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BOSTON UNIVERSITY

COLLEGE OF FINE ARTS

Dissertation

DIALECTIC DIALOGUES:

A DISCOURSE ANALYSIS OF EVERYDAY TALK BETWEEN ADOLESCENT GUITARISTS LEARNING MUSIC WITH A PEER OUTSIDE SCHOOL

by

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Submitted in partial fulfillment of the

requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Musical Arts

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DEDICATION

To popular musicians in the making, I hope this work will have had some elemental influence on you through a music teacher who heard *your* voice in the findings of this study. I hope they validated you, the Artist.

To members of Jazz Over Easy—James Huston, Michael Koesel, and Jeffrey Stevens—rehearsing and playing jazz for our audiences continues to fulfill my youth inspired dreams of performing music live.

I dedicate this work to Diana Ramirez, the most patient, loving and generous person I know. Thank you for sharing awesome and fulfilling musical experiences with me. Your love of animals inspired my vegan diet. Your fabulous sense of humor is unmatched. I am grateful for you and our time together. I love you.

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In my career, I owe my view on music learning to many of my former students. In having taught them, I learned the value in backing off to let them learn alone together. Thank you, Dr. Marcia T. Fountain, for your kindness and friendship carried me through many years as an undergrad. Dr. Anthony Vargas, your time and expert help contributed to my completed work. Encouragement from many friends—including Mella Delgado, Bill Flory, Mary Martinez, and Rachel Martinez—lifted my spirits on dark writing days. Richard D. Irving, our conversations about music benefitted me more than I can express here. Anthony J. Odegard and Dr. Charles A. Odegard, you are my family and your “outside-music” perspectives and support gave me reassurance that I might know what I am doing. Diana Ramirez, you simply saved my life. You carried so much of my angst and pulled me past many doubts. I hope you will know my thanks for the rest of our days.

DIALECTIC DIALOGUES:

A DISCOURSE ANALYSIS OF EVERYDAY TALK BETWEEN ADOLESCENT GUITARISTS LEARNING MUSIC WITH A PEER OUTSIDE SCHOOL

Boston University College of Fine Arts, 2019

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ABSTRACT

For many teenagers, learning to play guitar might only involve themselves and one or more of their peers interacting outside school. Music education research, however, does not reveal the spectrum of ways in which adolescent musicians interact to learn peer-to-peer. The purpose of this study was to examine this process: how adolescents verbally and nonverbally communicated to learn music together and without adult teachers.

Two research questions in this study addressed how systems of meanings emerged in adolescent musicians' processes of talk. The first was: How do participants learning jointly and independently communicate with a peer outside school? The second question was: How do participants assess independent learning along with their peer and joint learning outside school?

The participants were six adolescent guitarists from El Paso, Texas. The final candidates included five males with Hispanic backgrounds and one Mexican-American adolescent male. Data were collected in three observations of the guitarists learning in pairs. Data were also collected in interviews, artifacts, and field notes. Discourse analysis involved review of recorded observations, field notes, and transcripts. Data were coded

and parsed into categories. Multiple systems of meanings emerged in themes. Quoted material helped to explain the discourse themes. Three sets of findings included main dialectic discourse themes: together–individual, unreserved–reserved, and established–undetermined. Four identity discourses—self-learner, coach, musical artist, and friend—emerged from participants' dialogues. Three themes indicated how participants individually assessed learning, and two themes showed how joint evaluations emerged peer-to-peer.

This study and its results highlight a spectrum of ways adolescent musicians use everyday talk to learn music outside school. Findings in this study might empower music teachers to facilitate their students' own peer dialogues. Future research can build on the foundation of findings here, which raise questions for exploring how communication outside school might compare with communication in school, how peer-to-peer music learning might be facilitated, as well as implications about why certain types of communication influence music learning.

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Chapter 1

Adolescent Peer Communication and Music Learning

In the open garage of a suburban American neighborhood, a teenager casually leans against a shop bench, actively strumming an electric guitar, while another sings loudly and earnestly in order to be heard over thunderous drumming. The band members talk between bouts of playing. The drummer remarks after one song that he thinks the volume of the amplifiers should be turned up. The singer responds, “Maybe.” Neither he nor the guitarist, however, attempts to adjust knobs on their equipment. The band discusses the music they played. At some point, the guitarist demonstrates melodic phrases he says would complement the singer’s voice. The singer looks toward the guitarist and bobs his head as the guitarist plays. The drummer looks on, interested in this exchange. After discussion of the music, the singer turns to the others and asks, “Well, can we do it?” The drummer replies, “Yeah, let’s do it.” He turns to the guitarist, who is looking in his direction. The drummer signifies the tempo with his sticks, and the band plays again.

One can imagine such a scenario among teenaged musicians during a rehearsal or jam session outside school. Researchers suggest that valuable implications for students in formal classrooms could come from our discovery of how peer musicians learn on their own (Baker, 2012; Finnegan, 2007; Green, 2002, 2006, 2008). However easy it may be to observe *what* young musicians do to learn music with peers without teachers, *how* they use communication to learn might not be as apparent.

My interest in how teenagers learn music outside school stems from my

experience as a high school guitar teacher. I tried applying strategies that Green (2002) outlined with regard to how musicians who play popular music learn that music. Green's knowledge was derived from interviews and her personal involvement with such musicians. On several occasions and for weeks at a time, I allowed all of my students (approximately 12 to 20 students) to learn together. Except for initial explanations of projects that they might explore, I was mostly not involved. My class adjoined an empty classroom, and a small group practiced there; the majority grouped into pairs or trios. I helped when they requested assistance.

Based on my understanding of Green's research, I tried to not interrupt them. I stood back and let my students interact peer-to-peer. Although it was often difficult to resist interjecting my perspective, I wanted to help them learn more independently. I recognized problems with some of their explanations of certain musical ideas. Other students seemed mostly silent and barely interacted. I was mainly impressed with how they interacted to learn music without me. I had questions about helping my students learn together that the literature left unanswered.

I found that research is lacking about ways adolescent musicians communicate to learn on their own. Green's seminal books (2002, 2006, 2008) explain how popular musicians learn with peers and note that "we have focused mainly on the music itself—the product—and have largely failed to notice the processes by which this product is transmitted in the world outside the school" (p. 107). The fact that the demonstrated value of peer music learning is shown in studies increases the need to understand how students communicate in order to learn together. Existing studies (Allsup, 2002; Green, 2002,

2008; Jaffurs, 2006) on peer learning are limited to broad descriptions of musicians' talk; that is, they left off at the *what* without digging deeper for a better understanding of the *how*.

Music educators can benefit from knowledge that attunes them to how adolescents communicate to learn music on their own with peers. Teachers achieve a teaching perspective mostly through training and experience. It is reasonable that help based on such knowledge and training—about how they should teach students —might alter, disrupt, and impede the natural kinds of dialogues enacted by adolescents. According to Mantie (2009), music scholars have put ideas into language that stylize and determine the way music teachers learn how to teach music and consequently how students think music is to be learned. Without knowledge on how students communicate to learn music with peers, a teacher might not help foster the kinds of talk adolescent musicians use when the teacher is not present. If it is key that students speak and behave as they might without a teacher, then teachers will benefit from knowledge that attunes them to that. Students will, thus, benefit from such a teacher's help.

Problem Statement

Research in music education indicates that the strategies that peer musicians use to learn have suggested ways to apply such strategies in school and community music programs (Campbell, 2010; Green 2002, 2008; Higgins & Campbell, 2010; Wiggins, 2015). Many researchers point to the value found in how adolescent musicians interact to learn (Finnegan, 2007; Stickford, 2003; Woodford, 2005) and that learning strategies among adolescent musicians have been important in much of this research (Baker, 2012;

Davis 2005; Green 2002; Jaffurs, 2006).

More research is needed on the communication adolescents use to learn music outside school. Experts in the field of interpersonal communication acknowledge that research on communication processes has enhanced our understanding of how people interact (Bormann, 1980; Floyd, 2009; Keyton, 2006). Music education research, however, does not reveal the spectrum of ways in which adolescent peers communicate to learn peer-to-peer. Few studies involve the communication processes that emerge in these situations (Brand, 2003; Green, 2002; Davis, 2005; Jaffurs, 2006) and no structure has been assembled to guide teachers on how adolescents communicate to learn peer-to-peer. This lack of structure presents challenges in facilitating students to interact and learn efficiently peer-to-peer. Possessing no research-based knowledge of the communication processes, music teachers can misinterpret what is involved when students learn independently. A teacher's methods in learning music are not necessarily the students' ways. My intention is therefore focused: We must understand the ways adolescent musicians converse while learning music on their own.

Purpose and Rationale

The purpose of this study is to understand the communication practices that emerged from examining three pairs of adolescent peer musicians. I anticipate that showing how they communicate to learn with peers will provide an enhanced understanding of the ways they learn when the teacher does not intervene. I will provide a more holistic perspective of peer interactions that educators can apply to help adolescents learn music with peers.

Surprisingly, only a few studies include findings on ways students communicate peer-to-peer (Brand, 2003; Goodrich, 2007). These studies, however, have centered on in-school learning environments. Educators and researchers who want to help students to learn with peers might benefit from studies on ways young musicians talk peer-to-peer. Interpersonal communication research has enhanced our knowledge of how people talk in different situations. A literature exists on systems of communication and how people relate (Manning & Kunkel, 2014; Tracy & Robles, 2013). I will add to knowledge about peer music learning by applying a theoretical lens from the field of interpersonal communication.

Several researchers (Bennett, 1980; Davis, 2005; Green, 2008; Jaffurs, 2006; Vulliamy & Lee, 1980, 1982) have argued that music educators should take more seriously the learning that occurs only among the musicians themselves. Their studies show notably different interactions from those in formal settings. Allsup (2008), Davis (2005), Jaffurs (2006), and Stickford (2003) have suggested that educators may themselves benefit from knowing more about ways in which adolescent peers interact to learn peer-to-peer. Stickford (2003), for example, interviewed three adolescent musicians who shared their perspectives on learning both inside and outside class. Stickford found that "musical knowledge and language are the currencies for their interactions and music making experiences" (p. 261). According to Stickford, school programs are disadvantaged when educators lack awareness of how students learn on their own. Woodford (2005) advocates for greater collaboration among educators, students, and other interested parties in the processes of music education. Woodford's thesis

complements Stickford's idea that educators should place more importance on communication with students in order to enhance the effectiveness of learning in school. According to Woodford, adolescents should be included in conversations with music educators, parents, and adult musicians about learning.

Research shows an increased interest in applications of peer music learning in school. Goodrich (2017), for instance, recently published a comprehensive review of current literature that indicates many areas of interest in peer mentoring and tutoring. Collectively, these studies acknowledge the value of peer interactions in music education. This area of music education research indicates that the study of processes involved in peer learning is an idea whose time has come.

Interpersonal communication research shows the value in understanding how people interact in everyday situations. Little work has been done, however, concerning communication strategies among peer musicians. It is therefore fair to say that existing research has failed to address how learning unfolds in the dialogues adolescent musicians use among themselves. My study might help to fill this knowledge gap: It focuses on communication between pairs of adolescent musicians.

Music teachers have reported challenges while applying peer learning (Beaumont, 2015; Kastner, 2012). Having no sense of musicians' peer talk is a disadvantage to these teachers. Acquiring a sense of the spectrum of ways young peer musicians speak while learning would empower teachers to help their students. With this understanding an educator's role facilitating peer music learning will be enhanced.

Research Questions

This study involves two central research questions connected to my theoretical framework. The research questions are:

1. How do participants learning jointly and independently communicate with a peer outside school?
2. How do participants assess independent learning along with their peer and joint learning outside school?

Theoretical Framework

Our students learn music by interacting both with us and with peers. They might observe a peer playing an instrument, discuss music concepts with peers, and acquire some technical skill by watching a peer perform. Understanding how adolescent peers interact to learn outside school might help educators facilitate peer interactions in ways that students are attuned to. The framework of this study provides such a perspective. The study is built on communication concepts, certain assumptions about conversation when peers learn music together, and the principles of relational dialectics theory.

Communication Concepts and Definitions

Communication concepts are the key to this study: At the center of my research is *everyday talk*. Interpersonal communication researchers Tracy and Robles (2013) define the term:

> Everyday talk refers to the ordinary kinds of communicating people do in schools, workplaces, and shops; at public meetings; and when they are at home or with their friends. It also includes the conversations people have on mobile phones and

by text, through e-mail, and in online chats. (p. 5)

Everyday talk is informal: Not rehearsed, it emerges in the kinds of everyday situations summarized here. In my study I assume communication processes adolescent musicians use to learn music outside school are made up of this kind of everyday talk.

Everyday talk in this study involves two layers of communication: explicit communication and implicit communication. My definition of explicit communication aligns with the general understanding of what can be observed and understood of interactions among people. It is congruent with the *Oxford English Dictionary* definition of communication as “the imparting or exchanging of information by speaking, writing, or using some other medium” (*OED*, 2018). Meanings one might extract from explicit communication involve the types of information and messages with which people interact in everyday talk. People transmit meanings through words and nonverbal behaviors. A question such as “Do you want to play some music?” is an example of explicit communication; the meaning is, obviously, a request to play music. The content of messages can be derived from explicit communication.

Implicit communication is layered with inherent meanings. Communication research scholars (Baxter, 2011; Lindlof & Taylor, 2002) emphasize that communication can involve inherent meanings of which people may or may not be aware. Inherent meanings from a question such as, “Do you want to play some music?” might include desiring a joint activity, bonding, or togetherness. Implicit communication involves nuanced and sophisticated meanings that can be implied and may not be explicitly expressed. For example, one might interpret two people meeting to play guitar as

communicating their interest in joint activity, bonding, or togetherness: Words are sometimes unnecessary. Peer music learning studies (Bennett, 1980; Finnegan, 2007; Green, 2002, 2008; Timoner, 2004) suggest that peer musicians and music students communicate in idiosyncratic ways. Timoner's film, for example, revealed uncensored aspects of everyday talk not characteristically highlighted in informal music education studies, including bickering and contentiousness. The musicians often used vulgar language. Taking this into consideration, the conversations among students and their peers might involve other inherent, nuanced, and sophisticated meanings that help them understand musical concepts. Words they exchange might be conveyed as idiosyncratic but also implicitly highlight meanings we can understand as agreeing, disagreeing, showing openness to others' ideas, or critical judgment. This study assumes implicit communication.

Armfield and Morgan (2011), scholars of communication processes, describe verbal communication as "symbolic in nature, consisting of spoken, written, or signed words, or symbols equivalent to words such as numbers" (p. 3). I assume that spoken words might include vocables such as "okurrr" in place of the word "okay," as well as utterances such as grunting, mumbling, and groaning. I clarify this because some vocables do not fit my definition of nonverbal communication. My use of the phrase nonverbal communication aligns with implicit communication. Examples of nonverbal communication by Armfield and Morgan (2011) accurately explain my meaning:

> The volume, pitch, and rate of speech; kinetic behaviors such as facial expression and eye behavior; head movement, arm and hand gestures, leg and foot

movements, body orientation, elevation, and posture; physical attractiveness, scent, clothing, and other artifacts; handwriting and use of punctuation; and regulation of time, touch, personal space, and territory. (p. 3)

Adolescent guitarists might make audible sounds by humming, tapping objects, playing their instruments, and using handwritten notes or sheet music.

My teaching experience contributes to how I frame my study. I applied peer learning with my high school guitar students in which I was mostly an observer of their interactions. From this perspective and that of my understanding peer learning, I found that adolescents speak about music and skills with which they are familiar as well as about other material with which they are not as accustomed. Studies show that young musicians get together to play music they know, as well as to learn new music and skills (Davis, 2005; Green, 2002; Lamont, Hargreaves, & Tarrant, 2003). Green's (2002, 2008) finding that popular musicians speak haphazardly while learning and playing music together also suggests the kinds of discussions in which people wrestle both with what they know and what they struggle to learn. My study is based on the assumption that conversations between musicians involve what they understand and what they aim to learn *vive voce*—their word-of-mouth music education.

Studies including the topic of peers learning indicate that musicians interact outside school to learn independently and to collaborate with peers (Fornäs, Lindberg, & Sernhede, 1995; Jaffurs, 2006; Stickford, 2003). It is logical that young musicians might collaborate to learn concepts and skills that their peers already know. It also makes sense that their discussions about music and skills might include some individual—rather than

jointly realized—ideas. Adolescent musicians get together outside school to learn with peers, but each individual also aims to learn him or herself. That peer learning involves both collaborative and independent communication is a key assumption in my study.

We perceive and label other people by how they act and talk. People in seats at a concert hall, for example, make up a group we identify as members of an audience. Their quietness during a concert and applause following the performance communicate their individual and collective identities: These are audience members. Identities such as mother, friend, musician, and student also exist in our behavior and talk (Baxter, 2011; Baxter & Braithwaite, 2007, 2008, 2010). Baxter and Braithwaite (2008) asserted that interpersonal communication represents more than an information exchange between two people. They state, "Instead, [interpersonal communication] becomes the way that humans negotiate meanings, identity, and relationships through person-to-person communication" (p. 4). Tracy and Robles (2013) explain that interactional identities are "enacted through talk, changing from on occasion to the next" (p. 21). This is to say that different identities can emerge depending on the specific occasion. My use of the term *identity* relies on this definition by Tracy and Robles:

> [Interactional identity] refers to specific roles that people take on in a communicative context with regard to specific other people. For instance, Jason may be a friend in one context, an employee of Pizza-Plus in another, a college student, a hospital volunteer, a son, or a husband in yet others. Interactional identities may be formulated at different levels of abstraction. They may be formulated at the level of social roles, as just illustrated, or they may be

> formulated to make visible the particular discourse actions a person is doing. For example, rather than identifying a person as a student, at any moment we could think of him or her as a questioner, a presenter, a discussant, a debater, and so on. Interactional identities are situation- and relationship-specific. (p. 22)

Certain identities are evident in studies on peer mentoring in music education: Some students are mentors and others are mentees (Ford, 1998; Goodrich, 2007). In a music class, mentors would be those students who explain, demonstrate, and teach concepts to their peers. One can assume that student mentors speak differently from the peers they mentor. One can further assume that those who are mentored speak differently from their mentors. They might ask questions, for example, and repeat words regarding what mentors wanted them to understand. Identities in talk that adolescents use to learn music outside school have not been clarified through research. My study assumes that how adolescent musicians act and talk to learn outside school conveys identities.

Relational Dialectics Theory

Educators with knowledge of how adolescents talk with peers when learning music hold the potential to guide their students to ways attuned to those styles of communication. Interpersonal communication researchers have studied how people construct meanings through everyday talk in social interactions. One theoretical model aligned with the stated definitions and concepts of communication framing in my study is *relational dialectics theory* (RDT).

Relational dialectics theory is a perspective built on the extensive history of dialectical thinking (Baxter & Montgomery, 1996). According to Plato, Socrates

provided his views on making meaning through dialectic dialogue (Plato, trans. 1995). People understand ideas and concepts through dialogues. Opposing views are typical of such discussions; such pairs of views constitute dialectic dialogues. Socrates connected the concepts of argument and negotiation to the idea of thesis-antithesis-synthesis. He referred to this process of debate as dialectic (see Cooper & Hutchinson, 1997). The idea of thesis-antithesis-synthesis relates to debates, arguments, and the resolutions of such dialogues. Relational dialectics scholars indicate that shifts between thesis and antithesis remain dialectical and unresolved when people interact (Baxter, 2011). Relational dialectics scholars assume people relate through indeterminate conditions and processes of communication that are not final—situations, conditions, and people change (Baxter, 2011; Baxter & Montgomery, 1996; Rawlins, 1992).

Additionally, research with RDT extracts findings from data without psychological and emotional presumptions. The focus of this theoretical view on communication does not involve participants' psychological and emotional context for data analysis (Baxter & Montgomery, 1996; Baxter, 2011). Research that adds psychological and emotional data involves layers of information appropriate for further examination in studies with goals other than the ones of this study. For example, *pragmatics* research involves consideration of the frame of mind of people and what they think of as context for understanding how they behave (see Givòn, 2005).

Baxter and Montgomery (1996) coined the term RDT on this dialectical foundation and on Mikhail Bakhtin's theory of how sense is made from the text of literary works. Bakhtin theorized that author-reader dialogues are a means by which

people share ideas about reality and simultaneously create a shared reality through written communication (Bakhtin & Medvedev, 1991; Holquist, 2002). Bakhtin conceives of embedded meanings in an author's words that readers must make sense of in order to understand. Interpersonal communication researchers make sense of such embedded meanings by identifying them within interactions—verbal and nonverbal communication—between people. Baxter and Montgomery (1996) incorporated Bakhtin's dialogic views in conceptualizing RDT in order to understand how people make sense of their social reality in everyday talk. Competing systems of meanings that emerge in peoples' interactions are key. According to Baxter and Braithwaite (2008), RDT "is a theory of the meaning-making between relationship parties that emerges from the interplay of competing *discourses*" (p. 349). People interact in conflicting ways, such as stressing their wanting togetherness and, simultaneously, their desire for individuality, and they develop specific ways of relating in situations through such contradictory communication. Baxter and Braithwaite (2008) define *discourses* as "systems of meaning that are uttered whenever we make intelligible utterances aloud with others (or in our heads when we hold internal conversations)" (p. 349). This definition of *discourse* is critical to the understanding of communication in my study.

Discourse meanings are derived from words, nonverbal behaviors, sentences spoken, or entire conversations. Tracy and Robles (2013) write, "Scholars who write about everyday talk most commonly refer to talk as 'discourse,' in which discourse means nothing more than a multi-utterance unit of talk" (p. 25). An example of discourse can involve collective explanations and discussions of an apple, that is, communicated

notions suggesting what apples are about (Baxter, 2011). In this case of apples, this might include speech acts that Searle (1969) notably discussed as statements that indicate and emphasize someone's intentions ("I'm going to bake an apple pie"). Details about how one might be eaten and discussions about where they are grown are also some units of talk that characterizes the discourse of *apple*. It is important to understand that, although a discourse meaning can emerge or begin with one unit of talk, such as a word, other units of talk of which a discourse is composed might not emerge in only one discussion. Comments and conversations about apples, for example, can come up over time and within different discussions. From a doctor, we might learn that apples provide us with certain vitamins we need and a candle maker might inform us that the scent of apples have provided some people relief from a sense of claustrophobia. Discourse analysis involves such discovery of categories of units of talk over time and in separate conversations to label as specific discourses. Discourses in my study refer to the recurring systems of meanings embedded in words, statements, and dialogues that emerge from everyday talk adolescent musicians use over many conversations and sessions to learn music.

Specific discourse meanings come from explicit and implicit communication (Manning & Kunkel, 2014). Relational dialectics theory focuses on implicit and explicit uses and interpretations of communication. People use implicit and explicit communication—and interpret other's uses of implicit and explicit communication—in order to make sense of interactions with others. Participants in my study, for example, used implicit and explicit communication showing a specific discourse of connectedness:

Bruce: Well, we, we can do that combination. You doing the… [Bruce demonstrates a melodic phrase] two times and four, and I'll just do the… [He demonstrates another melody]

Chuck: [begins playing the melodic passage Bruce demonstrated] Alright.

Bruce: [watching Chuck play while playing his own part] Slower.

Chuck: [appears focused on his own playing] Yeah.

Bruce: A little bit slower. [Continues playing and watching Chuck play]

Bruce and Chuck connect while negotiating how to play their melodic phrases together. This is apparent with Bruce's explicit statement, "we can do that combination" and his instruction of the melodic parts. Chuck's response "alright" and his playing of Bruce's suggested melody showed his connectedness with Bruce. As Chuck played, Bruce directed him to go slower and I observed Chuck maintain use of the connected discourse playing and uttering "yeah." Chuck's playing of Bruce's suggested melodic phrase demonstrated that he was on board with Bruce's ideas in lieu of an explicit statement or explanation. Relational dialectics scholars investigate such implicit and explicit uses of everyday talk to better understand how people relate.

In applying the framework of RDT, this study examines how adolescent musicians relate outside school through meanings embedded in their dialogue that contradict each other. Everyday dialogue between people can seem haphazard and random, but order is couched within contradiction. For example, people commonly express wanting to relate with others (e.g., "Wanna hang out later?"), but people also commonly express their autonomy and desire to be independent (e.g., "I'm watching a

movie with my mom tonight"). Expressing a desire to connect with others and expressing autonomy both indicate an order to discourse: the contradicting meanings of connection and autonomy.

Other common contradictions of discourses appear in how people relate. They use discourse showing openness to sharing information and are unreserved; in contradiction, they use discourse showing they are less open and refrain from sharing. For example, openness discourse might emerge between friends talking about romantic date:

Friend A: So? How'd it go?

Friend B: What? You want details? I'm not telling you what happened.

Friend A: Dude, that's so not cool. I told you what happened between me and Sandra last week.

Friend B: OK, man, but just let me have this. It's a new thing and I think I really like her, you know?

Friend A: Well, you never know. What if I tell you what me and Sandra did when we got to my place? Will you tell me something then?

Friend B: Yeah, man. I'll tell you everything. Right.

Friend A: I'm serious, man!

This example illustrates how people interact with openness and reserve discourses. Friend B, for example, made clear he was not open to sharing information about his date ("I'm not telling you what happened"). By contrast, Friend A expressed he was unreserved sharing personal information with his friend stating "I told you what happened between me and Sandra last week." People interact through familiar and routine communication,

but also in surprising and uncertain ways. Certain and uncertain interactions indicate another order of contradictory discourse meanings. For example, a certain discourse might emerge between guitarists talking about techniques associated with songs they have played together:

Guitarist A: Stop! What are you doing? We always turn off our pedals for this song. Use the clean channel.

Guitarist B: I'm tryin' my new effects pedal on it.

Guitarist A: If it's another kind of distortion, it sounds really off.

Guitarist B: No, man. It's like a wah-wah sound. Makes wavy sounds.

Guitarist A: Wavy sounds? Are you sure it will work? I mean, a wavy sound might be too much. We have always done this one clean. It's good clean.

Guitarist B: You never know 'til you try.

Guitarist A: Alright. Let's give it shot. If it doesn't work, we can always play it like we know it.

In this example, Guitarist A emphasized the consistent way the pair has played a particular song. The statement about playing a song as usual highlights this consistency and Guitarist A expects to play the song a certain way. A sense of certainty has developed in how this pair of guitarists has consistently played this song. Guitarist B makes bids to try a new sound with the song with which the two are familiar. This and the previous examples of contradicting discourses, the dialectics, are the focus of RDT research (Baxter, 2011; Baxter & Montgomery, 1996; Rawlins, 1992). Table 1 shows

these common dialectic tensions of RDT research.

Table 1

Common Dialectic Tensions in Everyday Talk (Baxter & Montgomery, 1996).

Connection–Autonomy
Certainty–Uncertainty
Openness–Closedness

Relational dialectics scholars use terms such as connection–autonomy, certainty–uncertainty, and openness–closedness in discussing independent discourse meanings that contradict one another.

When people interact, one discourse is sometimes used more often than another (Baxter, 2011; Baxter & Montgomery, 1996). According to Baxter and Montgomery, this is how people relate. In my study, discourses used more often are referred to as *central* to interactions. I refer to less frequently used discourse meanings as *marginal*. When asked, for example, a pair of musicians might communicate how learning individually is more important than learning with their peer. In this case, autonomy discourse would be central and the discourse of connection marginal. This central–marginal identification is an example of how relational dialectics researchers define the constitution of a contradictory pair of discourses and learn how the parties make sense of their interactions.

Contradictory discourses are not always stable. Communicating using contradicting meanings, people emphasize one system of meaning more often than another. A pair of musicians, for example, might have this conversation about playing songs:

Musician A: Man, let's play that tune I made up. I worked on it and it's so much

better. [discourse indicating connectedness]

Musician B: Yeah, let's do that. But I also wanna work on that Alice Cooper tune. Let's practice on our own for a bit. [discourse indicating connectedness and autonomy]

Musician A: That's a tough song, dude. We didn't do so good on it. We're here, now, so why don't we just work on one together. [connectedness]

Musician B: We can, but I wanna practice the solo part on my own. I'm tryin' to figure it out. [autonomy]

Musician A: Well, we gotta hurry and get some jams in together. I gotta get home by six. Can you work on your own stuff after? [connectedness]

Musician B: Cool, man. Let's jam together for now. [connectedness]

Following each statement are the discourse interpretations shown in brackets. They indicate interpretations of the musicians' statements linked to the connectedness–autonomy dialectic tension. This example illustrates how the pair of musicians briefly related. First, the example shows structured interaction with a connectedness–autonomy dialectic. Second, it highlights which of two opposed discourses in the dialectic the pair privileged in this specific setting: connectedness. Musician A mainly emphasized statements about connecting. Musician B's remarks indicated bids for autonomy, to figure out a solo. In this example, the conversation shows they privileged connectedness more than autonomy.

Method and Analysis

I approached my research questions through discourse analysis. My study is attentive to the structure that emerged in discourse between adolescent musicians learning music outside school. Investigative methods of discourse analysis fit this inquiry into dialectic meanings and those meanings are embedded in talk attributable to identities. According to Richards and Morse (2013), “The questions asked by all sorts of discourse analysis concern the meanings and implications of words spoken or recorded, and how the taken-for-granted messages behind these words have social implications” (pp. 72–73). My theoretical framework and research questions are aligned with this approach. Richards and Morse explained, “The discourse analyst will examine many episodes of texts or talk and their interrelationship” (p. 74). Discourse analysis deliberately overlooks aspects of ethnography. Because my research questions center on the data concerning meanings in communication, ethnographic characterizations of the setting and its participants are outside the scope of the analysis (Wooffitt, 2005). The focus of my discourse analysis is the process of communication. My goal in approaching the research questions is based on Richards and Morse’s desire for researchers “to get behind taken-for-granted meanings of language or text” (p. 75).

My inclusion criteria aimed to identify participants for this study who were in high school, between the ages of 13 and 18, already learning guitar with a peer, owned or had access to a guitar, and had an interest to participate. The sexual orientations, genders, economic backgrounds, ethnic-racial identities, religions, and cultural heritages of potential participants were ancillary to the focus of my study. I did not express or

advertise such factors as conditions to be accepted or denied. The sample sites were convenient to me in El Paso, Texas.

