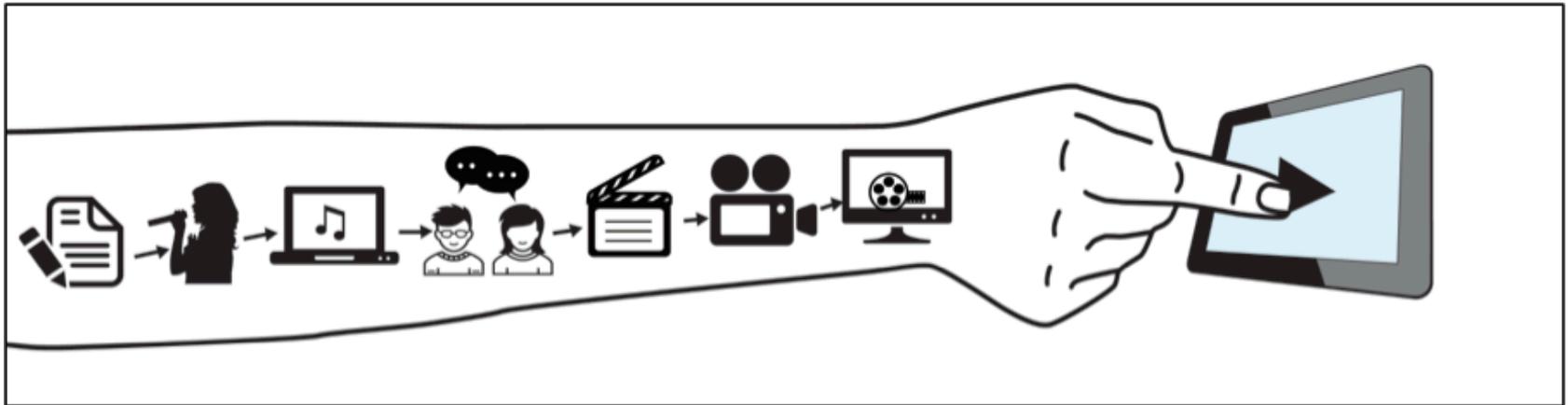


Lights, Camera, Re/Action: Exploring Transformative Music Engagement Through Music Video Production with Inner-city Youth



by

Gordon William Cobb

Mmus., Thames Valley University, 1999

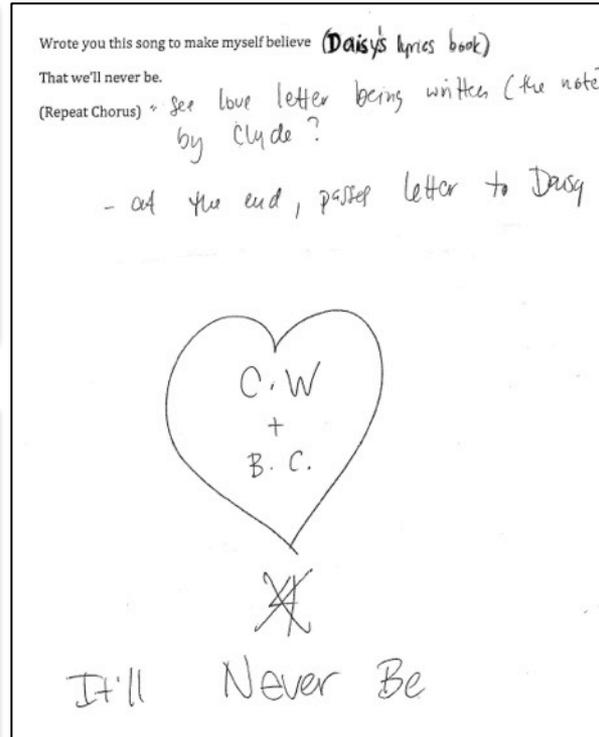
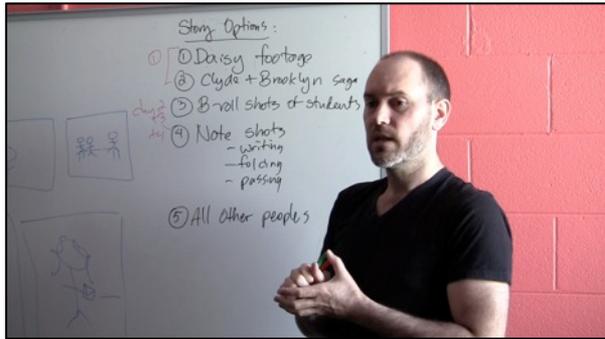
Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy/Education
in the
Department of Education
Arts Education

