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Leiden  
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## **Collaborative learning in conservatoire education: catalyst for innovation**

Roemjantsew, T.

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# 1

## GENERAL INTRODUCTION

With roots in the Middle Ages, the master-apprentice model in conservatoires has a long history and aspects of it remain strongly anchored in music institutions. The rise of conservatoires started in the nineteenth century and peaked in the twentieth century. In the early twentieth century, societal demand for orchestra members led to an increase in student numbers: large cohorts of students were educated; classes were scheduled using timetables; and separate teaching rooms were used for music theory and music practice lessons, resulting in a retrogression to the earlier master-apprentice model as applied by masters such as virtuoso pianist and composer, Franz Liszt (1811-1886).

Liszt was the originator of group piano teaching, and he was aware of the benefits for his many students (Gervers, 1970). The advantages were various: observing other students' playing, familiarizing oneself with new music, learning from others' lessons, and acquiring performance experience (Pfeiffer, 2008). Liszt loved to talk about images, literature, poetry, and music, and he actively involved his students in music analysis and music history, and explorations of repertoire, techniques, and interpretations of music.

In this introductory chapter, the context and research aims of the study, motivations for innovation in conservatoire education, and the outline of the dissertation are described.

## 1.1 CONTEXT OF THE STUDY

Working both collaboratively and creatively, often in an extensive variety of artistic, social, and cultural contexts is what musicians do nowadays. Conservatoires<sup>1</sup> have developed from institutions that met the demand for theatre musicians, orchestra members, and church organists (Ellis, 2021), to institutions that educate students in performing a wide scope of musical genres, and in music technology, music production, and music education. The broad professional practice requires, besides craftsmanship, generic skills such as reflection, creativity, flexibility, innovation, communication, and collaboration. Job opportunities have changed immensely, both in amount and in duration of employment (see also Bennett, 2016).

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<sup>1</sup> In this dissertation, the term *conservatoire* refers to all institutions that offer higher music education training, including stand-alone institutions and departments within larger multidisciplinary institutions, such as Musikhochschulen, Music Academies, and Music Universities (AEC, 2010, p. 8).

Musicians mostly work as cultural entrepreneurs covering a variety of activities, including performing, teaching, recording, producing, and cooperating with other musicians and with other disciplines in multi-, inter-, or transdisciplinary projects. As part of their portfolio careers, they function in different collaborations, cultural contexts, and roles (e.g., Bartleet et al., 2019; Duffy, 2013; Hallam & Gaunt, 2012; Smilde, 2009). Considering that new graduates enter the market every year, their generic skills (including such skills as collaboration and teamwork, problem-solving, and self-reflection), artistry, and entrepreneurship need to be of very high quality.

A strong vision of conservatoire pedagogy is needed in order to educate musicians who can meet all the requirements of professional practice. The demands of professional practice and the implications of the Bologna process are two significant factors influencing conservatoire education. The Bologna declaration (Bologna Process Committee, 1999) and the implementation of Bachelor and Master of Music degree programs have had an effect on conservatoire education, leading to a re-evaluation of curricula in order to include a broader range of knowledge, skills, and attitudes, such as problem-solving, reflective, cooperative, and communicative competences. Level descriptors and sets of final qualifications and competences were established, and some of these are relevant or even mandatory for higher music education. The Dublin descriptors (European Commission, 2004) were merged into the *Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area* (Bologna Working Group, 2005) for the purposes of international recognition, diploma transparency, and mobility of students. The Dublin descriptors have since been reformulated into *Reference Points for the Design and Delivery of Degree Programmes in Music* by the AEC (Association of European Conservatoires) in 2009.

Learning outcomes were subsequently described by the AEC (2017), which can be found in Appendix A, and by Dutch conservatoires in the *Dutch National Training Profile for Music* (Vereniging Hogescholen, 2017).