I recruited participants through methods of convenience sampling (Creswell, 2008). Among the first recruited participants, two candidates, a Mexican-American male and Hispanic female, dropped out after their first observation. These and the final participants reflected the dominant culture and demographic of El Paso, Texas—an American city along the Mexican border. The final candidates included five males with Hispanic backgrounds and one Mexican-American adolescent male. Of the 64 young people who inquired about participating in my study, only eight were female. The study's focus on adolescents learning guitar with a peer may accounts for the fact that more girls did not apply. Researchers have found gender associations with particular instruments (Abeles, 2009; Abeles, Hafeli, & Sears, 2014). They found that percussion, trumpet, bass guitar, and guitar are considered masculine. The implications of their study account for this narrow representation of population. Research also indicates that racial-ethnic identity formation can factor into how people learn (McCarthy, 2005). Our identities form over time through development and growth. It is logical that how we identify as individuals might affect how we communicate to learn. I assumed that age, gender, sexual identity, race, and other demographic elements can influence language and values such as discourses in education.

Discourse analysis enabled me to identify discourses from the viewpoints of pairs of adolescent musicians selected in this study. Data were collected through observations and the participants' interview responses about their range of interaction styles to learn

music away from school. Each pair was observed on three occasions.

I refer to my theoretical framework to pose the research questions. Methods of discourse analysis let me arrive at sets of findings. The findings included three core sets of dialectic tension, four identities enacted within a dialectic, and five communication styles participants used dialectically to evaluate their learning music together. Each participant contributed, reviewed, and approved of the findings. A retired music professor and a recent doctoral graduate of music education reviewed the findings.

Contributions

How students might learn music peer-to-peer presents a challenge to teachers who allow peer learning. Exactly what is the teacher supposed to do? To help students interact peer-to-peer in effective and efficient ways requires that teachers learn those ways. Without this knowledge, the teacher must trust his or her training and experience. Mantie (2009) suggests a teacher's training and experience shapes their perspective and how music students should interact to learn. Students coached by teachers not attuned to how young people interact peer to peer might fail to incorporate the kinds of communication peer musicians use to learn. I provide information about structured student-peer talk used to learn music.

My study also contributes to furthering knowledge on learning music peer-to-peer. It builds upon the work of researchers such as Green (2002), Davis (2005), and Wiggins (2015) by examining the everyday conversation adolescents use to learn. Unlike previous research, my study was designed as an investigation into structure and order in peer discourse. A detailed analysis of verbal and nonverbal communication provides

insights into the meanings of verbal and non-verbal communication that emerged during peer music learning outside school.

Summary

The communication among peers learning music might seem random and not pedagogically substantive to music education research or teachers. Such a view might suggest it is not worthy of study. Existing research refutes this view, however, and underscores their value and influence in peer interactions. Because responsibility for student learning in school falls on educators, teachers need to know how students communicate to learn peer-to-peer. Studies leading to an enhanced understanding of this topic can benefit teachers who apply peer music learning with direction and meaningful focal points. Students would profit as a result.

Researchers acknowledge the value of peers learning music, but the literature shows a gap regarding the kinds of communications adolescent musicians use. Building on what we know about peers learning, I focused on understanding the peer communication of adolescent musicians in rehearsals. Methods of discourse analysis entailed collecting communications data *in situ* with three pairs of adolescent musicians. The findings reveal the complex, but structured ways that participants interacted with a peer. The research was limited to communication between three pairs of adolescent guitarists. The implications of this study may inform future research on communication involving three or more musicians and in other settings, including classroom settings.

Chapter 2

Literature Review

People speak with others in order to learn about concepts and situations in the world. One method is by speaking with peers whose knowledge and experience may neither be expert nor obtained through formal education (Boud, Cohen & Sampson 2001). The literature reviewed here gives a perspective for researchers and music educators on how order might emerge in conversations that young musicians use to learn with peers.

Literature on peer learning, contexts of peer music learning, and elements of peer communication support this perspective. The framework enhances a theoretical lens employed here to answer questions about orderly ways adolescents related speaking peer-to-peer.

Philosophers such as Husserl (Husserl, 1970) have argued that the way people think is intimately tied to the objective world we perceive outside ourselves. Dialogues help people to understand the world. Gadamer (Gadamer, 1975, 1994) suggested that communication enables humans to understand social issues. Bakhtin (Bakhtin & Medvedev, 1991) believed that people learn about objects and concepts of the world through language—conversations and written text—as well as how they interpret language. Freire (1970) reasoned, “human beings are not built in silence, but in word, in work, in action-reflection” (p. 88). Freire’s influence in critical pedagogy and social critique—a broader mode of people conversing to become aware and change oppressive conditions—is well known. Music education philosopher Estelle R. Jorgensen (2003)

supports the notion that students' peer-to-peer learning transforms music education:

> A dialogical approach goes a long way toward liberating learners and equipping them with the critical skills they need to resist the pitches and pressures of authority figures. Instead of being told what to do, learners discover what they must do. Not only does its open-endedness allow learners to grapple with dialectical issues in their own terms, but as they participate in this conversation, the process of personal and institutional transformation in music education is set in motion, even if its ends remain forever out of reach. (p. 144)

This stance underscores that dialogues are valuable to peers learning music. Dialogues involve them in the processes of discovering how to learn. Figuring out how to learn in their own words can oppose authoritative ways that educators often stylize (Mantie, 2009) and impose on students to learn music. The congruence of these perspectives signifies a possible value to the field of music education to be gained from studies that focus on orderly ways peers relate to learn through talk.

Both aspects of talk and conditions that influence peer dialogues are evidenced in studies that cover many areas of music education research including peer mentoring (Goodrich, 2017), informal music learning (Green, 2002, 2006), and in the literature on community music learning (Higgins, 2012; Higgins & Campbell, 2010; Miranda, 2000). Specific focus on the structure of communication adolescent musicians use outside school, however, is lacking. Researchers and educators who apply peer music learning might benefit from the information in the literature on (a) the value perceived in peer learning; (b) its influential contexts; (c) the characteristics of communication used; and

(d) the research that has shown the structured ways people use everyday talk to interact person-to-person. A sense of the structure of communication that student-peers use to learn can help music teachers make formative and summative assessments of student-peer interactions. A structured perspective on student-peer dialogues—that is, one attuned to ways in which students communicate—will help teachers facilitate student discussions. By facilitating students, teachers could enable peers learning in language and through dialogic means that students understand.

The primary concern of this review is to introduce research on peers learning music both in and outside school and to highlight findings on communication musicians used in these situations. I drew on existing research to gain information on dialogues peers engage in, to develop the sites of investigation, and to learn about other researchers' approaches in collecting and analyzing data.

The following first section will address the topic of peer learning, research on contexts of peer musicians' dialogues, and features of the communication students use. In the second section interpersonal communication research using relational dialectics theory (RDT) is reviewed. The framework on which this study is based and four model studies with RDT highlight how people use embedded dialectic meanings in orderly ways through everyday conversation.

Peer Learning

Scholars help us gain information about our world through research and publications. In school, teachers educate us in ways that everyday conversations about subjects and ideas cannot. We can pick up a book or read a journal article about a specific

topic. People nevertheless seek peers (e.g., friends, classmates, strangers in their same age group) to learn more. We are all familiar with this kind of learning. Scholars of peer learning (Boud et al., 2001; Furrer, Skinner, & Pitzer, 2014) discuss how people continually learn from each other every day. Falchikov (2007) explained peer learning is a kind of emergent and commonplace education we experience talking with people in our everyday lives. People thoughtfully and arbitrarily converse with peers to obtain certain knowledge (Boud et al., 2001). That peer learning is recognized for its educational effect via everyday talk also points to its capacity to influence music education in and outside school.

Peer learning is widely recognized across various fields of research as a valued way people learn in situations where compatible relationships matter. Beyond the methods of formal teaching, peer learning is focused on personal relationships and on relating while learning (Martin-Beltràn, Chen, Guzman, & Merrills, 2016; Boud et al., 2001; Hara, 2009). Guilmette (2007), for example, examined peer-learning networks in which people in villages and cities organized to achieve economic development in their countries. Different people who shared national ties related to the aim of bettering their lives. Research in psychiatry shows patient support and recovery has improved when patients interacted with one another (Mead, Hilton, & Curtis, 2001). Research on nurses indicate they learn how to better cope with stress and acquire self-efficacy in clinical practice by sharing experiences (Pålsson, Mårtensson, Swenne, Ädel, & Engström, 2017, 2018). Hara (2009) found the interactions of workplace peers enhanced their knowledge at their job by virtue of sharing stories of personal experiences. These studies on peer

learning collectively emphasize its value to many fields of research.

In the field of education, researchers have investigated peer influence on adolescents' motivation and engagement (Furrer et al., 2014). Doctoral candidates and their mentors as peer learners are the focus of some studies. Martin-Beltràn et al. (2016) studied those learning second languages and found great benefit from dialogues with peers. Nelson (2014) examined communication children use with peers and found it to be influential in general language development, social skills, and knowledge acquisition. Studies across many fields support the value of peers relating. Peer dialogues in the process of learning are essential. This present study is focused on such communication processes young musicians use to learn outside school might enhance knowledge in the field of music education. Participants in this present study, for example, indicated that comments such as "Go for it, dude" and "Do it, do yours super-fast" and questions such as "Wanna play that?" and "What do you think?" prompted them to play, to self-evaluate, and motivated them to make decisions about playing guitar. It is noteworthy that adolescent musicians can motivate each other using such brief statements because they suggest how learning can be prompted in the flow of conversations can emerge.

There is little to no adherence to a lecture format in peer learning. Except in situations of peer-led groups, peer teaching, and peer mentoring in which a more knowledgeable student assumes a teacher's role to instruct other students—especially a mentor—students interact and learn collaboratively (Boud, Cohen, & Sampson, 1999). Peer collaborations can involve general one-on-one discussions (e.g., sidebar talk while a teacher lectures), peer feedback sessions in class, one-on-one tutoring, peer-to-peer

learning partnerships, student-led workshops, learning through small and large groups, study groups, team projects, and online formats (Boud et al., 1999; Wessel, 2015). Dialogues might vary within such possibilities and emerge differently from one learning situation to another. Whether a student incorporates language a teacher might use in such dialogues—and whether students are using techniques to teach others or engage in arbitrary conversations—is not immediately clear. This emphasizes how dialogues in peer learning might differ vastly from teacher-student dialogues in school. The variety of ways students can communicate indicates flexible ways peer learning might emerge through peer conversations. Findings on how students exchange knowledge through dialogue, relate without a teacher, and characterize identities as speakers (e.g., who is the teacher and who the learner) support this research's value for the field of education. Such findings can help teachers who apply peer learning in their classrooms. This current study, for example, found adolescent participants identified as Musical Artists in their exchanges. This identity was formed in statements, conversations, and musical play they interpreted in speaking to and with their peers. Knowing this, music teachers who apply peer learning might encourage such talk to empower students.

Peer interactions have a bearing on how people learn personalized, empirical, and expert knowledge. These kinds of knowledge and skills acquisition are evidenced in the worlds of our music students. Young people discuss, for example, music they admire, and they criticize music they do not like. Stickford (2003) examined music-learning experiences of three adolescents and remarked about a conversation with one participant, a self-taught guitarist: "His command of the material is complex and thorough, rivaling

that of any music history professor with whom I have studied" (p. 261). Stickford endorsed her participant's intelligence and knowledge. Such young musicians can influence their peers' learning informally in personalized and expert ways. By extension, peers learning in school—however lacking in knowledge about their subject—can supplement each other's understanding through repetition and restatement of facts that their teachers taught them. We cannot assume students' knowledge in peer learning, but studying how they speak in orderly ways to learn will provide insight into communication processes they use to help each other.

Communication in the social worlds of young people can be interpreted to show there is order and structure to how they speak and nonverbally behave (Brand, 2003; Lamont et al., 2003; Sanford & Eder, 1984). Sanford and Eder (1984), for example, explored lunchtime peer interactions among 120 adolescents in order to understand the social relations of all-female school groups. The researchers found that the girls used techniques in speaking among themselves to share certain information and to relate as a group. The quality of humor in conversations, for instance, was instrumental in how the participants both related to each other and in relating to others outside their group. For example, the girls utilized humor to discuss sexual issues and particular jokes to include or exclude certain people from their group. Particular jokes between certain participants were used to make others feel uncomfortable and unwelcome. The researchers ascertained participants' use of humor showed their dialectical use of openness to certain peers and reserve toward others. Sanford and Eder's study, although not related to music, provides a helpful model for understanding conversation used in peer learning through an

analysis of the vernacular of adolescent musicians outside school.

Students influence and manage learning on their own in formal contexts. Through interviews, Adderley, Kennedy, and Berz (2003) examined data collected from 60 American high school students enrolled in band (*N*=20), choir (*N*=20), and orchestra (*N*=20). They credited their peers as having influenced their joining a music class and their other experiences with music. The researchers explained:

> Benefits of being in a group included the sense of community engendered in the ensembles, the diversity that was apparent in the membership, the opportunity to participate in something musical as a group, and the chance to improve social skills. (Adderley et al., 2003, p. 200)

Engaging socially with peers helped them to feel part of an identified group and to maintain individuality within the group. They enjoyed a sense of community while feeling free to express their individualism. These insights show peer talk as individually and jointly influential to musical participation. It remains a question as to how students spoke to motivate peers. Motivation can come about through pressure or seduction. Adderley et al. characterized peer influence as positive: Students were motivated to join music class. This author's experience has shown that some students will join a high school music class to receive a high grade they think easily achieved or to be near their friends. Such students often lack motivation to learn and distracted others from learning.

Adderley et al. found in-school peer interactions influenced participants' interactions beyond school. The researchers stated, "Many of these students believed that it was natural for them to want to spend time with one another outside the classroom due

to their common interest in music" (p. 201). This suggests that talking about music is how some adolescents relate to one another and grow as people. Their talk is personal. The researchers argued, "A significant finding of the study is the degree of importance students place on the social aspects of their ensemble membership" (p. 204). The fact that students value social interactions and their sense of belonging in a peer group adds support for research on everyday talk that adolescents use with peers to manage music learning.

It follows that an understanding of the conversations in student-peer interactions holds potential for applications in school. For instance, someone other than the teacher voicing instruction can benefit students in at least two ways: A peer explanation repeats and can extend the versions a teacher provides, and peer explanations are likely provided in language that students more readily understand. Speaking with each other, students repeat and reiterate to peers what teachers tell them. Repetition of information can aid in its retention. Another benefit involves the student's mental process: Ruminating to find words to relate concepts and ideas further engages a person's mind and can enhance retention and support intellectual growth. The advantages to students and of a structure in talk used for peer learning—that is, for teachers to facilitate student interactions—further supports the need for this study on speech used in peers learning music. Linking knowledge about structured communication used in peer learning can provide starting points for assessing and evaluating talk student-peers use to learn when removed from their teachers' direct involvement.

Peer learning advantages. Peer learning promotes self-awareness and retention

of knowledge through reflection. That people must find words to share knowledge that their peers can comprehend highlights a primary advantage of applying peer learning in music education. When people ruminate about their knowledge, it reinforces recall of that knowledge. Thinking about what one knows (depending on the situation), a person must assess his or her own understanding and determine how to speak to convey information in a manner other peers will understand. Students aiming to explain concepts they learn in school with peers must search their own minds for words and organize the concepts in words that both they understand and their peers understand. This can be an iterative dialogue process. Increased self-awareness and retention of knowledge are strong motivations to apply peer learning with students in school music classes.

The choice of language and conversational tones while relating to peers provides other innate benefits. It helps people enhance interpersonal communication skills. Communication in peer learning can also help people practice cooperative learning over competitive learning. Boud et al. (1999) and Wessel (2015) found that people engaged in problem solving and decision making with peers had enhanced how to set goals, how to assess learning, and their commitment to explore and take risks.

Peer learning complications. Over time, some words can become so localized that only one’s peers can understand and relate to them. Certain idiosyncratic and inappropriate terms or tone of speech might threaten or ostracize some peers from further interaction with one another (see Sanford and Eder, 1984). The exploratory methods that peers use in choosing words and conveying safe learning environments—that is, to express ideas and explore creative ways of learning with each other—might be

misconstrued as unorganized and haphazard. Learning with peers can be leaderless. How peers manage group their interactions in these situations, however, might be problematic. In addition, a mismatch can occur between correct methods of teaching and learning. Uncorrected, peers risk propagating poor methods and incorrect information. Conversations can go astray and move into personal concerns. A student's past experiences and degree of understanding or skill may be too much at odds with their peers to be mutually productive (Wessel, 2015). Knowing and understanding peer talk holds the potential for music teachers to apply that knowledge in their classrooms to help their students navigate difficult and unfamiliar territories in their conversations.

Other drawbacks to peer learning might occur. Feichas's (2010) exploratory study highlighted how students' former formal and informal music education backgrounds shaped their experiences interacting with peers to learn. Feichas examined the impact that different backgrounds in music education—both informal and formal—had on university students in Brazil. Forty first-year student participants gave interview responses that Feichas grouped according to their self-identifications as informal or formal music students. Participants who shared backgrounds as formal music students reported difficulties with improvisation, creativity, and playing by-ear. "Classical music students indicated that they felt they lacked development of aural skills. They would like to develop 'playing by ear' as well as other aural practices in order to have 'better ears'" (p. 52). As students before entering college, they were used to being told what to do; experiences with improvising and learning by ear were not factors. By contrast, participants who had adapted to learning with their peers informally "did not have

problems with creative skills and playing by ear" (p. 53). While it is uncertain how the participants who identified as having informal backgrounds interacted with peers as young musicians, other studies (Davis, 2005; Jaffurs, 2006) indicate that by-ear learning is common when young musicians learn informally with peers outside school. Despite possible drawbacks to peer learning, the research generally indicates that communication in peer learning helps people foster relationships and understanding.

Peer Learning in Music Education

This section of the literature review shows that conditions of learning music can affect talk between peer learners. Discussed first is a broad trend of studies and relevant sources on peer music learning that exists across three contexts—formal, non-formal, and informal. I discuss evidence in studies showing peer learners gather and learn in various ways together. This section concludes with explanations of certain elements of talk found when peers learn together. A sense of the structure of dialogues peer musicians use to learn can be formed with the knowledge of these findings.

Peer Learning in Formal, Non-Formal, and Informal Contexts

The topic of peer music learning emerged in the literature as a trend across three contexts: formal, non-formal, and informal music learning. Conditions associated with each context indicate that each affects peer learning differently. Adult educators, instructors, environments of learning in and outside school, and student-peers are among influential factors that give shape to how students speak peer-to-peer (Allsup, 2002; Goodrich, 2007; Kastner, 2012). Adherence to imposed standards and prescribed methods in formal contexts also imposes a structure on how children are taught and learn

(Jorgensen, 2003; Fornäs, Lindberg, & Sernhede, 1995). Conditions of non-formal learning are relatively systematic. Non-formal learning involves voluntary participation. It is not an imposed activity and can occur between peers in any context (Higgins & Campbell, 2010; Miranda, 2000; Mok, 2011). Peer musicians often manage to learn in informal contexts (Green, 2002, 2006). Knowledge of the various influences on peer dialogues across these contexts can enhance our views on how students might communicate when learning.

Peer communication in formal music learning. I agree with Jorgensen's (2003) explanation of school music as the context for formal learning. According to Jorgensen, formal music learning involves "generally didactic, emphasize prescribed subject matter and procedures, and utilize assessment approaches to validate this instruction" (p. 3). It is a highly structured class. In public schools, formal music learning happens along with a mandated curriculum—the prescribed subject matter and procedures. Teachers are highly aware of the subject matter of school curricula imposed by their school district. They are also aware of the traditions and community expectations of performance—the winter program, city and state contests, and half-time shows. The notion of prescribed procedures includes traditional music education practices, such as lectures given by a teacher, even when unstructured processes are involved.

Research shows that formal musical education can occur in community music schools and programs (see Ford, 1998 and Miranda, 2000). Outside a public-school environment, conditions in some community music education situations do not include students in decision-making processes (Argott, 2005). Experiences with members of my

jazz band have included formal music education; at times, I have prescribed that veteran and potential new members learn songs. As a band, we have utilized assessment approaches to hire newcomers or dismiss fledgling members unable to improvise solos. For the purposes of discussion, formal music education includes community music schools, programs, and group situations that align with Jorgensen's definition.

Studies on peer mentoring align with peer learning that occurs in formal contexts (Brand, 2003; Darrow, Gibbs, & Wedel, 2005; Goodrich, 2007, 2017; Sheldon, 2001). Approaches to the application of peer mentoring in school can affect whether student-peer talk emerges in ways that the students themselves construct or in ways the teacher imposes on them (Darrow et al., 2005; Green, 2008; Wiggins, 2015).

Research on peer mentoring in music education underscores the fact that adult instructors affect student-peer talk in a formal context. Many researchers show, and sometimes advocate, that educators who apply peer mentoring in their classrooms train their students how to systematically speak with peers (Goodrich, 2007; Johnson, 2015; Sheldon, 2001; Taylor, 2016). Darrow et al. (2005) examined how teachers set up mentoring experiences with students in fifth-grade music classes and found that teachers had had students modeling two roles: Students practiced mentoring and then switched roles to being mentored by other students. Darrow et al. (2005) indicate that such training can involve imitative ways mentored students can ask for and respond to help their peers might offer. Johnson (2015) emphasized that students training to mentor other students should include modeling interactions. How students interact peer-to-peer from this standpoint is affected by how teachers might train students to mentor. Students relating to

peer mentor after having been trained would be expected to speak as their knowledge and experience from training guided them.

In his review of literature on peer mentoring in music education, Goodrich (2017) discussed research on applications of peer mentoring in formal contexts. Goodrich's review of studies stressed that peer mentoring "requires a significant amount of time and organization by the teacher" (p. 14). High school music teachers often use their summer vacations to train select students as peer leaders. The significant amount of time educators would find necessary to be set aside to train students in mentoring peers emphasizes the influence of teachers on students' peer talk. Research focused on how conversation musicians use to learn outside school can indicate in which ways peer dialogues might differ from teacher-student conversations.

Goodrich's (2005) examination of factors that contributed to the success of a high school jazz band in Phoenix, Arizona, in which students mentored peers. Goodrich's background as a jazz educator contributed to the selection of a high school jazz band of the highest quality from which he collected and analyzed details about factors he found contributed to its success. He found organized peer talk to be among these factors. He noted that the jazz band director had spent time in the summer training students how to mentor. Observing the students during the school year, Goodrich identified three levels of communication in their peer interactions: low-level, mid-level, and high-level peer mentoring. In low-level mentoring, Goodrich explained, students answered their peers' simple questions "such as how to finger certain notes" (p. 186). Such questions are one way an individual student might approach talking with a more knowledgeable peer. Mid-

level mentoring referred to instances in which a section leader assisted other students; they coached section members to play rhythms or articulate them correctly on their instruments. Goodrich observed high-level mentoring to involve student section leaders coaching their section or helping them one-on-one. Individual and joint communication—that is, one student in dialogue with another student to assist him or her—occurred at this level. Goodrich's findings complement the goal of the current study to provide a lens for finding organization in the ways students communicate to learn peer-to-peer, albeit in a formal context.

Brand (2003) examined the untrained peer mentoring interactions of young participants asked to teach a friend an unfamiliar song. Among the findings, Brand noted that participants—aged six, nine, and twelve—spent more than 81% of their interaction time in joint dialogue or discussion, as opposed to playing music. In a 45-minute class, this would equate to nearly 37 minutes of dialogue. Brand's participants only mentored a peer in one session, but in explaining Brand's observations of the children mentoring each other, the author asserted, "Children teach each other with ease and confidence, using a broad variety of strategies" (p. 14). She recommended that "Peer teaching abilities should be encouraged in schools, to the benefit of both teachers and learners" (p. 14). Brand's findings exemplify the agency of dialogues that other researchers (Davis, 2005; Green, 2002, 2005a; Jaffurs, 2006) emphasize could aid students learning music in school.

The percentage of time students could spend speaking peer-to-peer might force some teachers to reconsider its value and decide not to apply peer mentoring in their

classrooms. Brand's (2003) findings support research on perceiving organized ways adolescent musicians interact to learn without teachers. Brand found that nonverbal communication between pairs of students to learn a song could help educators understand what they might also observe with children learning in pairs. Interactions between the pairs included their demonstrating, comparing, associating, connecting, assisting, paying attention, playing, recording, planning, using visual symbols, singing with each other, and dividing music into parts. Instances of individual and joint speaking techniques among the peers included verbalizing, asking questions, giving and asking for feedback, encouraging, giving nonverbal instruction, explaining, and assessing learning. These findings provide evidence of the shape of everyday talk. Brand's study outlines how untrained students can communicate while mentoring a peer in a formal context. Systematic ways children help each other to learn songs are innate to their interactions. Questions remain, however, about the kinds of verbal and nonverbal communication music educators might observe when adolescents are permitted—and not trained—to learn peer-to-peer. The amount of time student-peers might spend talking and not playing music can cause concern. Knowledge of how peer dialogues structurally emerge in sound ways without training, however, can aid teachers with what they might observe and evaluate with their students in peer mentoring applications.

Peer communication in non-formal music learning. The literature under this heading aligns with Mok's (2011) definition of non-formal music learning. Mok researched non-formal learning to clarify the term as it applied to music education. According to Mok, "Non-formal learning is relatively systematic and (but not

necessarily) pre-planned with an explicit intention on the part of both learner and mentor to accomplish a/some specific learning task(s)" (2011, pp. 12–13). This differentiates non-formal learning from the conditions associated with formal music education. A non-formal situation might or might not be prearranged; a teacher prescribes subject matter in the context of formal music education. A non-formal situation is relatively methodical or organized; formal music education imposes a curriculum. Focusing on specific tasks in a non-formal way might not be part of the lesson plan, or a lesson plan might not exist. Mok further explained, "Mentors may include family members, established musicians, a ceremonial practitioner or other children" (p. 13). This makes clear that non-formal music learning might occur without trained adult teachers and that children might learn with their peers.

Such non-formal music learning can appear in other contexts. Mok emphasized that differences between contexts of learning and those of non-formal learning can emerge in both formal and informal settings:

> Whilst the informal way of learning is neither sequential nor orderly and can occur anywhere, non-formal learning refers to a kind of learning which is relatively systematic and (but not necessarily) pre-planned, with a clear intention on the part of the learner and teacher to accomplish a particular learning task. Unlike formal learning which has a clear and highly structured curriculum, an instruction plan, a sequential learning process, a clear assessment plan, and a person in charge, in non-formal learning, the assessment and the intended learning outcomes have not been clearly highlighted. (p. 15)

Considering these differences and the fact that non-formal learning can emerge in formal and informal contexts provides information for my study. Through experiences learning music with members of a jazz band, the author knows that conditions of formal learning can apply outside school. Peer musicians can discuss learning in sequential and disorganized ways whether or not a teacher is involved. Mok (2011) explained that non-formal music learning is voluntary and differs from formal learning in that it might be wholly or mostly influenced by an educator. It also differs from informal learning because ordered and systematic processes are consistent with non-formal learning.

The literature shows non-formal music learning pertains to schools and community music programs. Peer interactions in which student musicians volunteer are an important factor to some community music environments. Miranda (2000) noted that such peer interactions were "a critical component" and established in guidelines for best practices of community music programs (p. 303).

Non-formal music learning is depicted in Argott's (2005) film documentary about Paul Green's community music school. Argott presented an intriguing example of an instructor at a rock music school who employed formal and non-formal conditions of learning. Over nine months, Argott filmed day-to-day activities at the Paul Green School of Rock Music in Philadelphia and presented a summary. While Green's authority as a teacher was enforced by his age difference with his students, his co-constructed and spontaneous methods mirrored the notions of non-formal music learning illustrated in other studies (e.g., Allsup, 2002; Davis, 2005; Ford, 1998; Jaffurs, 2006). Green's students voluntarily participated and explored learning through one-on-one and group

discussions. Argott focused mainly on Green's interactions with students; however, the camera panned over many instances of students learning with peers throughout the school. Green's unorthodox directorship, combined with the students' hard work, resulted certain students in the school successfully earning an opportunity to perform at a festival honoring rock musician Frank Zappa, *Zappanale*, held in Germany.

A book co-authored by Higgins and Campbell (2010), both community music musicians, educators, and researchers of community music learning, provides lessons for engaging students to learn with peers and in less autocratic ways with a teacher. In *Free to Be Musical: Group Improvisation in Music*, the co-authors offer 21 music improvisation exercises they refer to as events. Teachers facilitate these events with their classes (referred to as workshops) that focus on creativity and exploration of improvised musical ideas.

The events Higgins and Campbell provide as suggested lessons align with the situation of non-formal music learning. The co-authors explain events as group interactions facilitated by a leader (i.e., a teacher or instructor), and students are encouraged to voluntarily add their input within the outlined guidelines. The desired aims are semi-structured, less controlled by the facilitator, and more controlled by the students. Students might or might not contribute ideas for improvisation. The authors stressed that "facilitation is concerned with encouraging open dialogue among different individuals with differing perspectives," which involves both giving up control and dictating instructions (p. 7). Students are not forced to contribute. Students volunteer to speak. Higgins and Campbell, however, recommend that facilitators encourage peer

communication, stating, “Exploration of diverse assumptions and options are often some of the significant aims of facilitators” (p. 7). Students’ assumptions and suggested methods of how to learn music might not be entirely systematic or pre-planned. This reality suggests that a proverbial Pandora’s box of differing perspectives, assumptions, and options by different individuals might emerge from student-peer open dialogues. Students and the facilitator could impact the content and nature of discussions. The fact that Higgins and Campbell recommend that facilitators encourage students to engage in dialogues denotes a departure from formal music learning, yet such learning is not informal (Green, 2002, 2006, 2008). Rather, the researchers point to conditions relating to the context of non-formal music learning—that is, students volunteering to engage in such dialogues imply relatively systematic learning would follow. Higgins and Campbell leave unanswered questions about how facilitators might perceive and interpret conversation between students to facilitate discussions. Understanding that communication processes in peer learning are produced highly organized through training in a formal context and less structured in the non-formal context nevertheless provides us a sense and implies why and how conversations might differ.