Presentation Outline

1. Introduction
2. Research questions
3. Research design and methods
4. Findings
5. Implications for music education

Music Video Production (MVP)

Why and I interested in this research?
How did I become involved in MVP?



Youth, Music, Digital Media, and New Literacies

- The affordances of digital media provide opportunities for today's young people to live agentive music lives through creative and collaborative forms of music making (O'Neill, in press).
- unprecedented access to information and modes of communication (Cercone, 2012).



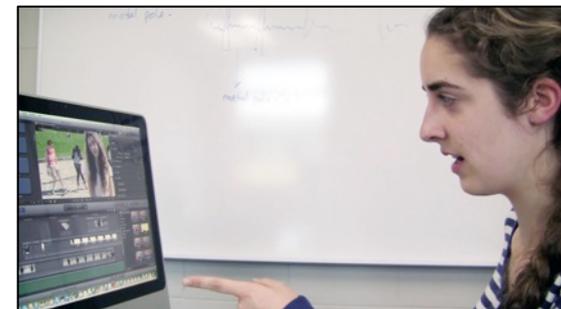
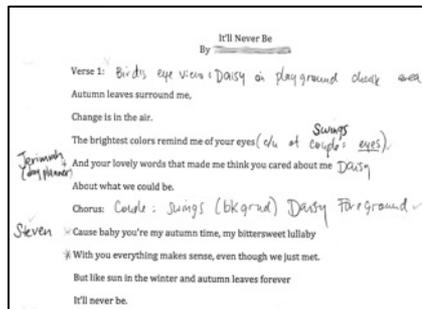
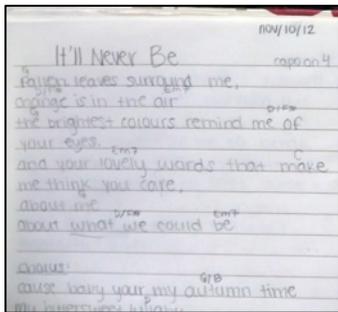
Main Research Themes

1. Multimodal Composing Practices
(Miller & McVee, 2012)
2. Transformative Music Engagement
(O'Neill, 2012, 2014)

Multimodal Composing Practices

(Miller, 2010; Miller & McVee, 2012)

- communicate and represent meaningful ideas and expressions of self through multiple modes such as text, sound, and image.



- How might this inspire and empower music learners to become agentive and autonomous musical artists?

Multimodal Social Semiotics

(Kress & Van Leeuwen, 2006)

- examines how people communicate by a variety of means in particular social settings
- *orchestrations* (Kress, 2010) of modes
- how the intention or meaning of one mode is transferred into another mode
- interpersonal and institutional power relations
- observe and analyze how music learners design and interpret meanings, thoughts, and ideas, through their multimodal composing practices.

It'll Never Be
By _____

Verse 1: Birds eye view: Daisy on playground cheer area
Autumn leaves surround me,
Change is in the air.
The brightest colors remind me of your eyes (duo of couple's eyes).
And your lovely words that made me think you cared about me Daisy
About what we could be.

Chorus: Couple: Swings (bkgrnd) Daisy Foreground ✓
Cause baby you're my autumn time, my bittersweet lullaby
With you everything makes sense, even though we just met.
But like sun in the winter and autumn leaves forever
It'll never be.

