places to obtain repertoire. Qin explained that she liked going to a music store because she could participate in workshops (e.g., reading sessions), but they did not do it often. Likewise, Lucy pointed out that she selected music in a music store because there were band reading sessions. The music store staff would show them new music, and at a reading session invite some teachers to conduct selected scores. Therefore, they thought it was very helpful when selecting pieces.

Locating music online. Obtaining music online is becoming a prevalent way for these participants to choose music. Most of the participants recently obtain repertoire through websites (e.g., J. W. Pepper, Hal Leonard). Although Bert stated that he normally located repertoire in music stores, he started looking for music online last year because he now realizes that the internet provides more resources. Mary also emphasized that when she first started teaching, she went to music stores, but now “it’s more online.” Steve also explained that he was more likely to search scores online because “it’s better than going to the music store because teachers can see one or two pages of the actual sheet music, and listen to a high-quality performance of the audio,” and he also could play the sample audio retrieved from the websites for his students to listen to and choose. Therefore, he believed that searching music online was useful way to select and acquire repertoire.

Sharing ideas with other colleagues. All of the participants agreed that sharing music with other music teachers is a useful way to acquire repertoire. Belle emphasized that “keeping collegial relationship is a big deal . . . It’s a network. It’s a way teachers can stay connected.” This is also supported by Steve and Selena. For example, Steve recalled

that, at the beginning of his teaching career, it was hard for him to find music by himself. At present, it is easier for him to obtain music because he has developed relationships with other music teachers. Thus, he could interact with other colleagues related to repertoire selection. Similarly, Selena initially made repertoire selection on her own, but now, she communicates with other music teachers working in her school to discuss and share music. Lucy indicated that she “would like to look through other music teachers’ libraries” to borrow music because her limited budget restricted her from buying new things.

Engaging in sight-reading. Sight-reading is an important skill for students, which can also be used to determine which repertoire to be performed. Four interviewed participants stated that they adopted sight-reading to determine difficulties of repertoire, while the other four teachers only used it to improve students’ skills.

Lucy, Qin, Madison, and Bert occasionally adopted sight-reading in order to select repertoire. In Lucy’s class, her students were allowed to sight-read a few sections of music with their instruments, and make decisions as to what pieces they would like to play. Qin also pointed out that music is also selected when students could recognize the melody during sight-reading. In addition, Bert stated that “students can start to look at pieces of more complexity if they can sight-read more proficiently, accurately, and efficiently.” Likewise, Madison stated that she might reconsider choosing a piece if students could not sight-read the piece well.

However, Selena claimed, “I don’t use sight-reading to determine what repertoire I’m going to choose, but I do sight-reading as a part of the process of learning new music, so we would sight-read once they have their new repertoire.” Furthermore, Belle stated

that she used sight-reading to “push students to build their skills.” This is also advocated by Steve. However, Mary did not always engage students in sight-reading because of the limited time.

Referring to the Ontario Arts Curriculum. Some participants may refer to the Arts Curriculum when selecting repertoire. For example, Bert stated that he referred to the curriculum when selecting multicultural music because music students are expected to learn about different cultures through different types of music.

However, other participants did not refer to the curriculum during the repertoire selection process, and they stated that their choices were not impacted by the Ontario Arts Curriculum. Several participants explained that the curriculum is very broad. Madison noted, “For my band, I just choose what I like” because “the curriculum is not focused on bands and ensemble arrangements.” Belle, Steve, and Lucy believed that every piece they selected could “hit on the aspects of the curriculum,” so they did not refer to the curriculum.

Moreover, Selena explained that when she first taught, she might refer to; but now, she has ideas about what students need to achieve by the end of grade 8. Therefore, she did not specifically look at the curriculum. Similarly, Mary claimed,

I know that level. I know what level they should be add and what they would like, and what’s easiest for them. . . . So, it’s more kind of my own knowledge that I don’t need to really look at the curriculum.

Bert thought that the curriculum is good because it “does give more freedom, so teachers have more freedom of choices, and there is some diversity in the teachers’ interests and choices.”

Using method books. Some participants selected method books when teaching instrumental music. For instance, Lucy used *Essential Elements for Band* for beginning grade five and six students to learn five basic notes. Similarly, this method book was also used by Mary for her grade five students. Because she wanted more variety for her grade six students, she used *Accent on Achievement*. She explained that “the benefits of using method book [are that] the progression is very easy. Students start with one note [or] two.” Selena used *Standard of Excellence – Book one* for all middle students to connect some exercises with the selected sheet music. Madison likewise used method books for all middle students: “Book 1 of Yamaha method book was used for grade five and six students; grade seven and eight students use Book 2.” She highlighted that Yamaha method book was great because of the format and content. Therefore, when students went back to review new concepts, they only needed to look at the top of each page.

However, some teachers have method books, but they did not use them. For example, Steve stated that they had method books, but they did not use it them because he found that “the students do not like the songs. There are too rudimentary.” Likewise, Bert also has the Yamaha books, but he encouraged students to do some improvisation or do some things that were outside the scope of the book.

It is evident that the participants’ different educational and teaching experiences influence their perspectives on repertoire selections. In addition, some challenges that participants encountered and many strategies they used during this process have been demonstrated in the data analysis. In the following chapter, I will present a discussion of the data analysis with some implications for the field of instrumental (band).

CHAPTER V: DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS

Discussion: Factors that Influence Repertoire Selection

This discussion section, four factors that influence teachers' choices are presented, including their goals, criteria, challenges, and strategies of repertoire selection. These four factors also answer the research questions: How do in-service music teachers select repertoire for their ensembles, what is the rationale for their choices, what resources do music teachers use/access when making repertoire selection choices, and what are the learning goals of in-service music teachers when they select repertoire for their students. The participants raised poignant issues pertaining to selecting multicultural music and different music categories for beginning students. Based on a variety of participants' perspectives in repertoire selection, I will identify implications for music learning and future research.

The Goals of Repertoire Selection

The overt goal of repertoire selection is to teach students about music and help them improve as musicians; however, there are other less obvious goals as well. According to Sheldon (1996), "selecting appropriate music for school bands is critical to providing an enjoyable band experience, developing instrumental executive skills, increasing musical cognition, promoting continued music learning, and programming a sequential, effective curriculum" (p. 6). Some participants stated that the primary goal of repertoire selection is to teach students valuable musical concepts and technical skills, such as dynamics, rhythms, and fingerings. When selecting repertoire for beginning students, the participants collectively emphasized that their goal is to get students to learn

the fundamentals with regard to playing instruments, so that they have a solid foundation in order to move forward in their music education. Moreover, Steve and Selena stated that the most important thing for them is that students can enjoy, appreciate, and love music. Thus, teaching students knowledge, helping musicians improve, and developing music appreciation are three crucial goals of repertoire selection, as noted by the participants.

Selecting Ability-Appropriate Repertoire

All of the participants suggest that music teachers should select appropriate repertoire to match students' abilities. In order to achieve this goal, music teachers should be familiar with students' musical skills, determine appropriate repertoire level, and balance both elements.

Being familiar with students' abilities. Some participants select repertoire based on their students' abilities. Baker (2010) and Brunner (1992) support this statement suggesting that when music educators engage in repertoire planning, they should be familiar with their students' potential abilities. Berenson (2008) observes that it can be challenging for music teachers to choose "repertoire that is within the range of the student's ability" (p. 4). Some participants point out that one reason is that students are different every year, and students' abilities vary from year to year. However, Lucy, Madison, and Selena stated that they had taught their students in their early years, so they were familiar with their abilities. For instance, Selena indicated that she had been teaching her current students since grade one, so she has a comprehensive understanding of their musical capabilities. Other participants (e.g., Mary, Steve, and Bert) pointed out that they stayed in their classrooms all the time, even during their breaks, and all students

are encouraged to practice. This approach is also beneficial for music teachers in order to better understand students' ability. Steve explained, "That's for me to be comfortable with them. Because the more the background I know what they can do, the better I can provide them the proper repertoire selection." As a result, being familiar with students' ability is essential for music teachers during the repertoire selection process.

Determining appropriate repertoire level. The participants noted that, once students' abilities are known, it is necessary to determine repertoire level to match their abilities. This is supported by some studies. Sheldon (1996) agrees that a "composition's level of difficulty is an essential consideration when selecting repertoire for developing ensembles" (p. 11). McCallum (2007) likewise recommends that music teachers need to consider the level of difficulty of the repertoire.