According to Mok (2011), non-formal music learning can occur when peer musicians collaboratively aim to achieve certain goals in learning. Allsup (2002) examined students who volunteered to participate after school in music groups centered on composing. Allsup’s dissertation on mutual and democratic processes among nine high school band students showed that students’ interactions were purposeful and relatively systematic. Allsup posed general goals for participants to learn music in two

peer groups that students had the freedom to form. Among the findings is a descriptive list of how peer dialogues emerged among the adolescent musicians.

Allsup outlined a list of communication processes he found the adolescent musicians had used: “1) expressing ideas vocally through singing; 2) expressing ideas instrumentally with or without speaking; 3) expressing ideas by applying a combination of both techniques, or 4) ordinary dialogue” (p. 193). These findings show that peer musicians expressed ideas by singing and by musical instruments. Singing ideas and using instruments in combination with verbal and nonverbal communication shows the importance of examining the particular means of delivery musicians might use.

Allsup’s study contrasted autocratic and democratic learning by focusing on how his participants interacted in a non-formal music situation. Although self-directed and peer-led, peer music learning seemed to encourage the students to acquire more knowledge and skills. He referred to the influence of the theoretical perspectives of Dewey (1916, 1933, 1989), Freire (1970, 1996, 1997), Greene (1978, 1988, 1995), and hooks (1994, 1995) in explaining that autocracy in the classroom—in which a teacher establishes the goals of music education—tends to discourage students from contributing to their own education. He noted participants were serious about learning, but considered it as “fun, nonobligatory, self-directed, and personally meaningful” (p. 355). Students valued their interpersonal relationships in peer learning, which they thought of as fun. That participants thought learning was fun suggests that the tone of conversations might be a tool that peer musicians use to facilitate their interactions.

Allsup’s list of these interactions shines a light on broad peer-group interactions,

however certain interactions indicated specific kinds of peer communication. The second point of Allsup's summary suggests participants spoke through a "processes of discovery" (p. 355). Allsup observed, for example, that participants communicated nonverbally, and the researcher explained that verbal communication was not always prioritized in the students' exchanges. "Should someone's tune take hold, or a progression suddenly speak, a head will lift from a fingerboard, eye contact will be made . . . and talking may or may not be necessary" (p. 331). Allsup asserted that such nonverbal and musical interactions impact learning. Allsup's research underlined the fact that student peers interacted using nonverbal communication in a non-formal context.

Many music education researchers, such as Fornäs et al. (1995), Allsup (2002), and Stickford (2003), suggest the issue of communication processes used by peer musicians has not been adequately addressed and warrants further study. Peer communication used in the context of non-formal music education, although systematic and goal-oriented at times, involves approaches that students bring to the environment; students volunteer their input. The information in Allsup's study highlights how many styles of communication might be found in the non-formal context.

Talk by peers is also influenced when teachers apply socially constructed learning in their music classes (Blair, 2009; Shively, 2002; Wiggins, 1994, 2015). Wiggins's (2015) book *Teaching for Musical Understanding* captured many ideas about socially constructed learning. Wiggins emphasized that socially constructed learning involves cooperative processes and social experiences mirrored in ways people learn with peers in real-life situations. Socially constructed learning also aligns with the non-formal model.

Students speaking peer-to-peer, for instance, might be seen as relatively systematic. Wiggins reiterates that students volunteer to participate in learning that is exploratory and not necessarily pre-planned. Wiggins differentiates socially constructed music learning from formal music learning: its focus is on learning that occurs between people, not on a teacher's dictated methods.

Wiggins described how teachers influence conversation in socially constructed learning:

> Teachers are not only answering student questions but also using their questions to learn more about students' perspectives and levels of understanding. They are also helping learners know how to seek their own answers to questions. Therefore, in this environment, classroom dialog goes way beyond teacher questions and student answers. (pp. 43–44)

Such a teacher is involved with helping students learn how to learn without a teacher. They facilitate students in learning how to help each other seek answers.

Wiggins also underscores the significance of students' individual and joint communication:

> The primary role of the learner is to learn—that is, to engage in the learning experiences and construct his or her understanding. An equally important role of the learner is to interact with peers to enable everyone's learning and to provide scaffolding for peers when it is needed. (p. 49)

Suggesting that students in a setting with peers bring in their own experiences to learn music indicates that individual communication is critical. That a student must construct

understanding through interactions with others indicates that joint communication is also important. It is not clear that young musicians speak and interact in organized ways. Wiggins's book draws attention to the lack of research on students' techniques and orderly speaking to learn with peers.

Peer communication in informal music learning. The last fifteen years have seen studies involving the processes of peer learning in the context of informal music learning (Green, 2008; Davis, 2005; Jaffurs, 2006). Such studies provide evidence that peer musicians, when outside school, manage their dialogues to learn (Bennett, 1980; Green, 2002; Timoner, 2004). Outside school, musicians and their peers initiate music practice and conversations on topics they choose. In school, teachers are involved. The aims of teachers' instruction according to Green (2008) are that student-peers manage their interactions. Green's (2002, 2006, 2008) seminal research in the United Kingdom on popular musicians highlights strategic ways a teacher might instruct their students to informally learn with peers. The current author employs Green's (2002) description of young musicians' informal learning practices as the definition to guide this review of literature:

> young musicians largely teach themselves or 'pick up' skills and knowledge, usually with the help or encouragement of their family and peers, by watching and imitating musicians around them and by making reference to recordings or performances and other live events involving their chosen music. (p. 5)

Green underscores that informal music learning is voluntarily—young musicians largely teach themselves. Green points to self-regulation: Young musicians pick up skills and

knowledge by watching, imitating, and referencing recordings and live performances. They also learn music they themselves choose. Green explained how informal music learning usually involves family and peers; teachers are not included. Green explains that with informal peer learning the influence of educators is diminished. Green and other music education researchers (Bennett, 1980; Davis, 2005; Lamont, et al., 2003; Jaffurs, 2006; Stickford, 2003; Timoner, 2004) have also indicated that young musicians converse to learn together whether applied in school or when musicians gather to learn outside school.

Strategies perceived in informal settings suggest that peer learning might involve organized methods of purposeful talk. Literature on the application of informal music learning in school (Beaumont, 2015; Green, 2008, Kastner, 2012) is grounded in research on strategies peer musicians use to learn outside school (Davis, 2005; Green, 2002; Jaffurs, 2006; Lamont, et al., 2003). Green (2002, 2006, 2008) discusses five strategies based on how popular musicians learn peer-to-peer. Green outlined these five strategies for teachers: (1) the teacher allows students to choose the music; (2) students learn by-ear; (3) students learn in groups with friends and little adult guidance; (4) students learn in personal and haphazard ways; and (5) students combine listening, playing, singing, improvising, and composing in order to learn. The strategies indicate certain activities—students choosing songs, using recordings, playing by ear—which a teacher might initiate. They provide some sense of talk and music playing that might take place among student-peers. Green, however, characterized peer learning as unfolding in haphazard ways. This denotes randomness and general lack of orderly talk. This also suggests that

Green either did not closely examine the popular musicians' communication behaviors or, having closely examined them, did not detect any order or system associated with them. In describing idiosyncratic communication as haphazard, the author undermines socially constructed dialogues that might, in fact, be structured albeit through exploratory talk or in dialectical conversations (Baxter, 2011; Baxter & Montgomery, 1996).

Further discussions on peer learning by Green (2005a, 2005b, 2006) point to reasons why the current study is one whose time has come. Green, for example, noted in 2006 that research on informal music practices was in an initial stage of growth: "We have focused mainly on the music itself—the product—and have largely failed to notice the processes by which this product is transmitted in the world outside the school" (p. 107). It is significant to the current study that Green indicated that interpersonal communication between informal music learners is an underdeveloped area of research. Green pointed to a need for research on peer learning, that is studies to enhance knowledge about the processes of communication peers use to learn: "The more research that can be done on informal/aural or other learning practices that have hitherto lain largely outside formal music education the better" (Green, 2009, p. 130). Green also asserted this in book form (2008). The current author's experiences applying Green's informal learning strategies highlighted my inability to interpret how learning emerged in dialogues among peers. Green's peer strategies do not account for how peer musicians communicate, that is, how peer musicians might evaluate, assess, or acquire musical knowledge using various conversational techniques.

Green may have understated the role of talk in peer music learning. Certain

questions remain about the substance and management of peer talk suggested in strategies the author found musicians use to learn popular music. Green (2002) reported that the musicians she interviewed had summarized their talk while learning popular music with peers as “endless talk about scales and harmony, techniques, rhythms, meters, styles, approaches to performance, music history, instruments and equipment” (p. 83). Their description of peer talk suggests their focus on musical topics and processes of learning indicate that they spoke at great length. Green gave context to the notion of popular musicians’ endless talk by explaining that they communicated in ways friends speak with one another. Green, however, left unanswered whether any kind of organization or system in their endless talk might be observed. Self-taught musicians presumably use everyday talk to relate and exchange ideas in ways they implicitly understand. Although it might have been implied, Green was not explicit about dialogues that occurred repeatedly or systematically among musicians.

Green (2006) further characterized popular musicians’ dialogues as untrained and not systematic. The author described their practices as lacking methods and organized processes of learning and asserted “one of the strongest, if perhaps implicit, delineations transmitted by popular music is the notion that its musicians acquire their skills and knowledge without any apparent need for education” (p. 106). The fourth observation that Green outlined was the notion that popular musicians learn informally through personal and haphazard ways. Green’s characterizations of learning popular music as occurring without a need for education and involving endless talk does not highlight systematic interactions but does provide a sense for how peer musicians communicate

outside school without teachers.

Bennett (1980) preceded Green (2006) in observing that rock musicians learned without educative methods. Acting as a participant observer, Bennett conducted research on how people become rock musicians outside school. He joined and formed rock bands as he researched. Bennett's fieldwork for research was conducted between 1970 and 1972 and continues to impact informal music learning studies (e.g., Davis, 2005, 2010; Green, 2002, 2008; Jaffurs, 2006). At the time, Bennett emphasized that rock musicians had no institutional locations to meet and noted that many would-be rock musicians gravitate toward interacting with their peers—rather than music educators—when they first become interested in playing music. One guitarist mentioned, "I met this guy at school" (p. 24), in reference to the person who initially peaked his interest in his instrument. Bennett further explained that rock musicians learned through processes of "self-recruitment and learning without pedagogy which are not possibilities in other forms of music in America" (p. 18). Extending from the suggestion that no pedagogical system exists for rock musicians, Bennett may have emphasized that rock musicians learn through *de facto* communication processes that emerge differently from those in formally structured pedagogical situations. Musicians communicate to learn and play music—they use verbal, nonverbal, and music (Allsup, 2002) as channels to transmit and acquire knowledge and skills. These ideas suggest that something systematic and ordered might exist in the ways peer musicians communicate. Learning music without pedagogy might involve learning that emerges through talk; for some music education researchers the notion of pedagogy is a socially constructed framework (Allsup, 2002 and Wiggins,

2015).

Scholars who study peer talk in music might gain greater understanding for the kinds of everyday dialogues musicians use in contexts outside school through research into the field and by viewing filmed documentaries. Timoner (2004), for example, collected over two thousand hours of film footage over seven years in a case study of two rock bands, The Brian Jonestown Massacre and The Dandy Warhols. Timoner's film, *Dig!* documents everyday talk involving peer musicians during practice and including periods of intense and uncensored talk. While the film concentrated on peer interactions among young adults in two rock groups, it contains scenes in which real-life musicians managed learning and playing music through dialogues. Timoner's film revealed uncensored aspects of everyday talk not characteristically highlighted in informal music education studies, including their bickering and contentious dialogues. Everyday talk is managed by the members of each band, as well as between the two bands' members when their paths crossed while touring.

Preconceived notions about haphazard and unstructured talk that may come to mind while reading research about talk among musician peers are explicit in Timoner's film. Timoner did not imply any specific method of analysis for the choices of which talk between peer musicians to highlight, thereby leaving interpretation of the dialogues to the viewer. Timoner seems to have selected certain peer interactions in order to show that interactions among one band's members enhanced their careers while those of the other group resulted in their disbanding. The film is relevant in showing examples of everyday talk by musicians that may be influential to learning and relating.

Davis (2005) focused on three high school musicians who formed a rock band, and the researcher perceived some order in their interactions. Observations of six of the band's rehearsals over four months revealed a key peer learning interaction: The participants assumed roles in teaching each other. Davis discovered that the musicians established rehearsal routines and concluded that these routine interactions contributed to motivating the participants and enhanced their commitment to rigorous study. This conclusion provides a further endorsement of the need for research into how adolescent-peers speak when learning by-ear without adult teachers. The more we can learn about organized ways peers use everyday talk to learn music, the more we can assess how their speech influences each other's learning.

Jaffurs (2006) examined a garage band composed of two boys in the sixth grade and one in high school and found that they developed musical competency by interacting without the presence of an adult teacher. The research centered on the band members' interactions—although, not specifically verbal and nonverbal techniques used to learn—in settings mostly outside school, e.g., friends' homes. Data were collected through interviews, observations, and the researcher's recordings of rehearsals and performances. Information about the participants' involvement with a music camp for rock bands came from interviews.

Jaffurs observed, for example, that the musicians established a routine that gave form to their learning. The researcher perceived structured and formulaic rehearsal behaviors. The guitarist, for instance, began each rehearsal with new material. Although music composition is outside the scope of the current study, Jaffurs observed that the

band members collaborated to compose their own music. The band members also scheduled rehearsals, decided when to meet, what to rehearse, how they would rehearse, and how long they would practice.

Jaffurs's participants indicated that their self-constructed habits learning music were more influential to their overall music making than music classes controlled by teachers. They expressed opinions that school music and learning in the rock band camp were too constricting. Jaffurs added an impression of this point: "When comparing the musicality of the members of the garage band and the motivation and commitment to learning how to become rock musicians, some might say that the formal education system is not as effective or efficient as an informal approach" (p. 180). Jaffurs explained that how the band members learned was the result of ways they communicated peer-to-peer: Certain members assumed leadership roles and told others what to do, and when participants jointly collaborated to create songs, they spoke to make decisions together. This is aligned to Jaffurs's view that participants learned through methods; however, the researcher did not quote or expound upon how participants managed such communication strategies.

The value of peer interactions might be more important and influential in motivating students to learn music informally than we understand. Lamont et al. (2003) found that peers learning music outside school was highly interesting to young people. The three collected data from 1,470 primary and secondary students and 42 teachers in the United Kingdom to explore attitudes about music education both in and outside school. Data Lamont et al. analyzed showed 45% of their participants—including 39% of

seventh- and ninth-grade students—reported their desire to learn an instrument away from school. Their findings show "high reported levels of informal music-making outside school" (p. 239). Many reported they jointly learned with peers outside school, listened to music they individually selected, and composed with friends. The researchers emphasized peer-led learning of music in school might enable students "to assert a degree of ownership over their music-making," but cautioned that bridging learning music practices in school with those occurring outside school is complicated (p. 239). Lamont et al. suggesting this complexity adds support for the need for research to explore how peer talk is used in learning music.

The literature indicates that music educators attempt to detach from and diminish their role in teaching when applying informal music learning with their classes (Green 2006, 2008; Kastner, 2012). Teachers aim to allow students to learn peer-to-peer. However far they stand back from interactions with students, teachers are participants in the informal context of learning. How teachers perceive peer talk used to learn music is questionable. Kastner (2012) highlighted this in a study on music teachers' perspectives on informal learning in their classes. Four elementary school music teachers agreed to read selected literature about informal music learning, implement learning with peers in their classrooms, and meet bimonthly for six months for discussions about their experiences. Kastner's participants discussed the guilt they felt in standing back and needing to "talk less" to allow students to learn jointly (p. 206). The teachers observed, "Students' peer interactions included disagreements and tough critiques, but they also found that the students would work together and teach each other necessary parts" (p.

245). Kastners's insights point to the tone of conversations as a feature of students' peer talk. Teachers who stand back to allow student-peer interactions must understand and account for the students' education; the tone of conversations is one element of communication that teachers might use to account for learning facilitated or inhibited among peers. Research could provide information to help them in facilitating and evaluating student-peer learning while standing back will empower students to maintain this responsibility.

Researchers and music educators might lack understanding of how student-peer dialogues help students learn. The lack of focused studies on communication processes that peer musicians use to learn suggest that misperceptions might occur about how talk between student peers can emerge when informal music learning is applied in school. Beaumont (2015), for instance, applied informal music education in a university guitar class of six over a semester in which the students learned through peer interactions. Beaumont interpreted one participant's actions as lacking interest: "I observed Lee noodling frequently on his instrument while someone was talking" (p. 93). From his point of view as researcher and educator, he interpreted what other music educators might also perceive as a student's lack of interest. The fallacy in this perspective derives from who we are as educators and the conditions of formal music education. The student might have indeed been interested in learning, albeit in a self-focused manner. (He was, after all, playing his instrument.) Here we have some indication of a potential problem with peer interactions and with the study of informal music learning in school. Research that relays only the researcher's interpretations can fail to offer in-depth interpretations of the

meanings of participants' individual behaviors and their dialogues with peers. Research on peer interactions in applications of informal music education in school will benefit by an analysis of data collected from the perspectives of student-peers. A deeper perception of structure in peer talk emerges from focusing research on peer musicians' perspectives of communication and nonverbal behaviors they use to informally learn.

Overview of peer learning contexts. The main focus of the current study is to provide a framework to perceive the structure of everyday talk used by peer musicians. Its goal is to find orderly ways adolescents learn music outside school. The literature reviewed thus far shows peer learning can be shaped by the contexts of formal, non-formal, and informal music education. Researchers' definitions of these contexts outline certain influential conditions (Jorgensen, 2003; Mok, 2011; Green, 2002). Conditions involving teachers and prescribed subject matter that are linked to the formal context (Jorgensen, 2003) do not impose as much on non-formal music learning (Mok, 2011). The literature on the informal learning indicated increased influence from musicians' engagement in self-teaching, their peers, and with music they choose to learn (Green, 2006, 2008). Elliot and Silverman (2015) created a figure to illustrate a phenomenon they refer to as "fading" in which teachers remove their support to enable students to solve problems (p. 434). This is depicted with Figure 1.

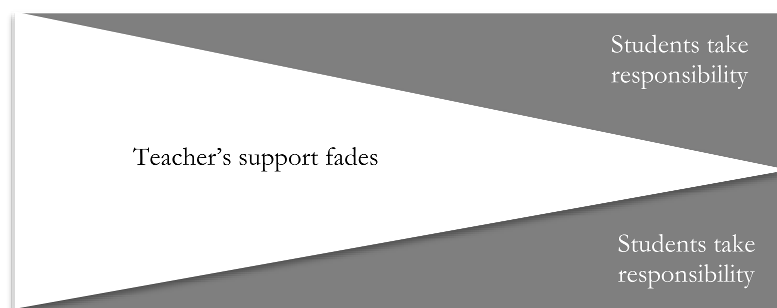

Figure 1. The "Fading" Strategy (Elliot and Silverman, 2015).

Elliot and Silverman explained, "a teacher's support can (and should) fade over longer time periods (or even during single lessons) as student take more responsibility for finding and solving musical problems" (p. 434). This author observed a parallel notion in the literature involving contexts of music education. Teachers in non-formal and informal contexts less impose and control conditions of students learning with peers. Figure 2 illustrates this idea of shifting influences on learners' peer talk across the contexts.

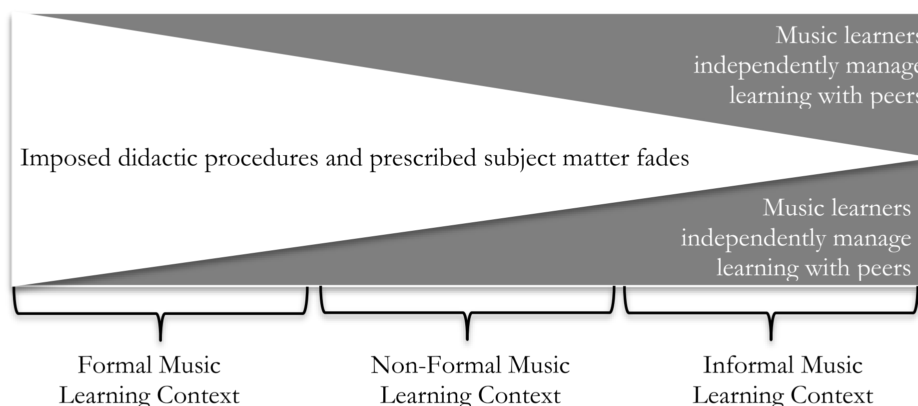

Figure 2. Peer Learners Fading Strategy Across Contexts. Fading imposition of conditions on peer talk over three contexts of music learning. Bracketed terms under the diagram denote conditions of learning found in the reviewed literature on contexts of music learning. The white area depicts diminished conditions of teacher involvement, prescribed subject matter, and assessments of instructions associated with the contexts. This area is greatest over the context of formal learning because conditions are most firmly imposed on peer learning. The white area is depicted as narrowing because conditions of influence diminish with non-formal context and are least influential with informal learning. Gray areas show the increasing influence of music learners' involvement to self-teach and interact with peers to learn music they choose.

The figure illustrates this author's summary perspective of the literature involving learning music with peers and shows conditions that can affect peer talk in three defined contexts.

Characteristics of conversations in peer music learning. Various dimensions of communication in peer learning are evidenced across music education research. Dimensions of peer communication discussed in the following section include (a) channels of communication (Allsup, 2002; Green, 2002; Davis, 2005), (b) tone of conversations (Argott, 2005; Feichas, 2010; Timoner, 2004), (c) perceived homogenies of peer talk (Bennett, 1980; Green, 2006; Kastner, 2012; Wiggins; 2015), and (d) identities of speakers (Goodrich, 2007; Johnson, 2015).

The two channels by which peer musicians transmit knowledge peer-to-peer are verbal and nonverbal communication. These two channels of communication fundamentally attune us to how peers learn through dialogues. They are the processes music education scholars suggest we might focus research on in order to discover how peer musicians learn together (see Green, 2006; Jaffurs, 2006; and Stickford, 2003). Research suggests that language and nonverbal cues, which includes the music itself, that students use might have a greater influence on learning than a teacher's group lecture (Barrett, 2002; Kastner, 2012; Seddon, 2005; Shields, 2001). Beyond these methods of communication, researchers emphasize that peer musicians also communicate using music (e.g., written and played) (Allsup, 2002; Davis, 2005, Jaffurs, 2006). Allsup (2002) highlighted the finding that peer musicians expressing ideas instrumentally with or without speaking. Davis (2005) also found that by-ear methods—playing, speaking, and

aurally recreating music—helped the adolescent musicians in the study learn music they liked. Live performances and recorded music spoke to them in these ways. This evidence suggests how musicians communicate to each other, however, might not be completely understood through interview research. Data gleaned from focused research on techniques of communication *in situ* is necessary in this area of music education research.

Tone in communication refers to feelings and attitudes that individuals articulate or the general character and cadence of conversations (Baxter & Babbie, 2004; Tracy & Robles, 2013). Research involving peers shows that the dialogues with which peer musicians engage to discuss and learn music vary greatly in tone (Timoner, 2004; Brand, 2003). Tone in peer musicians' talk differs between inside and outside school. The tone of communication between peer learners in school can emerge as effortless and confident (Brand, 2003), formal and informal (Goodrich, 2005; see Green, 2002, 2006), and nonthreatening and welcoming (Adderley et al., 2003). Student-peer interactions in school have been observed as dismissive (Beaumont, 2015) and biased (Feichas, 2010) regarding musical tastes. Feichas (2010) found college students' opposing views on musical styles served to distract some students in their joint musical education; the finding suggests that expressed biases might have been antagonistic. The tone of conversations used in music education adds dimension to how peer talk can be perceived as structured. Outside school, talk between peer musicians has been depicted as contentious and argumentative. Members of two rival rock bands were the focus of Timoner's (2004) film revealed uncensored bickering and contentious dialogues among peer musicians. By contrast, researchers have described peer musicians' interactions

outside school as casual in tone (Green, 2002), conversational and spontaneous (Finnegan, 2007; Stickford, 2003), and nonthreatening and non-autocratic (Allsup, 2002; Bennett, 1980; Jaffurs, 2006). Allsup (2002) explained the tone of conversations among students as fun and cooperative while they explored learning music democratically. Tone in conversation that peer musicians use to learn outside school provides some sense of structure in their communication; tone is an aspect of talk that might be linked to how peer learning can emerge. The varieties of tone in musicians' peer talk provide some guidance in understanding how learning is facilitated or hindered.

Consistency of terms and the labels people use to describe and explain certain experiences is important to understand one another. Imhoff (1995) examined consistency in labels expert musicians and novices use to categorize music. Given music selections across many genres, Imhoff assumed two extremes: (1) that either all participants would categorize the selections the same, or (2) that all participants would use terms that reflected "his or her own special ideas" about the music (p. 19). Terms the experts and novices used varied, but Imhoff found the two groups agreed about the kinds of music they listened to. Certain all-encompassing terms have been used to describe talk used when peers learn music indicating homogeny. We might presume the conversations of everyday, untrained people learning peer-to-peer would maintain only idiosyncratic consistencies. Researchers (Bennett, 1980; Green, 2002; Kastner, 2012; Wiggins; 2015) have described consistencies in how peer musicians communicate and through in-the-moment assessments and analyses of data, they have labeled and termed their perceptions of these consistencies. Bennett (1980) conducted field research into how people become

rock musicians and concluded that they learned “without pedagogy” (p. 18). Green (2008) explained that the popular musicians interviewed characterized their talk as “haphazard” (p. 888). Her participants summarized their own dialogues about musical concepts as involving “endless talk” (Green, 2008, p. 83). Wiggins (2015) indicated that the interactions between young people lack sequence and may not occur in a simple-to-difficult linear fashion. Music educators who participated in Kastner’s (2012) study applied peer learning in their classes and described students’ learning as involving “messy processes” (p. 219). These descriptions contribute a consistency in peer dialogues. One must consider, however, the context of learning and the factors affecting how young people might speak to each other. Brand (2003), for example, focused on peer interactions between children helping a friend learn a song and found the interactions to be constructive and organized. The varied terms researchers have used to label talk in peers learning highlight a need for focused research that considers that peer talk might differ in light of factors such as learning music in school, outside school, and among the various ages of students.

Understanding that a person’s identity can emerge through how he or she talks provides another view into communication used in peer learning (Tracy & Robles, 2013). This dimension of communication can shed light on how order and structure appears in peer talk (see Boud et al., 2001; Sanford & Eder, 1984; Stickford, 2003). Speaking to a peer, one musician’s words identify him or her as teacher, mentor, or friend. The notion of these identities impacts this study’s aim to frame understanding how young musicians communicate to learn outside school.

Words and language people use with others, including nonverbal characteristics of speaking, comprise elements one might attribute to a person's identity. Verbal and nonverbal communication provides data from which researchers can analyze discourses attributed to people's identities (Baxter & Braithwaite, 2008; Tracy & Robles, 2013). Identities are defined as the characteristics of who people are and the groups with whom they associate (Tracy & Robles, 2013). Tracy and Robles indicate three ways identities can emerge through interactions: master identities, personal identities, and interactional identities.

According to Tracy and Robles (2013), master identities refer to the aspects of a person that remain relatively unchanged. These aspects include a person's gender, ethnicity, age, nationality, and regional origin. These aspects do not change from situation to situation. Personal identities, however, may vary in situations. Personal identities refer to "individuals' personality and character, their relationships with others, and their attitudes about events, issues, and other people" (p. 22). We might describe the personality of someone we know as stubborn, loving, or friendly. Personal identities describe self-identified aspects of personality. For example, we might consider ourselves to be stubborn, loving, or friendly.

Interactional identities apply to the current study. They indicate a person's role in dialogues in specific situations with certain people. A person can switch among various identities from one context or situation to another in the way that they use language and nonverbal communication. This is illustrated in the idea that a person we perceive or know to be a student—in our classroom, for instance—might be thought of differently

"as a questioner, a presenter, a discussant, a debater, and so on" throughout moment-to-moment dialogues during a single class session (p. 22). A student's different interactional identities as a questioner, a presenter, and a debater (and so on) might emerge within a single conversation or over many dialogues as the class progresses. A teacher who applies peer mentoring in a music class might assign students roles of mentors and mentees. This might involve training and modeled behaviors associated with those roles. We can imagine that with such training and experience students will communicate accordingly. Mentors will speak in a manner to help, instruct, or demonstrate how to understand or learn something; those being mentored will speak in a manner showing they are receptive to learning or trying to understand. Whether or not we know the roles a teacher might have assigned to particular students, it is reasonable that students will speak their parts and we will be able to identify them as *mentor* or *mentee* through their dialogues. Understanding interactional identities sheds light on understanding talk adolescent peers use to interact and learn outside school.

Conditions in which musicians are assigned a role in school, or assign themselves roles while learning with peers outside school, simplifies how we might identify them. As researchers, we can ask them about how they identify themselves or—having first observed their interactions to learn with a peer—ask about what the type of communication they have used says about them as a speaker. Discovering someone's identity—from his or her own point of view—can be a simple process. A researcher can ask participants about particular words, tone of voice, nonverbal gestures, and extended phrases they used in order to understand what those aspects of communicating indicate

about participants as speakers. Consider how we talk—language we use, tone of voice, words we say including non-verbal gestures can all indicate our identities (Tracy & Robles, 2013). Statements such as "Stop, in the name of the law!" and "You're under arrest" can bring to mind the image of a policeman or other law official. Granted that in-context statements and questions such as, "May I take your order?" and "Do you want fries with that?" presumably bring to mind images of a fast-food employee, such apparentness can emerge between peer musicians learning outside school.