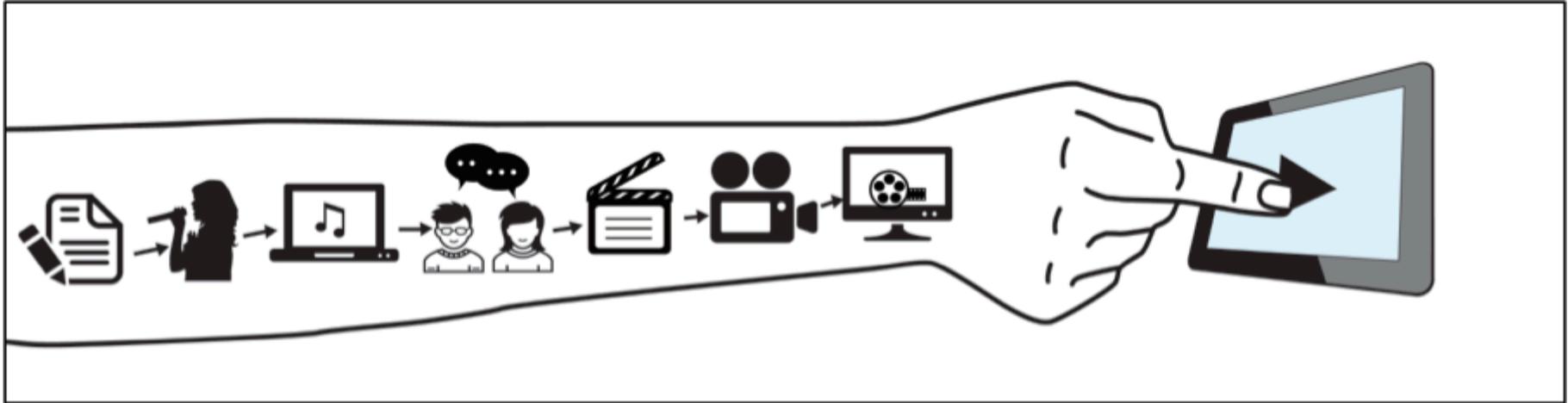
Jeremy
(day planner)