However, some participants claim that determining the level of difficulty is a big challenge. Baker (2010) points out that "a common misstep is to over-or-under-program music for the ensemble without giving consideration to the ensemble's needs to limitations" (p. 34). The participants offered a variety of suggestions when determining repertoire level. Some of them always search online or go to music stores to check repertoire that is frequently categorized by levels. For example, beginning students usually start at level 0.5 or level 1. Brunner (1992) states that "musical elements are technical aspects of the piece" that determine the difficulty of this piece (p. 32), and Colwell and Hewitt (2016) indicate that "technical skills are those most frequently considered when selecting music" (p. 354). Despite the assigned levels, not every piece will be appropriate for students to play.

Therefore, Qin, Mary, Lucy, Steve, and Bert always check the music elements to

determine the difficulty of the repertoire (e.g., melody, key signature, harmony, and duration). For beginning instrumental students, some participants pointed out that they focused primarily on the melody when selecting repertoire. Although some of them think key signature and harmony are also factors affecting their choices, they do not identify these as main concerns. All of the participants indicated that they were more likely to select concert B flat major, which is a basic key for beginners. With respect to harmonic variety, some participants thought that it was particularly important for advanced students, but they thought that beginning students were too young to understand it. Qin and Belle suggested that music teachers might be able to select pieces for their students with more complex harmonies, if instrumental beginning students had previous knowledge of vocal harmony. Consequently, some participants stated that they would choose simple arrangements based on fundamental musical elements.

Some participants claimed that the repertoire selected for beginning students should not be devoid of challenges. This allows music teachers to introduce some new concepts and teachable elements, such as new rhythms and fingerings. This is reinforced by Colwell and Hewitt (2016), who suggest that teachers should select music that will challenge and improve students' musical skills. Sheldon (1996) also expresses a similar opinion:

Students need music that provides opportunities to practice newly acquired skills and, at the same time, challenges them to reach the next level of achievement.

Determining a musical work's level of difficulty is a comprehensive consideration of all the elements it contains (p. 12).

Other music researchers explain that students are more likely to lose interest if the

selected repertoire is too simple. However, if the selected music is too difficult for them to master, they will also be frustrated (Baker, 2010; Greig & Lowe, 2014). This statement is supported by Sheldon (1996), who concludes that “when considering a work's level of difficulty, the instrumental music teacher will want to compare all of its musical elements with what he or she knows the students are capable of achieving” (p. 12).

Balance between students’ abilities and repertoire level. Colwell and Hewitt (2016) suggest that teachers should “determine the appropriate grade level” and whether the instrumentation of the piece is appropriate for a beginner ensemble (p. 354). Baker (2010) argues, “It may be a challenge to select music that balances levels of difficulty with accessibility” (p. 34). When students are at different levels, the participants identified that there were three approaches of repertoire selection to balance students’ abilities and repertoire level. The first one is to select music to highlight strong students; the second way is to rewrite parts of the repertoire to match individual students’ abilities, and the third is to educate students as how best to overcome actual or perceived challenges. In order to successfully implement these three approaches, considerable knowledge, related experience, and varied pedagogical skills are required.

Highlighting strong sections in an ensemble. Some participants selected music to challenge and strengthen the ability of strong students, while providing weaker students with compositions that are suited to their ability. For example, if a teacher has a strong flute section but a weak brass section, they might select music that is challenging for the flute section but less demanding for the brass section. Therefore, depending on the chosen repertoire, students will be challenged according to their individual abilities. Madison and Selena indicated that they wanted to challenge the strong students but not

discouraged the weak players in their ensemble. This approach is also supported by Greig and Lowe (2014), who advocate for the concept of a “conservative challenge.”

This involves a director having a realistic understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of their ensemble, the ensemble’s capacity for growth and its work ethic (effort and persistence), and the technical ability of the individual players to reach predetermined goals. Repertoire is then chosen to realistically challenge the ensemble and individual players based upon their playing potential, and not just whether the director likes the piece (p. 58).

Revising sections of the repertoire. When there is an area of the selected repertoire that exceeds students’ abilities, Steve, Madison, Mary, and Lucy often rewrite sections of a piece. The participants offered two approaches for reconstructing sections to accommodate students’ capabilities. Some participants, such as Lucy, rewrote some rhythms or melodies much simpler for students to play, while others cut out a section and allowed students to repeat other sections. For example, Steve allowed the students to go back to play the beginning part of a jazz piece and cut out the difficult ending when they played it. Based on the length of a piece, Stycos (1994) suggests that teachers ask students to repeat very short pieces, giving them an opportunity to improve their performance and the listeners an opportunity to experience the piece more fully.

In addition, some participants noted that students were different every year, so the instrumentation of an ensemble would differ. Stycos (1994), Colwell and Hewitt (2016) suggest that it is important that music teachers carefully consider the instrumentation available to their students, when selecting repertoire for beginning ensembles. Therefore, some participants make small changes to the score in order to accommodate the

instrumentation they have at any given time. When they do not have the instruments suggested in the score, they will rewrite the part to match the instrumentation to reflect the players they have at the time. For example, Lucy did not have trombone players last year, so she rewrote the trombone parts for the tenor saxophone section to play.

Educating students to overcome challenges. Bert, Selena, Qin, Belle, and Mary always “pre-teach” students the difficult parts using warm-up exercises or method books. They believed that some sections were not overly demanding for students because the sections have been selected based on students’ abilities. The participants thought that it was one of the responsibilities of teachers to educate students how to practice and overcome difficult parts in any given piece. Randall (2009) states that an ensemble always “has to have something they can play easily, something that’s just a little beyond, and something that they know they’re going to have to stretch for but that I as the conductor know is within the realm of possibility” (p. 34). Consequently, some participants consider their students’ abilities when selecting appropriate repertoire.

Selecting “High-Quality” Repertoire

Some participants stated that the quality of repertoire was also an important aspect they consider during the repertoire selection process. Howard (1996) suggests that “music selected for learning should be of highest quality” (p. 27). All of the participants stated that it was also one of the responsibilities of music teachers to choose high-quality repertoire in order to achieve their pedagogical goals. However, they have different understandings of what quality repertoire is, so their strategies differ when choosing high-quality repertoire.

Some participants claimed that high-quality music comes from the past and is

defined as celebrated arrangements from renowned composers because these works can “stand the test of time” (Hayward, 2004, p. 17). Steve and Qin demonstrated that high-quality repertoire includes nursery rhymes and folk songs that have become a part of human history. Howard (1996) states that high-quality music, according to the Kodaly method, includes traditional folk music from different cultures, and music written by distinguished composers from all generations. Qin advocated using the Kodaly method, and emphasized that folk songs can be high-quality music because they are rooted in the social culture of different generations.

Hayward (2004) adopts statements from Brian Balmages to explain that “historical significance and longevity” are characteristics that can define the quality in music (p. 17). All of the participants regard classical music as a type of high-quality music. Johnson (2002) outlines “a common argument” that suggests classical music “has stood the test of time and been judged as ‘great music’ by successive generations” (p. 91). The majority of participants agreed that exposing students to classical music is beneficial to gain more knowledge about music history and enhance their music appreciation. Some participants emphasized that students, who learn classical music representing different eras, will recognize the progression of music and understand why music sounds different in modern times. Selena and Steve believed that quality music is connected to the real world where students can identify and appreciate music, so that their lives will be better, which is also a goal of repertoire selection. Colwell and Hewitt (2016) state, “Music from various historical periods is especially appropriate for teaching form” because the “vast majority of music written for wind bands has been writing since 1960 and is in an ABA format or slight variant” (p. 354). Consequently, the authors

believe that selecting high-quality music from different historical periods is significant for students in a band.

Some participants stated that high-quality repertoire includes a variety of musical elements, relating to tempo, dynamics, key signature, rhythm, melody, and harmony. Therefore, checking varied musical elements in a piece is a significant step in determining whether this piece is high-quality repertoire. Brunner (1992) and Del Borgo (1988) support that music elements establish the quality of the piece. However, as discussed before, some participants preferred to choose music featuring simple musical elements because beginning students' abilities are restricted. Some participants could only focus on one or two music elements, such as melody and key transitions. This does not mean that their repertoire choices are not of high quality. Del Borgo (1988) suggests, "Check to see whether there is variety in the placement of primary melodic material. . . . Melodic material that is shared with middle and lower voices can increase the impact of the work" (p. 24). This suggestion is supported by Selena and Madison. Selena preferred to select a piece using theme and variations where the melodic variations are shared by different instruments. Likewise, Madison selected a piece that allows students to pass a melody between different instruments.