Types of gatherings for peer music learning. Young musicians can gather in particular ways whether or not they are instructed how to learn peer-to-peer. How peer musicians get together provides some perspective on roles (whether assigned and presumed), an idea of quantity of participants (e.g., one-on-one, small group, large group), and how interactions might emerge. Various groups learning music point to how peer communication might affect individual and joint talk. It might make sense in a large ensemble, for example, to have sectional rehearsals in which a section leader (i.e., the first-chair in an orchestra) leads others to learn their parts. Although few studies have discussed peer talk in specific groups—Brand (2003) examined pairs of peers and Goodrich (2007) observed peers in various groups—the body of research on peer learning suggests that peer musicians participate in various grouped settings. Many different kinds of groups that appear in the research include: (a) peer-led group interactions (Allsup, 2002; Goodrich, 2005), (b) leaderless group interactions (Bennett, 1980; Green, 2002, 2008; Kastner, 2012), (c) one-on-one dialogues (Brand, 2003; Finnegan, 2007; Goodrich, 2005), and (d) self-centered learning while in a group (Beaumont, 2015; Finnegan, 2007;

Green, 2008; Stickford, 2003).

One or more young musicians might guide their peers to learn music when they assemble in a peer-led group (Darrow et al., 2005 and Sheldon, 2001). Allsup (2002) and Goodrich (2005) have discussed peer-led group interactions. Goodrich explained that high-level peer mentoring involved student section leaders coaching a group of peers. Among Goodrich's observed levels of peer mentoring in a high school jazz band, students answered simple questions their peers asked in low-level mentoring and helped each other articulate rhythms at the mid-level. Answering a peer's questions shows how an interaction might occur one-on-one. This kind of interaction might be the most basic technique musicians use to negotiate joint music learning with words. Allsup (2002) examined adolescents in two after-school music groups. He observed that students used self-directed and peer-led interactions to acquire musical knowledge and skills. Allsup found participants used ordinary dialogue to help each other learn about certain musical ideas. These group interactions highlight one communication technique peer musicians might follow in a group.

Another way peer musicians might learn in a group is through leaderless interactions. Bennett's (1980) examination of how rock musicians learned outside school emphasized that learning in groups could be leaderless. He stated, "Each group is a separate musical reality in a system of multiple realities, and it makes the criteria for who fits and who does not fit" (p. 29). Bennett indicates it is the group that makes the criteria to decide who fits, not a group leader. Bennett participated as a musician in various rock bands and discussed how rock groups formed spontaneously through musicians'

associations with one another.

Green (2008) also found that many popular musicians learn in leaderless groups. Green explains aspects learning in this type of group:

> One aspect involves ‘group learning’, by which I mean learning that occurs more or less unconsciously or even accidentally, simply through taking part in the collective actions of the group. This includes unconscious or semi-conscious learning during music making, through watching, listening to and imitating each other. It also involves learning before, during and after music-making, through organizing, talking and exchanging views and knowledge about music, such as deciding who will play what, sharing ideas about chords, rhythms or melodies, swapping parts, seeking each others’ opinions, and so on. (p. 120)

Green suggests that, although musicians might assemble as a group, individuals within the group also might learn in self-centered ways. They observe and imitate each other’s playing to learn from others in the group. Green also pointed out that students collaborate “before, during and after music-making” (p. 120). The aspect of individuals stepping back, to observe or simply listen to others during group rehearsals, suggests how leaderless group learning might uniquely benefit them differently from other groups (e.g., learning one-on-one). Leaderless group interactions maintain the expanded opportunity for peer musicians to learn by themselves within the group.

One-on-one dialogues are also highlighted in research on peers learning music (Brand, 2003; Finnegan, 2007; Goodrich, 2005; Kastner, 2012; Wiggins, 2015). According to Finnegan, learning music does in fact occur spontaneously among

musicians one-to-one without teachers present. This research was conducted in the 1980s and became a seminal study in informal learning practices. Finnegan provided a noteworthy illustration of a young musician who, in order to learn how to play the instrument, simply “tried out an electric guitar under a fellow musician’s influence” (p. 137). This case shows that one-on-one dialogues had something to do with the musicians’ initial learning processes. It would be interesting to understand how the other musicians spoke with one another and how this communication process might have helped the young musician initially.

Teachers who applied informal music learning with their classes for Kastner’s (2012) study indicated that students spoke informally peer-to-peer in school. The teachers discussed student-led activities as involving general talking and students giving directions to peers. According to Kastner, the teachers explained that students would “teach each other necessary parts” (p. 245). This points to their one-on-one dialogues and other joint interactions.

In the third manner, young musicians might learn in a self-centered manner while among a group of peers. A young musician might seem not to pay attention to their peers and actually might be learning in a self-centered manner (Beaumont, 2015). In exploring how local musicians learned in the British town of Milton Keynes, Finnegan (2007) stated “A high proportion of the musicians in local bands had learnt their skill in this way: through their own efforts and experience rather than being instructed formally by specialist teachers” (p. 136). This denotes both individual and joint music learning but that one’s own efforts emphasizes self-centered learning. One rock musician, for

example, stated that she “just made up tunes” in first learning how to play an acoustic guitar (p. 137). Although she may have made up tunes alone or with others, this novice musician’s statement indicates one dimension of self-centered learning.

Stickford (2003) conducted a phenomenological case study focused on the experiences of three adolescent musicians learning outside school. Stickford explored how they learned in self-centered ways and highlighted their individual management of learning. The researcher conducted in-depth interviews and had extensive conversations with the musicians—a bassoonist, a singer, and a guitarist—outside school over the course of a year. Stickford listened to participants’ personal music collections, their rehearsals, and their formal performances. One of her three participants, the guitarist, was self-taught. Stickford indicated that self-taught musicians—typically denigrated and often dismissed by academics—might in fact be more knowledgeable than supposed. Stickford compared one participant’s command of knowledge to that of a music professor. Stickford’s impressions reverberate with one of this author’s motivations for this study, involving as it does personal interactions and observations of self-taught adolescent guitarists. Peer learning may involve everyday talk, but many adolescents can make music because their spoken interactions have a remarkable consequence on their learning.

Stickford states that young musicians’ perspectives on learning indicate that talking with their peers had helped them. The participants learned on their own by seeking help from peers. The guitarist in her study, for instance, explained that he mostly learned alone and with peers. The singer participated in multiple school choirs, competed in solo and ensemble contests, took private lessons, and sang in church choirs. The

bassoonist explained that he began learning piano on his own and with a private teacher, and also identified strongly with band, orchestra, and school competitions. Stickford's study underscores adolescent musicians who interact with their peers to learn influence each other in non-formal, untrained, and informal ways. They speak using everyday language in such interactions. The participants' perspectives contributed valuable data about what they perceive about learning music with peers, but observations of their peer-to-peer dialogues *in situ* may have enhanced our understanding of how they spoke and communicated nonverbally.

Relational Dialectics Theory

Structured contradictions in talk. Much of the field of interpersonal communication research is focused on everyday conversation between parties and on organizing how people relate in certain situations (Bormann, 1980; Floyd, 2009; Frey, Botan, & Kreps, 2000; Keyton, 2006). One theory in this field developed by Baxter and Montgomery (1996), relational dialectics theory, provides a framework for making sense out of tensions that commonly arise when people relate through everyday communication. Relational dialectics theory is a perspective on the use of contradictory systems of meanings—referred to as discourses—that commonly occur in everyday talk. The RDT approach focuses on discourses that contradict in meaning "as they play with and off of one another" (Baxter & Montgomery, 1996, p. 46). Relational dialectics theory provides an organized way to make sense of how people relate in situations by examining such tensions as opposed discourses in speaking. The aim of the current study involves discovering how peer musicians relate in these ways and to provide orderly taxonomies

of peer talk used for learning.

Systems of meaning: discourses. The concept of discourse is important for making sense of how people relate through speech. Discourses refer to "systems of meaning" that are communicated verbally or nonverbally (Baxter & Braithwaite, 2008). In clarifying connection and autonomy discourses, a statement such as "Let's go" might only indicate to some people that the speaker and listener should leave a place or are about to start some project together; however, the meaning in this statement points to their connectedness. A person in this context who replies, "I'll stay behind" declares his disconnect from the joint venture and expresses autonomy. In this scenario, the statements are examples of speech within two opposing meanings, connectedness discourse and autonomy discourse. Such systems of meanings—that is, discourses—can be derived from interpreting the use of words, nonverbal behaviors, sentences spoken, or entire conversations (Baxter & Montgomery, 1996; Baxter, 2011; Tracy & Robles, 2013). Methods of discourse analysis help in the discovery of recurring categories and discourse themes to define the discourses used in speech.

Baxter and Montgomery (1996) explained certainty discourses are made up of systems of meanings in which people communicate with conduct, behaviors, and in conditions of which relating parties are accustomed and are familiar. Examples of certainty discourse include greetings between people at work, e.g., saying "hello" and handshaking. Baxter and Montgomery also clarified uncertainty discourse concern new and surprising ways people interact including unusual conditions that apply to conversations. Examples of uncertainty discourse include someone unexpectedly inviting

a stranger out on a date and a person telling a coworker to "go to hell" when typical greeting of "hello" is expressed toward them at work—few people expect to hear such a remark from a coworker.

Baxter and Montgomery also explained openness and closedness discourses. Openness refers to systems of meanings in which people communicate frankly, are not secretive, reveal personal information, and are approachable. Openness discourse is evident, for example, in conversations between people discussing their salary, the particular events of a romantic date, and musical tastes. Closedness discourse is expression of reservation, not speaking (silence), and keeping secrets. Examples of closedness discourse emerges when people define emotional and physical boundaries, say "I don't kiss and tell" when asked about details of a romantic date, and are silent toward a coworker's typical spoken greeting of "hello" at work.

Opposing discourses. Central to RDT is the assumption that many discourses commonly behave in interdependent or oppositional interplay (Baxter & Montgomery, 1996; Baxter, 2011). Baxter and Montgomery (1996) "subscribe to a dialectical perspective on social life, that is, a belief that social life is a dynamic knot of contradictions, a *ceaseless* interplay between contrary or opposing tendencies" (p. 3). The researchers assume that opposed discourse patterns are common and found in the everyday conversation. In describing the oppositional interplay of discourse as maintaining unified-yet-contradictory dynamics, Baxter and Montgomery explained the term *dialectics* with RDT refers to discourses that oppose in meanings. Opposed discourse patterns—which I also refer to as dialectics in this study—are conceived in

terms such as connectedness–autonomy, openness–closedness, and certainty–uncertainty.

Dialectics: discourse oppositions unresolved. The notion that people talk in unfixed ways is important to relational dialectics scholars. Relational dialectics theory is built on dialectical thinking as unresolved (Baxter & Montgomery, 1996). It assumes opposing discourses shift and change but do not result into fixed ways of relating. Ideas of interactional balancing in terms of the thesis–antithesis–synthesis process do not apply with RDT.

When people argue opposing views, they use dialectic dialogues. Plato described Socrates's explanation of this as the debate process (Plato, trans., 1995). In the debate process, the idea of interactional balancing highlights the resolution of thesis–antithesis (contradictions) into synthesis; there is an end and a resolution. Relational dialectics theory is not focused on contradictory arguments in everyday speech; it also does not involve the notion of resolution in the sense of the thesis–antithesis–synthesis model. According to dialectics scholars (Altman, Vinsel, & Brown, 1981; Baxter & Montgomery, 1996; Rawlins, 1992), interpersonal relationships do not necessarily fit such a neat process. Instead, Baxter and Montgomery asserted that dialectic discourses are indeterminate. Rawlins (1992) used the term *motion* to explain this RDT assumption that dialectic discourses shift and change in conversations. Dialectics do not ultimately resolve because as people and situations change, so do their conversations evolve. This is to say that specific interactions may fit one discourse more dominantly at times and be more suited as marginal at others.

The forces of central and marginal discourses in dialogues. Relational

dialectics theory assumes discourses in opposition but one discourse can be more functional or weighted in peoples' interactions. Given two discourses in contradiction, one discourse may be more often used than the other it contradicts. According to Baxter and Montgomery (1996), the subjective use of discourses—one more than another it contradicts—is how relating parties manage dialectics in their conversation. In this study, dominant discourses are referred to as central to relating and less used discourses—in oppositional interplay with a dominant discourse—as marginal. The weight of discourses can be illustrated in a sample conversation between young musicians who interact daily to play music together after school:

Musician A: Hey, man. Where are we practicing today?

Musician B: Let's do it at my house. My mom won't be home 'til six.

Musician A: Cool. Can we practice at your place Friday, too? We got some relatives coming this weekend and they need my room.

Musician B: That's cool, man. If we don't get together then, I won't be able to practice until Tuesday next week. We got family stuff going on, too.

The dominant discourse between these musicians involves a system of meaning they say about practicing together; the lesser-used discourse indicates that independent learning is not preferred. In this case, the discourse of togetherness would be central and the discourse of independence marginal. This central-marginal identification technique is how relational dialectics researchers define the constitution of an opposing pair of discourses and gain knowledge of how relating parties—whether they are aware or not of their use of systems of meanings in talk—logically interact.

The homogeny of a dialectic composed of two opposing discourses, such as connection and autonomy, do not indicate their constancy in interactions. The forces of opposing discourses are unstable by definition. According to Baxter and Montgomery (1996) and Baxter (2011), people use certain discourses in conversation more often than ones the discourse contradicts. Two friends arriving at a rock concert, for example, might have this conversation:

Friend A: Dude, let's hang out down front. We'll see the band better. [discourse indicating togetherness]

Friend B: Yeah, but I wanna go get a beer and check out the snacks. [discourse indicating independence]

Friend A: No, man. It's all about the music and hangin' out together. [together]

Friend B: OK, but I wanna enjoy myself with a beer and some snacks. [independence]

Friend A: Well, let's hurry and get some then get up as close to the stage as we can. Cool? [together]

Friend B: Cool. [together]

The discourse interpretations shown in brackets indicate that the friends' statements in this scenario highlight their connectedness. Friend B's remarks indicate that he privileges some independence over connectedness in this social setting, at least temporarily. The statement, "Let's stay together" with another pair of friends at the same concert, for one example, would emphasize their privileging being together over independence. The example illustrates how the pair of friends related at the concert. First, the example shows

how interactions are structured around the connectedness–autonomy dialectic. Second, it highlights which of two opposed discourses in the connectedness–autonomy dialectic the friends privileged in the specific setting.

Meanings in communication can also shift from dominant to marginal and from marginal to dominant depending on the particular parties and situations in which they interact. Friend A in the previous example might decide to get beers on their own making the statement, “I’ll go get us some beers, you wait here” and Friend B might indicate wanting to connect with another friend across the crowd and state, “I’m going to go talk to them and I’ll be right back.” These new statements made by the friends show how their use of connected discourse to the once marginal autonomy discourses. Relational dialectics theory researchers gain knowledge about how people relate in specific situations by paying attention to such shifts in discourse in particular settings and situations.

Research with relational dialectics theory. Music education research not focused on processes of speech among peer musicians contributes to the general impression that such talk is haphazard, indiscriminate, and arbitrary. The sense that learning among students occurs through indiscriminate talk may persist for many music educators and researchers who do not know that everyday talk can be systematic, efficient, and efficacious. The following studies in which the framework of RDT was applied informed the current study as research models that give shape to communication otherwise considered as not structured.

Pilling’s study of the marriage dyad. Several interpersonal communication

studies have employed RDT. Pilling (2009), for example, examined one dialectic tension, autonomy–connection, in the dyadic interactions of married couples. Twenty-nine couples participated in the study by engaging in two fifteen-minute conversations. Pilling directly observed participants' conversations and re-examined their communication by reviewing video recordings of their interactions. A focus on dyadic interactions afforded the researcher the opportunity for an in-depth investigation of autonomy and connection meanings in the everyday conversation between two people. Autonomy and connection meanings are important to people closely related (Goldsmith, 1990). Participants in Pilling's study were asked to speak using everyday language. One conversation was on a topic casual in nature. In another conversation, participants were asked to discuss a topic on which they disagreed and on which their opinions might conflict.

Pilling investigated participants' dialogues to discover whether they maintained an autonomous stance as individuals or united with each other in discourse as a pair. After assessing the couples' common and daily interactions through pre-interviews, Pilling asked each of the couples to converse about specific events that took place during their day. Yin (2014) notes that participants involved in research may alter their natural behaviors as researchers observe them. Although participants were asked to follow Pilling's guidelines, it is reasonable to assume that a degree of performance or other modified behaviors resulted from their participation. While participants followed guidelines established by Pilling for communicating, the substance of his findings between participant couples may be problematic. Regarding his coaching and the participants' awareness of being assessed in the study, it is to be questioned whether

married couples behaved as naturally as they do in other settings, e.g., in a private location or their home.

Pilling offered descriptions of the discursive shifts in the autonomy–connectedness dialectic between husbands and wives during their conversations. His findings indicated that couples' interactions centered on the connection discourse of the autonomy–connection dialectic, because they tended toward agreement and bonding. Participants who showed higher degrees of autonomy also reported lower relational satisfaction with their spouse. For example, a husband who wanted to spend more time with his wife stated, "You work all the time," in order to indicate his unhappiness with this aspect of her autonomy. His wife laughed, "I know. It's bad," but adding connection discourse stated, "It's okay. We have Thanksgiving. Like one whole day together. It will be so exciting" (p. 124). Pilling noted that shifts from one discourse to another in the autonomy–connection dialectic were marked by changes in communication style. For example, participants who expressed autonomy in conflict with their spouse spoke in challenging ways or avoided conversing with their spouse. In an instance to show autonomy, a participant stated, "the house was cleaner when you were gone" to her husband (p. 128). The statement indicated both that the participant preferred her house clean—occurring when her husband was not at home—and that she could maintain it herself.

Dialectic shifts, however, instantly emerged when Pilling instructed the couples to discuss a topic on which they differed. Pilling's study shows that discourses in dialectics shift over the course of a relationship. Different situations call for different conversations

and, therefore, different meanings communicated. For example, in a conversation about buying an item, one participant remarked to his wife, “Okay, we’ll pick it up today. It’s fine. It’s not a big deal.” (p. 125). The use of a connection discourse is evident in his agreeing with his wife (“Okay”) to buy the item and picking it up that day. This followed the couples’ casual conversation. Although Pilling’s participants included only husbands and wives, the study’s purpose and design examined the system of embedded meanings in one-on-one communication.

Cavanaugh on superior/subordinate interactions. Cavanaugh (1999) conducted an investigation utilizing RDT to examine dialectics in speech between supervisors and their subordinates. Twenty-five employees and three supervisors were asked to answer questionnaires and to participate in interviews in which Cavanaugh asked how they managed their communication with each other. Participants represented various professions. The researcher conducted all interviews one-on-one. Cavanaugh found that interpretations of supervisor/subordinate interactions revealed the dialectic tension involving predictability and surprise discourses. The researcher concluded that the struggle enacted in the tension of the predictability–surprise dialectic created discomfort for both parties. For example, some employees related the occurrence of surprise at work as something to fear. Some surprises could be deemed as positive, such as when an employee unexpectedly received a raise. Many subordinate employees, however, viewed surprises as changes to their normal, predictable work routines and suggested that all such changes were negative (p. 104). Consequently, Cavanaugh found the dynamics of changes provoked employees’ fear of interacting with their supervisors. Employees

sometimes made efforts to avoid speaking directly to supervisors.

Cavanaugh identified several dialectic tensions in communication between supervisors and subordinates. These included connection–autonomy, predictability–surprise, openness–closedness, privilege–uniformity, and equality–superiority. Baxter and Montgomery (1996) and Baxter (2011) consider researchers' interpretations of dialectics—terms researchers apply to systems of meanings they find—relative in meaning to the three primary and common values of dialectics: connectedness–autonomy, openness–closedness, and certainty–uncertainty. Terms for discourses are subjective according to the authors of RDT. There is no requisite that meanings exactly match the terms Baxter and Montgomery coined for dialectics (see Table 1). The terms describe a system of meanings. The authors of RDT encourage researchers to use terms as they and their participants perceive to describe the discourses that emerge in their studies (see Baxter & Montgomery, 1996, pp. 222–223; Baxter, 2011, pp. 64–65). The specific dialectics drawn from a study such as Cavanaugh's indicate the unique oppositional nature interpreted in conversation.

According to RDT scholars (Baxter, 2011; Baxter & Montgomery, 1996), findings may be uncommon or only relate to the primary three values. Various findings enhance our understanding of how people relate (Baxter, 2011). Cavanaugh noted that the dialectic tensions between participants occurred after having established a working relationship as supervisor-subordinate. This investigation focused on people who had been working together for at least 18 months.

The dialogues between supervisors and subordinates Cavanaugh investigated

demonstrated leader-follower discourses. Cavanaugh did not, however, observe participants interacting in their usual contexts. The study involved data from participants' reflections on their conversations collected through the interviewer's questions and the participants' recollections. Cavanaugh did not therefore convey the full array of participants' interactions, including nonverbal communication. That data were derived from structured interviews and questionnaires may have limited participants' responses. It remains a question as to what would have arisen naturally and dynamically *in situ*. The participants may have yielded richer data about specific verbal and nonverbal communication if data analysis had included the participants' naturally occurring conversation.

In 1996, Baxter and Montgomery devised RDT. Considering that Cavanaugh's research was only available for review three years following the book's release, limited reliance on RDT at that time is understandable. Baxter (2011) later pointed out that interpersonal communication research using RDT was growing, yet the area continued to lack studies in which conversation observed by researchers was analyzed. Cavanaugh's study expanded research on dialectic tensions in conversations as well as power struggles between leaders and followers, despite the study's lack of instantaneous *in situ* data.

Campbell's study on teacher-student talk. In another study by an interpersonal communication researcher, Campbell (2000), the focus was conversation between college professors and students in the classroom. Similar in design to Pilling's study, it was based on a predetermined investigation of two sets of opposing discourse meanings constituting two dialectic tensions. Campbell's study differed in its attention to the dialectic tensions

of superiority–equality and autonomy–connection. It included not only data from observations of naturally occurring talk between a professor and students, but the aim was also to discover the two hypothesized dialectic tensions rather than others that might have emerged, e.g., certainty–uncertainty, and openness–closedness. Findings in the context of individual-group interactions indicated that the superiority meaning used in the professors' communication with students tended to dominate. Campbell explained superiority referred to communication indicating control over others and being in charge. Similarly, the autonomy discourse was central when the professor communicated with the students. Peer-to-peer talk among students showed they spoke predominantly as equals; Campbell derived this evidence from students' talk in relating to and connecting with one another. Campbell interpreted students' interactions with the professor, e.g., such as a student asking or responding to questions posed by the professor, as inferior in meaning.

Campbell observed four professors each of whom taught two classes a week for a semester. The researcher did not make clear whether the amount of data collected was sufficient to ensure that the two predetermined dialectical tensions were observed. Interview data were collected from the four professors and students at the end of the semester. Student participants were only made aware of the study then via a letter accompanying their final exams in which Campbell requested an interview. This is notable because the data collection approach benefitted the study by capturing students' naturally occurring conversation, preventing some from altering their behavior when aware of the study. A combination of observational and interview data from students at certain points during the semester would have been instrumental for a deeper

understanding of the meanings of their talk.

Kosempel on student-teacher mentorship. Kosempel (2008) studied the mentoring communication of student-teacher relationships in a teacher preparation program. The dynamics of discourses found in teacher mentors' and student teachers' speaking were examined within the framework of RDT. The study was limited, however, in scope to an examination of naturally occurring conversation within one interaction between participants. The study involved twenty pairs of teacher-mentors and their pre-service students. Kosempel analyzed the student-teacher dialogues and triangulated data from their interactions with data from one-on-one interviews with each participant. The lens of RDT provided the framework for understanding the systems of opposed discourses. Participants in Kosempel's study interacted in mentoring dialogues as pairs. Kosempel noted that protégés acknowledged their mentors' openness through terms such as "accepting" to describe them. Teacher mentors and student teachers spoke using discourses in dialectic tension; Kosempel attributed systems of meanings to participants' talk in terms of openness and closedness, integration and separation, and structure and flexibility.

Kosempel's research design enhanced understanding of the influential discourses embedded in student-teacher interaction in mentoring. Participants' were influenced by Kosempel's prompts: He defined the parameters of the discussions in which each pair communicated. Interestingly, Kosempel addressed the limitations of previous research employing RDT to examine mentoring communication because, like Cavanaugh (1999) and Pilling (2009), Kosempel did not view the participants' dialogues in the field as

naturally occurring.

The creators of RDT, Baxter and Montgomery (1996), called for researchers examining interpersonal communication to investigate in-the-moment communication of relating parties instead of participants' recollections of communication. Since the creation of RDT, Baxter (2011) recognized a trend in initial studies by researchers that employed RDT in locating and suggesting dialectic tensions arising in past interactions. This is to say, data were gathered in early RDT research only through questionnaires, surveys, and interviews. Observations of participants in natural and immediate conversations had not often been applied in researchers' analysis of interpersonal communication using RDT. Kosempel's study, however, contributed to advancing participant-observation research employing RDT. His findings suggest that applying the processes for informal talk during mentoring helps to broaden an understanding of these types of interactions.

Everyday conversations, as ritualized activities, are an important source for the systematic study of how people think and behave with one another. People come to understand and purposefully relate through everyday talk. Interpersonal communication research has enabled scholars to understand exchanges in how people relate in systematic ways and in particular settings.

Summary

This review of literature on peer learning clarified what researchers acknowledge and support: People learn with their peers through observation and everyday conversation. Studies on the discourses music educators use to teach students have enhanced our understanding of the influence of communication (Mantie, 2009; 2013).

Information about everyday talk that influences peers learning outside school might also help teachers better understand and facilitate peers learning music in their classrooms. Case studies in the United States and in the United Kingdom have indicated students' interactions with peers motivated and helped them learn music. Learning peer-to-peer is often highlighted as an aspect of students' informal musical experiences in school and in community music programs. The studies on this topic, however, have not investigated everyday conversation between adolescent peers learning outside school. The in-depth examination of everyday talk in peers learning music outside school as presented in my study has not yet been explored in depth.

Conditions that influence peer talk shift across contexts of formal, non-formal, and informal situations. The formal context imposes the most teacher- and school-designed learning structure—expectations of what and how to learn—on peers learning and those conditions lessen in non-formal contexts and are least imposing in informal contexts. In informal contexts, the learners themselves design their music education. The evidence on how peer musicians assemble provides insight into arrangements of conversations among the musicians. Conversations in various arrangements of groups can involve individuals learning by observing and imitating others without directly interacting with them. Elements of peer communication portrayed in researchers' studies highlight certain aspects of discussion used in peer learning and can help in finding a way to make sense of peer dialogues.

A structure in peer-to-peer interactions can be perceived based on researchers' descriptions of adolescents' verbal and nonverbal communication that, if labeled,

contributes to framing how their everyday talk is systematically organized. Researchers have observed peer-learning strategies (Green, 2006), distinguished graduated stages of peer mentoring (Goodrich, 2007), and have listed how peer musicians exchange ideas (Allsup, 2008). Allsup (2002) also found that some hierarchical peer-to-peer dialogues shifted between teacher and student roles. Other researchers have further observed that peer musicians communicate to make decisions in order to advance their music-making progress and to evaluate their peers (Bennett, 1980; Finnegan, 2007; Timoner, 2004). While these studies have highlighted the outcomes of peer learning, i.e., the acquisition of knowledge, they have not examined the substance of everyday communication used in learning music, a more complex study that warrants further examination.

The substance of everyday communication refers to verbal and nonverbal elements of interaction with which people convey an overall impression of meaning. Everyday talk among peer musicians is multifaceted and varied—music itself is a channel of communication—and is influenced by the people and settings in which the interactions occur. The variables involved with socially specific talk may account for why everyday conversation has not been the focus of more rigorous study in music education research. Interpersonal communication researchers, however, have framed how other researchers might perceive both verbal and nonverbal order in everyday communication.

Studies on peers learning music indicate that young musicians communicate with each other to learn independently and with peers to learn jointly. Research on independent and joint interactions among peer musicians can enhance our understanding of the order within their peer communication. Existing music education research has yet

to scratch the surface of many aspects, systems, organization, or structure within peer talk outside school. This literature review provides a framework to perceive structure and order in talk adolescent musicians.

Relational dialectics theory has aided researchers in considering meanings in everyday conversation and, through thematic analysis, interpreting them as organized systems of communicating. Applying this framework in this study entailed analyzing meanings in verbal and nonverbal communication that relate to the positions participants maintain in speaking and in being spoken to by their peer. A spectrum of ways in which adolescent peers talk to assess learning music from individual and joint perspectives were found through analysis. The following chapter contains the methods and procedures of my study and how the findings were derived.

Chapter 3

Investigating for Discourse Meanings

The method used for this qualitative study is discourse analysis. Following the data-analytic processes outlined by Braun and Clarke (2006), I interpreted meanings from dialogues between pairs of adolescent guitarists learning without a teacher. My analysis focused on interpreting meanings that emerged from verbal and nonverbal communication while participants learned music outside school. Specific discourses were labeled as these systems of meanings emerged. With this focus, I observed three pairs of adolescent peers in environments where they typically practiced and learned music together; I did not apply any interventions.

This chapter details the procedures used to collect and analyze the musicians' peer-to-peer interactions. Topics covered in this chapter include the sample selection process, methods of collecting data, and a description of the data-analytic procedures for extracting themes of discourses.

Method and Research Questions

Discourse analysis involves close examination and interpretation of verbal and nonverbal communication people use, for example, to relate, cooperate, and help others (Richards & Morse, 2013). Researchers have applied discourse analysis to understand how people communicate in social situations (Philips & Hardy, 2002). Researchers have applied methods of discourse analysis to understand how people communicate in social situations (Philips & Hardy, 2002). Research approaches with discourse analysis are widely diverse; Van Dijk (1997) identified 20 different approaches used with discourse

analysis. Researchers (Maciszewski, 1998; Talbot, 2011), for example, have applied discourse analysis to understand power struggles in the music-learning activities of specific cultures. It is, thus, important to understand how discourse analysis fits the purpose and to focus my research questions. My study aimed to enhance knowledge of communication practices—from a perspective of dialectic meanings that emerge in dialogues—when adolescent peer musicians learn together and the teacher does not intervene.