## 1.2 A NEED FOR INNOVATION

As described above, the demands on the conservatoire sector are diverse, and the multitude of voices and discourses within the sector are complex and intertwined. The master-apprentice setting that was embraced by emerging conservatoires in the nineteenth century (Burwell et al., 2019) remains central in most institutions (see, e.g.,

Carey et al., 2013; Gaunt, 2008, 2013; Presland, 2005; Zhukov & Sætre, 2021). With the rise and growth of popular music departments within conservatoires, a more informal learning culture has been introduced that is based on peer interaction and peer learning (Green, 2001). The context of a band offers ample opportunity for informal learning in casual situations, rehearsals, and sessions (Green, 2001).

Despite the introduction of a different and informal learning culture with the integration of popular music in conservatoires, the master-apprenticeship model remains deep-rooted in most conservatoires. In this model, understanding and expertise are developed through demonstration, replication, and application, according to Westerlund (2006). As the expert, she further states, the teacher prescribes the path and content (repertoire) to be learned, assuming that the student will understand this method of transmission and is also motivated to engage in it. This implies that the teacher initiates, shows, and assesses the learning activities in the practice of “studio teaching” - one-to-one tuition in the context of instrumental or vocal study. Such passive student learning (Zhukov, 2007) does not lead to a culture where students solve real-life problems (Westerlund, 2006, p. 120).

For about twenty years, research into conservatoire education has questioned the effects of this teacher-student transmission model in preparation for the music profession (see, e.g., Burwell et al., 2019; Carey, 2010; Carey & Lebler, 2012; Gembris & Langner, 2005; Lebler, 2007; Gaunt, 2008, 2010, 2011). The teacher-student dyad can be a valuable, rich, and inspirational learning environment, when the combination is right, the chemistry works, and expectations are aligned (Duffy, 2013). According to Gaunt (2008), in interviews, students were found to be very positive about their teachers. However, acknowledging dissatisfaction and changing from one teacher to another appeared to be impossible and frightening (Gaunt, 2008). Further investigation of the transmission model has brought negative sides and effects to light (see, e.g., Burwell et al., 2019; Carey & Lebler, 2012; Gaunt, 2010, 2011; Jørgensen, 2000; Presland, 2005), including asymmetrical relations, issues of student dependency, and too large a focus on reproduction, technical mastery, and interpretation of music.

A major focus on performance was found to result in insufficient interaction with peers and other musicians, limited stimulation of creative practices and an entrepreneurial attitude, limited curricular cohesion and integration with other subjects, and limited variety in teaching approaches. In an extensive range of studies (2016a, 2016b, 2017, 2019,

2020), Burwell investigated studio lesson practices and behaviour, and besides acknowledging the value of the interpersonal relationship in vocal and instrumental training, she provided insights into so-called dissonances in studio-teaching, including misunderstandings, communication problems, clashes of opinions, and personal friction, which nearly always remained hidden both by students and teachers, and essentially hindered apprenticeship (Burwell, 2016b).

A way forward was described by Lebler (2007). In his study, he explained the benefits of collaborative learning for popular music undergraduates who worked collaboratively in an informal setting in which the guidance of the teacher was reduced. He stated that “teaching practices that have dominated in the past will need to be rethought, and alternatives pondered that are likely to produce graduates with the abilities and attributes necessary to adapt readily to a rapidly changing environment” (2007, p. 206). In 2013, the book *Collaborative learning in higher music education* (Gaunt & Westerlund, 2013) was published, including both academic and practice-based papers, bringing new perspectives and insights into collaborative learning approaches and forms of collaboration in conservatoires worldwide. Gaunt (2013) and Gaunt & Westerlund (2013b) argued that it is vital to further investigate the implementation of collaborative learning in the conservatoire curriculum.

Duffy (2013) described how, in a process of curriculum innovation, teachers were eventually able to recognize collaborative aspects and values of musical practices and transfer them to the educational context. However, the project began with resistance to the implementation of collaborative learning, with teachers fearing the lowering of artistic standards, losing control over their students’ learning paths, and missing focus on the specialist discipline. According to Forbes (2016b), collaborative learning can be regarded as a significant alternative or an addition to current pedagogical approaches within the higher education music sector. Various challenges (participatory culture, portfolio careers, the rise of technology, and budget cuts) have in fact increased interest in collaborative learning in higher music education institutions. However, she concluded, not much research has been performed in this direction.