As the content of high-quality music includes musical elements, Qin believed that high-quality music should be teachable. This is supported by Apfelstadt (2000), who states, "Good music will meet the standard of teachability because its content provides a basis for teaching material" (p. 20). If teachers want to teach some valuable concepts to students, they need select adequate musical content to help students accomplish this goal (Apfelstadt, 2000). Although the participants noted that some musical elements might be

challenging for students, Baker (2010) states that teachers should challenge students to achieve “rewarding and attainable goals of performance” through high-quality repertoire (p. 34). This was supported by the participants, who collectively expressed the view that involving a variety of musical elements was central to students’ learning.

Selecting Highly Appealing Music

According to Forbes (2000), teachers often equate high appeal with high quality during the repertoire selection process. This is demonstrated by some participants, who always select music that is appealing to the instructor and the students who will listen and practice it repeatedly. Moreover, it is also important that the music will appeal to the audience so that a positive response will encourage students for their efforts.

Maintaining teachers’ motivation. Some participants suggested selecting pieces that appeal to them. The process of teaching and practicing a piece with students requires teachers to listen to a piece repeatedly. If teachers do not enjoy a piece, their engagement fades quickly. Therefore, it is important for teachers to select repertoire that they find engaging and appealing, so that after listening to it repeatedly, they can remain motivated and engaged. For example, Selena, Steve, and Qin spent a lot of time listening to potential repertoire, wrote down the music that appealed to them, and went back to re-listen to the music, in order to determine which piece they would eventually select.

Increasing student engagement. The participants preferred to select appealing music to increase students’ engagement, and they thought that it was a critical consideration when selecting repertoire. Some participants allowed their students to provide suggestions, while some of them stated that there were many problems if they allowed students to make choices.

Considering students' interests. Most participants stated that their repertoire selections were based on students' interest. Some music educators indicate that students' musical interest can be seen as an essential element of repertoire selection (Baker, 2010; Randall, 2009). Therefore, Sheldon (1996) suggests that "teachers need to be aware of repertoire that motivates their students and include it in the band experience" (p. 13).

Selecting repertoire that students might be interested in has the potential to motivate them because "interest increases learning" (Schraw, Flowerday & Lehman, 2001, p. 211). Selena and Madison indicated that students are willing to spend more time playing and practicing when the selected pieces appeal to them, and the opposite may also be true. It is also supported by Renwick and Mepherston (2002), who believe that students can "play pieces that they like for longer periods of time than pieces they find less interesting" (p. 185). Students' perception of whether they like a piece is often influenced by how they play the piece. Ames explained that students prefer to persist in a task if they are encouraged rather than impeded by it (as cited in Sheldon, 1996, p. 13). Randall (2009) emphasizes that a teacher's repertoire choice actually should serve as an inspiration to his or her students.

Involving students in repertoire selection. Several teachers thought that involving students in repertoire selection was beneficial, but they approached this differently. For example, some participants allowed students to make suggestions, while others simply gave students choices. Participants noted that, even when using a democratic approach, students still became disinterested in repertoire that they struggled with. Consequently, three participants provided few opportunities for students to choose repertoire during the learning process.

Allowing students to make suggestions. In order to encourage their students' commitment to learning, some participants encouraged them to be involved in the repertoire selection process. Renwick and Mepherston (2002) state that choices can be regarded as an effective method to stimulate students' interests. Likewise, Reynolds and Symons state that providing "students with choices has also been found to relate strongly to superior learning outcomes" (as cited in Renwick & MePherson, 2002, p. 175). In their study, Schraw, Flowerday & Lehman (2001) state that the majority of students report that, "choice increases their interest" (p. 216).

Furthermore, Schraw et al. (2001) explain that students often select "what they like or what they are curious about," and their "curiosity increases their motivations and engagements" to learn the selected materials. Students are also familiar with the selected materials, and "their prior knowledge also enhances their engagements" (p. 215). For example, some participants stated that their students selected music from movies, such as *Star Wars*, *Despicable Me 2*, and *Harry Potter*. Because students are familiar with the music from these movies and are curious about how they will eventually perform it, they are more likely to engage with the repertoire. Consequently, students are more likely to practice when they are able to play music that they are familiar with (Renwick & Mepherston, 2002; Greco, 1997).

In addition, Schraw et al. (2001) indicate that "ownership" is a common word that students mention when speaking of making choices (p. 215). This statement is supported by Greco (1997), who argues the following:

If students are given the responsibility to select some of the music that they will play and ultimately perform, they are far more likely to feel ownership in those

selections and therefore practice the more diligently than if all of it is chosen by the instructor. (p. 62)

However, some participants pointed out that they provided few opportunities for students to select music because they believed that it was problematic to select pieces only based on students' interests and suggestions. First, some participants pointed out that beginning students are too immature to select music responsibly. Greco notes that "the effects of choice and interest are often perplexed" because students always choose the pieces that they are more interested in. (as cited in Renwick and McPherson, 2002, p. 175). This kind of interest means that students often choose pieces that they are familiar with and are easier to play. According to Renwick and Mepheron (2002), "there was a strong association between intrinsic motivation and the pleasure that students take in playing easier, familiar melodies." More specifically, they found that the participant in their research "preferred to learn an 'easy' piece rather than a 'hard' one" (Renwick & McPherson, 2002, p. 177). This is reinforced by some of the research participants, especially Selena, who emphasized that students disliked a piece because they think they are not able to play it.

In addition, Selena pointed out that it was very difficult to choose pieces that students suggested because they have different interests and preferences. When students suggest different pieces, it can be difficult for teachers to make final decisions. A scenario could exist where 60% of students choose *Star Wars*, 30% of students select *Harry Potter*, and 10% of students choose a Beethoven work. If the teacher selects *Star Wars*, 40% of students might feel upset and decide not to participate to their fullest in the learning process. Consequently, students' interests are not rewarded and teachers may

have inadvertently created a dilemma.

Students have choices. In order to address this issue, Lucy pointed out that she allowed advanced students to choose one of the four pieces she selected. These four pieces are based on her predetermined repertoire knowledge. This procedure encourages students' engagement, and the outcome (i.e., chosen repertoire) is limited by teachers' prior knowledge. Katz and Assor (2007) suggest that teachers should cater to their students' needs when providing choices:

In particular, options should be constructed that are relevant to students' interests and goals, are not too numerous or complex yet not too easy, and are congruent with the values of the students' families and culture of origin. In order for choice to be motivating, it has to be based on a careful match between the various options and the students' needs, interests, goals, abilities, and cultural background (p. 439).

Enhancing audience engagement. Enhanced audience engagement is something that participants considered when they selected repertoire for performance. The participants claimed that they also considered whether audiences would be bored when they listened to the music, so they chose contrasting music that audience could recognize, identify, and appreciate. Therefore, music teachers should make sure that selecting music would be engaging enough to have a positive response from the audience.

Selecting Multicultural Music

Fung, Lee, and Chung (1999) state that "multiculturalism is becoming a global issue that music educators should notice" and suggest that music teachers should focus on "the inclusion of music from world cultures in music education" (p. 50). The participants

collectively demonstrated that multicultural music incorporates diverse music from different regions and cultures. All of them believed that multicultural music learning was an effective way for beginning students to gain comprehensive knowledge in music and the world. However, multicultural music selection is a major challenge for music teachers.

Benefits. Blair and Kondo state that a variety of multicultural music includes new musical expressions (as cited in Nethsinghe, 2012b, p. 383).

Participants agreed that by being exposed to this new music, students could experience different types of music and be introduced to unique melodies, rhythms, notations, structures, and instruments. Apfelstadt (2000) supports this statement: “Music from other cultures . . . can provide opportunities [for students] to learn unusual forms of notating sound” (p. 22). Therefore, students’ musical knowledge will be improved by including multicultural music in the curriculum. This is exemplified by Belle who stated that she often displayed and played different instruments from around the world for her students. This provided visual and acoustic support that helps students recognize multicultural musical ideas. Furthermore, Qin and Madison always analyzed and explained the reasons why this type of music sounds different. For example, when Qin selected Chinese pieces, she introduced pentatonic scales. This kind of scale is different from Western major and minor scales. Therefore, students’ musical knowledge can be augmented through learning multicultural music.