I analyzed transcriptions—from observations and interviews—as well as participants' nonverbal interactions during sessions and I took field notes. Interpretations of data focused on instantaneous communication of peer music learning. Observations took place in locations where participants go to learn music with their peers, such as participants' homes, garages, and other public areas (Lindlof & Taylor, 2002; Keyton, 2006; Richards & Morse, 2013).

According to Merriam and Tisdell (2016), findings in qualitative research are commonly organized and presented as categories, themes, or derived theory from analysis. "Qualitative data analysis is all about identifying themes, categories, patterns, or answers to your research questions" (p. 216). My study resulted in data providing such organized answers to my two research questions. The research questions are:

1. How do participants learning jointly and independently communicate with a peer outside school?
2. How do participants assess independent learning along with their peer and joint learning outside school?

Participants

I employed convenience sampling and methods of chain sampling in order to identify six total participants (Creswell, 2008). I spoke directly with music teachers, emailed local schools, and put up flyers at local music stores. At the time of this study, I was teaching high school guitar classes. I did not approach any of my own students for this study in order to avoid issues of bias and to find participants who most closely met my sample criterion for this study. The sample sites were convenient to the researcher in areas in and surrounding El Paso, Texas. After the first contact with potential participants, I encouraged chain sampling by asking potential participants to talk to others they knew who might fit the parameters of this study.

Devlin (2006) discussed how researchers must aim to assess their preconceived notions of participants; researchers often have an ideal standard participant in mind, but must recognize that real participants may not fit this ideal. I sought participants with little or no formal music education. The inclusion guidelines I used helped prevent selection of inappropriate participants such as adults and preadolescent children. The eight inclusion criteria determined characteristics of candidate participants that fit the purposes of this study. I chose participants by employing the following eight criteria:

1. The participant is in high school.
2. The participant is 13 to 18 years old and will not turn 19 during the study.
3. The participant is already learning to play a guitar with at least one peer.
4. The participant owns a guitar or has easy access to one to use regularly.
5. The participant has only recently begun playing and ideally has self-studied

the guitar for one to three months.

6. The participant practiced or met with a peer (or peers) to learn music several times, for varying lengths of time, for at least three to four weeks or at least on three occasions—for about an hour on each occasion—within the last three months.
7. The participant is not currently enrolled in guitar class or taking private lessons.
8. The participant is interested in participating in this study.

I offered an incentive for agreeing to be involved in the study. Creswell (2008) stated, “Payments may be cash or may consist of alternate forms of payment, such as gift certificates” (p. 239). All participants who agreed to participate in the study received $60.00 gift cards for their involvement. I gave gift cards in two amounts—one for $20.00 after the first one-on-one interview and a second for $40.00 after the final focus group interview. I bought the gift cards from Guitar Center.

Upon acquiring a verbal agreement and contact information from potential participants, I secured signed letters of consent from both parents and the adolescent. Candidates under the age of 18 were required to sign a letter of informed consent agreeing to participate in this study. Parental permission was required for all participants. Candidates were to remain potential in status until they signed an informed consent form. In performing honest and ethical research, I sent the letters of informed consent to all potential participants in the study, as well as their parents.

These letters of consent contained an explanation of the research project and

provided specific details about the length and nature of data collection. The letters included information about incentives and explained that each of the participants would receive two gift cards redeemable at a local music store. Individuals received the incentive even if they withdrew from the study early—as long as they agreed to participate, they were eligible to receive both gift cards. Gall, Gall, & Borg (2003) explained that "to do otherwise would be to give the impression that there is a penalty associated with leaving the study" (p. 69). Letters of consent outlined that participants were to receive the first gift card at the completion of the first one-on-one interview and the second at the conclusion of a final focus group interview. Additionally, participants signed an assent form (see Appendix F) to confirm that they understood the study consisted of the three following main forms of inquiry:

1. Observations of participants' music learning with a peer would be audio and video recorded.
2. All interviews would be audio and video recorded.
3. Specific and relevant artifacts (e.g., handwritten notes, text messages, CDs) may be requested from them for investigation and analysis.

Data Collection Procedures

Following the IRB committee's approval of this study, and after filing necessary paperwork and applications, I began the first stage of study. Preliminary work included initiating sampling methods to locate eligible participants. Based on factors such as the sample goal, incentives, and the population size of El Paso, Texas, I estimated that I would need two to four weeks to secure the participants.

Within one week of receiving letters of consent, I projected scheduling the first of three weekly one-hour observations with each participant pair. I acquired the specific date, time, and place to observe each pair; if it was not immediately known, I asked them to contact me at their convenience about this. Observation sessions occurred during the school year, and so they depended on participant availability and their typical practice times. I initially hoped that the three pairs of participants could be scheduled for observations on consecutive days (e.g., Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday) to allow for delays, interviews, and transcriptions. The final focus group interview occurred after the last observations and paired interviews.

My first interaction with the participants—before their enrollment in my study—involved general introductions and greetings. In these initial interactions, I aimed to establish rapport with each participant by relating my personal experiences as a guitarist and high school guitar teacher. I asked each pair if they would invite me to participate as an observer when they practice together. Although I was a participant, I let them know that I would not be speaking or playing guitar at those times. All participants understood that I was studying their everyday talk and the meanings in what they said. LeCompte, Schensul, Weeks, and Singer (1999) wrote that

> The data and findings of interpretivists are created and recreated as the research proceeds. Important to interpretive researchers is that the constructs or meaning systems of researchers, participants, and research partners all carry equal weight, because negotiated meaning cannot occur unless the researcher is a full participant in the process. (p. 50)

In line with this, the participants aided me by answering my protocol questions immediately following every session. Data collected during the sessions occurred as much as possible as though a researcher were not present. This was because I did not speak up or join the participants during their sessions. I gave no prior assistance or interventions to the participants to learn music. I situated myself quietly in the background during observations as participants mindfully focused on their own learning.

I recorded the practice sessions with audio-video equipment. Recording began as soon as I met the participants and they prepared to play their instruments at each session. At the start of each recording, I noted times and conditions of the observations in my field notebook. Dates and times of recordings were automatically date-stamped in the video recording device. I used a Samsung Zoom Q3 Mini Camcorder to record observations and interviews because of its high definition audio-video recording quality and for its ability to store up to 16 hours of audio-video data on a single 32 GB SDHC memory card. The device is also compact and about the size of a cellular phone.

I made field notes about ongoing participant interactions (focusing on both verbal communication and nonverbal body language), as well as the nature of participants' music session activities. I wrote out numerous descriptors, notes, explanations, and questions during observations. For example, I noted how the participants interacted during tuning, how they initiated music making, as well as how activities concluded at the end of learning sessions.

I used a protocol in order to collect and record data as it emerged. This involved a list of actions to follow before, during, and after the data collection process (see

Appendix G). LeCompte et al. (1999) suggested that researchers' specific targets of observations should include the participants' activities and events, sequences of events, settings and participation structures, behaviors, conversations, and all interactions between the participants. I established the protocol with this in mind to ensure the consistency and accuracy of data collection in my observations.

Interviews followed each of the observations. After each of the first two observations with the participant pairs, I asked the participants questions in one-on-one interviews. I arranged the first and second one-on-one interviews with participants to inquire about their music-learning interactions with their peer. Each interview took place on the day of each observation. I politely asked the participants whose interview came second to wait outside of earshot of their peer's responses; this typically meant one participant left the room or moved to another location far enough away that I believed they could not hear the one-on-one interview. I expected that one-on-one interviews would take up to 45 minutes; however, I did not place any limits on the length of the interview. Immediately following each participant-pair interview, I recorded reflections, thoughts, and notable ideas in the digital recorder. These were transcribed as field notes.

In a third interview, I spoke with participants as a pair. As with the one-on-one interviews, my main objective was to have the pair interview immediately follow the observation; in this instance, the pair interviews followed the final observation. Pair interviews were instrumental for understanding how both adolescent peers justified making sense of their dialogues in specific music-learning situations they jointly constructed.

Interviews commonly consist of various approaches to verbal inquiry that researchers use to elicit general and specific data from interviews (Clough & Nutbrown, 2002; Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). Participants can generate data by answering open-ended questions posed by the researcher (Clough & Nutbrown, 2002). Copious amounts of information were essential to this study because no previous studies had focused on the processes of peer-to-peer talk between adolescent musicians learning music outside school. I wanted to make sure I had adequate data for the analysis in order to determine whether any participants' dialogues were organized or systematic. My coding process was iterative and I found consistent—recurring and repeating—evidence across the data. I determined that saturation was achieved when I could no longer find other codes or categories. The methods for this research were deliberate and purposeful in accounting for the lacunae detected in existing literature on how adolescents might systematically communicate to learn music.

The interview protocol I used involved preliminary, ongoing, and follow up procedures similar to the observation protocol (see Appendix H). My list of actions helped ensure accurate and thorough data collection as it emerged before, during, and after the interview. Preliminary steps included securing appropriate information about when and where the interview could take place, if the participants asked that the interview occur somewhere other than where their sessions took place. In obtaining this information, we moved locations as necessary. At the start, I briefly explained how the interview would take place. I reminded participants that a certain number of questions about their learning music with a peer were to be asked and that answers would be

recorded and transcribed for analysis.

I used the same questions in all three interviews to maintain a desired consistency and thoroughness. The use of repeated questions helped move the interview dialogues forward and stimulated new data from participants (Baxter & Babbie, 2004; Clough & Nutbrown, 2002; Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). I developed questions based on my research questions and in order to find underlying meanings about what participants said or implied about themselves and what they said or implied about their peer relationship (see Appendix I). I worded the questions informally and took into consideration the age ranges for each of the one-on-one and paired interviews.

After all the rehearsal observations and interviews, I conducted a focus group interview with all six participants. Creswell (2008) clarified, “A focused group interview is the process of collecting data through interview with a group of people, typically four to six” (p. 226). The purpose of the focus group interview was to elicit the participants’ collective voice about peer-to-peer music learning and the everyday talk they enacted to acquire skills and knowledge. In order to facilitate attendance by all participants, I informed them that the greater of the two incentives (gift cards) would be issued at the end of this final interview. This final interview for all six participants took place at a music store (Guitar Center); the facility was conveniently located for all participants and I was allowed to use an isolated room to conduct the focus group interview.

At the focus group interview, I informed participants about the interview proceedings. I notified participants that a number of questions would entail learning about their communication during their practice sessions and that all answers were to be

recorded. I took field notes during the interview to record issues, unexpected questions, remarks, and notable data that emerged. I also noted participants' responses about their peer I had observed in the sessions. At the end of the focus group interview, I thanked all the participants and reminded them about my future contact with them for their verification of transcriptions within the following weeks. I gave the participants their gift cards at the end of the interview. My thoughts and considerations were immediately recorded verbally and manually on paper following the focus group interview and later transcribed in my field notes data.

Creswell argued that data collected in a focus group interview, "[is] advantageous when the interaction among interviewees will likely yield the best information and when interviewees are similar to and cooperative with each other" (p. 226). With this in mind, I used a unique set of questions for the focus group interview and created a preliminary, provisional set of open-ended questions for this study (see Appendix J). I developed additional questions through the collection of data from individual interviews, observations, and a review of artifacts, reflective thought, as well as during the focus group interview. Preliminary questions helped to move the interview dialogues forward. The group discussion helped to elicit new data from participants. I worded questions informally and in consideration of age ranges for the focus group interview.

Research scholars (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2012; Stake, 2006) have advocated for consultation with colleagues and mentors for critical perspectives on data, writing, and validity of findings. Phillips (2008) referred to "peer briefing" as involving another person to review and question data (p. 88). In line with this, two peer reviewers, a

recently retired music professor and a recently graduated doctoral student of music education, examined the data and findings of my analysis. They verified and challenged meanings I extracted from text excerpts that involved participants speaking and my descriptions of nonverbal behavior. I revised some explanations of meanings based on peer reviewers' insights and opinions; overall, both peer reviewers agreed with the meanings interpreted from participants' dialogues. I contacted specific people for their knowledge and expertise such as current and previous advisors, as well as doctoral candidates and doctoral graduates in my group at Boston University. Stake emphasized that methodological self-reliance and "expertise comes largely through reflective practice" (p. 50). Following this advice, I used reflective journaling and audio recorded verbal self-reflections in order to develop methodological expertise throughout this study.

This study also involved collecting and reviewing relevant artifacts. Research scholars (Berg, 2001; Richards & Morse, 2013) emphasize the review of documents and artifacts in order to triangulate data in analysis. LeCompte et al. (1999) also highlighted that artifact collection helped corroborate other data collected. Examples of artifacts I analyzed included handwritten notes, music they played, as well as items the participants used for learning music (e.g., their instruments and equipment). Investigating all forms of communication meant considering any nonverbal findings in the artifacts. I catalogued data about the potentially pertinent artifacts in a section of the field notes to identify the artifact, describe it, and explain why and how it emerged as important. I noted participants' expressions and explanations about any artifacts for analysis.

I carefully transcribed verbal communication from observations and interviews

into computer documents and reviewed them for accuracy. The computer I used was exclusively reserved for this research. I recruited evaluators to verify correctness of transcriptions. (I contacted peer reviewers in advance who agreed to do this.) I informed peer evaluators that I expected them to listen to recordings and mark discrepancies they noticed in the transcripts. I printed all transcripts and audio recordings for the peer reviewers. After peer reviewers evaluated the transcripts, I examined all noted mistakes, corrected them, and reviewed them again for accuracy. Participants checked transcripts and came to a consensus on the final version.

I maintained a preliminary data organization throughout the data collection processes. I made note of any peer communication that related to my first and second research questions and according to concepts in RDT (such as dialogues attributable to the three common categories of contradictory meanings in communication). I noted moments in dialogues in which peers seemed to assess progress or expressed particular positions. I organized extended notes, descriptions, and my interpretations of nonverbal communication while the transcripts were peer reviewed. I organized data from transcripts, field notes, artifacts, reflective journaling, and visual data in order to link findings to specific participants, observations, and interviews. Participants contributed their explanations and justifications of nonverbal communication, which helped me to interpret categories of data. The following section explains the methods of analysis used to evaluate the participants' verbal and nonverbal communication.

Data Analysis

This study provides answers to research questions on adolescent musicians used

everyday talk to learn music with a peer outside school. My analysis of participants' verbal and nonverbal practices facilitated this. I identified and organized a plethora of appropriate and notable findings in the transcripts and other data. I followed thematic analysis methods associated with discourse analysis to answer my research questions (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

Through the lens of RDT, I investigated for contradicting systems of meanings. According to Baxter (2011) and Baxter and Montgomery (1996), interpersonal communication researchers identify three dialectic tensions as common when people relate. My inductive findings corresponded to the dialectic meanings discussed by these RDT scholars. Baxter and Montgomery provided a list of common dialectic tensions people use to relate. Table 1 lists these dialectic tensions.

Table 1

Common Dialectic Tensions in Everyday Talk (Baxter & Montgomery, 1996).

Dialectic Tensions
Connection–Autonomy
Certainty–Uncertainty
Openness–Closedness

Opposing meanings in my study refer to communication interpreted as maintaining such qualities relating to *connection* versus *autonomy, certainty* versus *uncertainty,* or *openness* versus *closedness*. I inductively interpreted and labeled meanings as they emerged through analysis. I deductively categorized those emergent meanings by associating them with the three dialectic tensions listed. The term *together*, for example, used to describe of talk regarding connecting was deemed one subtheme of *connection* in meaning.

Each opposed meaning was sorted and labeled as to its maintaining either a central or a marginal function in the peer dialogues. For example, *autonomy* was interpreted as a central in dialogues if participants explained that this meaning recurred more often, was more frequently emphasized dialogues, or functioned more than the discourse meaning with which it opposed, i.e., *connection*. Thus the opposite pole, *connection*, was deemed marginal to the conversations.

I referred to my first research question in examining the transcripts for initial coding of the data. Taking into consideration the literature on peer music learning, the coding of data entailed a close examination of how participants addressed each other and how these forms of address might suggest identities (e.g., helper, learner, friend) enacted through communication. I first described text in the transcripts and nonverbal actions with short terms such as *tells*, *asks*, and *shows* as code terms for generating categories and themes from the data. These initial categories of data later developed into the themes showing identities in peer-to-peer communication. I reexamined findings to identify consistency in recurrence and repetition. I then compared these findings to data from interviews in which participants justified and explained particular identities from which they spoke or listened. Participants contributed opinions and suggestions about which terms defined the identities.

Coding data for my second research question involved closely examining participants' assessments of their own learning, the assessments they observed and perceived in their peer, and how they jointly assessed their problems and progress to learn music. I considered both verbal and nonverbal data showing that participants

focused on their own learning, their peer's playing and learning, and assessments of progress with one another. The qualitative data analysis software helped me organize and triangulate coded data. I assigned general terms (codes) to transcripts and nonverbal data (e.g., *listening, looking,* and *explaining*) in order to develop these communication categories into themes. These themes then demonstrated how individuals assessed themselves and how pairs assessed joint learning. I then examined the resultant findings for consistency in recurrence and repetition, and for evidence of the pair's assessments of learning. The participants also contributed explanations of their assessments.

Data-analytic steps. Baxter and Montgomery (1996) developed RDT to explore how people relate in specific situations through common ways of interacting: connected or autonomous, open or reserved, and through routine or uncommon kinds of communication. Analytic strategies with RDT involve focus on the meanings and the function of verbal and nonverbal communication that emerge "as they play with and off of one another" (p. 46). Because opposing meanings—the dialectics—are the aim of RDT research, Baxter (2011) referred to its analytic strategies as *contrapuntal analysis*. Like counterpoint in music, everyday talk contains opposing or dialectic tensions; dialectics are created by contradictory meanings that arise when people communicate to connect and maintain their independence, to be open with others and to maintain personal privacy, and to relate in familiar as well as in unexpected ways. As Baxter suggested, I applied the following steps of thematic analysis outlined by Braun and Clarke (2006).

In the first step of data analysis, I read the transcriptions to gain familiarity with the text. After the final focus group interview, I transcribed the observational and

interview data, had them peer reviewed for accuracy, and made necessary corrections. I also organized extended notes, descriptions, and preliminary explanations for nonverbal communication for analysis. Braun and Clarke suggested researchers “read through the entire data set at least once” before coding (2006, p. 16). I read the transcripts a minimum of three times to establish familiarity with the data. I read and reviewed data in the transcripts and recordings multiple times in order to focus on identifying recurring and repeating themes in the peer-to-peer dialogues.

The second step of my analysis required initial coding of text from the transcribed data. This entailed close examination of what participants said about themselves as individuals and about their peer in the context of interacting to learn music. In interviews, I asked participants what meanings could be derived from how they spoke to and interacted with their peer. I used my interview questions to acquire the participants’ interpretations of everyday talk. I used QSR International’s NVivo 10 qualitative data analysis Software (NVivo 10, version 10.1.3, 2014) to collect, organize, and cross-examine text segments that showed how participants perceived themselves, as well as how they spoke about their peer. I described specific textual segments in two or three general terms (e.g., *encouraging*, *takes lead*, and *helps peer*) in preparation for the next analytical step. I reviewed all data no less than three times with an aim to reassign and alter coding terms as necessary. I concluded this step when I could not assign different coding terms to the data and synonymous terms did not fit or seemed redundant.

The third step of analysis involved generating themes (discourse meanings) from the initial coded data. Independent themes of discourse meanings emerged from many

categories of coded text. First, I found clusters of communication data—the discourses—related to independent themes of meaning. Through the perspective of RDT, this step next involved looking for potential opposing discourse meanings—the *dialectics*. All categories of coded text that exhibited a negating, countering, and an either/or penchant, in direct or implied opposition, was labeled a potential dialectic theme. I added the coded data together and categorized it into coherent themes until after iterative review I concluded that no further independent or dialectic themes would emerge.

The fourth step consisted of reexamination of the potential themes. It involved examining for repetition and recurrence the communication data from all participants and with each participant pair in different observations. I assigned terms to label each theme with an understanding the terms might change many times during this step of analysis. I reviewed the themes, one to another, in order to determine the coherence of coded data for each theme. I rejected potential themes that held little supportive data. By judging the meanings to be identical, I combined some themes into one theme.

In the fifth step, I redefined theme names and relabeled them. I made my final decisions on theme labels from ones conceived in step four. This included the participants' opinions and suggestions of terms to describe the themes of dialectic communication they considered attributable to their verbal and nonverbal interactions (e.g., *together–individual*). I organized dialectic themes according to the three dialectics Baxter and Montgomery (1996) listed as commonly found in research with RDT. Following this, I deduced that some of my data consisted of primary themes and subthemes.

The purpose of step six involved locating exemplars of the dialectics. With this step, I reflected on the assertions of research scholars (Baxter, 2011; Lindlof & Taylor, 2002; Richards & Morse, 2013) that exemplars should add to the idea of thick description of findings. I chose quoted data representative of the meanings of each particular discourse theme. One participant, for instance, prompted his peer to play some music saying, "Let's do it." Indicative of togetherness, I used this quote in reporting my findings to illustrate the nature of a particular discourse—in this case, *together* discourse.

Trustworthiness and Validity

Researcher familiarity with the topic of study adds to that study's validity. Richards and Morse (2013) explained:

> Discourse analysts argue that their methodology unusually direct researchers, who are investigating their own social worlds and languages, to reflect on their part in what is studied, their selection of the voices to be heard, and their ability to challenge or question the texts studied. (p. 74)

Enhanced understanding of how adolescent musicians self-learn is a highly personal topic of interest. As a full-time high school guitar teacher for over eight years and professional guitarist for over nineteen years, confidence in my understanding of the participants' dialogues may be upheld in light of this background.

The methods of analysis in this study contribute to its trustworthiness and validity. Scholars (Baxter, 2011; Manning & Kunkel, 2014; Tracy & Robles, 2013) recognize RDT as a developing area of research into interpersonal communication; Baxter's body of work makes sense of how people relate through talking. Academics of

human behavior (Geertz, 1973; Timoner, 2004), qualitative research (Lichtman, 2006; Stake, 2006), and interpersonal communication (Manning & Kunkel, 2014; Rawlins, 1992) have advocated for interpretivist methods such as discourse analysis. In qualitative studies, interpretations of communication data can result in abundant descriptions of words and dialogues (Baxter, 2011; Manning & Kunkel, 2014; Richards & Morse, 2013). I applied the framework of RDT to the analysis; in the first analysis, this entailed organized methods of thematic analysis and steps involved with contrapuntal analysis as explained by Baxter (2011). Other studies (Green, 2002; Jaffurs, 2006; Stickford, 2003) add support for methods involving an interpretivist approach in which researchers aimed to understand the activities of their participants. Conducting the one-on-one and paired interviews immediately following practice sessions also adds to the validity of the research process, because participants did not have a large gap of time between interactions with their peer and answering questions in interviews about what occurred in their conversations.

Regarding my analysis with RDT, interpersonal communication researchers apply RDT as a lens in order to interpret meanings in communication (Baxter, 2011; Baxter & Montgomery, 1996). The discourse analysis—that is, the interpretation of meanings from dialogues and nonverbal communication—refers to method (Manning & Kunkel, 2014). Baxter's (2011) updated guidelines for this method with the lens of RDT clarify Baxter and Montgomery's (1996) introduction of RDT and enhance the validity of extracted meanings from participants' dialogues. The steps of analysis with RDT were clear to follow, meticulous, and highly engaging.

Member Checks and Peer Review

Discourse analysis necessitates that the researcher parses and interprets the textual subject matter from their perspective. Gall et al. (2003) asserted that methods of member checks provide democratic validity. The judgments of participants—concerning their own interpretations of meanings in communication, as well as those of their peers and the researcher—contributed to the credibility of the findings. The creators of RDT discussed dialogic scholarship (interpreting data with participants) and Baxter asserted, "I would hope, at minimum, that people privilege multiple voices in gathering data. And we need not be fearful when those voices say something very different that we can't reduce to a single answer" (Baxter & Montgomery, 1996, p. 237). In line with this, I incorporated participants' interpretations and suggestions for descriptive labels of categories and the resultant themes of data. They provided interpretations of findings in their own words. I aimed to appropriately represent the first-hand perspective and voices on peer communication practices to learn music.

My study included member checks and peer review to add measures of trustworthiness and validity from multiple voices. This was done not only to triangulate perspectives on the data, but also to satisfy questions to ethics issues. The peer reviewers included a retired music professor and a recent doctoral graduate of music education. They examined and verified meanings I extracted from the participants' everyday talk. Peer reviewers thus enhanced the trustworthiness and validity of research findings.

Limitations and Delimitations

One limitation of this study was achieving the ideal sample. Few potential

participants met the criteria of having little to no formal music experience and only a few months learning on the guitar. Two participants did meet the full criteria but dropped out of the study.

The participants determined the timeline of this study, because I had to conduct observations when they chose to meet and practice music together. The participants also determined the length of each session; this affected the amount of interactions they had and how much data I could collect. This study involved naturalistic research, and so one concern was that meeting infrequently could have a negative impact on participant retention. I also had to coordinate my availability with my participants. As a teacher, the study took place while school was in session; some participants met on days off from school. I did my best to accommodate my participants, taking days off from work to observe and interview them.

According to Baxter and Montgomery (1996) and Baxter (2011), examination of interpersonal communication can be approached in two ways: (1) *internally* with regard to the communication exclusively between the relating partners' interactions; and (2) *externally* with regard to the relating partners' discourses as a communicating unit in the context of greater society (e.g., two people communicating to parallel or contrast with social customs). In this study, data analysis was delimited to the *internal* approach. I methodically followed procedural steps of thematic analysis outlined by Braun and Clarke (2006) for identifying the themes of dialectics exclusively between the relating pairs of participants.

Summary

Discourse analysis aided me to extract rich data for answers to my research questions. I used observations and interview questions to gather extensive data to deeply explore systematic ways participants used everyday talk with their peer to make and learn music. My research questions and theoretical perspective provided direction for data collected, and my findings may enhance pedagogical understanding about how adolescent musicians relate to learn music without adult teachers. Following steps of analysis included coding, organizing categories of codes, defining themes, and choosing exemplars representing each theme. Peer review and the participants' member checks support the validity of the methods and respective findings. The following chapter contains the findings from this study.

Chapter 4

Dialectic Discourses

The purpose of this study was to observe and analyze how pairs of adolescents used everyday talk in organized ways to learn music outside school. I applied the framework of Relational Dialectics Theory (RDT) to illuminate structures of opposing discourses that emerged in participants' dialogues. I interpreted discourse meanings from verbal and nonverbal communication during learning music. I parsed data with a discourse analysis approach. Core themes and subthemes of dialectic tensions developed through analysis. Identities emerged in analyses of joint and independent dialogues. Participants used variations of joint and independent communication to assess learning. I aimed to answer two research questions:

1. How do participants learning jointly and independently communicate with a peer outside school?
2. How do participants assess independent learning along with their peer and joint learning outside school?

The first set of findings included three core dialectic tensions: together–individual, unreserved–reserved, and established–undetermined. Data indicated these opposing discourse values maintain either a central or marginal function in the participants' dialogues. I discuss these three core dialectic themes and subthemes in this chapter.

Participants

The six adolescents who enrolled and participated in this study were male students from various neighborhoods in the city of El Paso, Texas. Each participant identified his counterpart in the music-learning environment as a “friend” with whom he played music before entering my study. The participants, thus, enrolled in my study as a pair of friends.

All of the participants had, at least, some music experience provided in public schools. All declared themselves to be self-taught on the guitar. Table 2 identifies participants’ respective ages and reported experience (years of self-taught music study).

Table 2

Participant Age and Reported Self-Learning Experience

Participants (*N* = 6)	Age	Reported Experience
Bruce	15	1 year
Chuck	18	5 months
Robert	17	7 years
Morrissey	18	7 years
Xavier	16	5 years
Max	16	4 years

All names used are pseudonyms the participants themselves chose. Bruce and Chuck comprised the first participant pair, Robert and Morrissey the second, and the third are made up of Xavier and Max. I use my first name to indicate myself as researcher.

The friendship of the first pair was new. They had not known each other well in school and had recently connected as musicians in their high school guitar class. Bruce was playing guitar for about eight months before he and Chuck met and started playing music with each other outside school. Chuck had only been playing guitar for four

months at the time of this study, and he often allowed Bruce to show him new material and take the lead in their sessions.

The second participant pair was made up of Robert and Morrissey. Each began playing guitar a couple of years on his own before joining the high school guitar class. Like the first pair, they also connected as musicians and began practicing their music for the class—as well as music they liked—outside school. Both competed annually in regional and in state-level classical guitar competitions. From my observations, the two were highly skilled players in both the Classical and the popular style of guitar playing.

The third pair represented self-taught guitarists, and each had several years of playing experience. Xavier had been playing guitar for five years, Max for four years. Max participated in his high school marching band (on another instrument), and Xavier only played music outside school. They practiced to jam, to learn with and from one another, and to rehearse music. During these sessions, they often discussed and practiced music played by a band they had formed.

All participant pairs arranged their own rehearsal times and locations and invited me to observe three of them. Observations took place in locations in which participants regularly met to play music together. The locations included a bench outside a public library, a secluded foyer at a high school, and in a garage at one participant's home. Table 3 identifies the locations and lengths of time (rounded to the minute) for each observation and interview with the participants.

Table 3

Locations and Lengths of Time for Observations and Interviews

Participant Pair	Session	Location	Minutes of Observation	Interview Kind	Who Interviewed	Minutes of Interviews
First Pair	1	A Public Library Bench (outside)	34	One-on-one	Bruce Chuck	14 10
	2	A Public Library Bench (outside)	42	One-on-one	Bruce Chuck	13 9
	3	A Public Library Bench (outside)	30	Pair	First Pair	25
Second Pair	1	High School Foyer (secluded)	28	One-on-one	Robert Morrissey	17 16
	2	High School Foyer (secluded)	28	One-on-one	Robert Morrissey	20 20
	3	High School Foyer (secluded)	49	Pair	Second Pair	24
Third Pair	1	Garage at Xavier's home	34	One-on-one	Xavier Max	12 9
	2	Garage at Xavier's home	26	One-on-one	Xavier Max	20 21
	3	Garage at Max's home	63	Pair	Third Pair	59

Note. The participants also met at a local music store in a focus group interview lasting 64 minutes.