Since the amount of research on collaborative learning approaches in conservatoires is rather limited and more knowledge of practices including those approaches is necessary, the aim of this study was (1) to assist in illuminating existing collaborative learning approaches in conservatoire education and (2) to increase

understanding of the factors involved in the implementation of these approaches. The aspects of the innovation in conservatoire education considered in this dissertation are the curriculum implemented, the pedagogy used, the experiences of students, and the perceptions of teachers and leaders.

### 1.3 THE CONSERVATOIRE CURRICULUM

Historically, conservatoire curricula are centred around the principal study or the “main subject”: weekly instrumental, vocal, or compositional lessons in a one-to-one context. “Side subjects” generally cover music-historical and music-theoretical courses, orchestral, choral, and ensemble activities, sometimes a second instrument (piano for instrumentalists/vocalists), and pedagogical subjects related to instrumental/vocal teaching of the student’s main subject. Minor differences between conservatoires are evident, and have increased over the years for the purposes of profiling and attracting students.

The Bologna process has provided input for a broader curriculum, and a growing number of conservatoires include subjects related to entrepreneurship, problem-solving skills, and the critical thinking and writing abilities of learners. As far back as 1986, Renshaw reported the need to create and connect to new audiences, and thus, to educate students to be active agents in their studies: together with other skills, they should have “a professional attitude to all tasks - e.g., ability to work in a team, ability to assume personal and collective responsibility, personal organisation, reliability” (p. 81). Carey and Lebler (2012) were highly critical of the current conservatoire curriculum in preparing students for their futures. They stated that, in order to prepare students better for their prospective careers, elements such as critical skills, awareness of study strategies, movement and improvisation, functioning in groups, self-assessment, and reflection ought to be included in a new curriculum. The stance taken by a large number of researchers is that musicians need to be educated more broadly in creative skills (e.g., Burnard, 2018; Delègue & Wiggins, 2006; Creech et al., 2008; Varvarigou, 2017a, 2017b), metacognitive skills (e.g., Bennet, 2016; Hallam, 2001; Hatton & Smith, 1995; Carey et al., 2018), societal and cultural awareness (e.g., Berger, 2019; Minors et al., 2017), and social, interpersonal, and collaborative skills (e.g., Carey & Lebler, 2012; Gaunt, 2013; Gaunt & Westerlund, 2013a).

## 1.4 CONSERVATOIRE PEDAGOGY

According to Carey (2010), the quality of teaching in conservatoires is generally measured by the performances of students in recitals and exams. Since there is a long-standing tradition of measuring students' outcomes in such events and relating these to the quality of teaching, the teacher-centred approach remains central in the institution (Webster, 1993). Carey (2010) further stated that high expectations of student performances may induce teaching for short-term effects, leading to students depending on their teachers to bring out the best in them. However, Carey stated, such "quick fixes" do not encourage autonomy in the learning of students (p. 34). In the interest of students, pedagogy needs to be adapted. Since many conservatoires have benefitted from their reputation of excellence, Carey (2010) doubted whether such adaptation would actually occur in the light of established perceptions of success.

Research into the transformation from teacher-centred to more student-centred approaches in higher education is available to and valuable for conservatoires (see, e.g., Biggs, 2001, 2003, 2012; Prosser & Trigwell, 1999; Trigwell & Prosser, 1996; Trigwell et al., 1999). Simones (2017) questioned why instrumental and vocal pedagogies have remained tied to the eighteenth- and nineteenth-century pedagogies with their relatively vague, personal, and subjective teaching strategies, rather than relying on insights from more recent cognitive and educational psychology, as happens in other higher education disciplines. She brought up yet another perspective as a possible reason: students who had had one-to-one tuition prior to entering the conservatoire, preferred to continue with this type of pedagogy (see also Carey, 2010). With the rise of tuition fees, students are inclined to behave like customers who feel entitled to the education they themselves regard as best. Simones (2017) concluded that the present diversity of musical styles in higher music education allows for different pedagogical approaches, and peer learning represents a relevant approach for conservatoire students. This was confirmed by Hanken (2016), who stated that the influence students have on one another's learning processes is not given enough consideration; moreover, less teacher intervention may encourage more peer interaction.