In addition, students have opportunities to explore the world through multicultural music (Nethsinghe, 2012b). This exploration can be represented in many other aspects (e.g., geography, society, and cultures). Madison often used a map to point out the region

where the music originated from and told students that the world is not just the place they live in. This encourages students to recognize other regions around the world. Moreover, students can benefit from experiencing different cultures as noted by Countryman (2005):

When [teachers] teach the music of Canada's First Nations, Australia's aboriginal people, African American spirituals and field hollers, the Mbuti pygmies, and so much more, [teachers] have a tremendous opportunity to contextualize the music socially and politically. Spending just a few moments explaining the inhumane conditions experienced by the music's creators can open students' eyes to some of the realities and complexities of their world (p. 17).

Furthermore, Baker (2010) suggests that it is imperative for teachers to “promote cultural awareness and heritage by music learning (p. 35). All of the participants agreed that multicultural learning might not only cultivate students’ awareness of Canadian music, but also make connections to their own individual cultures with some of their multicultural students. This process is an effective way to promote students’ cultural self-identity. When students have the opportunities to be exposed to French-Canadian music, First Nations music, and east-coast music, they will be more likely to appreciate the diverse cultures in Canada. Shand and Smith (2008) believe that:

The students felt a passionate sense of loyalty and patriotism towards Canada, a country in which none of the students' families had lived for more than one generation. ‘If we just study American music or other types of music from other countries then we aren't showing much respect for our country’ (p. 22).

Likewise, some participants detailed their experiences with students who came from other cultures. These students recommend music from their own culture and when

teachers were able to incorporate these selections into the class repertoire, it encouraged a sense of pride among these students. Therefore, integrating multicultural music into the curriculum can better increase students' understandings of different cultures (Nethsinghe, 2012b). This is also a driving force for the participants to select multicultural music.

Strategies for multicultural repertoire selection. Because learning multicultural music encourages students to explore the world and promote students' cultural self-identity, some participants who teach in multicultural schools selected this type of repertoire according to the cultural background of their students. Students with multicultural background were encouraged to make suggestions based on their own cultural backgrounds. This process not only promotes these students' native cultural identity, but also provides opportunities for other students to appreciate music from different cultures. In addition, some participants selected multicultural repertoire based on the sheet music and instruments they have available to them. For instance, Bert and Lucy selected pieces from the book that their school boards provided, and Madison referred to her current music library.

Challenges of selecting multicultural music. Although some participants believe that selecting multicultural music is beneficial to students' musical development, they stated that there were also some challenges, such as limited instrumental materials and a lack of knowledge, when selecting multicultural instrumental repertoire.

Limited instrumental materials. The majority of participants highlighted that there is a lack of multicultural sheet music and instruments for use in the beginning instrumental class. Some researchers claim that it is difficult for teachers to acquire sufficient and appropriate multicultural material and resources to educate students

(Demorest & Schultz, 2004; Nethsinghe, 2012b; Volk, 1991). Although the participants did not directly state that they did not have enough multicultural music, they only selected multicultural music based on their existing collections. Some participants also pointed out that it was easier to locate multicultural music for listening rather than instrumental learning and performance. This is consistent with Countryman (2005), who states that “choosing multicultural music for performance carries even bigger challenges than that chosen for listening” (p. 18). As a result, teachers cannot find sufficient instrumental multicultural music. Countryman (2005) also suggests “publishers, such as *earthsongs* and *World Music Press*, are bringing well-researched repertoire from various world traditions to our attention” (p.17).

Furthermore, Belle emphasized that accessibility to instruments from other cultures might impede the selection of multicultural music, and she believes that original instruments offer opportunities for students to be involved in an authentic music environment. This statement identifies a problem: teachers need to “spend money to buy ethnic instruments for the instrumental program” (Volk, 1991, p. 54). Fortunately, she borrowed an Australian instrument to teach Australian music. However, owing to limited budget, the other participants cannot purchase instruments for their music classes. Therefore, this restricts their choices relating to multicultural repertoire selection.

Lack of knowledge. Some participants identified that the range of multicultural music is broad, so they thought that they lacked an extensive knowledge of multicultural music. Therefore, the participants were less likely to select multicultural music if they were unfamiliar with it. Volk (1991) highlighted this issue by stating, “It is evident that while instrumental teachers acknowledge the value of multicultural music, and think this

music have a place in their program, they are uncertain as to how to employ them” (p. 54). This is reinforced by Teicher, who states, “many music educators feel limited in their ability to teach multicultural music” (as cited in Demorest and Schultz, 2004, p. 301). In addition, some music teachers are less willing to select multicultural music that has religious elements. For example, some participants explained that they did not want to offend some cultures and noted that some parents might have concerns if their children were involved in multicultural music that has religious connotations or implications.

Their lack of knowledge with respect to multicultural music also made it difficult to verify the authenticity of repertoire they might select. The notion of authenticity in multicultural music has been considered a highly important aspect by some researchers. For example, Demorest and Schultz (2004) note that music teachers frequently select readily available repertoire, particularly those found in middle-level music books. However, many of them are arranged in a manner that is not reflective of authentic performance practices rooted in the original culture (Demorest & Schultz, 2004). Though cross-cultural arrangements are an effective way to promote learning, mistakenly presenting such arrangements as an authentic cultural representation can be misleading to students and insulting to the culture of origin. This was a concern among the participants, as none of them knew how to evaluate the authenticity of music from other cultures. Although Bert believed that published multicultural music could be trusted to be use in the classroom, Steve and Mary stated that they would like to find a consultant to support their selections.

Despite the fact that all of the participants stated that they believed it was beneficial to introduce multicultural music to their students, it was not a main factor

when determining instrumental repertoire choices.

Selecting Different Music Categories

All of the participants indicated that they chose from multiple genres of music, including classical, pop, and jazz music. In this way, they supported Baker's (2010) notion of what a music teacher should do, as he argues that one of music teachers' responsibilities is to instruct students about the various musical categories. Gault (2006) also believes that incorporating popular, traditional, and classical music genres into the curriculum is necessary.

Pop music. Isbell (2007) states that it has become more popular to select pop music in the classroom. This is exemplified by the majority of participants, who prefer to select pop music. Isbell (2007) believes that "pop music is the music that students most prefer" (p. 55). Most participants agreed with this statement, and they explained that pop music is closely linked to students' lives. Bert added that students were more likely to recognize the music that is around them because it is common for students to approach pop music via radios. "Hearing the selections on the radio is [an] important" factor that influences students' preferences (Boyle, Hosterman, & Ramsey, 1981, p. 54). This is supported by Demorest and Schultz (2000) who indicate that younger students' music preferences are "based on characteristics of the environment, characteristics of the musical stimulus, and characteristics of the listener" (p. 301). Keith Cerny points out that "the younger the ensemble, the more important it is to connect the study of music with what the young people see as popular culture around them" (as cited in Randall, 2009, p. 34).

Consequently, some participants preferred to select pop music from movies.

Cerny also supports this type of selections by using *Star Wars*, and suggests that teachers should provide more opportunities for students to play movie music (as cited in Randall, 2009, p. 34). This is confirmed by most of the participants who selected pop music from *Star Wars* and *Despicable Me 2*. The participants indicated that students were familiar with these two pieces, and they could easily recognize them. According to Fung, Lee, and Chung (2000), young students are more likely to select music that they are familiar with, which is reinforced by many studies that conclude that “familiarity has a positive relationship to music preference under a variety of conditions” (Demorest & Schultz, 2004, p. 302). Therefore, some participants selected pop music to attract students’ attention and increase their engagement.