I recorded each of the participant's practice sessions and interviews, and I took field notes during and after each practice. At the end of the first two practice sessions, I interviewed participants individually, and, at the end of the third session, I interviewed the pair together. In addition, all six participants met to take part in a group interview that followed my final observations. Participants answered open-ended questions about their interactions and the dynamics of communication used to learn music with a peer.

Findings

Dialectics

I found that adolescent guitarists learning music jointly and independently outside school used systems of meanings in communication that relate to three core dialectic tensions. I interpreted the dialectic tensions with emergent subthemes of opposing discourse meanings presented by each participant and across all participant pairs. Subthemes of opposing discourses represent the core dialectic tensions. Table 4 outlines the primary values and semantic subthemes representative of these core dialectic tensions.

Table 4

Dialectic Tensions Identified

Core Dialectic Tensions	**Subthemes**
Together–Individual	United–Divided
	Compliant–Independent
	Supportive–Self-focused
	Equal–Superior
Unreserved–Reserved	Flexible–Inflexible
	Suggesting–Obligating
	Playful–Serious
Established–Undetermined	Routine–Spontaneous
	Practiced–Learning

The following sections entail explanations of subthemes comprising each of the core dialectic tensions. Using terminology outlined by Baxter and Montgomery (1996) and Baxter (2011), I discuss each defined meaning as encompassing a *discourse* and the

individual discourses in opposition as either *central* or *marginal* in participants' dialogues. In referring to central discourses, I indicate discourse types that were dominant and more frequently used in participants' conversations. Marginal discourses might be recurrent or repeated, but these were comparatively and expressively less important and less frequently used.

Core dialectic: together-individual. Together–individual is a dialectic tension with opposing discourse meanings and is synonymous with the terms connectedness–autonomy used by Baxter and Montgomery's (1996) and with the terms autonomy–connection explained by Baxter (2011). Together discourse refers to participants' communication showing their unity, collaboration, and interdependence. Conversely, individual discourse refers to communication indicating the participants' dividedness, independent ideas, and self-focus.

The core oppositional values arose from associated subthemes of dialectic tensions that emerged through analysis of participant discourses. Associated subthemes attributable to the core oppositional value together–individual include united–divided, compliant–independent, supportive–self-focused, and equal–superior. Participants identified the specific discourses on each polar end of the tension as either central or marginal to their dialogues.

United-divided. Participants engaged in both individual and joint interactions. United discourse was shown in their joint dialogues in many issues, but especially in learning to play music. Divided discourse emerged in discussions in which the two differed on issues and showed they were not like-minded. My awareness of tension

between discourses grew out of understanding the separate discourse meanings with examples from the corpus of data. I interpreted united discourse, for example, in an exchange between the first participant pair:

> **Bruce**: Well, we, we can do that combination. You doing the… [Bruce demonstrates a melodic phrase] two times and four, and I'll just do the… [He demonstrates another melody]
>
> **Chuck**: [begins playing the melodic passage Bruce demonstrated] Alright.
>
> **Bruce**: [watching Chuck play while playing his own part] Slower.
>
> **Chuck**: [appears focused on his own playing] Yeah.
>
> **Bruce**: A little bit slower. [Continues playing and watching Chuck play]

Bruce and Chuck are united in this exchange regarding how to play certain melodic parts together. The sense of togetherness exists in this exchange. These participants concurred that musical excerpts Bruce played, in lieu of providing a verbal explanation, contributed in showing their unity. Using music as a form of communication occurred in dialogues between each participant pair. For example, the second participant pair explored the complexity of a fingering exercise, largely by attempting to play the fingering:

> **Robert**: You have to do it fast like . . . [Robert demonstrates a melodic phrase]
>
> **Morrissey**: It's just like, no! [Morrissey also demonstrates a similar melodic phrase] Ha!
>
> **Robert**: Then just like from the like, three, two, four. [Robert looks at his grip-hand fingers as they move.]
>
> **Morrissey**: This is tricky. It's a badass exercise. Where's your trick your hand?

[chuckles]

Robert: No, no, no watch. [Robert again looks at his grip-hand fingers as he continues. Morrissey looks at Robert's hand as well.] It's like going up and down the neck but it's cool for flexibility. Like, it's basically the same thing just to start it off but you kinda go up and down the fret board. Watch. You go one, two, three, four, and then you shift from the first to second position.

Morrissey: Oh yeah. [both smile at each other]

These interactions showed the participants united in a joint effort to learn the fingering exercise. I interpreted united discourses in such communicative actions indicated here—nonverbal and musical—while participants learned music together.

United discourse emerged in other brief interactions. For example, during one meeting Xavier took on a position of leadership and suggested, "Hey, let's do 'My Hero' really fast." Max replied, "Yeah." Discourse meanings emerged from individual participants' utterances, as well communication between two participants as a pair. Xavier's use of "let's" was a one-sided implication until Max replied affirmatively by saying "Yeah." By perceiving these distinctions in the analysis, I was able to deduce and code terms and categories.

Digressing from joint interactions, participants asserted individual stances and expressed dividedness. For example, the long periods between meetings suggested a preference for independence. In this way, divided discourse was not always explicitly revealed in the verbal data.

Nonverbal and musical communication also revealed how participants divided in

actions and behaviors. For example, a participant pair might briefly interact with little verbal communication and focus separately on individual playing. In one instance, Bruce interrupted his peer by remarking, "No, it's just, it's just . . . " and demonstrated a chord-melody phrase that Chuck had practiced repeatedly during the meeting. Chuck watched as Bruce demonstrated left-hand grip shifts and finger placements, looked back at his own fingers, and played the chord-melody phrase using Bruce's approach. After one attempt, Chuck looked at Bruce, nodded his head toward his peer, and smiled. He then began to play a different melodic line and chords that they were working on during that session. Bruce's body language demonstrated that he acknowledged his peer's encouraging facial gestures, but then he turned his attention back to his own playing, thus ending the joint exchange. In this example, together discourse was illustrated by Bruce's verbal utterance ("No, it's just . . . ") and Chuck's actions (watching and applying Bruce's suggested technique). Their immediate departure from joint music making, however, indicated that divided discourse was central in this episode. Participants concurred in separate interviews that while they often met with their peers to work on selected music together, they preferred to learn separately.

I interviewed the second pair asking, "So, can you describe how you [both] set goals for music?" Morrissey asserted, "Well, sometimes, I mean, well, we're hardly practicing together." This statement supports a preference for individual practice over joint practice. It might suggest they favor being divided more than being united in music practice. Morrissey also remarked about setting music-making goals with his peer, "We don't talk about our personal life." I did not ask him about how their personal lives

factored into their goals for learning and playing music together; however, this statement was further evidence of how Morrissey and his peer maintain individuality. They separate talk about music making from discussions about personal life.

Dates in my field notes for observations with the pairs indicated they did not meet weekly to play music. For example, after the first meeting with Robert and Morrissey on February 2, they met again on March 3 and for a final session on March 20. These time gaps between meetings highlighted their dividedness. In the sessions I observed, all pairs were united through music making, but divided by instances of individual playing in the presence of their counterparts. Through my observations and participant responses about extended periods of time between their meetings, I concluded that all participants had privileged divided discourse over the united discourse. United discourse was therefore marginal and divided discourse central.

Compliant–independent. Participants communicated both from an independent stance and in complying with their peer to learn jointly outside school. Compliant discourse refers to communication in which participants acquiesced to a peer. This emerged when participants followed orders or directions given by their peer. Participants simply nodded their head sometimes and began playing music their peer insisted they play. Conversely, independent discourse refers to communication and nonverbal behaviors that showed participants were on their own, disagreed, and did not wish to play along with their peer. Independent discourse emerged in language to establish and assert personal thoughts on musical ideas or to contradict something the peer said.

Compliant behavior often involved one participant playing in response to his

peer's verbal instruction. I observed an example of this during one meeting with the first participant pair. Bruce interrupted joint play with Chuck by insisting Chuck try to play a certain way. He demonstrated his suggested playing style for Chuck:

> **Bruce**: Just this . . . [Bruce gestures his guitar neck forward to show finger placement] You're just gonna be playing . . . [Bruce begins strumming a chord pattern, while Chuck looks on] while I do . . . [Bruce plays a melody, and then makes eye contact with his peer] Alright. One, two, three. [both simultaneously play, and then Chuck stops]
>
> **Chuck**: Wow! No, I get the chords, no, I do get the chords. Like, where to put the fingers?

In the interview following this session, Bruce explained that Chuck appeared to struggle in playing, and this provoked him to offer Chuck instructions. His aim was to help his peer. I observed that Chuck had grimaced as he negotiated his grip-hand fingers at the time of this interaction. While strumming the strings, Chuck's finger placement for chords did not match his rhythmic strumming. Bruce then asserted, "You're just gonna . . . " and a brief interlude of joint playing began. Chuck's actions to play along with Bruce, in this circumstance, were compliant: Chuck complied with his peer and played as instructed. In contrast, Chuck stopped the mutual playing and exclaimed, "Wow!" He did not, however, look up at Bruce. Chuck halted the mutual playing to express his own thoughts on the issue ("No, I get the chords") and then began playing other material. The tone of Chuck's voice and body language indicated some annoyance—he looked away from his peer, spoke in a muttered and abrupt way, stating "No," and emphasized the

word *get* in reference to fingering the chords that were not a problem for him. Chuck also did not look directly at his peer. A turn from compliance discourse to independent discourse had occurred. Chuck communicated his independence from Bruce; that the pair did not continue playing jointly also showed this.

Participants exhibited compliance by agreeing to help their peer in brief asides with specific passages or songs. Max, for example, engaged his peer to play a song he was working on during such an aside from Xavier. While playing individually, Max exclaimed, “Let’s do this!” Max referenced the melody of the song he was just playing. Xavier peer looked and listened to Max briefly and responded, “Alright.” As Xavier was focused on himself at that moment, their solo to joint music playing also marked a transition in discourse from independent to compliant. The suggestive tone in Max’s exclaiming, “Let’s do this!” was obligating. Max’s tone urged Xavier’s compliance and to cease playing the music he was playing. This tone was common among the pairs. In interviews, however, participants declared independent discourse was central to communication over their use of compliant discourse.

Participants sometimes used nonverbal cues to evoke compliance. For example, Max gestured for Xavier to look at his fingers on the guitar neck by extending the neck out in front of his body, close to his peer; widening his eyes when his peer made eye-contact with him; and motioning downward with his head and looking at his own hand. Xavier registered his partner’s meaning and followed his cue by complying to look and by smiling and nodding in acknowledgment. The episode continued through compliant interactions as Max began to play along and verbally acknowledged Xavier’s efforts by

saying, “Nice.” All three pairs similarly displayed compliant discourse through nonverbal actions.

At certain moments participants complied in exchanges with their peer and made few or no bids to maintain their independence. Robert, for example, commented, “We should do things light.” His peer replied, “Alright.” Morrissey immediately complied with Robert’s suggestion and the two continued on as such for some time. In another example, Xavier suggested that he and Max try to play some music with various types of guitars. First, he exclaimed, “Hey! Actually, let’s try that, but let’s try it acoustically,” referring to the electric guitars they were holding and the acoustic guitars that lay nearby. Max stopped playing and asked, “Acoustic with that?” Xavier replied, “I want to put in my guitar and try it like. I just want to try it. Let’s go!” Understanding this, Max complied in replying, “Okay, ready,” before they embarked in a new direction of music making.

The pairs often enacted independent discourse nonverbally. This was evident when they spontaneously began playing musical ideas separately and self-sufficiently—without reason or excuse—despite verbalized decisions to play together in particular instances. This is problematic for instrumental music teachers. Usually negative consequences occur in music class when students with instruments play them without permission. For participants in my study, it often signaled that independent discourse emerged to oppose the compliant discourse previously established. Such spontaneous enactments of independent discourse highlighted a participant’s dividedness and an end to complying with their peer, if only for a few moments.

Verbal utterances helped some participants assert their independence. For example, while complying with Bruce's desire to watch him play some strumming patterns, Chuck halted Bruce by stating, "'Cause I'm always used to going like this," and strumming his guitar using a different pattern. Chuck's abrupt interruption and demonstration of a pattern he was accustomed to playing signaled his assertion of independence. His utterance and actions effectively achieved this.

Independent discourse seemed to stem from disparate musical skills, knowledge, and preferences. Robert expressed an opinion about music he himself was not interested in playing but Morrissey might have been:

> **Harold**: In those moments where you're like, "I don't want to do that," how do those happen?
>
> **Robert**: Uh, I think going back to when he asked me to be in his band and stuff like, if I'm going to play a show with him, like it's more polite, you know, like . . . [Robert grimaces as he continues] "No! I don't like your music!" That's kind of dumb for me to do. And it's never like that, because he's my friend I respect him. It's usually like, "No, I can't. I don't really want to, not anything against you or anything it's just not my kind of thing," you know?

Robert established his independent stance. He indicated he might tell Morrissey that he could not or did not want to play music he did not appreciate. The tone of his response is reflected in comments made by all the participants: They sometimes felt more strongly about not playing particular songs or music preferred by their peer, but friendship and respect for the peer was always a check. Data indicated that participants often went along

with their peers when asked to play certain musical ideas. Participants emphasized, however, that compliant discourse was less functional between them and their peer and that independent discourse was central. The participants emphasized in various ways that they learned more by playing independently:

- In my asking Robert to describe how they help their peer learn music on the guitar, he replied, “I learn by myself.”
- I asked Xavier why he did not like learning music with someone else (“Do you remember why you didn’t like it?”). His answer was, “I didn’t learn from him.”
- In asking Chuck and Bruce, “If you guys don’t pick a song to learn together, what then?” they stated, “We’ll usually learn the song on our own.”
- Responding to a question about whether or not his peer taught him music, Morrissey said, “I’m practically teaching myself”

Within a compliant–independent tension, the central function of independent discourse in communication suggested that participants valued their individual decision making and self-learning over joint learning. This did not mean, however, that participants did not also value joint playing and self-learning with their peer. Compliant discourse was illustrated when a participant proposed new musical materials, and a peer agreed. The evidence of compliant discourse, interspersed in communication, showed it was marginal. The more repeated and recurring evidence of independent discourse demonstrated that it was central in interactions.

The compliant and independent discourses that emerged in participants’ dialogues

provided some organized sense to the complexity of participants' self-learning music together. A broader picture of dialectic tensions begins to form in considering the interplay and overlap of united and divided discourses. Individual discursive styles reveal dialectic tensions that fit to form the complex narrative picture, much like fitting the pieces of a puzzle together. As separate puzzle pieces, each discursive pole of a dialectic tension may serve a central or marginal function in communication. The overall picture of dialectic tensions found between relating parties can indicate the landscape of talk used in specific social interactions—such as in this study of talk between adolescents learning music with a peer outside school.

Supportive–self-focused. Data showed participants jointly supported each other and communicated their independent self-focus while learning with a peer outside school. Supportive discourse emerged in instances of peer assistance by playing accompaniment, as well as through peer instructions and explanations. A participant's individual music playing and interactions focused only on himself demonstrated self-focused discourse. The following example of supportive discourse demonstrates how participants talked about playing music together. The participants communicated support for one another and referred to their music-making with a third peer:

Xavier: See how it sounds, everything right now, let's get a song going.

Max: Yeah, let's do the . . . [plays a melody on his guitar]

Xavier: Do we go down to "D" or "A?" [referring to pitches of the song melody]

Max: Yeah. So, do we start it off? Are we gonna start off with some keyboard thing? Or are we gonna do like, uh . . .

Xavier: We got your part still.

Max: We'll do that next. Or we'll do that tomorrow or something.

Xavier: Yeah, okay. Okay, let's go. [both begin playing a song]

[both finish playing]

Xavier: Turn your volume up.

Max: Yeah, and then I'll have this, uh, if Cliff wants, maybe we can take that guitar, and he could just switch out guitars.

Xavier: He still says he has his Fender.

Max: Or he could use his Fender. I think my guitar sounds like a . . . [begins playing a melody]

This interaction highlights supportive discourse the pair used for discussing their friend ("maybe we can take that guitar and he could just switch out guitars"). Speaking about accommodating their friend portrayed their support of him. Supportive discourse was dominant between the pairs. All participants regularly showed support of each other's opinions, playing skills, and knowledge.

Supportive and self-focused communication was used in peer music-learning interactions among all pairs. For example, a participant explained and demonstrated a certain finger exercise to his peer:

Robert: You have to do it fast like.

Morrissey: It's just like, "No!" [snorts] Ha! [Morrissey demonstrates the melodic pattern while Robert watches him]

Robert: Then, just like from the like, three, two, four.

Morrissey: This is tricky. [looking at his grip-hand and back at Robert as he speaks] It's a badass exercise, where you trick your hand… [snickers]

Robert: No, no, no watch. [looks at his own grip-hand and moves his fingers as he picks the pattern and speaks as Morrissey watches] It's like going up and down the neck but it's cool for flexibility. Like, it's basically the same thing just to start it off, but you kind of go up and down the fret board, watch. You go one, two, three, four and then, you shift from the first to second position.

Morrissey: Oh yeah.

Robert: And right here you go for up. [looking at his grip-hand, picking a melodic pattern] If you do it right, you should be in twelfth position right there. [plucks the fretted string] Then you go backwards. Fast. Try it.

Morrissey: Alright, I'll try it. [looks back at his own grip-hand]

Robert: When you get to the highest string you just shift it up. Yeah, there you go . . . and backwards.

Morrissey: Yeah.

Robert: Yeah, then you go back. It's kinda tricky.

Morrissey: Damn.

Robert: It's crazy. [both he and Morrissey snort]

Robert's interest in and concern for his peer here is supportive. The segment showed Robert's support ("You have to do it fast"), but the communication style shifted when Morrissey displayed a self-focused interest in learning an exercise. As stated previously, the related tensions in this study often overlapped. For example, I interpreted

Morrissey's comment, "Alright, I'll try it," as compliant discourse. That supportive discourse is related to united and compliant discourses highlights the complexity in the peer musicians' communication.

Supportive discourse occurred in cases of instructive dialogues, questions participants posed to each other, and in evaluations of joint playing. Helping his peer with a guitar fingering, for example, Bruce pointed to instructing Chuck, "This finger and the fifth, fourth fret." Chuck's peer acknowledged the support by physically counting the frets and verbalizing in a questioning tone, "One, two, three . . . it's the fourth fret? This one, this one, and this?" Bruce replied, "Yeah." Collaborative support was apparent as they continued to play.

Discourse of self-focus indicated that participants were playing and learning alone. Participants enacted self-focus in short periods of moments or seconds while in the presence of their peer. Participants asserted in interviews that supportive discourse was central to their overall communication. Communication data from observations confirmed that self-focused discourse was marginal and supportive discourses central. I observed participants supporting each other—watching and commenting on their peer's playing—while enacting individual discourse, but they were not together or helpful to their peer while self-focused.

I observed each participant to be independently focused on his own playing, rather than on joint practice, at one time or another. Self-focus was often unannounced and nonverbal. Nonverbal self-focused behavior opposed supportive dialogues. This occurred when participants tacitly focused on playing and learning by themselves.

Participants focused, for example, on playing a melodic phrase or chord pattern and were drawn away at these times from supporting their counterparts.

Supportive discourse was also enacted both nonverbally and musically. In the following interview excerpt, Bruce explained how Chuck supported him through focused attention and how he supported his peer's singing by providing accompaniment:

> **Harold**: Did Chuck help you today?
>
> **Bruce**: He, in the learning he didn't help me. Only in putting attention on me, he helped in that. And when we were pretty much done with that song, we just started like playing other songs. He left his guitar down and started singing and I played.

Chuck's nonverbal attention on Bruce and Bruce's attention on Chuck indicated supportive discourse. Bruce's reply displays his self-focus. The statement, "he didn't help me" suggests that Bruce did not receive Chuck's help and that Bruce was self-focused in learning. This segment emphasized the supportive–self-focused dialectic tension.

Equal–superior. Participants showed an independent superiority of skill and knowledge, and they communicated their preference to learn on equal terms with their peer outside school. Equal discourse was central in participants' communication evident in their similar levels of skills and musical knowledge. Dialogues, for example, showed similar understandings and use of insider guitar terms ("open 'D' tuning") each understood. Superior discourse emerged during instruction by one peer to his counterpart. Instruction given illustrated a participant's greater knowledge or expertise than his peer.

Equal discourse was evident during joint music making and in general

conversations about music. Equal discourse reflected the peers' friendship. In speaking, this discourse showed in their mutual understanding of music; playing guitar, it showed in their comparable musical skills. Participants thought that dialectic terms such as inferior and superior did not apply because of their effort to learn and enhance their own understanding. They did not perceive their peers as inferiors. Instead, they were empathetic in coordinating both verbal and nonverbal behaviors. They aimed to speak to help one another understand. There was no data indicating inferiority discourse aimed toward their peers' guitar playing. Participants did not consider one peer inferior to the other.

Equal discourse was enacted through similar playing styles and verbal communication about music and music-related issues. The pairs generally performed with each other and for each other with comparable abilities and skills. Bruce and Chuck exhibited the greatest differences in skills and knowledge, although they started learning the guitar only seven months apart.

The pairs often played different lines in songs they practiced. One participant, for example, would strum while their peer played the melody. That they could trade places with these techniques—playing the melody after strumming the chords—showed the equivalence of their skills. Participants were typically able to play techniques for music they played together.

Verbal communication about playing techniques showed participants to be equal in discussion of knowledge. In one brief exchange, Robert and Morrissey discussed the playing technique of other peers:

Robert: And then Vance is like . . . [incoherent word spoken as he strummed aggressively] you ever seen James do down strokes, dude?

Morrissey: That's mainly his technique.

Robert: And then Satanic down strokes?

Morrissey: Oh yeah! [snickers]

Robert: Dude, "Sad, But True." [name of the Metallica song]

These exchanges evidenced mutual camaraderie and history of friendship. These people are equals. The exchange here portrays this pair's parallel tone, understanding of jargon ("Satanic down strokes"), and agreement about how a mutual acquaintance played guitar. In another example, participants stopped playing a song to express their mutual confusion:

Max: Let's try it again. [both begin playing, then stop after a moment] You hear it?

Xavier: I'm confused.

Max: I know, me too.

Xavier: It's been a long time, that's why.

Max: I'm used to playing it on a piano, that's why.

Xavier: The bass line?

Max: Yeah. [incoherent statement made while Max plays his guitar; distorted audio recording]

Xavier: Oh! Let's play that!

Max: Ahh, I got control. [pauses to talk but continues playing his guitar]

Xavier: [laughing] We have control of this.

Max: We have control of everything.

This example involved two parties equally providing reasons for their individual confusion (i.e., "been a long time" and "used to playing it on piano"). They also shared their enthusiasm to immediately cease playing this passage and play a different song. The enthusiastic tone in this episode emphasized their friendship. Participants' use of similar vocabulary, as well as their similar vocalizations of musical passages (e.g., singing and humming melodies), showed how they empathetically communicated in equal measure.

With superior discourse, participants showed differentiated knowledge and ability of musical techniques. Superior discourse emerged in instances when a participant nonverbally observed his peer play or when participants acknowledged their peers' greater skill. Superior discourse often stemmed from one participant instructing his peer how to play.

Bruce stopped playing in one session to observe Chuck play. Bruce said to Chuck, "You skipped a chord." Chuck continued playing, and at another point in this interaction Bruce said, "Your right hand, smoother," while he continued to watch and listen to Chuck. When Chuck paused for a moment, Bruce insisted, "And don't play fast, try to play it slower." Bruce's superior knowledge and experience showed in these exchanges.

I noticed that Bruce gave instructions to his counterpart more often in their meetings. Chuck was frequently absorbed in self-learning, but he often complied with Bruce's instructions. Chuck asked questions and practiced certain parts while Bruce looked and listened. Despite Bruce's frequent use of superior discourse, the pair played

music together during each of their sessions, both by performing the same parts and complementary parts. Bruce used superior discourse with Chuck about guitar technique, and the episode highlighted how equal discourse became central to the interaction.

> **Bruce**: OK. [laughs and stops playing, Chuck begins to pick again] Yeah, um, try to, try and use this [Bruce holds his guitar slightly above his leg and closer to Chuck. Chuck looks up at Bruce's strum-hand.] From this string, first finger right here.
>
> **Chuck**: Oh, yeah. I know. [Chuck continues to watch Bruce's finger placement as they both pick their guitars] Yeah, the rest stroke.
>
> **Bruce**: No, but for this one do [looks down at his strum-hand and demonstrates the technique] and for this you have two fingers. Do it thumb and first finger, thumb and first finger. First finger, rest stroke.
>
> **Chuck**: But I'm so used to alternate rest stroke. [Chuck begins playing but stops after a moment when Bruce begins to play. Bruce also stops]
>
> **Bruce**: Keep playing it, man. Whatever, you know, I'll follow.

In this interaction, Chuck defended what he already understood and asserted equal discourse ("Oh yeah, I know"). Chuck continued using equal discourse by saying, "I'm so used to alternate rest stroke" and by demonstrating the technique. Chuck's communication underlined a sense of equality with Bruce and emphasized his independence; however, Chuck's communication did not indicate they were equally skilled. Bruce validated Chuck and enacted equal discourse by conceding, "Whatever, you know, I'll follow."

In an exchange between Robert and Morrissey, both enacted superior discourse. The following episode highlights exchanges of superior discourse and illustrates participants taking turns using superior discourse:

> **Morrissey**: Just practice those sweeps, but with the one, with the E that you start at the twelfth position. What I do is that I add a string. [demonstrating with both hands on his guitar]
>
> **Robert**: There's a Metallica solo that I can do finger picking. It's like, what is it . . . [playing single-note melodic material] Something like that, but it's sweeped. It's like, [sounding with his mouth] "Tarara, tarara, tarara."
>
> **Morrissey**: Oh, yeah. You're using your index and your middle . . .
>
> **Robert**: Yeah.
>
> **Morrissey**: Uh, huh.
>
> **Robert**: It's just easier for me. It's just easier . . . [trails off in talking as he looks on at his peer play some material]
>
> **Morrissey**: [finishes playing a segment] Alright, dude, with those sweeps, I add, like, a string to keep on going, like, throughout the whole string.
>
> **Robert**: It's like arpeggio?
>
> **Morrissey**: It's pretty cool.
>
> **Robert**: Move the third finger, like, hammer-on from first finger, hammer-on to the ring finger and then bar with the middle finger.
>
> **Morrissey**: Wait, third finger?
>
> **Robert**: Yeah.

Morrissey: [looking at his grip hand] Ah!

Robert: Yeah.

Superior discourse refers to a meaning in talk in which a participant spoke or played music that indicated a superior skill (such as in instructing their peer). This segment depicted each participant taking turns in communicating with superior discourse. Morrissey had just suggested that Robert "just practice those sweeps." Robert's saying, "there's a Metallica solo that I can do finger picking" indicated that Morrissey knew something about the technique. Robert had not fully understood what his peer meant by the "sweeps" technique, however. Morrissey, initiated superior discourse by telling Robert to practice the "sweeps" technique, but Robert instructed Morrissey on finger usage.

Participants recognized that they might differ in the level of their musical knowledge and guitar playing skill. One communicated this with superior discourse during an interview:

Harold: Can you explain what conflicts come up between you and Morrissey as you learn music together?

Robert: Well, I mean I don't mean to be like, kinda cocky but I would say I'm a little bit better at guitar than Morrissey. And the only thing that would stop us from stuff is like, uh, I mean either, him not being able to play it, which I mean I doubt it now. I mean, I haven't played with Morrissey in a couple of weeks. I mean, we're friends and stuff, but I haven't really played with him like I used to kinda. And, uh, it used to be the issue that like, I'll show him something and he

> wouldn't be able to get the, either rhythm down or the technique down, and also there's stuff that he'll teach me like, that I won't get either.

In a light-hearted tone, Robert indicated his guitar playing was superior to Morrissey's "Well, I mean I don't mean to be like, kinda cocky but I would say I'm a little bit better at guitar than Morrissey." The comparative statements Robert made regarding his playing skill versus his counterpart represent superior meaning, while his final statement about learning from Morrissey suggests equal meaning. In remarking, "And also there's stuff that he'll teach me like, that I won't get either," Robert used equal discourse.

All participants used equal discourse while making music jointly. Instruction by one participant given to their peer most clearly indicated the use of superior discourse. Participants discussed, for example, music-making concepts that one peer did not recognize. The more knowledgeable counterpart would assist with an explanation. The two maintained a tone of camaraderie throughout such interactions. I interpreted egalitarian relations based on their friendship and mutual respect.

Core dialectic: unreserved–reserved. Participants jointly communicated in unreserved ways and also expressed individual reservations regarding learning music with their peer outside school. Unreserved and reserved discourses are characteristically similar to openness–closedness, as defined by Baxter and Montgomery (1996). According to the authors, openness discourse refers to "self-disclosure with, and responsiveness to, the relationship partner" (p. 132). Unreserved discourses in this study also referred to participants' expressiveness and openness reflected in three associated meanings: (1) expressed flexibility with one's peer, (2) openness to suggestions and their

application, (3) and playfulness. Baxter and Montgomery explained that closedness emerged in displays of reservation, secretiveness, or introverted behavior regarding partners. In this study, reserved discourse was evident in three meanings as opposed to unreserved meanings: (1) inflexibility, (2) obligating a peer, and (3) serious communication.

Flexible–inflexible. Participants showed that they were open and flexible in playing with each other. I observed, for example, that participants often allowed their counterparts to start first. They tolerated and accepted playing certain music that their counterparts wanted to play even when they had no interest in playing such music.

Accessibility, cooperation, and approachability characterized flexible discourse. Examples of flexible discourse included instances in which participants asked their peers something like, "You wanna play yours first?" Peers who responded, "You can go ahead" displayed further flexibility. The following excerpts from all three pairs depict flexible discourse:

- **Bruce**: Wanna play that?

  Chuck: Mmm. [looks at Bruce and nods in confirmation.]

- **Robert**: You haven't done the tune. You wanna do the one we learned?

  Morrissey: Yeah.

  Robert: Alright.

- **Max**: What song do we do next?

  Xavier: It's up to you.