In her research on teachers' and students' perceptions of one-to-one tuition, Gaunt (2008) addressed the perceived lack of variation in lesson structure applied by nearly all instrumental and vocal teachers: small talk to start with, followed by the student performing the prepared repertoire, followed by detailed comments of the teacher on



musical or technical aspects. According to Gaunt (2008), such a routine restrains the development of creativity and autonomy in students. Furthermore, she stated that replication of such teaching routines is difficult to avoid when teacher training, professional development, and connections between research and teaching are lacking in the institution. The perspective taken in this dissertation centres on the task of conservatoires to renew and advance the ways young people are educated, giving them a positive, encouraging, and collaborative learning environment in order to develop their artistic identities and shape their views of the wide range of possibilities of musical practice.

### 1.5 COLLABORATIVE LEARNING

Framed within an interpretivist-constructivist paradigm (Mackenzie & Knipe, 2006) and relying on socio-cultural and social constructivist theories of learning, this study explores the change and renewal of conservatoire education through the lens of collaborative learning. According to Dillenbourg (1999), collaborative learning is “a situation in which two or more people learn or attempt to learn something together” (p. 1). Smith and MacGregor interpreted collaborative learning as an umbrella term for a variety of educational approaches involving joint intellectual effort by students, or students and teachers together (Smith & MacGregor, 1992). Udvari-Solner (2012) proposed a narrower definition: “Collaborative learning is a process by which students interact in dyads or small groups of no more than six members with intent to solicit and respect the abilities and contributions of individual members. Typically, authority and responsibility are shared for group actions and outcomes. Interdependence among group members is promoted and engineered. Collaborative learning changes the dynamics of the classroom by requiring discussion among learners. Students are encouraged to question the curriculum and attempt to create personal meaning before the teacher interprets what is important to learn. Opportunities to organise, clarify, elaborate, or practice information are engineered, and listening, disagreeing, and expressing ideas are as important as the ‘right answers’” (Udvari-Solner, 2012, p. 631).

To refrain from simply regarding collaborative learning as group tuition, Gaunt and Westerlund (2013b) argued that collaborative learning may relate to a diversity of contexts such as one-to-one contexts, interdisciplinary collaborations, peer-teaching, distributed networks, partnerships, mentoring, and leadership. They further stated that, instead of understanding learning as only taking place in individuals, the field of

collaborative learning aims to include shared goals and joint problem-solving, to gain understanding of the complexities involved in interactions and their impact on learning, and to foster inspiration through the improvisatory and creative aspects of collaborative learning that could interrupt the routines of canonized professional interactions (Gaunt & Westerlund, 2013b, p. 4).

Collaborative learning approaches may also improve student engagement, and reinforce bonds among students from a variety of backgrounds (OECD, 2010; see also Slavin, 1986; Johnson & Johnson, 2006). Furthermore, and relevant to this dissertation, the social aspects of socio-cultural and socio-constructivist theories help in understanding contexts and situated environments in which learning takes place through participation and interdependence between learners, as in communities of practice (Lave & Wenger, 1991; Wenger, 1998). Constructivist concepts allow levelled teacher-guidance and student-centred learning, and more active roles of and more interaction between students, and make possible consideration of the inter- and intra-psychological processes of learners and the scaffolding of learning (Vygotsky, 1978). Following this, fostering more autonomy and self-direction in the learning of students allows them to take responsibility for their own learning processes, leading to higher intrinsic motivation and increased agency over their career paths.

## 1.6 DEVELOPMENT OF MUSICAL AND PROFESSIONAL COMPETENCIES

Investigating the transition from music student to professional, Creech et al. (2008) concluded that students encounter difficulties entering professional practice and conservatoires owe a large responsibility to their students to prepare them for the music profession. Creech et al. (2008) recommended several factors to include in the curriculum: (1) providing opportunities for multi-genre communities of practice; (2) fostering of self-confidence; (3) including development of interpersonal skills; and (4) stimulating perseverance, musical responsibility, and autonomy amongst students (Creech et al., 2008, p. 329).