Steven



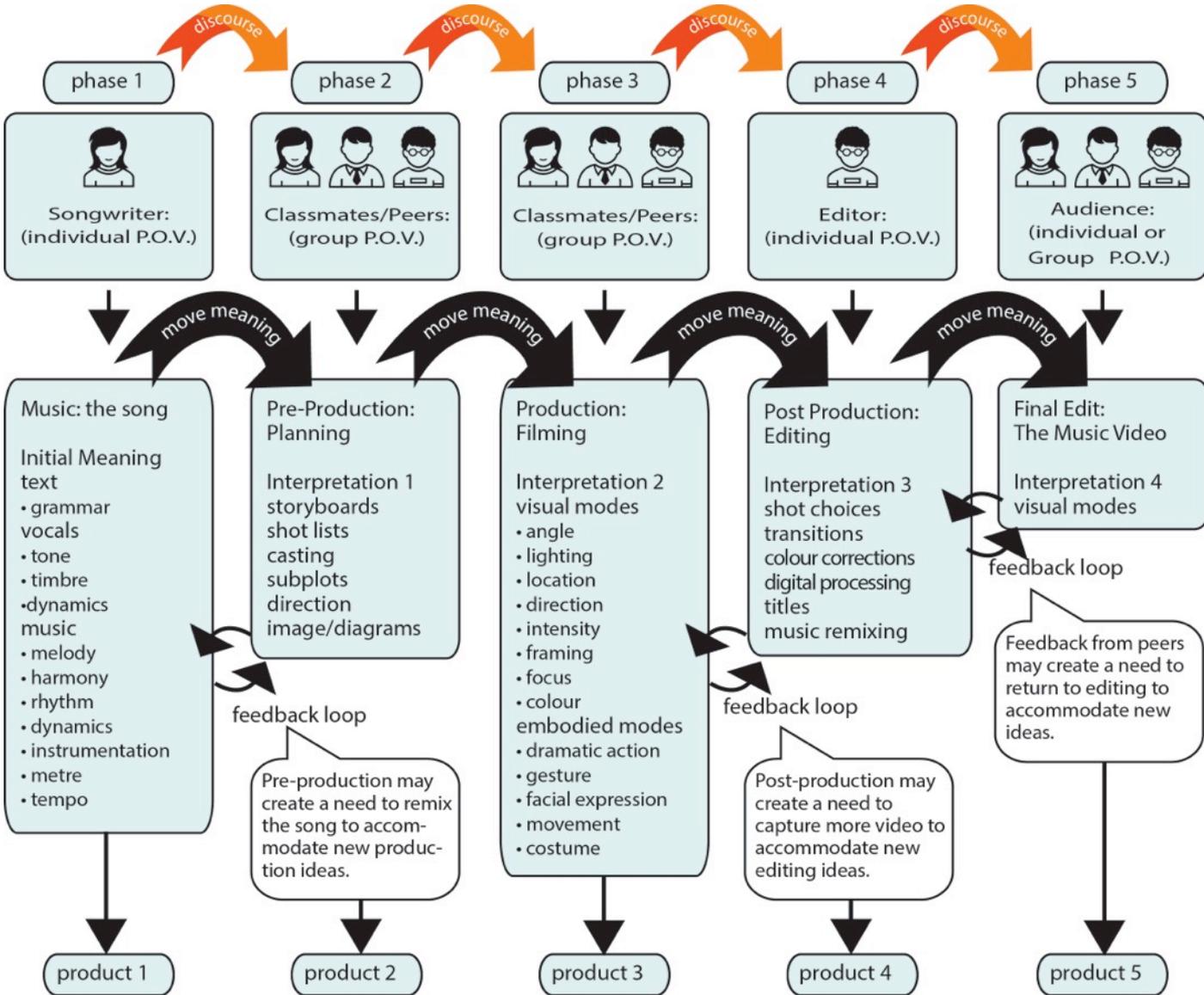
The Semiotic Reach of MVP

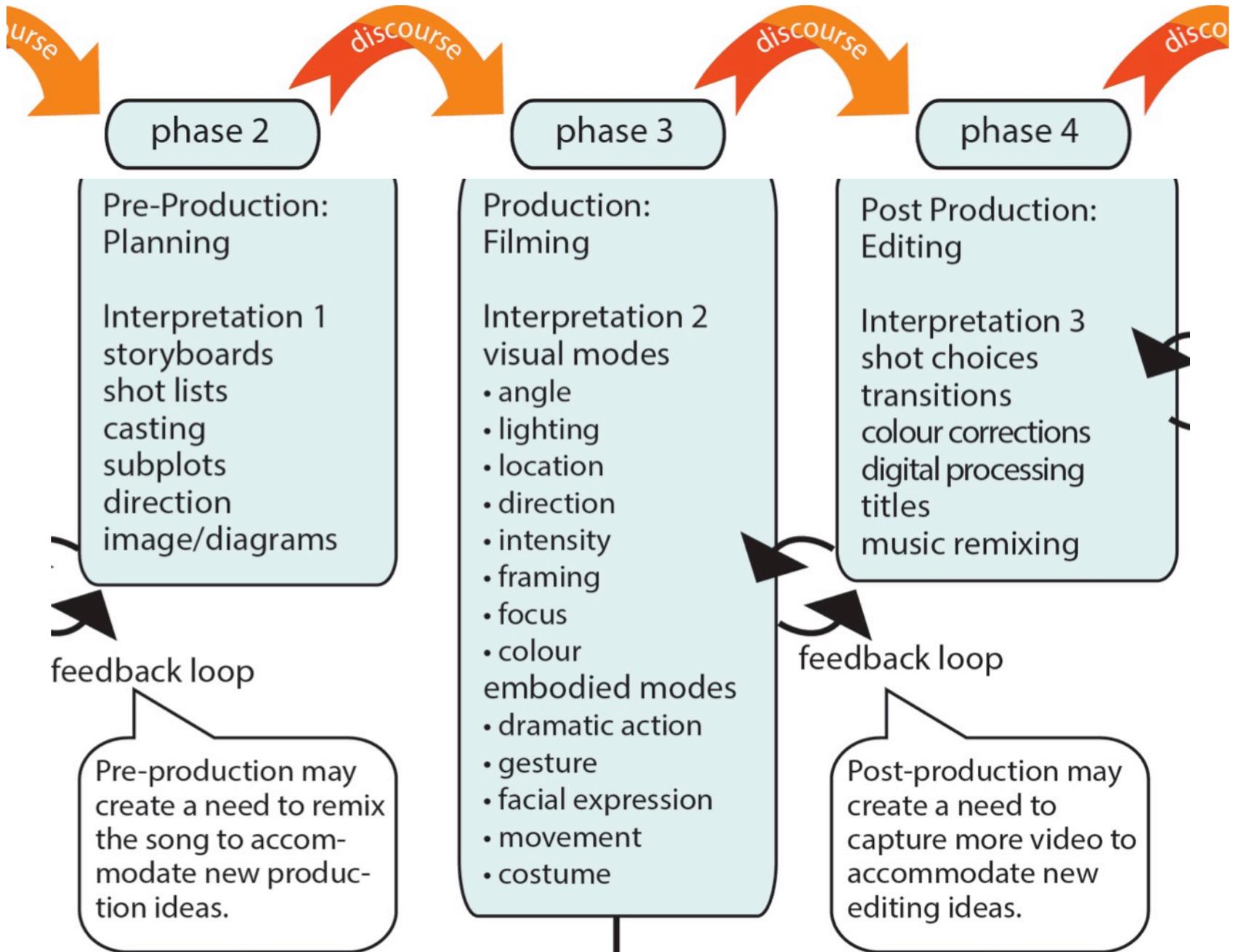
(Kress, 2010)



- musical texts are becoming more multimodal than previous generations (Gall & Breeze, 2005)
- *multimodal composing practices* extend the *semiotic reach* (Kress, 2010) of music as a mode of representation and meaning making
- enable music learners to create *multimodally* across a spectrum of traditional and newly emerging genres

A Working Model of MVP as Social Semiosis





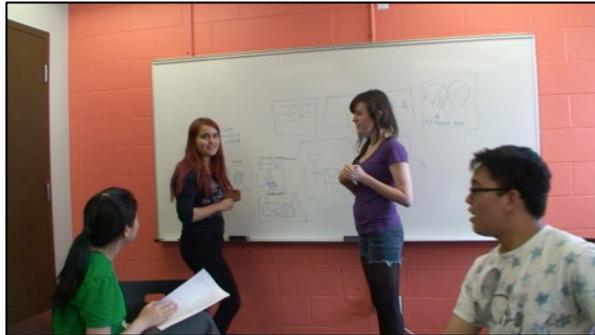
Transformative Music Engagement (TME) (O'Neill, 2012, 2014)

- learner-centered
- fosters agency and empowers music artists to be autonomous, self-directed learners
- “catalyst for change across a broad and diverse group of music learners” (O'Neill, 2012, p. 164).
- reflect critically on their values
- “implement actions that bring about new ways of transforming themselves, others, and their community in relation to the music activities they are involved in” (O'Neill, 2014, p. 20).



Influences

- Participatory Cultures and Learning Relationships (Jenkins, 2009)
 - peer to peer, owning the process, instructor mentorship
- Affinity Spaces (Gee, 2009)
 - interest related, spectrum of users, specialized and dispersed knowledge
- Dialogical Inquiry (Wells, 2000)
 - collaborative, holistic, context dependent, emergent



Justification for the Research

- Develop a deeper knowledge and understanding about the multimodal composing practices of today's music learners
- Concepts explored and findings contained within this study may apply to other forms of music learning and multimodal music pedagogies, thereby advancing the field by complementing existing research in this area
- There is a gap in research documenting the learning processes involved in youth-led music video production, particularly in relation to music pedagogy

Research Questions



1. What are the specific semiotic affordances provided by new media technologies, and how might they best enable music learners to achieve music-oriented multimodal literacy through the production of collaborative music videos?
2. How might music video production pedagogies provide expansive learning opportunities associated with aspects of transformative music engagement?