These flexible statements relied on openness and invitations to disclose preferences for

the music to be played. Participants frequently showed this kind of openness to their peers. They were flexible with each other's interests, as well as in maintaining agreeable conditions for music making. Flexible discourse was central in communication.

I did observe some infrequent displays inflexibility. Simple rejection statements, such as "No" or "Nah," expressed a participant's rigid position disinclination to play certain songs, for example. Sometimes nonverbal communication, i.e., remaining silent when asked, showed an inflexibility to try music he did not want to play. I did not perceive such responses as pointed negativity, such as to shame or bully. Inflexibility sometimes showed in slow, disapproving head shaking or distorted facial expressions. Morrissey spoke about his awareness of Robert's lack of interest in joining his band:

> **Harold**: Is there anything else about your learning music with Robert that you would like to share, or you think that might help me in my study?
>
> **Morrissey**: I mean, um, if this helps, I wish he could be in the band I'm playing in. I mean, this is out of school, but I really wish he could come in place to play the second rhythm guitarist, because his music abilities can match mine a little bit more further. But like, he's, he can be able to play with me, harmonize, and all that other stuff that metal players do, but he's a little bit beyond that point playing jazz. And he doesn't, uh, he's not really into the metal.

Three indications highlight evidence of Robert's inflexibility: (1) Morrissey says he "wish[es] he could be in the band;" (2) it is implied that Robert does not show up to play in Morrissey's band; and (3) Morrissey points out Robert is "not really into the metal." Morrissey respectfully contends with Robert's boundaries—his inflexibility—in their

other interactions.

The participants spoke about flexibility in the focus group interview:

Harold: How good do you think teens are at teaching themselves music out of school?

Chuck: They can experiment.

Group: Yeah.

Max: It gives you time to . . .

Xavier: You can do what you wanna do.

Robert: I think better, because you're not afraid to mess up in front of somebody.

Max: You don't have a deadline to meet. Like, "You have to learn this guitar part in like two weeks for your test," and you're stressing out on trying to learn the guitar part and you keep messing up.

Xavier: And if you mess up, "You fail."

The excerpt shows that participants valued the flexibility of learning outside school. Chuck indicated that teen musicians "can experiment" to learn music on their own. Xavier mentioned they learn well by doing what they wanted to do. Max and Xavier agreed learning outside school was less stressful than classroom learning. All participants emphasized their preference for flexible discourse. Observational data suggested that flexible discourse was central to peer communication.

Suggesting–obligating. Participants obligated their peer to play something, insisting they play certain passages and instructing them to experiment with particular ideas and techniques. Obligating them, they imposed closed-minded expectations on their

peers. Suggestions to play, by contrast, provided them an opportunity to say "No" and opt out. Suggesting did not involve single-minded urgency and insistence. Suggesting involved paired decision-making and concern for a peer's opinion about which music to play.

Participants imposed their instructions and guidance with obligating discourse in order to influence their peers to comply with a requested behavior. For example, in one instance, Bruce insisted that Chuck try playing a certain musical passage his way:

> **Bruce**: Just do [demonstrates chord fingerings on his guitar] and instead of playing the open one two times, play [plays a short chord sequence.] You need to replace the 'A' . . . [Chuck attempts the chord sequence and Bruce plays a musical phrase at the same time. Chuck appears frustrated—strumming a chord repeatedly and loudly—and stops after he struggles to change chords.] Slower.
>
> **Chuck**: Yeah. [Chuck continues to play and Bruce watches him.]
>
> **Bruce**: A little bit slower.

Assertive and direct tones in Bruce's statements were aimed at Chuck's behavior. Bruce insisted that Chuck execute certain actions. Bruce's tone of voice was not agitated, nor was he visibly upset. His tone, however, was firm and insistent. Chuck did not reply verbally, but complied with his peer's obligatory instructions. Chuck attempted to play the chord sequence that Bruce showed him, and he conveyed the concerted effort in his body language: He looked down to focus on his fingers while playing what Bruce told him to play. Bruce provoked a compliant response. Chuck might have unwittingly facilitated and enabled this by his not suggesting alternative music to play.

Suggesting discourse was frequent in peer music learning. Instances in which participants suggested fingerings for chords and single-note melodies were evident in each pair's dialogues. Participants often noticed when their counterparts made mistakes and offered suggestions for how to play difficult fingerings or chords. Suggestions were also frequently made in choosing songs. Participants made suggesting statements through questions such as, "Wanna play that," "You wanna do the one we learned," or "Wanna go through the Battle of the Bands [songs.]?"

Suggesting and obligating discourses were communicated verbally, nonverbally, and through musical behaviors. I observed participants use audible grunts and head-bobs in repeated attempts—some of which failed—to suggest the beat or tempo. Such nonverbal clues showed guidance through suggestive behaviors for how to play. Participants did not realize they elicited such nonverbal help from their peers.

Participants posed suggestions for how to play during their counterpart's self-focused playing. For example, Bruce responded when Chuck stopped attempting to play a single-note phrase. He leaned back and laughed after a number of failed attempts at a passage. Suggesting and obligating discourses emerged in this excerpt:

> **Bruce**: OK, start that. [Bruce watches as Chuck plays the passage on his guitar.] It's a cool, it's a cool, ah, speed and open zeros on the strings that you do. [Bruce begins playing the passage with Chuck.] If you wanna just practice [Bruce demonstrates the musical material as he speaks.] be putting your finger and just letting it go, 'cause it's just gonna be one [Bruce plucks one string.] like . . . [Bruce stops talking and demonstrates the full passage. Chuck imitates what

Bruce showed him and the pair resume playing the song together.]

Chuck is verbally silent here, but the meaning of his communication is clear. This segment begins with an obligating statement ("OK, start that"). Suggesting discourse follows ("If you wanna just practice"). Just as obligating can evoke compliant discourse, so suggesting discourse seemed to lead to united discourse here. This is apparent in Bruce's suggestion that resulted in the pair interacting, united, in their music making. Suggesting discourse was also evident here:

Max: What do you wanna do first? [Xavier finishes playing a melodic guitar riff while Max asks this.]

Xavier: Dude, I love how this sounds. No feedback!

Max: See how it sounds everything right now? Let's get a song going. You wanna do "Punk Song?"

Xavier: Yeah! Let's do "Punk Song!" [Xavier begins tuning his guitar.]

Max: Do we go down to 'D' or 'A'?

Xavier: Yeah. So, do we start it off? Or are we gonna do, like, uh . . . [Xavier demonstrates a musical passage.]

Max: Yeah. Okay, okay, let's go. [Both begin playing the song.]

The dialogue began with Max approaching Xavier after he had finished playing a riff. Max suggested joint playing by asking, "What do you wanna do first?" Xavier agreed to play with Max and offered his own suggestion in responding, "Yeah! Let's do 'Punk Song!'" Suggesting this led to a transition into joint music making. Obligating discourse, conversely, tended to serve self-learning. Participants invoked obligating discourse when

they made mistakes; in such instances, participants got help to improve or master a difficult passage or technique by obligating a peer to listen to them play. The data showed that participants spoke more frequently with suggesting discourse. Instances of obligating discourse were intermittent and, thus, marginal regarding the dialectic.

Playful–serious. Participants used both playful and serious discourses in learning music with a peer. Baxter (2011) discussed playful discourse as one that contributes to an understanding of a speaker's manner: "The serious–playful dimension draws attention to the tone of an utterance" (p. 136). In this study, playful also applied to expletives, as well as to colorful, and humorous communication. For example, participants frequently used expletives, but without a tone of hostility or aggression. This preserved their playful meaning. The common expletives (i.e., "shit," "damn," and "bad-ass") were often emphatic and expressive. In the following exchange, the first pair employed expletives while discussing the use of fingernail extensions for guitar playing:

Robert: They'll do the job. But it's just not what I'm used to, you know?

Morrissey: Yeah, you know, you like, you want 'em long.

Robert: Yeah, shit. I was thinkin' about tellin' my mom, 'cause my mom doesn't know how to get the, the, the fake nails on.

Morrissey: Yeah, I dunno, 'cause look at this one . . . [holds up his hand to show Robert his long fingernails.]

Robert: Oh, dude, that's so badass!

Morrissey: Yeah.

This episode reveals how expletives were typically used (as is often the case) in

lighthearted dialogue. In this study, I did not observe any expletives used as an expression of aggression. On the contrary, the use of expletives may indicate how adolescents connect with each other through a certain language that reflects their youth and desire to achieve maturity (Bennett, Cieslik, & Miles, 2003). The use of expletives among adolescent musicians may help them to develop rapport by playing with words associated with adults. Expletives were colorful and expressive, but non-threatening, and all participants in this study used them.

During the group interview, participants agreed that playfulness and humor were important to peer music learning. As one of my final questions, I asked for information about learning music with a friend that had helped them and that might help me in teaching my high school students. They used words such as "joke," "humor," and "friendship," highlighting the *playful* discourse, in their answers:

> **Harold**: Is there anything else about learning music with a friend, a peer out of school that you think you could share and be helpful to me as a teacher?
>
> **Xavier**: Always keep friendship in there. Keep your students as friends.
>
> **Max**: OK, jokes are a constant need. You need to joke, if you don't joke . . .
>
> **Bruce**: Like, we make [our high school guitar teacher] our friend.
>
> **Max**: Like our teacher, he's so comfortable with his students that he literally is not afraid to be stupid in front of us. And he literally showed us the music his band wrote.
>
> **Chuck**: And this is what he says like in every semester he gets new students, and he's like, "If you don't have a sense of humor then, get another class." That's it.

He has a great sense of humor.

While participants predominantly portrayed their seriousness in learning and playing music, they also valued playfulness and humor. They all agreed that they connected with music teachers who used *playful* discourse. They suggested to me that I "keep [my] students as friends" because that element of communication works for them. Music making could also be playful; participants often expressed themselves through physical gestures (body and face) that indicated some effect of the music they played. For example, they gyrated their bodies (when standing to play their instrument) and swayed their heads to the beat of the music. Participants also acknowledged each other and affirmed in-the-moment achievements with playful, nonverbal communication. Nonverbal gestures such as fist bumping, smiling, laughing, and high-fiving were examples of nonverbal, and playful behaviors. Discussions about learning music, musicians, and guitar technique—which frequently accompanied playing—also encompassed such playful behavior.

While overall communication involved playful discourse, much of what was happening between participants was grounded in serious discourse. Participants communicated serious discourse using ordinary language and expressive tones. This is to say, participants spoke plainly rather than expressively when discussing music and music making. In the following excerpt, the first participant pair spoke seriously about a song they were learning:

Bruce: To make it easier, to make it to one finger . . . [pauses as he watches Chuck continue to play.] Look. Instead of doing it . . . [Bruce demonstrates the

melodic pattern on his guitar.] you could just do open, four. And then, same up here, but 'O' for five. [Both begin playing the melodic phrase together.] That's the beginner part. Just, it's just to make it cleaner, when you do, uh, just to make it cleaner, not so . . . [Bruce demonstrates a portion of the melodic phrase, then Chuck. Bruce continues to watch what Chuck does.] This . . . [Bruce points at his grip-hand.] Like this . . . [Bruce reaches out and moves Chuck's finger and vocalizes "dun-dun, dun-dun, dun-dun, duh-duh."]

Chuck: Oh. [Chuck plays the melodic phrase again. Bruce begins to play the passage again with him.] OK.

Bruce: You know, Ratt plays the chorus. [Bruce plays a different melodic phrase and strums chords. Chuck replays the melody he is learning and Bruce watches and listens then begins playing along.]

Chuck: I, I hear it. [Both continue to play together.]

Bruce: You play the melody. Just play, don't stop. [Bruce strums chords and plays some different melodic material.]

Chuck: No. [Chuck is playing with some errors, but continues trying. Bruce resumes playing same melody as Chuck.]

The text illustrates how serious meaning emerged through verbal, nonverbal (vocalizing), and musical communication. The pair used serious discourse to discuss technique, aesthetic issues ("to make it cleaner"), and other musicians (Ratt). Other discourses emerged in the course of Bruce's instructions about fingerings. Bruce said, "Just, it's just to make it cleaner, when you do, uh, just to make it cleaner," which indicated suggesting

discourse. When Bruce added, "You play the melody. Just play, don't stop," he used obligating discourse. The participants' conversation also maintained a serious tone. Playful behavior, however, interspersed the participants' serious discussion and music making. They enacted playful behavior in bobbing their heads, merrily moving in time with the beat of the music, and looking at each other with raised eyebrows and smiling while playing.

Serious discourse emerged during another pair's meeting, when the peers discussed picking technique:

> **Robert**: When you do the, like the triplets the "trr-trr-trr," do you like tip the pick sideways, kinda, a little bit?
>
> **Morrissey**: Not really, I don't know about the, like the fucking triplets?
>
> **Robert**: Yeah the triplets like . . . [demonstrates picking triplets on one guitar string and Morrissey watches attentively.]
>
> **Morrissey**: Yeah.
>
> **Robert**: Have you ever tried doing, like with, like the pick, like perfectly, like parallel with the string?
>
> **Morrissey**: Nah, it's, awkward.
>
> **Robert**: Yeah.

In this excerpt, the exchange opened with Robert's question about picking. He expressed an interest in understanding the technique of using a pick parallel to the strings. Robert's tone of voice was even, rather than expressive. Serious discourse—central in communication—was only irregularly disrupted by playful discourse.

Core dialectic: established–undetermined. Participants jointly and independently communicated with both established and undetermined discourses to learn music with a peer outside school. Established discourse refers to typical and familiar ways in which people have a sense of certainty about relating with others. Including certain topics that often recur between people, established discourse involves ways we expect people to interact. A child arriving home from school might typically look their parents in the eyes when asked about their day; the child will have expressed established discourse in this nonverbal way. If the same child looked down when their parents asked about their day, the behavior expresses a difference and might evoke surprise in the parents. Uncertainty in relating emerges from such new and surprising communication. The unfamiliar and surprising ways with which people relate in new exchanges is referred to in this study as undetermined discourse. Established–undetermined is the same as the dialectical tension Baxter and Montgomery (1996) labeled certainty–uncertainty. According to those authors, certainty–uncertainty entails the known and unknown in communication.

Each pair of participants in this study had a history of experiences. However short their friendship, they developed communication routines. They practiced music together, for example, before enrolling in this study, although they still continued to learn. Atypical, unplanned, and surprising ways of interacting to learn music emerged in contrast to those ways established in dialogues. Two subthemes of dialectics characterized the established–undetermined dialectic: routine–spontaneous and practiced–learning.

Routine–spontaneous. Routine refers to methodical, recurring, and systematic peer interactions. Participants, for example, routinely discussed the particulars of facilitating their meetings. At the start of each session, participants discussed where they would sit or stand, where to place their gear, and what volume or pedal-effect settings to use. Conversely, changes in communication style and different approaches to music making exhibited spontaneous discourse. Participants usually practiced in the same locations, for instance, but on one occasion a pair had to meet in a different location (Max's home garage was unavailable and the pair met at Xavier's home garage). This deviation in routine inspired spontaneous discourse. It emerged when the participants spoke about their necessary location change.

Routine discourse emerged in recurrent dialogues and behaviors. Verbal routine discourse during sessions included discussing songs, speaking about topics previously discussed, and agreeing when to end the sessions. Specific nonverbal routines included actions for setting up, playing music, tuning guitars, playing songs again from the beginning, and repeatedly stopping at points where work was needed. Songs participants seemed to have already mastered were routinely played again.

Routine discourse was maintained through recurring topics of conversation. Robert and Morrissey, for example, often discussed issues related to fingernail technique, length, and nail cutting in their meetings. They also tended to play songs using a classical fingering technique. Other commonly brought up subjects emerged in dialogues with all three pairs. Song choice was routinely asked ("So, what do you wanna play?") at the start of each session. When participants simply began playing different music from what was

agreed on to play, it signaled a change in music making and spontaneous discourse.

Spontaneous discourse was evident when participants discussed playing new songs, techniques, or musical phrases. Bruce, for instance, suggested to Chuck, "You wanna use a pick?" Chuck countered with an explanation of a strumming style that Bruce provided by saying: "It's 'cause I'm always used to going like this . . . [strumming while he spoke]." In asserting his own method of playing—a way of strumming he was used to and seemed to satisfy him—Bruce enacted a routine discourse. In another exchange, Bruce suggested that Chuck try to play a different fingering for a chord:

> **Chuck**: Ok, start playing that. It's a cool, it's a cool, uh, speed and open zeros on the strings that we did. [Both begin playing.]
>
> **Bruce**: If you wanna just practice 'B' low putting your finger [Bruce looks at his fingers forming the chord pattern on his guitar neck] and just letting it go [he strums the strings to sound the chord] 'cause it's just gonna be one, like . . . [Bruce demonstrates and Chuck attempts to imitate.]

Similar to previous observations with this pair, Chuck did not request assistance. Bruce suggested ("If you wanna just practice . . . and just letting it go") that Chuck play specific strumming patterns and guitar finger techniques. These types of exchanges were routine in this pair. I interpreted many of the participants' suggesting and obligating discourses as examples of spontaneous discourse. Bruce and Chuck supported my interpretation in explaining they did not work from a plan:

> **Bruce**: I never have something planned to teach Chuck, every single time I'm going to show him something . . . [Chuck interrupts.]

Chuck: It's improv.

Bruce: It's improv.

While participant practice sessions were not without some structure, I did not observe rigid protocols or the use of anything that could be construed as formal lesson plans. Generally, peer dialogues emerged, through spontaneous discourse; routine discourse was marginal to interactions. Casual observers might logically describe communication in any of the pairs' sessions as haphazard. Indeed, notable researchers of informal musicians who learn music outside school—such as Davis (2005), Green (2002, 2008), and Jaffurs (2006)—have described musicians' discourse this way. Without a theoretically focused perspective, researchers have interpreted peer musicians' communication as quite unsophisticated, rather than complex and multi-layered.

Practiced–learning. Practiced discourse refers to ways participants communicated their proficiency at a particular musical skill or musical concept. Practiced discourse emerged nonverbally in the way they played and in spoke about musical concepts mutually understood. Conversely, learning discourse refers to a communication in which participants displayed a lack of familiarity with certain skills and concepts. This emerged in questions they asked. Nonverbal examples of learning discourse would emerge when participants stopped their playing to ask a question and repeatedly restarted passages.

Although they were teenagers, I thought that all participants exhibited moderate to high levels of technical skill (e.g., chord grips, single-note picking, and strumming patterns). Their execution in playing parts (e.g., single-note phrases and harmonies), and

rehearsal performances of full-length songs impressed me. Their dialogues also showed their familiarity with well-known musical artists, genres, and the aesthetic issues involved with playing guitar. Their relating as friends and musicians showed that they knew each other. I observed participants comfortably playing music and interacting with their peer. I concluded such interactions occurred through practice.

Practiced discourse was observable in many verbal exchanges. For example, when one participant observed a mistake by his peer he immediately corrected him, "It's on that other string. It's like," and demonstrated the passage. Such verbal and musical evidence highlighted the meaning in practiced discourse: It showed that one participant was familiar enough with the music to assist his counterpart. Participants' many statements revealed practiced discourse on music, music making, and music concepts:

- **Bruce**: It has the same shape, only right next to it just . . . [looking at his left hand, he makes the chord grip and strums the guitar strings] the same.
- **Chuck**: And then the 'F.' [strums the guitar strings]
- **Robert**: Like in the actual music that's written, like at the tempo I'm playing it at, and the harmonics part is like . . . [demonstrates a melodic passage] and then, like you start hearing, like it actually sounds Cuban, like at a half-tempo.
- **Max**: If I get out of tune, my guitar sounds really weird. It feels really loose, too. Sounds like . . . [plucks guitar strings] listen to that. Sounds weird.
- **Morrissey**: Just practice those sweeps. But with the one with the, that you start at twelfth position, what I do is that I add a string [looks down at his left

hand while fingering the string pattern; utters something incoherent]
consistent.

The examples show micro-episodes in which participants regularly instructed, offered suggestions and guidance, shared, modeled, and otherwise taught their counterparts. Bruce's statement, "It has the same shape, only right next to it," showed his experience and knowledge of chord fingerings. Chuck's explanation, "And then the 'F,'" showed he understood the chords of the music he and his peer were playing. Robert's reference to the tempo of "the actual music" suggested his understanding that he was playing the music differently from the original. Max's added explanation about how his guitar "feels really loose" when out of tune showed his experience with the sound and feel of his instrument. Finally, Morrissey's statement about "those sweeps" indicated his knowledge, and his demonstration of the technique showed his experience with it.

Learning discourse was evident when participants showed their inability to execute certain passages or techniques. Learning discourse emerged in questions and dialogues in which peers sought answers from their counterparts to music-related issues. Participants learned about genres, musical techniques, audio production, stage presence, and one another's understanding of music and playing through learning discourse. Back-and-forth discussions tended to emphasize learning discourse; participants spoke in turns in order to discuss and learn. For example, in one session, Xavier and Max repeatedly played full-length songs, which demonstrated that they had previously practiced those songs. Max inquired about the playing style in one song, as it referenced an external genre, as well as on the ordering of songs:

Xavier: What do you think?

Max: Kind of.

Xavier: Kind of. I don't think . . .

Max: Because the beginning's too metally. Unless we cut out the beginning, but either way, no. OK, "My Hero."

Xavier: I think it's "Sad Days." That one we know.

Max: That one goes acoustic. We've done it acoustic. We've done it many times. [Xavier starts to play the song, Max joins in playing, and they play the entire song.]

Xavier: Yeah, that will definitely [incoherent] and then we could, we should cut out that part. Do it like how we did the original.

Max: Which part?

Xavier: Like the . . . [plays a passage of the previous song]

Max: Yeah.

Xavier: Yeah.

Max and Xavier discussed their repertoire for an upcoming performance. In playing their songs from beginning to end, they enacted practiced behaviors. The participants sought to grasp each other's opinions about their playing style. The pair demonstrated learning discourse in a further discussion about equipment issues and what they intended to use in the performance:

Xavier: I hate this amp!

Max: I should have brought the Peavey.

Xavier: You should have brought the Peavey.

Max: It worked good last time, that's why. Have you played this amp with this guitar before?

Xavier: Nah, it's because, no, I haven't . . . [plucking strings, he adjusts knobs on his amplifier] OK, that's the best I can do.

Max: Alright.

Xavier: Ok, let's start from the solo.

Max: Alright. [both begin playing a full-length song, approximately four minutes.]

Xavier: I think it sounds good like that.

Max: Yeah.

Xavier: Alright.

Max: Let's do it the regular way. [Max laughs, then both begin to play the song, full-length; approximately five minutes pass.]

Xavier: What part were you at?

Max: After that, then we went back into the chorus.

Xavier: Well, after that it goes drum.

Max: Drum enters for, like two beats, right?

Xavier: Yeah, and then it goes into the chorus again.

Max: The songs go acoustic.

Xavier: Well, let's try them all then. I'll bring out the acoustic, and we'll try it.

In these excerpts, the participants indicated their individual focus on learning how they

would mutually play the songs (e.g., "Let's start from the solo" and "Let's do it in the regular way"). Rehearsal time was focused on preparing for performance. Learning discourse emerged through discussions on equipment, specific musical parts (e.g., melodic lines, voicings, harmonies, and accompaniment) and ways of performing. Practiced discourse was marginal in participants' dialogues while learning discourse was central.

Summary

Through the lens of RDT, dialectic discourses in participants' interactions showed that structure existed in their dialogues. Table 5 is a summary of the dialectic discourses as constituted in central and marginal tension in the participants' dialogues.

Table 5

Constitution of Discourses in Dialectic Tension

Dialectic Tensions	Central	Marginal
Together–Individual		
United–Divided	Divided	United
Compliant–Independent	Independent	Compliant
Supportive–Self-focused	Supportive	Self-focused
Equal–Superior	Equal	Superior
Unreserved–Reserved		
Flexible–Inflexible	Flexible	Inflexible
Suggesting–Obligating	Suggesting	Obligating
Playful–Serious	Serious	Playful
Established–Undetermined		
Routine–Spontaneous	Spontaneous	Routine
Practiced–Learning	Learning	Practiced

The columns do not indicate a lack of unity among the discourse types as dialectics or pairs of opposing meanings. Dialectical tensions exist dynamically in dialogues; they are not static and binary discourses. Discourse use—as central or

marginal to dialogues—change in everyday conversations (Baxter, 2011; Baxter & Braithwaite, 2008; Baxter & Montgomery, 1996; Montgomery & Baxter, 1998). The language, musical tastes, expressed values, and talk between peers are constrained by the narrow population of participants in this study. My participants included six adolescent males with Hispanic and Mexican-American backgrounds. Such a representation does not necessarily suggest universal ways adolescent musicians might communicate to learn peer-to-peer.

Chapter 5

Identity Discourses

A second set of themed findings emerged in my analysis that helps answer my first research question. The participants' dialogues when jointly learning music showed that they enacted trait discourses associated with four identities: self-learner, coach, musical artist, and friend. Such an identity observable in communication is found in the literature (Baxter & Braithwaite, 2008; Tracy & Robles, 2013). In this study, identities refer to pragmatic labels used to define data depicting communication traits of a persona, role, or personality while participants learned music with their peer. Through the lens of relational dialectics theory (RDT), identity discourses showed that participants were at times both connected and autonomous in dialogues.

Two questions guided my analysis: What is portrayed or implied about communication used by one individual; and what is portrayed or implied about the communication used by participant pairs together? I coded data with terms that provided characteristics of each speaker's trait identity. I discuss each identity in the following sections; however, it is important to note that discourse analysis resulted in my identifying them in the interactions. In real time, I did not easily or wholly perceive identities in the dialogues because they emerged rapidly, subtly, and spontaneously.

Self-Learner

Participants showed autonomous self-efficacy to learn music by speaking as self-learners. The capacity of adolescent musicians to learn on their own might be obvious to any secondary school music educator. As a guitar teacher, self-learning dialogues of

participants in this study intrigued me. The level of the participants' guitar playing skills and their understanding of music was often surprising.

I labeled self-learner discourse in consideration of the data and participants' self-descriptive terms. They described that they learned music using words such as "self-learned," "self-taught," "learned by myself," "teaching myself," and "I play alone." The follow examples illustrate such self-descriptions:

- **Bruce**: Uh, I self-learned, so I never went to school.

  Harold: You self-learned?

  Robert: Same, yeah. I think we're all self-learned.
- **Max**: I like self-taught myself. [In answer to my question about influence from teachers in school.]
- **Chuck**: I play alone and I fool around with the guitar, see what I can do. Sometimes, I tell him like, 'Look what I can do,' and we add on to stuff. [In answer to questions about learning music with his peer]
- **Morrissey**: The first two years, I guess you could say I was self-taught. [In answer to a question about number of years he had been learning guitar]
- **Robert**: I say I'm better at teaching myself than anybody else. [In answer to inquiry about his thoughts about self-learning out of school]
- **Harold**: Ok, so how long have you been playing?

  Xavier: About five years.

  Harold: Five years. Did you ever take a class or . . .

  Xavier: No, self-taught.

Each participant explained in his own way that a fundamental reason he met with his peer was to play music and learn the instrument for themselves. The responses above show participants considered themselves self-learners. Identifying as self-learners, they asked their peer for help, they discussed performance and technique, and they enmeshed themselves in self-study by watching their peer and by focusing on themselves. Discourse of the self-learner identity is further defined in the four following sections.

Asking for help. Communication between each pair entailed a participant questioning his peer and asking for help. They asked for help in order to understand ideas and techniques, as well as for assistance with playing music (e.g., for their peer accompany to them by strumming chords). Such requests for help indicated a self-learner identity.

In asking for help participants self-checked their skills in and understanding of certain material. For instance, Bruce asked Chuck, “At first, we’re doing two times, right?” in order to verify his playing of the chords correctly. Bruce also asked Chuck, “Like this?” and demonstrated the music to which he was referring. Through eliciting his peer to help him evaluate his ability to play certain music melodies and chords. Bruce enacted the self-learner identity.

Participants did not ask arduous questions of their peers; self-learning was not depicted as an intense search for knowledge. Their questions were not formalized interrogations or characteristically academic. In general, their questions demonstrated their penchant to satisfy uncertainty about certain facts (e.g., about an artist or a playing technique) and to play accurately or better than before.

Many participants had difficulty explaining their concepts in words. Although questions were purposeful and specific, many inquiries evidenced lack of formal conceptual understanding through use of specific vocabulary and jargon. For example, one participant asked his peer about learning a certain song and about the difficult parts of that song. Both of them used music to communicate in their banter:

> **Robert**: Did you ever figure out the hard part for that "Laid to Rest"?
>
> **Morrissey**: Which one? [Robert plays a segment on his guitar that Morrissey notices.] No. I always play it like that.
>
> **Robert**: Yeah, that part's like, it's like, it's like . . . [looks at his left-hand fingers.]
>
> **Morrissey**: What the fuck is it?
>
> **Robert**: Like, open.
>
> **Morrissey**: Oh. Yeah. [begins vocalizing a melody] Yeah.

Trained musicians might have used technical terms (e.g., tremolo, G7 chord grip) to discuss what Robert and Morrissey reflect on here. These participants, however, show that adolescent self-learners use music to communicate when words fail or are unknown. Robert used music to take place of a verbal clarification about a part of a song he referred to and in answer to his peer asking, "Which one?" Morrissey's vocalizing was his answer.

All of the participants in this study used music to communicate. At times, verbal communication became ancillary when words failed to express what they meant to say. Music playing—and vocalizations of music—comprised aspects of their repertoire.

Music was played (and not discussed) to explain and verify an understanding of musical concepts. Playing music sufficed in many instances to describe parts in songs and their melodic or harmonic makeup instead of talking about them.

Participants asked their peers which music to learn or play asking, “So, what do you wanna play?” and “You wanna do the one we learned?” and “Play something?” These questions often led to music making. The following examples illustrate specific instances in which participants questioned their peer:

- **Chuck**: Let me ask you a question. [In lieu of an actual verbalized question, participant strummed chords about which he had a question. His peer answered nonverbally by strumming the chord sequence. Chuck begins playing and they continue together until Chuck falters.]
  Bruce: [Seeming to understand Chuck’s question] You go like this. [He holds up his guitar neck showing his grip-hand fingers pulling the strings slightly with his strum hand. Chuck stops playing to observe his peer.]
- **Robert**: What do you do for sweeps? [asked to Morrissey.]
- **Max**: Can you tune it to drop ‘D’? [asked to Xavier.]
- **Bruce**: Damn! How do you do that one? [asked to Chuck.]