The *AEC Learning Outcomes* (2017) for undergraduate music students include such aspects, and are included here to show what is expected of undergraduate music students upon completion of their course of studies. The *AEC Learning Outcomes* (2017) are divided into (A) practical (skills-based) outcomes; (B) theoretical (knowledge-based) outcomes; and (C) generic outcomes (see Appendix A). The generic outcomes show the incorporated

aspects of interpersonal, intrapersonal, and metacognitive skills, which point to the development of a professional identity and artistic personality with collaborative, reflective, creative, communicative, problem-solving, analytical, and processing skills, a flexible attitude, and the ability to apply previously learned skills in new contexts.

## **1.7 RESEARCH AIMS**

The dissertation is focused on practices within and perceptions of conservatoire education in relation to the development of professional competences, and the role of collaborative learning approaches in this context. The development of musical and professional competences has been formulated in various sets of descriptors and outcomes (see AEC, 2017), aiming to provide students with a wide range of skills, including collaborative skills for a broad and demanding practice. However, better preparation and stronger connections to the versatile practice are necessary, and implementation of the presented set of AEC generic outcomes (2017) may be regarded as a work in progress.

The first research aim of this dissertation was to investigate existing experiences with and perceptions of collaborative learning in conservatoire education, and how these are related to the preparation of future musicians. To serve the first research aim, various aspects of conservatoire education were investigated, such as: (1) existing empirical research into current collaborative learning approaches in conservatoire education; (2) the experiences of teachers and students with collaborative learning; (3) the experiences and perceptions of teachers who engaged in professional development and aimed to improve their teaching practice; (4) the observations and perceptions of conservatoire leadership on curriculum reform. Aspiring to a broader and improved preparation of students for present and future musical practices, including the development of social and metacognitive skills through collaborative learning, the second aim of this dissertation was to assist in the implementation of collaborative learning approaches, and more generally to be of practical value for conservatoire teachers, leaders, advisers, and policy makers.

**TABLE 1.1***GENERIC OUTCOMES BACHELOR OF MUSIC FROM AEC LEARNING OUTCOMES (2017, P. 10, 11, 12).*

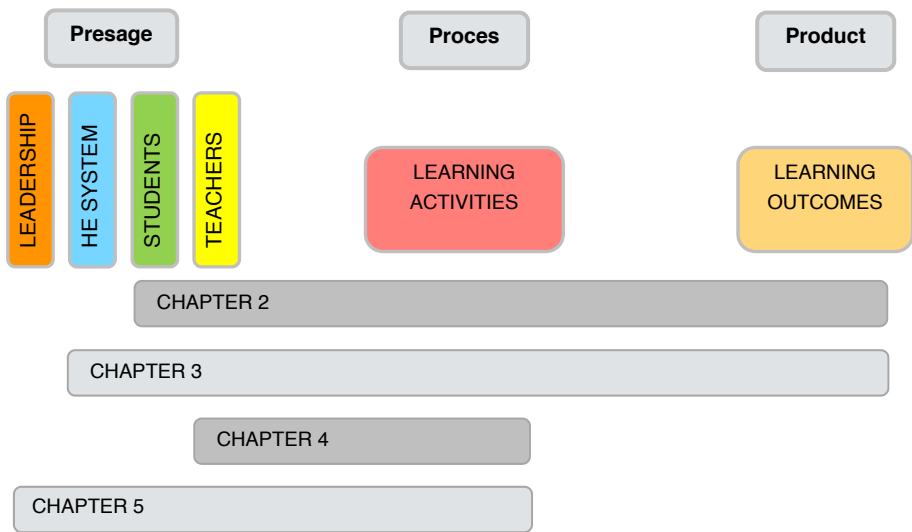
- 
1. Demonstrate systematic analytical and processing skills and the ability to pursue these independently and with tenacity.
  2. Demonstrate strong self-motivation and self-management skills, and the ability to undertake autonomous self-study in preparation for continual future (life-long) learning and in support of a sustainable career.
  3. Demonstrate a positive and pragmatic approach to problem solving.
  4. Evidence ability to listen, collaborate, voice opinions constructively, and prioritize cohesion over expression of individual voice.
  5. Evidence flexibility, the ability to rapidly synthesise knowledge in real time, and suggest alternative perspectives.
  6. Recognise the relevance of, and be readily able to adapt, previously learned skills to new contexts.
  7. Develop, research and evaluate ideas, concepts and processes through creative, critical and reflective thinking and practice.
  8. Respond creatively and appropriately to ideas and impetus from others, exhibiting tenacity and the ability to digest and respond to verbal and/or written feedback;
  9. Exhibit ability to utilise and apply a range of technology in relation to their music making, including the promotion of their professional profile.
  10. Project a confident and coherent persona appropriate to context and communicate information effectively, presenting work in an accessible form and demonstrating appropriate IT and other presentational skills as required.
  11. Making use of their imagination, intuition and emotional understanding, think and work creatively, flexibly and adaptively.
  12. Recognise and reflect on diverse social, cultural and ethical issues, and apply local, national and international perspectives to practical knowledge.
  13. Engage with individuals and groups, demonstrating sensitivity to diverse views and perspectives, and evidencing skills in teamwork, negotiation, leadership, project development and organization as required.
  14. Recognize and respond to the needs of others in a range of contexts.
  15. Recognise the physiological and psychological demands associated with professional practice, and evidence awareness of – and preparedness to engage with as needed – relevant health and wellbeing promotion initiatives and resources.
  16. Exhibit a long-term (life-long) perspective on individual artistic development, demonstrating an inquiring attitude, and regularly evaluating and developing artistic and personal skills and competences in relation to personal goals.
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1.8 OUTLINE OF THE DISSERTATION