However, pop music was not selected by Qin, Selena, and Madison because they thought the quality of pop music is not great. This is likewise reinforced by Forbes (2000) that “much of the repertoire [that is] performed . . . that focus[es] on popular music is of poor quality” (p. 116). Randall (2009) assumes that some pop music cannot stand the test of time, and it may be discarded within one decade. Selena and Madison stated that students strived to play pop music “by what they heard on the radio,” but they did not have abilities to play like that. Some pop arrangements they played are simpler, which are not the same one they heard on the radio. Selena and Madison further explained that selecting pop music is only for entertainment, and they pointed out that some competitions (e.g., MusicFest) do not allow competitors to select pop music. Baker (2010) argues, “It is most likely that a majority of our students possess an mp3 library of music they enjoy for entertainment purposes alone” (p. 34). In addition, Qin specifically stated that she did not often adopt current music because much of the music “is simply

repetitive.” In contrast, Sheldon (1996) argues that “the repetition of certain musical concepts, particularly those requiring new physical skills, is necessary for young children to gain understanding and automaticity,” so he states that it is essential for an instrumental music teacher to analyze “whether a work that uses repetition would help to effectively rehearse a skill” (p. 10). Therefore, music teachers should determine their goals before selecting pop music.

Jazz music. Compared to pop music, there were few participants who selected jazz music for beginning instrumental students. Some participants explained that they did not have a jazz band. Similarly, Madison explained that she did not choose a lot of jazz music because she did not have a good drummer who could play a central role in the jazz big band. In contrast, Steve stated that he often selected jazz pieces for his students because he has a jazz band.

Some participants, such as Steve and Selena, who selected jazz pieces, stated that by learning jazz music, students would understand many different musical styles, such as swing. Greig and Lowe (2014) state, “Swing is at the heart of understanding jazz style” (p. 58). Selena chose a piece including diverse jazz rhythms for grade 8 students. Through this piece, she noted that students’ skills in rhythms were developed. It should be noted that these two participants always selected jazz music for their grade 8 students because their students are more advanced and could understand “jazz rhythms and ‘swing feel’ that are based upon syncopation” (Greig & Lowe, 2014, p. 58). Bitz (1998) explains, “Most younger students are only familiar with simple rhythms, downbeat and upbeat relationships” (p. 21). This is confirmed by Mary, who did not select jazz music because she believed that her students were unfamiliar with the jazz rhythms (e.g.,

swing), and there was not enough time to learn jazz music.

In addition, some participants stated that jazz music was a kind of improvisation. Compared to the curriculum from Grade nine to twelve, improvisation is not a requirement in the elementary arts curriculum. Bitz (1998) states, “When it comes to teaching improvisation, jazz may not be the best or most logical genre to start with” because it is difficult for beginners (p. 21). Consequently, music teachers should select jazz music in an appropriate level for their students as a means of improving their musical skills.

Educational music. Music specifically written for school-based performance is often referred to as educational music (Canfield, 2009). Budiansky and Foley (2005) state that educational music is easy for music teachers to obtain, but it is often tedious, predictable, and “formulaic” for students (as cited in Canfield, 2009, p.15). However, the majority of participants selected a large amount of educational music and believed that it is beneficial for their students. Lucy and Selena clearly demonstrated that educational music was accessible for students. Compared to established music (i.e., art music), educational music is often easier for younger students to play and practice, and includes many valuable ideas for students to develop their musical abilities. Canfield (2009) argues, “this music was named educational music because many of the arrangers or composers had no significant relevance beyond music education” (p. 15). In contrast, Selena emphasized that composers who create education music should be aware as to what particular skills beginning students need to acquire and/or improve. Some of the participants agreed that beginning students had limited skills and could not successfully master challenging pieces and to do so would only frustrate them. Therefore, it is

necessary for teachers to lay a solid musical foundation for their beginning students, and connect this knowledge to higher levels of understanding. This is supported by Jessup (2014): “Learning good fundamentals allows students to progress and play well for many years” (p. 21).

Based on the responses of the participants, it is clear that educational music has a useful purpose. It functions to introduce students to a conservative educational art form (i.e., music) with the intention of advancing their musical knowledge and skill sets. Composers of this music often work within a self-imposed set of limitations due to the limited knowledge of their intended users. Teachers use this music as a teaching tool, which in essence becomes the curriculum (Reynolds, 2000). Regardless of what music teachers choose, it is important that they have a clear rationale for their selection.

Challenges for Repertoire Selection

The majority of participants claimed that they had encountered a variety of challenges during the repertoire selection process. Based on respondents’ statements, there are four factors that may make repertoire selection more challenging: limited time, inadequate budget, determining performance level, and knowledge of repertoire selection. Determining repertoire level has been discussed previously.

Limited time is a reality of public schooling and is determined as a result of a number of factors (e.g., students’ practicing time and teaching time). Some participants stated that the limited time they had for students’ learning and practicing influenced teachers’ choices. When students were assigned a more difficult piece, they might be discouraged, and so spent less time practicing it. If students practiced less, they would spend more time learning the piece, so teachers have to select only one piece in a

semester or choose less demanding music for them. This may make it difficult to select diverse repertoire (e.g., multicultural music and jazz music). Although some participants encouraged students to practice at home, few students did it. Lucy noted that some parents did not allow their children to practice at home because it sounded noisy and the music did not appeal to them.

Teachers' budget will have an impact on the amount and possible quality of repertoire they are able to purchase. Teachers in a public school setting often supplement assigned budgets by engaging in fundraising activities. Additional money helps to alleviate the need to borrow from other teachers or resource libraries. Even though they located music in different ways, inadequate budgets limited their choices.

A lack of effective guidance also makes repertoire selection more difficult. None of the participants received useful guidance pertaining to repertoire selection during their undergraduate study, and they stated that they chose pieces based on their experiences. This makes it more challenging for beginning teachers and pre-service teachers to select repertoire. As Sheldon (1996) suggests that selecting repertoire effectively for students should be incorporated "in the undergraduate music education curriculum" (p. 6). However, some of the participants stated that there were discussions or assignments related to repertoire selection in their academic qualification (AQ) courses, they might go to participate in reading sessions in music stores, and they preferred to share music with other colleagues. They stressed that they generally chose music based on their experiences.

Strategies of Repertoire Selection

All of the participants provided their strategies with respect to repertoire selection, and they used a wide variety of resources when selecting repertoire, including music stores, music websites, and sharing with other colleagues. Some participants also used method books, referred to the Ontario Arts Curriculum, and engaged sight-reading to support their selections.

Locating repertoire. Each participant has been teaching for a long time, through a lot of resources to collect repertoire, so some participants claimed that they had built their own library, and they selected the repertoire based on what they already had. Music stores are typical places for music teachers to select repertoire in the past. Some participants stated that they could not only read the full scores in music stores, but also had opportunities to participate in some reading sessions and share experiences with other colleagues face-to-face. However, Randall (2009) raises an issue:

Several of the teachers interviewed for this story said that they had received their sheet music dealers, but that this only happened after they'd been dealing with each other for a long time. 'A lot of times, you don't know who these people are on the other end of the phone and how their tastes match up to yours, so you just have to trust your own knowledge.' (p. 35)

If teachers only relied on the recommendations from the sale associates in music stores, they may not make good choices because sometimes dealers just want to promote their sales. Therefore, locating repertoire online is becoming increasingly more popular.

Belle and Mary admitted that they often went to stores and libraries to locate the repertoire ten years ago, but now they spend a large amount of time searching music

online. It is supported by all of the participants who always searching music online nowadays. First, there are more materials for music teachers to select and acquire online. Bert, for example, stated that he obtained the missing part of a piece online. In addition, an increasing number of online publishers and companies provide some sample sheet music and audio for teachers to read and listen, which is highly recommended by Steve and Madison. Not only can teachers preview and listen to the music, students also have opportunities to listen to the audio and choose their preferred music. Some participants suggest that J.W. Pepper is a good website, which is also recommended by Kimberly Le, who states that this site “provides sound clips and pictures of the score for most pieces, which are very helpful; it makes me feel more confident in my purchase” (as cited in Randall, 2009, p. 35). Compared to books, teachers can listen to recording categorized by difficulty (Randall, 2009), some participants stated that it was risky to purchase some music without listening. Therefore, previewing the music online is useful for music teachers to evaluate the music based on their knowledge, which also encourages teachers to locate music online.

However, whether searching for music in music stores or online, it may be necessary for educators to personally buy needed repertoire due to an inadequate budget. As a result, the participants collectively agreed that sharing music between teachers was an effective way for teachers to obtain and get information about the repertoire. Similarly, Randall (2009) cites Matt Frost’s statement to agree that talking to others is very important for repertoire selection. All of the participants have experiences to consult, share music, and be supported by other colleagues and music professors. Through communicating and sharing, they can better understand what the repertoire is

and what it sounds like. For instance, Mary and Qin stated that they went to music stores because there were reading sessions for music teachers to communicate opinions together. Also, compared with the retail stores and online stores, sharing music and experiences with other teachers is economical since teachers do not need to pay much money for the music. Therefore, building a social network with other music teachers is an effective way to obtain repertoire.