Research Design and Methods

- practical action research design: “a design in action research in which educators study a specific school situation with a view towards improving practice” (Schmuck, 1997)
- Reflective Practice (Brookfield, 1998)
- Reflexivity (McKernan, 1991)
- Explores multimodal composing practices within the context of:
 - a particular form and medium (music video production)
 - music genre (popular music)
 - music practice (songwriting)

Research Context

- Participants were 5 females and 5 males (aged 13-16 years)
- At-risk youth from an inner-city area
- Attended a 32-week community-based music program taught by the first author



Participants

- Class consists of students from music disciplines (adders) and students from outside the regular program
- Equal numbers of males and females in a technology–based class
- Range of backgrounds and interests



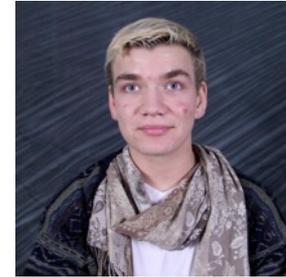
Richard: percussion



Kat: writer



Zoe: voice



Finn: voice



Daisy: songwriter



Steven: guitar



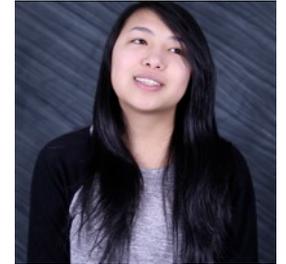
Jade: piano



Clyde: actor



Jeremiah: photographer



Brooklyn: percussion

Research Site

- at-risk youth
- equal emphasis on all styles of music
- weekly group classes/biweekly private lessons
- Tuition for students is free
- provided with an instrument to use at home
- all experience levels are admitted
- no audition
- grades four through twelve
- independent of the public school system

Research Procedure

- The classes were video recorded, participants were interviewed at various points during and at the end of the program, and all completed videos were collected for analysis.

Analytical Framework

- The interviews were transcribed and analyzed using the *constant comparison method* (Glaser & Strauss, 1967)



- Music videos were transcribed and analyzed using *multimodal microanalysis* (Curwood & Gibbons, 2010)

| Screen Shot/time | Lyrics | Music | Action | Filming | Editing | Student Interpretation (from interview) |
|--|---|-------------------------|--|---|---------------------------------------|---|
|  00:00 | | Guitar chords | Tree branches blow in the wind | C/U of branches | Camera continues to pan down the tree | R: Ok, uh, so, the intro's right there. |
|  00:10 | | Guitar chords | Tree branches still blowing, as camera pans down we see a girl (Daisy) sitting alone on a bench looking sad. She looks upwards and the camera pulls up again into the branches of the trees. | Camera moves down towards wide shot of girl, central framing. | Same shot | |
|  00:12 | Falling leaves around me, change is in the air. | First phrase of verse 1 | Daisy is lying on the ground, surrounded by leaves singing. | Medium C/U, central framing, above POV | Straight cut | |
| <p>Transcription Narrative: 00:12 to 00:22: We hear Daisy sing the lyrics "Falling leaves around me, change is in the air." In the action, we see Daisy lying on the ground surrounded by a variety of leaves in the background. The framing is a medium C/U, central position, and the camera angle is captured in an above POV, looking directly down on Daisy. Daisy uses her gaze indirectly, not making eye contact with the camera but instead looking around to the side and above her.</p> | | | | <p>Themes: multimodal discourse, semiotic transduction, creative collaboration</p> <p>Interpretation: This edit represents one of the more successful multimodal discourses that emerged out of this production. This particular shot was originally captured in the springtime, and there were no leaves anywhere to be found in the park. A number of students and myself brought in leaves from our own neighborhoods, and the students arranged the leaves around Daisy to create the façade of a fall landscape. By doing so, the students and Daisy are passing the meaning represented within the lyrics into the background of the shot. We hear the word "leaves" in the vocals, we see Daisy sing the word "leaves" in her performance, and see actual leaves in the background. Semiotically, this illustrates how the process of transduction is used to pass the meaning of the word "leaves" from the mode of text to the modes of sound (music) and image.</p> | | |