This section describes the four studies that were conducted to accomplish the research aims. In the studies reported in Chapters 2 and 3, the focus was on experiences with existing collaborative learning approaches; the two studies reported in Chapters 4 and 5 focused more on the implementation of collaborative learning approaches. The overarching research aims are addressed in Chapter 6. This introductory chapter closes with an overview of the following chapters in this dissertation, reporting the steps that were taken in this research. An adapted 3P model (Biggs, 2003) is presented (Figure 1.1) to facilitate understanding of the educational system factors discussed in this dissertation. This model contains presage, process, and product factors as stages in the educational system. The research aims and methodologies are presented in Table 1.2.

Since these chapters present studies that have been published, accepted, or submitted to journals, some surplusage in the information in the conceptual framework sections (introductions to studies) is inevitable. This means, however, that each chapter can be read independently and reports a complete study.

**FIGURE 1.1**  
ADAPTED 3P MODEL (BIGGS, 2003) AND INCLUDED EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM FACTORS.



In Chapter 2, a qualitative systematic literature review is presented, in which the findings of empirical research into collaborative learning in undergraduate music study were evaluated, including learning outcomes, activities, and approaches used at various institutions around the world and identified in the literature. Peer-reviewed articles were screened from a combination of data bases reporting on collaborative approaches in conservatoire education, published between 2000 and 2021. A total of 157 full-text articles were reviewed, of which 22 articles were included in the study. An inductive qualitative content analysis was used to code and categorize the text data extracted from the selected studies. Tables and a narrative synthesis have been used to present the selected articles.

Chapter 3 provides insights into students' and teachers' perceptions of the development of professional competencies through collaborative learning in vocal group lessons within classical and jazz/pop departments. The study aimed to develop an understanding of the collaborative environment of group lessons, the experiences of participants with this, and its relationship to preparation for professional practice. Questionnaires were administered to 101 bachelor's and master's students and alumni; 60 questionnaires were returned, of which 34 were complete and valid. Interviews took place with nine vocal teachers. Quantitative and qualitative methodologies were used, including descriptive statistics and a thematic analysis to reveal advantages and disadvantages of group lessons as a form of collaborative learning in classical and jazz/pop vocal courses with regard to students' performance, their collaboration and interaction, and their professional preparation.