Adopting method books. Method books have functioned as primary instructional material of beginning bands since instrumental music classes started (Brittin & Sheldon, 2004; Byo, 1988). Some participants often apply method books to very beginning students because the majority of method books contain basic information, such as five-notes fingering. In addition, Mary highlights that progression in method books is very easy. “Method books underline a sequence of smaller steps. Exercises highlight particular concepts, rhythms, and are ordered such that students will master those (to some degree) before moving on to more complex material” (Brittin & Sheldon, 2004, p. 53). Madison pointed out that a method book she used, highlighting the particular concepts in each piece, was easier for students to review concepts. Through this progressive learning, students are not bored, and they also can better master basic technical skills and musical concepts. Therefore, selecting method books as instructional material is appropriate for beginning instrumental students.

Howard (1996) suggests teachers to “try to select a method book that has standard and literature. Look for solos and lesson books that have good folk song materials and songs with words” (p. 28). According to Brittin and Sheldon (2004), folk song is the most featured category in recent method books, such as Yamaha, Accent on Achievement,

Essential Elements, and Standard of Excellence. These method books also contain different types of melodies from a variety of countries and regions. According to Brittin and Sheldon (2004), all of method books contain more than 20 melodies from other countries or regions. Furthermore, students are more likely to approach music from different composers, especially composers from classical era. “It should be noted that even Mozart and Beethoven appeared no more than three or four times in the current methods, each thus representing approximately 2% of the book” (Brittin & Sheldon, 2004, p. 52). Consequently, selecting method books are beneficial for beginning instrumental students.

The Ontario Arts Curriculum. Although some participants referred to the provincial arts curriculum, all of them stated that their band selections were not influenced by the curriculum. They indicated that the curriculum is a general document, and it does not focus on band repertoire selection. All participants believed that the repertoire they selected would address the stated requirements in the curriculum. Identifying a connection between repertoire and curriculum, Brame claims that “the selected repertoire does not need to fit anything specific in the curriculum, but teachers can teach technical aspects of the music, folk songs, and other valuable things through repertoire. Sometimes curriculum dictates repertoire, and sometimes vice versa” (as cited in Randall, 2009, p. 37).

Engaging in sight-reading. Half of participants engaged in sight-reading in order to make decisions related to repertoire selection. Lucy and Qin adopted sight-reading to evaluate whether the music appealed to their students; Bert used it to determine students’ ability, and he suggested that if students could sight-read one piece very well, the

students might be assigned a more difficult piece. Similarly, Madison guided students to sight-read pieces and in turn make their suggestions. Randall (2009) claims that music teachers can obtain responses from students “on which one works best for the band when students go through in sight-reading sessions” (p. 37). According to participants’ stated experiences, engaging in sight-reading could prove to be helpful when determining which pieces to accept or reject.

Limitations of the Study

Due to the method adopted in this study, the small number of participants, the specific criteria for participation, and participation of participants from only a single public school board, the opinions expressed cannot be generalized to represent the perspectives, rationale, and strategies of all middle instrumental music teachers in Southern Ontario who are responsible for choosing repertoire for their music students. There is some degree of error as a result of the recruitment process: the fact is that not every participant had at least ten years teaching experience, and one participant was not teaching instrumental music at the time of the interview. This may have impacted their perspectives and consequently their responses.

Implications: for Music Teachers and Future Research

Despite the informed responses from the participants, it is evident that there are more questions to ask educators relating to their rationale and procedure for repertoire selection. Students’ ability and interest, as well as the level and quality of repertoire, are major concerns when teachers select repertoire. First, some participants stated that they would rewrite difficult parts of a piece in order to match students’ abilities. This may

raise issues pertaining to Copyright. Making even small changes to the original score (e.g., octave transportation, key changes, instrumentation) may result in copyright infringement. Substantial changes may be contrary to what the composer originally intended, and may violate copyright law. Therefore, when music teachers intend to change some elements in a piece, they should consider copyright issues and when appropriate gain permission from the publisher. If they rewrite pieces for students to practice, it might be acceptable. However, if the reconstructed pieces will be used in a public performance setting, teachers should receive the permission from the publishers.

Second, students' interest is an important aspect to consider during the repertoire selection process. In order to appeal to students and increase their interest in music classes, some teachers prefer to select music that students like. Under this circumstance, music teachers should consider two questions: Is the focus on responding to students' non-musical rationale for selecting pieces or is the focus on establishing in advance educational criteria that must be met when choosing repertoire?

In addition, students' interest also impacts teachers' choices in music categories. As discussed previously, some participants select some pop music more than classical pieces for students because students often prefer pop music. However, this raises two problems: what skills will students improve when teachers select pop music? In other words, excluding entertainment value, what else will students achieve through learning a specific pop piece? These questions require teachers to consider whether a pop song that they selected has educational value. This study also explored participants' perspectives of different music categories. As discussed before, Selene, Qin, and Madison, three music teachers who have taught elementary music for more than 15 years, seldom selected pop

music. Very little research had investigated whether teaching experiences would influence teachers' choices with respect to music categories or genres. Based on the researcher's observations during the interviews, younger participants prefer to choose pop music more, while the elder participants do not like selecting pop music. However, this is not evident because the researcher did not ask questions relating to their ages. Therefore, future research could determine which elements (e.g., teacher's age, number of years teaching, educational level, or gender) might influence their choices with respect to music categories. In other words, does teachers' age or teaching experience influence the selection of music categories?

On the other hand, teachers select less classical music because their students do not like it, and some arrangements are too difficult for beginning students. Music teachers and researchers should consider the following question: How can teachers increase students' interests in classical music (i.e., non-educational music) through their teaching? And, for music composers, is it possible to adapt some classical pieces for beginning instrumental students? It may prove valuable for future research to study which pedagogical practices are most effective in encouraging a positive attitude toward 'classical' music.

All of the participants identified the significance of multicultural repertoire selection, and also demonstrated the process of selecting multicultural music. However, this study did not focus on this aspect. Therefore, future research may need more specific investigation related to the selection of multicultural music for middle school students. Meanwhile, these participants claimed some challenges with respect to multicultural repertoire selection, which included a lack of knowledge and limited instrumental

materials. A detailed investigation of multicultural repertoire selection was not addressed in this study. Therefore, it is suggested that professors of music provide instruction to pre-service educators in order for them to better understand and appreciate multicultural music. It may prove valuable for researchers to investigate further more aspects relating multicultural band repertoire (e.g. authenticity, given instrumentation, rationale for choice).

In terms of strategies for repertoire selection, participants stated that they did not refer to the Ontario Arts curriculum. As discussed above, part of reasons why teachers may not refer to the provincial curriculum may be the fact that this document is not prescriptive but rather it presents broad guidelines for teachers to follow when teaching specific subject areas.

Conclusion

There are a number of factors that teachers should consider with regard to repertoire selection. The first thing a teacher should do is to establish specific learning goals, which can be a complicated and subjective process. Once this has been determined, it is imperative that music teachers consider the abilities of their students and select repertoire at an appropriate level. It is critical that teachers consider their students' musical interests in order to assure greater engagement in the learning process.

Music teachers also need to select 'quality' music to advance students' skills after establishing their students' abilities and interests. Therefore, all of the above factors need to be considered collectively when selecting repertoire. In addition to considering if the proposed repertoire will appeal to their students, teachers also need to consider the difficulty level and the quality of this piece. Similarly, when teachers determine a high-

quality repertoire for beginning students, they still need to consider whether it is interesting for students and whether the difficulty of this piece is appropriate for students' ability. In addition, music teachers' own cultural context might instill a bias when selecting repertoire, which unintentionally results in choosing repertoire that lacks musical variety. Given that students in Canada typically come from a multicultural background, it is also important to consider cultural diversity. Therefore, based on the findings from the current study, when selecting repertoire, teachers should consider learning goals, students' abilities, students' interests, music categories, cultures, level and quality of repertoire.