It'll Never Be

Song written by Daisy

Music video by Finn



Findings: Connectedness, Agency, Autonomy, and Empowerment

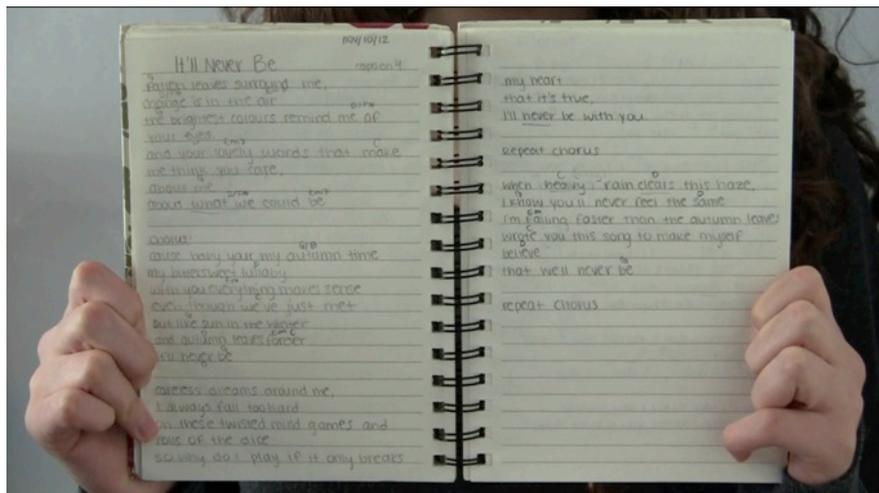


Summary of Findings

- Findings indicate that MVP students are empowered, inspired, and engaged as active agents within the creative collaborations that occur within all stages of music video production.
- Students experience both individual and communal agency, working together, teaching together, and learning together.
- MVP processes and technologies are autonomous, providing music learners with the freedom and control to create music videos that reflect not only each student's individual voice, but the beliefs and values of the entire class.



- The music video as a musical production provides the potential to express ideas in a unique manner that would not be possible within songwriting or music composition alone.
- Many students became active agents in the direction of their music education, and all students were inspired, engaged, and empowered by their work as producers of music videos.
- These affordances also create expansive learning opportunities associated with transformative music engagement, with prominent characteristics including **agency**, **autonomy**, and **empowerment**.



Implications for Music Education

- Albers and Harste (2007): “work with how messages are sent, received, and interpreted, as well as how media and technology position us as viewers and users of multimedia texts” (p. 6)
- incorporate our traditional music knowledge within the vastly changing and evolving face of education?
- knowledge gap between teachers and students, Green and Bigum (1993)
- new media technologies provide educators with a way to bridge the generation gap

- sound continues to be an under-explored semiotic terrain
- multimodal creative projects in schools rarely begin with the consideration or creation of music” (Gall and Breeze, 2013, p. 430)
- what motivates and engages musical learners in and out of classroom environments
- the means to find their voices, to write their stories multimodally, and to reflexively “read” their worlds
- create narratives that frame learners’ lives and identities and connect them to their cultures and communities
- MVP pedagogies have the potential to reach across not only modes, but also genres of music education and generations of students and teachers alike
- bridge the knowledge gap between generations and create a new world of understanding for tomorrow’s music artists

Thank you!

Please feel free to contact me
with questions, feedback, or suggestions:

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