In the study reported in Chapter 4, the focus was on teachers' professional development and the improvement of teaching practice through action research. Alignment of conservatoire education with the demands of professional practice requires a variety of teaching and learning approaches, including collaborative learning. This entails another approach to the teaching practice and requires different competences of teachers. Teacher action research has been regarded to stimulate both professional development and the improvement of teaching practice by teachers as inquirers into their practice. However, studies on teacher action research within conservatoire education have been found to be rather limited. In this study, two teachers engaged in action research. A multiple-case design using a qualitative research paradigm with an inductive approach was employed, including a cross-case analysis of two individual case-studies.

In the study reported in Chapter 5, the focus was on the role of leadership in advancing education, and on understanding leaders' observations on curriculum, pedagogy, and professional practice. The objective of this study was to increase understanding through empirical research of the roles of Flemish and Dutch conservatoire leaders in curriculum development and their perceptions of the relationship between their curriculum and professional practice. A theory-driven format based on sensitizing concepts was used in the semi-structured interviews. Twelve leaders of conservatoires in Belgium (Flanders) and the Netherlands were questioned. They were asked to freely and broadly reflect on three topics: (1) professional practice, (2) pedagogy, and (3) teaching staff, all in relation to the curriculum currently implemented as well as past and potential future curriculum reforms. They reflected on their curriculum and discussed their observations and perceptions of its connection to professional practice. Conservatoire leaders' observations and perceptions regarding the process of curriculum reform were identified through thematic analysis.

Chapter 6 summarizes the four studies and returns to the research aims of the dissertation: to investigate (1) experiences with and perceptions of existing collaborative learning approaches and (2) factors influencing the implementation of collaborative learning approaches. Internal and external factors and stakeholders' perspectives are discussed, and recommendations regarding the implementation of collaborative learning are given.

### ***1.8.1 RESEARCH QUESTIONS***

The following nine research questions were addressed in the studies included in this dissertation, showing a wide range of perspectives:

- (1) What are the learning outcomes of collaborative learning activities?
- (2) How are learning-focused activities related to these outcomes?
- (3) How are learning and teaching context factors related to these outcomes?
- (4) How did both students and teachers perceive the development of professional competencies in a collaborative learning environment in vocal group lessons within classical and jazz/pop conservatoire departments?
- (5) How do teachers perceive their professional development through action research?
- (6) How do teachers perceive improving their teaching practice through action research?
- (7) How do conservatoire leaders observe and perceive the relationship between the curriculum and professional practice?

- (8) How do conservatoire leaders perceive the competences of their teachers?
- (9) What do conservatoire leaders perceive as necessary to foster the development of students' professional competences?



**TABLE 1.2**  
**OVERVIEW OF INCLUDED STUDIES.**

Chapter	Title	Rationale	Research question(s)	Research type	Research design	Participants
2	<i>Collaborative learning in conservatoires: A systematic literature review</i>	Comprehension of collaborative learning related learning outcomes and factors influencing those outcomes.	What are the learning outcomes of collaborative learning activities? How are learning-focused activities related to these outcomes? How are learning and teaching context factors related to these outcomes?	Desk research	Systematic literature review	N/A
3	<i>Collaborative learning in two vocal conservatoire courses</i>	Students' and teachers' perceptions of professional competency development in the collaborative setting of vocal group lessons.	How did both students and teachers perceive the development of professional competencies in a collaborative learning environment in vocal group lessons within classical and jazz/pop conservatoire departments?	Mixed methods	Case study with questionnaires and interviews	teachers (n=9); students (27); alumni (n=7) (all from one institution)
4	<i>Teacher professional development and educational innovation through action research in conservatoire education</i>	Increasing understanding of teachers' action research projects related to their professional development and improvement of their teaching practice.	How do teachers perceive their professional development through action research? How do teachers perceive improving their teaching practice through action research?	Qualitative	Multiple case study with interviews and reflective journals	teachers (n=2) from one institution
5	<i>Conservatoire leaders' observations and perceptions on curriculum reform</i>	Perceptions of conservatoire leadership on their curriculum, pedagogy and the connection of these to professional practice.	How do conservatoire leaders observe and perceive the relationship between the curriculum and professional practice? How do conservatoire leaders perceive the competences of their teachers? What do conservatoire leaders perceive as necessary to foster development of students' professional competences?	Qualitative	Case study with interviews	leaders (n=12) representing twelve institutions