In order to achieve this goal, music teachers must spend a large amount of time searching and listening to repertoire for their beginning instrumental students. Colwell and Hewitt (2016) emphasize, "Selecting good music is a task that require considerable time and expertise" (p. 353). Brunner (1992) encourages teachers to invest adequate time and effort to search the literature, and states, "The selection of repertoire is an ongoing process determined by the specific needs of each new school year" (p. 29). Consequently, repertoire selection is an ongoing balancing process.

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APPENDIX A

Introductory Letter to music educators

Title of Study: An investigation of middle school music teachers' rationale and procedure relating to instrumental (band) repertoire selection in Southern Ontario: A case study.

Dear _____:

We received your name from a colleague (Dr. Berthelotte or Mr. Seguin) who thought that you might be interested in this study.

You are invited to participate in a research study (Thesis) conducted by Yang Chen, a graduate student from the Faculty of Education at the University of Windsor.

If you are interested in participating in this research, please contact

- 1 Yang Chen at chen1es@uwindsor.ca, *or*
- 2 Dr. Jonathan G. Bayley (Advisor) at jbayley@uwindsor.ca or (519) 253-3000 ext. (3814).

APPENDIX B



[Interview]

LETTER OF INFORMATION FOR CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH

Title of Study: An investigation of middle school music teachers' rationale and procedure relating to instrumental (band) repertoire selection in Southern Ontario: A case study.

We received your name from a colleague (Dr. Berthelotte or Mr. Seguin) who thought that you might be interested in this study. You are invited to participate in a research study conducted by Yang Chen, a graduate student, from the Faculty of Education at the University of Windsor. Results from this study will be included in Yang Chen's thesis.

If you have any questions or concerns about this research, please contact Yang Chen at chen1es@uwindsor.ca, or her advisor Dr. Jonathan G. Bayley at jbayley@uwindsor.ca or (519) 253-3000 (ext. 3814).

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of the study is to investigate in-service music teachers' rationale and procedure for selecting repertoire. More specifically, this investigation identifies the nature of the educational and musical decisions that teachers make relating to choosing appropriate repertoire.

PROCEDURES

Research data will be collected through face-to-face interviews. It is expected that the interview will vary in length from 60 minutes to 90 minutes.

If you volunteer to participate in this study, a letter of information, a consent form, and an audio taping consent form will be sent to you to review. After one week, the researcher

will contact you again to arrange an interview location and time that is suitable to you. You also will receive a copy of the interview questions prior to the formal interview.

Prior to beginning the interview, the researcher will review the content of the consent form with you and ask if you have any questions. If you do not have any questions, the researcher will ask you to sign the consent form and the audio taping form, and then all consent forms will be collected by the researcher.

After the researcher transcribes your interview, the transcript will be sent to you by e-mail. You will have an opportunity to revise (three weeks) your own transcript. Any changes made by you will be accepted by the researcher, since the researcher wants to ensure that your perspectives are accurately represented. If you cannot return your revised transcript before the required date (three weeks), the researcher will not accept your revised transcript and the original transcript will be used in this study.

After the researcher has carefully reviewed the transcript you revised, it may be necessary to ask you follow-up questions relating to specific details or to clarify statements.

If, after a review of the transcripts, follow-up questions are deemed necessary, the researcher will review the content of the consent form again prior to recording any communication. The follow-up interviews will also be audio-taped. You will have the opportunity to review (and change if necessary) the transcripts (member checking) as a result of any follow-up interviews, if you so choose.

POTENTIAL RISKS AND DISCOMFORTS

You may skip any questions or end the interview at any time.

POTENTIAL BENEFITS TO PARTICIPANTS AND/OR TO SOCIETY

You will have the opportunity to rethink the issues relating to repertoire selection. This process has the potential to encourage the practice of self-reflection and, in turn, impact your pedagogy and practice.

Findings from this research could benefit pre-service and in-service teachers as they undertake this very important task. An in-depth understanding of practitioners' repertoire selection practices will supplement the expert opinion literature. In addition, Harris and Walls (1996) note that many college [university] teachers are unfamiliar with music for young bands, and inadequate appropriate repertoire for young bands relates to the research problem. Given this information, music educators and professors teaching in Faculty of Education and Faculty of Music, could be made more aware of the challenges encountered by in-service music teachers, and in-turn provide more meaningful instruction relating to repertoire selection.

COMPENSATION FOR PARTICIPATION

You will receive a Chinese bookmark and a Tim Horton's coffee card worth of \$25. This will in no way compensate you for your time but is meant to be a small token of the researcher's appreciation. Also, if you decide to withdraw from this study, you may keep the compensation (small gift).

CONFIDENTIALITY

With respect to confidentiality, Dr. Berthelotte or Mr. Seguin will not be informed as to who participated in this study (who were chosen). Also, the researcher will assure you that your personal information (e.g., name, address, e-mail, telephone number, school name and district) will not be made public and will only be shared with the researcher's thesis advisor. In order to assure confidentiality, you will be assigned a pseudonym or given the opportunity to choose your own pseudonym.

Audio recordings will be transferred to the researcher's password protected computer and transcribed in the researcher's office. With respect to data storage, privacy and confidentiality will be protected by securely storing collected information in a locked filing cabinet. Two years after finalizing data collection the digital audio files will be deleted; and the transcribed interviews will be de-identified and kept by the researcher.

PARTICIPATION AND WITHDRAWAL

In this research, you choose to take part in the interviewing process voluntarily. You will be informed that you may not request your data be withdrawn after returning the transcript to the researcher (member checking). If you withdraw before returning the transcript to the researcher, the information and the data you provided will be immediately deleted.

FEEDBACK OF THE RESULTS OF THIS STUDY TO THE PARTICIPANTS

The findings of this study will be made available to you by posting an executive summary of the study on the University of Windsor REB website (<http://www.uwindsor.ca/reb>).

Date when results are available: June 30, 2018.

SUBSEQUENT USE OF DATA

These data may be used in subsequent studies, in publications, and in presentations.

RIGHTS OF RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS

If you have questions regarding your rights as a research participant, contact: Research Ethics Coordinator, University of Windsor, Windsor, Ontario, N9B 3P4; Telephone: 519-253-3000, ext. 3948; e-mail: ethics@uwindsor.ca

APPENDIX C



[Interview]

CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH

Title of Study: An investigation of middle school music teachers' rationale and procedure relating to instrumental (band) repertoire selection in Southern Ontario: A case study.

We received your name from a colleague (Dr. Berthelotte or Mr. Seguin) who thought that you might be interested in this study. You are invited to participate in a research study conducted by Yang Chen, a graduate student, from the Faculty of Education at the University of Windsor. Results from this study will be included in Yang Chen's thesis.

If you have any questions or concerns about this research, please contact Yang Chen at chen1es@uwindsor.ca, or her advisor Dr. Jonathan G. Bayley at jbayley@uwindsor.ca or (519) 253-3000 (ext. 3814).

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of the study is to investigate in-service music teachers' rationale and procedure for selecting repertoire.

PROCEDURES

Research data will be collected through face-to-face interviews. It is expected that the interview will vary in length from 60 minutes to 90 minutes.

If you volunteer to participate in this study, a letter of information, a consent form, and an audio taping consent form will be sent to you to review. After one week, the researcher will contact you again to arrange an interview location and time that is suitable to you. You also will receive a copy of the interview questions prior to the formal interview.

Prior to beginning the interview, the researcher will review the content of the consent form with you and ask if you have any questions. If you do not have any questions, the researcher will ask you to sign the consent form and the audio taping form, and then all consent forms will be collected by the researcher.

After the researcher transcribes your interview, the transcript will be sent to you by e-mail. You will have an opportunity to revise (three weeks) your own transcript. Any

changes made by you will be accepted by the researcher, since the researcher wants to ensure that your perspectives are accurately represented. If you cannot return your revised transcript before the required date (three weeks), the researcher will not accept your revised transcript and the original transcript will be used in this study.

After the researcher has carefully reviewed the transcript you revised, it may be necessary to ask you follow-up questions relating to specific details or to clarify statements.

If, after a review of the transcripts, follow-up questions are deemed necessary, the researcher will review the content of the consent form again prior to recording any communication. The follow-up interviews will also be audio-taped. You will have the opportunity to review (and change if necessary) the transcripts (member checking) as a result of any follow-up interviews, if you so choose.

POTENTIAL RISKS AND DISCOMFORTS

You may skip any questions or end the interview at any time.

POTENTIAL BENEFITS TO PARTICIPANTS AND/OR TO SOCIETY

You will have the opportunity to rethink the issues relating to repertoire selection. This process has the potential to encourage the practice of self-reflection and, in turn, impact your pedagogy and practice.

Findings from this research could benefit pre-service and in-service teachers as they undertake this very important task. An in-depth understanding of practitioners' repertoire selection practices will supplement the expert opinion literature. In addition, Harris and Walls (1996) note that many college [university] teachers are unfamiliar with music for young bands, and inadequate appropriate repertoire for young bands relates to the research problem. Given this information, music educators and professors teaching in Faculty of Education and Faculty of Music, could be made more aware of the challenges encountered by in-service music teachers, and in-turn provide more meaningful instruction relating to repertoire selection.

COMPENSATION FOR PARTICIPATION

You will receive a Chinese bookmark and a Tim Horton's coffee card worth of \$25. This will in no way compensate you for your time but is meant to be a small token of the researcher's appreciation. Also, if you decide to withdraw from this study, you may keep the compensation (small gift).

CONFIDENTIALITY

With respect to confidentiality, Dr. Berthelotte or Mr. Seguin will not be informed as to who participated in this study (who were chosen). Also, the researcher will assure you that your personal information (e.g., name, address, e-mail, telephone number, school

name and district) will not be made public and will only be shared with the researcher's thesis advisor. In order to assure confidentiality, you will be assigned a pseudonym or given the opportunity to choose your own pseudonym.

Audio recordings will be transferred to the researcher's password protected computer and transcribed in the researcher's office. With respect to data storage, privacy and confidentiality will be protected by securely storing collected information in a locked filing cabinet. Two years after finalizing data collection the digital audio files will be deleted; and the transcribed interviews will be de-identified and kept by the researcher.

PARTICIPATION AND WITHDRAWAL

In this research, you choose to take part in the interviewing process voluntarily. You will be informed that you may not request your data be withdrawn after returning the transcript to the researcher (member checking). If you withdraw before returning the transcript to the researcher, the information and the data you provided will be immediately deleted.

FEEDBACK OF THE RESULTS OF THIS STUDY TO THE PARTICIPANTS

The findings of this study will be made available to you by posting an executive summary of the study on the University of Windsor REB website (<http://www.uwindsor.ca/reb>).

Date when results are available: June 30, 2018.

SUBSEQUENT USE OF DATA

These data may be used in subsequent studies, in publications, and in presentations.

RIGHTS OF RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS

If you have questions regarding your rights as a research participant, contact: Research Ethics Coordinator, University of Windsor, Windsor, Ontario, N9B 3P4; Telephone: 519-253-3000, ext. 3948; e-mail: ethics@uwindsor.ca

SIGNATURE OF RESEARCH PARTICIPANT/LEGAL REPRESENTATIVE

I understand the information provided for the study **An investigation of middle school music teachers' rationale and procedure relating to instrumental (band) repertoire selection in Southern Ontario: A case study** as described herein. My questions have been answered to my satisfaction, and I agree to participate in this study. I have been given a copy of this form.

Name of Participant

Signature of Participant

Date

SIGNATURE OF INVESTIGATOR

These are the terms under which I will conduct research.

Signature of Investigator

Date

APPENDIX D



[interview]

CONSENT FOR AUDIO TAPING FORM

Title of Study: An investigation of middle school music teachers' rationale and procedure relating to instrumental (band) repertoire selection in Southern Ontario: A case study.

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of the study is to investigate in-service music teachers' rationale and procedure for selecting repertoire.

I give permission to Yang Chen to digitally record interviews relating to her thesis research.

Name of Participant

Signature of Participant

Date

APPENDIX E



[Guided Interview Questions]

The purpose of this study is to investigate teachers' perspectives and procedure relating to repertoire selection.

Introduction:

Q: What comes to mind when you think of repertoire selection?

Repertoire quality:

1. Some noted music educators (Elliot Del Borgo, Robert Reynolds, etc.) make mention of high quality when choosing appropriate repertoire.

Q: Should music educators strive to select repertoire of high quality? If so, why?

Q: How would you define high quality when speaking of repertoire?

Q: What are the greatest challenges when choosing repertoire of high quality?

2. In Del Borgo's article, ["Selecting Quality Literature for Bands and Orchestras"] he identified three aspects of quality repertoire: variety, contrast, and musical interest.

Q: How might these three qualities variety, contrast, and musical interest be found in your selected repertoire?

3. A great deal of band repertoire is referred to as "educational music." In other words, the pieces are not arrangements of established repertoire, such as Mozart or Beethoven; they are written for a specific purpose and context to be performed by an instrumental ensemble in an educational setting.

Q: What do you believe might be the possible benefits and limitations to selecting this type of repertoire for young students?

Q: How would you describe the quality of this type of repertoire?

4. It is very common to have many band pieces written in concert Bb, especially for young bands.

Q: In terms of harmonic variety do you believe this is an educational issue/problem?

If so, what can be done?

Q: What percentage (%) of your repertoire do you think is not in the key of concert Bb?

Q: What are the most common keys performed by your ensemble?

'Multicultural' repertoire:

Q: How would you define multicultural music?

Q: What do you believe might be the possible benefits or limitations to selecting multicultural music?

Q: What skills will students develop? [Interviewer question schedule]

Q: What challenges might there be in selecting multicultural music?

Q: Can you think of some examples that would be considered multicultural music?

Q: Have you used or performed any multicultural pieces with your ensembles?

Q: How can a teacher evaluate the authenticity of multicultural repertoire?

Q: What criteria have you applied when selecting repertoire for your classes?

Q: To what degree is it important that Canadian music educators select Canadian music for their ensembles? What challenges might there be in selecting Canadian music?

Challenges:

- Q:** What has been your greatest challenge (excluding quality) when choosing repertoire for young bands?
- Q:** What additional challenges?
- Q:** Was repertoire selection addressed/spoken of during your undergraduate B.Ed. degree or in any online courses (e.g., Additional Qualifications) you might have taken?
- Q:** Have you read any professional or academic articles relating to repertoire selection? If so, which ones and how did they inform your repertoire selection process or outcome?

Students' interests or preferences

- Q:** Are your students involved in the repertoire selection process? In other words, do they have any influence as to what pieces are chosen?
- If yes, in what ways do you encourage students' participation? (e.g., Do you give them the opportunity to select the repertoire they want to play?)
- If no, why?

Strategies:

- Q:** How do you go about selecting/choosing repertoire for your ensembles?
- Q:** Where do you go to locate repertoire?
- Q:** Are you familiar with any of the following organizations or publishers: Saskatchewan Band Association (SBA), Alberta Band Association (ABA), Ontario Band Association, MusicFestival Canada, and ApRo Music (Brian Appleby & Scott Rogal)? Please explain.

Q: Are there specific publishers that you use more frequently than others when choosing repertoire?

Q: Do you use a method book as part of your repertoire? **Q:** If so, which one?

Q: When you engage in repertoire selection do you refer to the Ontario Arts Curriculum? **Q:** If yes, what aspects of the provincial curriculum inform your selection of repertoire? If no, why?

Q: Is sight-reading an aspect of the repertoire selection process?

Q: When selecting repertoire, have you chosen any female composers' work for your band?

Jazz and Pop music:

Q: Does Jazz music have a place in band repertoire? Yes/No. [Why?]

Q: If yes, what criteria do you use when selecting Jazz music?

Q: Does pop/commercial music have a place in band repertoire? Yes/No? [Why?]

Q: If yes, what criteria do you use when selecting pop(ular) music?

Q: Do any of your repertoire band selections fall under the category of Jazz? Yes/No? If so, which ones?

Q: What do you identify as pop[ular] music?

Last few questions:

Q: Is there anything else you would like to say about repertoire selection?

Q: Do you have a program from a recent performance that I might have?

Q: May I contact you again if, after reviewing the transcripts, I have any follow-up questions?

VITA AUCTORIS

Yang Chen was born in 1989 in Changzhou, Jiangsu Province, China. She graduated from Changzhou No. 5 High School in 2007. From there she went on to Nanjing Normal University where she obtained a B.A. in Music in 2011 and a M.Mus in Piano Performance in 2014. From 2014 to 2016, she taught piano in Shuyang International High School and Nantong Lanling Technology College. She is presently a member of All Saints' Anglican Church and a part-time pianist at Woodslee United Church in Windsor, Ontario, Canada.