These examples show specific questions that participants asked. Xavier confirmed this point when I asked whether Max helped him learn music: “He helps me through the notes. Since I’m completely self-taught, I’m not too sure on the notes, but he knows note by note so he tells me.”

Other instances of direct inquiry were observed in brief such as these:

- **Max**: The strumming? [asked to Xavier.]
- **Robert**: Oh, like this? [asked to Morrissey.]
- **Chuck**: One, two, three. It's the fourth fret? This one, this one, and that? [asked to Bruce.]
- **Xavier**: It has a microphone on the top, huh? [asked to Max.]
- **Morrissey**: Like the *spider* one? [asked to Robert.]
- **Bruce**: And, then? [asked to Chuck.]
- **Robert**: So, it's on the fifth? [asked to Morrissey.]
- **Xavier**: Uh, the, I don't know which one you're talking about . . . [Xavier strums the chord.] Yeah, yeah, and what's that? Standard or 'D'? [asked to Max.]
- **Bruce**: Do you still remember the one [single-note pattern] I showed you? [asked to Chuck.]

Participants learned music through such simply stated questions (and musical demonstrations) as those depicted here. Their questions seemed prompting at times:

- **Bruce**: At first, we're doing two times, right? [asked to Chuck.] etc.
- **Chuck**: Do I play there? [asked to Bruce.]
- **Xavier**: Wait. What's that part? [asked to Max.]
- **Robert**: Where'd you fuck up on? [asked to Morrissey.]
- **Max**: You still gonna use his guitar or what? [asked to Xavier.]
- **Xavier**: Yeah, yeah, and what's that? Standard or 'D'? [asked to Max.]

Participants' identity as self-learners emerged through such questions. These examples highlight their focus on learning and knowing. Asking for help suggested they valued accuracy and understanding in music making.

Discussing for comprehension. Participants put simple questions to each other, but also engaged in longer discussions. Exploratory discussions helped participants critically inspect what they did not understand, reexamine what they thought was going on, and assert their understanding about music making. Exploratory discussions also indicated how participants enacted the self-learner identity.

Participants' discussions were purposeful, investigative, and critical. They entailed musical topics and non-musical issues (e.g., popular music in general, musicians, and their other friends), as well as individual or shared past experiences in music making. For example, participants discussed learning a certain song:

Robert: Did you learn it with the tabs or did you just kinda hear it?

Morrissey: Well, this first part I just played it, like just by hearing it, but then I forgot I had the tabs because our teacher from Socorro gave it to us. So, I'm just, like "Oh!" So, that's why I just started playing the chords. Yeah.

Robert: Yeah, it's . . . , I haven't played this in a long time. I remember this part. When I was learning, I didn't understand the tabs. I was just like, "That sounds about right."

Morrissey: Yeah, I think the second guitar just plays it like that because Kirk and James . . . I'm pretty sure they don't play it the same.

Robert: Nah. They don't play it like the same part. It's rare when they do.

Morrissey: Yeah. I wouldn't label them though in the new albums. It's just like, "Meh," you know?

Robert: They're alright. I mean, nothing [incomprehensible]. I still listen to them. Did you ever figure out the hard part for that "Laid to Rest"?

This exchange showed participants discussing a particular song they were learning by ear. They compared experiences using tablature ("the tabs") to learn the music. They continued talking about other issues and learning other songs. Such discussions helped define the self-learner identity and overlapped with both the together discourse and with the together-individual dialectic tension.

In another example, participants discussed a single-note technique after one had demonstrated the technique, laughed, and exclaimed in excitement. The discussion resumed as follows:

Robert: That works with anything, dude, like rock, metal, anything. It's just, I'll play it here, like with distortion.

Morrissey: [laughs] Just keeps on going.

Robert: It just keeps on going. So, let's say you, like bend [Morrissey plucks a string and pulls the pitch out of tune.] Yeah, like that! And barre the . . . put your finger there on the twelfth [Robert looks on as Morrissey rearranges and shifts his grip-hand fingers on his guitar neck.] Right here, but only these two [Robert looks down at his own grip-hand to signify that Morrissey also look.] Like, with the tip of your finger [Robert looks on at Morrissey's grip-hand.] Just like that, and then, put these two fingers [Robert looks at his own grip-hand.] Put these two fingers.

Place this one on the thirteenth and this one on the fourteenth and this one on the fourteenth. And bend the fourteenth [Robert looks at Morrissey's grip-hand, again.] Bend the fourteenth. Yeah, but keep this bared and just . . .

Morrissey: Damn! [Morrissey plucking strings in attempt to play the technique.]

Robert: Yeah, there you go!

Morrissey: [laughs]

Robert: And, then, there's another cool thing that you can do where you just go . . . [Robert looks down and plucks a melodic phrase. Morrissey also watches Robert's fingers.] And another one is . . . [Robert plucks another melodic phrase.] If it gets a little complicated, what I'll do is . . . [Robert plucks a third melodic phrase.]

Morrissey: [incoherent]

Robert: Then, use it as . . . [Robert watching Morrissey pluck the melodic phrase.] Yeah, it's like, G-B-E, G-B-E, G-B-E, like, circular. [Morrissey plucks the melodic phrase with string bends that sound Blues-like.] Yeah, Blues solo is a lot different from metal soloing.

Morrissey: Damn it!

Robert: Yeah.

The participants discussed the technique and developed further ideas for its application. Although Morrissey did not explicitly state that he desired to learn the technique, he was observed attempting and remarking while playing. While both participants were part of the discussion, Morrissey was musically engaged with the technique throughout. Each

emphasized his identity as a self-learner by discussing and exploring musical techniques with his peer.

Intently observing peer. Participants observed how their peers played in order to learn and to share in the experience. As previously indicated, participants were observed asking questions and engaging in discussions with their peer to learn music. This showed their proactive position as self-learners, which was also demonstrated in more subtle ways by listening, watching, shadowing their peer's actions, playing along, as well as by imitating their peer's non-musical movements. Active observance contributed to their identities as self-learners.

Participants were often nonverbal yet active as observers during their sessions. They learned new music and compared their own playing with that of their peer. For instance, Max remarked how he learned music his peer liked, "He was playing some metal stuff and I was looking at him, like I was learning from him too." Morrissey explained how he and Robert managed their playing together: "When we're playing, we kind of just look at each other and we kind of just go with the flow." Participants looked at their own hands, looked at their peers playing guitar, and looked back at their hands to regulate and adjust movements. Each participant self-examined by looking at how they gripped a chord or strummed patterns and repeatedly looked back at their peer's fingers in the same grip or rhythmic strumming. They checked for synchronicity, correctness, and accuracy in technique and strumming. These actions were often unnoticed by the participant himself.

Participants stealthily glanced at their peer's playing. In their practice sessions,

participants were able to play music at similar tempos as their peer by listening and watching the other strum. They imitated specific music that their peer was playing without verbally inquiring about it. Such instances of their playing showed they were actively observing their peer. After improvising together, Max commented to Xavier, "I don't know what else to play." Both participants had been attentively looking back and forth at each other's strumming while playing. Xavier responded, "Um, what else, um. You can just, like play bass notes" and demonstrated specific pitches on his guitar. Another participant, Bruce, explained that Chuck's attentive observation helped him self-learn. He stated, "You don't have to do that much to explain, 'cause he can just see it and try to do." Chuck reiterated Bruce's explanation: "We sort of didn't communicate through voice, we communicate more through movement of the guitar like, 'oh, you're doing that?'"

Self-focusing. Communication behaviors that contributed to discourse of the self-learner identity did not always directly involve a participant's peer. Participants appeared focused on their own playing in looking at their strum hand, looking at their chord grip hand, and in bobbing their head while playing. Participants also conveyed self-focus by playing unaided and talking to themselves. Exclaiming, mumbling, and murmuring—as well as silent mouthing and moving of lips with music, for example, counting time, singing lyrics, dictating finger placements—encompassed ways participants evidenced self-focus.

Statements and comments that did not appear directed to someone else were meaningful for the individual speaking. Some examples indicated this:

- **Max**: Okay. [Max stated while playing by himself.]
- **Chuck**: Shit. [Stated at various times by every participant, as well as other single-word expletives especially when a mistake was apparent.]
- **Chuck**: Oh, that's weird." (Chuck examined his fingers while trying a finger exercise.]

Participants similarly used expletives to punctuate and emphasize pleasure or annoyance with themselves. In the absence of an immediate conversation, a participant's verbal "OK" often suggested their internal dialogue. Many participants were observed mumbling and murmuring to themselves. Every participant was observed moving rhythmically (e.g., head bobbing and swaying/rocking their bodies) as they played alone and with their peer. Additionally, many nonverbal and physical gestures showed that participants were focused on their own music learning. Other activities construed as self-focused in this study included:

- Participants smiling to themselves.
- Playfully slapping the face of the guitar and abruptly raking the strings to a single gripped chord after playing.
- Participants experimenting with electronic effects and volume levels between episodes of playing alone and with their peer.
- Participants looking at one's own grip-hand and strum-hand movements.
- Humming alone and humming during individual play (e.g., strumming chords and humming a melody or humming while playing a melody).
- Foot tapping and perceptible muscle movement (reflexive/responsive muscle

> jerking and twitches) during music play, bobbing or swaying of head, snapping of fingers, slapping a knee, and clapping (often in-time to a tempo, but not always).

These behaviors were interpreted as evidence of self-focus mainly because participants enacted them outside the context of a conversation and because they were not necessarily intended to evoke direct responses from their peers.

Coach

Each participant echoed the others in stating that their peers did not teach them. They, however, also made statements that they connected in teaching each other and their peers. Participants were disinclined to label themselves as taught by others. In interviews, participants made statements such as, “I self-learned, uh, nobody taught me, not even my brothers,” and “I like taught myself,” and “I’m self-taught.” The participants, however, made statements about teaching such as, “I kinda teach him a little bit,” “I can’t teach him how to sweep pick,” and “I feel like I teach, and at the same time I don’t.

In this study, every participant instructed and prompted his peer through spoken directions. Each offered their peers guidance to help them learn. Additionally, participants gave feedback to peers about progress, and assessed their peer’s achievements. Generally, participants acknowledged their peers’ playing skills, answered questions, and helped their peer in the manner of a teacher. Their communication highlighted both a coach identity discourse and a together discourse.

Because the participants did not identify with being a teacher, my forcing the term *teacher* conflicted with data. Participants, however, did enact an educative identity

through talk. I coded many dialogues that resembled teaching with the term *coaching*. Discourse of the coach identity emerged in aggregated themes that I termed teaching, tutoring, instructing, helping, and expertise. The term *coach* fitted the evidence of their prompting, facilitating, and encouraging. Discussions about the categories of this theme follow.

Influencing peer learning. Participants influenced each other verbally, nonverbally, and musically to start, try, and follow through playing music. They coached one another through specific techniques and encouraged the other to think about issues differently and more broadly. They spoke with encouraging, supportive, and evaluative statements. Instances of each participant prompting his peer to play were seen in statements such as, "Alright, let's do this, man," "Play it," and "Alright, here we go!" They asked provocative questions and demonstrated techniques; the result of such communication was peer instruction, direction, and coaching.

Participants helped each other to understand by demonstrating music. For example, one pair enacted such a back-and-forth exchange:

> **Bruce**: Uh, we can also play, you can just do, like these chords, so, it's gonna be 'D' [lifts his guitar neck up while holding a chord grip and begins to strum the guitar while Chuck looks at his grip-hand.] It has that same form. This finger [said while looking at his own grip-hand] goes down here [moves one of his grip-hand fingers from one string to another]. It has that same form [again, lifts his guitar neck up while holding the indicated chord grip. Morrissey looks at his own grip-hand, tries the grip fingering and looks at Bruce with his eye brows raised.] Yeah!

[Morrissey nods his head in acknowledgement and continues to play while Bruce observes him playing.] Just this [again, lifts his guitar neck up while holding another chord grip]. You're gonna be playing . . . [Chuck stops planning and observes Bruce playing a strum pattern.] While I do, uh . . . [Bruce begins playing a different strum pattern.] Alright. One, two, three [both begin to play, but Chuck stops playing after a few seconds]

Chuck: Fuck! [Chuck makes a grimaced face and looks at Bruce. He looks back at his own strum-hand and begins playing again but louder than before and out of time with his peer. Bruce stops playing his guitar but begins playing again in time with Chuck. The movements and face of Chuck seem tense and it looks as though he is struggling in his efforts to strum the chords. Bruce makes an audible sighing sound that seemed sympathetic in tone. Chuck stops strumming his guitar after a few more seconds but continues to shift and replace his fingers in different grip positions when he stops strumming.] Wow! No, I, I get the chords. No, I do get the chords, like where to put the fingers.

Bruce: The strumming?

Chuck: It's the strumming [Both smile at each other.]

Bruce's prompting was instructive. He demonstrated fingerings and strumming patterns. Verbal prompting was evident, but Chuck also demonstrated his musical understanding rather than questioning Bruce. Bruce also prompted Chuck on finishing his statements on the issue of strumming.

Participants prompted their peer by asking questions, as well as through

statements and suggestions. Such communication influenced (prompted) their peer to play music or to experiment and try a certain musical activity. For example, Chuck asked Bruce, “You wanna use a pick?” Bruce replied, “Yeah,” and immediately located a pick to continue playing. Other similar examples of statements and questions included:

- **Xavier**: What do you think? [asked to Max.] etc.
- **Morrissey**: Dude, I wonder if we could play anything else.” [said to Robert.]
- **Max**: You hear it? [questioned Xavier.]
- **Robert**: What do you wanna play? [asked to Morrissey.]
- **Xavier**: Go for it, dude! [said to Max.]
- **Robert**: We should do things light. [stated to Morrissey.]
- **Bruce**: Wanna play that? [asked to Chuck.]
- **Robert**: Do it, do yours super-fast. [Robert prompted Morrissey.]
- **Max**: Let’s do “Sad Days” real fast. [said to Xavier.]
- **Xavier**: Turn your volume up. [said to Max.]
- **Xavier**: Do it like how we did the original. [said to Max.]

These examples illustrate influential prompting by peers. Although short, each statement prompted a peer response. They motivated participants to play music, to use specific techniques, to self-evaluate, to mutually evaluate, and to make decisions.

Robert explained how he prompted Morrissey to help him with specific songs and play certain techniques:

> **Robert**: Yeah, I’ll usually ask him like, “Do you want to do this so I can show you?” or “Do you want to try the part to this?” and he’s like not rude about it.

> Like I said, we're real polite with each other. Like if you ask him, "You should just like play this so I can fool around with it," like if he asked me that, I'd be totally down for it.

Robert implied his awareness of his peer to oblige him to play certain music by his qualifying statement, "He's not rude about it." He also remarked that he was open to Morrissey's asking him to play music so his peer could "fool around with it."

Facilitating instruction. Participants facilitated each other's learning. They described concepts they grasped and demonstrated in music when they lacked the words. Many musical concepts and techniques were discussed through back-and-forth dialogues. Robert explained how he facilitated instruction with Morrissey:

> **Robert**: Yeah. I just helped him right now it was, kind of like the same thing last time, like rhythm-wise. Like we were playing the same song that we talked about last time, like I said, "Did you learn this song? Did you learn the rest of it?" He's like, "no." [Reiterating what he had stated,] "OK, well, next time we meet we should learn it." And then we learned it, the last part of that song. And he was playing it for me and I was like, "Well, kind of like this. You're playing the rhythm wrong," and like, I broke it down for him. I just kind of pulled it. And he saw it, and he tried to play it. Then, I played it again then he saw that he played it good. Like the tactic was the same as me, you know?

In stating, "I broke it down for him," Robert indicated that he facilitated Morrissey's learning. He also prompted music making and a discussion with Morrissey about a finger exercise:

Robert: There's this like sick, a sick exercise that, to trick your fingers. It's pretty cool actually. So, to start simple, what you would do is stay, like on one position, right? You just go up and down [the fingerboard] [Robert plays the pattern on his guitar.]

Morrissey: Like the spider one?

Robert: Yeah, kinda like that. But let's say you switch it up a little. You switch up the pattern. Instead of one, two, three, four, it could be, like one, three, two, four and, then, you do it backwards.

Morrissey: That's cool.

Robert: Then there's, like tricky ones, like one, four, three, two. Then there's the . . . [Robert attempts single-note patterns on his guitar.] Which ones were the tricky ones? It was one, three, four, two. What was it?

Morrissey: The other one?

Robert: Try it! [Morrissey looks at his grip-hand as he tries the finger pattern.]

Morrissey: Shit.

Robert: One, three, four, two.

Morrissey: One, three, four, two?

Robert: Yeah, then two, four, three, one.

Morrissey: Two, four, three, one? [Morrissey continues to look at his grip-hand as he plays.]

Robert: [watching Morrissey] Yeah, that was the last. Two, four, three, one.

Morrissey: Yeah. Ah, fuck! I don't know. [laughs]

Robert: You have to do it fast, like . . . [Robert demonstrates the pattern.]

Morrissey: It's just like, "No!" [Morrissey chuckles, "Ha!"]

Robert: Then just, like from the, like [incomprehensible], three, two, four.

Morrissey: This is tricky. [Morrissey continues to play a single-note exercise pattern.] It's a badass exercise, where you trick your hand. [Morrissey laughs.]

Robert: No, no, no watch. [Robert looks at his own grip-hand fingers while he plays the single-note pattern.] It's like going up and down the neck but it's cool for flexibility. Like it's basically the same thing, just to start it off, but you kind of go up and down the fret board, watch. [Robert continues to look at his grip-hand as he plays the discussed example.] You go; "One, two, three, four," and then, you shift from the first to second position.

Morrissey: Oh, yeah.

In this dialogue Robert is facilitating his Morrissey's understanding. That both participants were actively involved in the dialogue also indicates together discourse. Robert prompting ("Try it!"). This example highlights how participants discussed songs and musical material in systematic ways. Participants delineated instruction and facilitated their peers' understanding of how to play songs, learn specific techniques, and to strum certain patterns.

In another example, a pair of participants mutually instructed and facilitated each other's understanding of songs they rehearsed for performance:

Xavier: OK, let's start from the solo. Oh, I found an amp that's like a cheaper amp, but it sounds good. Ok, this one we shouldn't have that much problem

because . . .

Max: Alright. [Both play a full-length song to its completion.]

Xavier: I think it sounds good like that.

Max: Then everyone is hugging in the background.

Xavier: So, that one's gonna be me, you, and Lizzy, huh?

Max: Yeah.

Xavier: Alright.

Max: Frank and the other guy will just be sitting in the background. Like, maybe Frank should just play, like simple chords. He could do like, uh, an 'E' chord or something.

Xavier: Only thing is that I'm confused, 'cause he told me that, he told me how. Paramore version goes . . . [demonstrates a musical phrase] It's up here somewhere.

Max: Let's do it the regular way. [Max laughs. Both play the song in full.]

Xavier: What part were you at?

Max: After that, then we went back into the chorus.

Xavier: Well, after that, it goes drum.

Max: Drums enter for like, two beats, right?

Xavier: Yeah, and then it goes into the chorus again.

This dialogue occurred over thirteen minutes. Most of the interactions between Max and Xavier involved playing music. They used succinct instructive statements throughout their discussion. Some statements were overt commands (e.g., "OK, let's start from the

solo," and "Let's do it the regular way"). The discussion facilitated the pair's aim to understand the song arrangement, visualizing the performance event ("everyone is hugging in the background"), and about other musicians who would ultimately perform the music with them.

Participants' instructive statements facilitated music making. Other examples of such succinct statements included:

- **Bruce**: It's just gonna be . . . [demonstrated music for Chuck to play.]
- **Bruce**: And don't play fast . . . [instructed to Chuck.]
- **Bruce**: You play the melody. Just play, don't stop. [instructed to Chuck.]
- **Max**: Play it as fast as you can without, like, dying. [instructed to Xavier.]
- **Morrissey**: The other one. [instructed to Robert while looking at his own fingers moving over a pattern on the fretboard.]
- **Max**: Look. [motions with his head and eyes for Xavier to notice his grip hand.] Play, like, the second note.
- **Chuck**: Let's start from there. [said to Bruce.]

These examples show how participants initiated music making. The guitarist captured his peer's attention. Musical demonstrations were used for instruction. Participants nonverbally demonstrated physical acts of playing and they explained verbally. Their facilitations of what to do and what not to do were succinct ("Don't play fast"), instructive ("You play the melody"), and clear ("Look").

Every participant facilitated his peer by accompanying the other in certain songs; sometimes singing was involved, most of the time was instrumental play. In many

observations, participants facilitated their peer's practice of a technique, a segment of a song, or in playing an entire song. Accompaniments ranged from unison playing of single-note phrases to strumming chords over the length of an entire song.

Evaluating peer performance. The participants each provided one another with evaluations of their performance. They appraised each other's techniques and musical expression and judged one another through individual and joint music making.

Participants evaluated themselves and their peers making music and in verbal discussions. Discourse of the coach identity, however, was defined by categories of data that showed participants evaluated and encouraged each other. Example of participants' encouraging statements include:

- **Xavier**: I think it sounds good like that. [stated to Max.]
- **Bruce**: But this one's good too." [stated to Chuck.]
- **Robert**: It was a pretty good improv. [stated to Morrissey.]
- Alright! and Yeah! [Exclaimed often by all participants to their peer.]
- **Morrissey**: That's pretty cool. [said to Robert.]
- **Max**: Nice." [Max commented while smiling in listening to Xavier having played a phrase.]

These statements encompass verbal examples of judgments and evaluations. As I indicated about Max's comment, I found other evidence of nonverbal encouragement. For example, participants smiled, nodded their heads, gave each other high-fives, shook hands, and patted each other on the back. Evaluations and encouragement were often contributed. The evidence highlighted a discourse encompassed in the coach identity.

Musical Artist

Participants spoke and performed music that portrayed a discourse of identity as a musical artist. Improvising and experimenting with music was typical in the sessions. Participants drew from experiences and knowledge to speak about music genres, musical artists, and audio production. They expressed their aesthetic intentions. They played music expressively. On the basis of interpreted data, each identified as a musical artist.

This study permitted me access to ethnographically learn about adolescent musicians' exclusive communication and interactions. I was privileged to have observed and analyzed how burgeoning musicians communicated and played instruments to develop as artists. Using discourse of the musical artist identity, participants engaged in aesthetic discussions, experimentation, and artistic decision-making. These contributing factors are discussed in the following sections.

Playing music and discussing aesthetics. Participants expressed their aesthetic sense through talking and making music. In every instance, they demonstrated their attention to aural aesthetics by tuning of their instruments. They discussed playing with accurate pitches, helped each other play correct fingerings, and managed their tempos together. It was apparent that participants valued and recognized the notion of beauty in music making. Participants also showed sensitivity to sound production and differences in musical styles. Xavier and Max showed this in talking about the music they were playing:

Xavier: Start off with the bass line like if it's a drum piece. [Xavier vocalizes a rhythmic drum pattern and Max imitates him.] Isn't that the chorus?

Max: I learned the chorus like two weeks ago and I forgot it. I haven't practiced it in like two weeks.

Xavier: I haven't. I don't know the piece.

Max: Because the bass line to that intro is just like "Stairway to Heaven."

Xavier: I love the chorus just like, I don't know, I love the chorus.

The pair first collaborated with Xavier's suggestion for starting "the bass line like a drum piece." Max compared the bass line they were playing with one from another song. They indicate joint aesthetic understanding by vocalizing the rhythmic pattern together.

In another example, Robert remarked to Morrissey, who was improvising a string of melodic phrases, "So, it's like folk music, hmm?" Morrissey replied, "It's actually kind of Led Zeppelin, so . . . " The participants both expressed their discernment and awareness of music style and genre in this exchange. Referencing the name of a specific band, Morrissey's statement indicated his specialized knowledge of other artists.

Participants expressed their aesthetic awareness when they discussed music. After Robert had completed playing a song, for example, he and Morrissey remarked about many aesthetic qualities of the music:

Morrissey: I love it when my cousin played it. He's had a lot of intensity on it.

Robert: Yo, what's it called, dude, right now, I'm playing it slow. Have you ever seen Leo Brower play it? Leo Brower plays it, he was like . . . [Robert demonstrates a portion of the song at a faster tempo as Morrissey listens and watches.]

Morrissey: Yeah, it's, it's supposed to be that fast.

Robert: And then, the harp [Robert holds his guitar neck up and demonstrates an arpeggio phrase.] It's not really, it's just he plays it like that.

Morrissey: Well, I mean that . . .

Robert: Like in the actual music that's written, like at the tempo I'm playing it at and the harmonics part is like . . . [Robert plays harmonics on his guitar.] and then, like, you start hearing, like it actually sounds Cuban, like at a half tempo. [Robert demonstrates the segment.]

Morrissey: That's true, that's true. Isn't he Cuban?

Robert: He's Cuban! [Robert puts his guitar in his case as Morrissey takes his out of one and begins to tune.]

Morrissey: Yeah, I thought so.

Robert: [snorts] Heh, Leo Brower. Go for it. Is that open 'D' tuning?

Morrissey: I'm guessing it is. [both participants looking at Morrissey's guitar as he tunes.]

Robert: I don't know, it's like, or isn't it called 'Double-drop D'" or something like that?

Morrissey: Nah. If it was drop 'D', I don't know [incomprehensible mumbling].

Robert: 'Cause, I mean it is drop 'D', isn't it? And then with the . . .

Morrissey: It's drop 'D', but then it's . . .

Robert: So, I think it's like double-drop 'D', but I think that's what they call it. I have no idea.

Discussing many aesthetic issues highlighted the discourse of the musical artist identity.

Morrissey's remark about how his cousin played with "a lot of intensity" was a value statement. The pair discussed tempo regarding what was written in "the actual music" and what was musically demonstrated; the critique showed their discernment through comparison. They did not have any written music in front of them during their practice sessions, and that indicated to me that they had thorough knowledge about music they discussed. Robert referred to the music sounding "Cuban," which expressed his awareness of the music style. He referenced harp-like articulations and mentioned the composer's ethnicity, suggesting connections made between the artist and the music. The pair also discussed non-standard guitar tuning, and this indicated both their aesthetic discernment and their technical knowledge. Their discussion appeared to be one between musical artists.

Participants conveyed the importance of aesthetics in regard to their musical equipment. The participants used various instruments and equipment. Table 6 lists the kinds of instruments and equipment used by the participants.

Table 6

Instruments and Equipment Used by Participants

Participant	Session 1	Session 2	Session 3
Bruce	Acoustic-electric guitar (Epiphone EJ-200CE)	Classical guitar (Española)	Classical guitar (Española)
Chuck	Classical guitar (Española)	Classical guitar (Española)	Classical guitar (Española)
Robert	Classical guitar (Yamaha C40)	Classical guitar (Yamaha C40)	Electric guitar (Ibanez RG350DX) Amplifier (Line 6 Spider IV 15)
Morrissey	Classical guitar (Yamaha C40)	Classical guitar (Yamaha C40)	Electric guitar (ESP LTD m-100FM) Amplifier (Line 6 Spider IV 15)
Xavier	Electric guitar (Epiphone SG G-400) Amplifier (Peavey VYPR-75)	Electric guitar (Epiphone SG G-400) Amplifier (Peavey VYPR-75)	Acoustic guitar (Yamaha F335) Electric guitar (Epiphone SG G-400) Amplifier (Peavey VYPR-75)
Max	Electric guitar (Peavey EXP) Amplifier (Rogue RB-50B)	Electric guitar (Peavey EXP) Amplifier (Rogue RB-50B)	Electric guitar (Peavey EXP) Amplifier (Rogue RB-50B)

Only Chuck was consistent in his use of one instrument in all three observations; the other participants used more than one kind of guitar. All participants reported that they owned their equipment (guitars, amplifiers, electronic effects, cables). These artifacts, personal and meaningful objects to the participants, contributed in defining the musical artist identity. I examined the instruments and equipment and was impressed by their playability; their guitars were of good quality. As a high school guitar teacher, I

have observed that students typically used or owned lesser quality musical equipment. The equipment was not expensive (Española brand guitars are quite inexpensive in a border town such as El Paso). The qualities of the guitars' conditions included (1) comfortable weight and size, (2) low and easy-to-play string height over the frets (with minimal buzzing, which meant their guitar necks were straight), and (3) sound electronics in electric guitars (i.e., no intrusive humming, popping, or crackling when plugged into amplifiers). I did observe one participant's issues with the electronics of an amplifier in the first observation, but he did not use that amplifier in following sessions. I examined the artifacts for evidence of maintenance and general condition and concluded that the standard of instrument care and conditions of equipment showed that participants used their instruments often.

Musical artists, are considered passionate creators and performers. Participants communicated to me that meaningfully connecting with the music was important to them. Xavier spoke about this connection and that he was less passionate in playing songs suggested by Max: "I open up to them and I'll play and hear them and stuff, and if I don't like them, I'll just kinda like, I don't know, not get into it." Xavier expressed his openness to listen and play music Max indicated his disconnect, to "not get into it" if he did not like the songs. Other participants expressed their aesthetic connection with music in terms of "feeling it, "getting into it," and "liking it." Their passion for playing songs was evident in speech as they worked and picked music apart.

Beyond the equipment and music that they played, a handwritten note conveyed a modified tuning sequence for guitar had been used. Xavier and Max told me about the

note, but I never observed them examining it. (Xavier retrieved it from his room during an observation in his parents' garage.) I construed from their learning by ear and their memorizing songs that they had a disciplined connection with the media of their art. That they possessed a handwritten note for a modified tuning supports their aesthetic intent for correctness of sound. Participants, however, never played from written music.

Experimenting with music. Artists manipulate the materials of their discipline to create art. In manipulating sounds on their instruments and experimenting in making music, participants enacted a discourse of the musical artist identity. They played popular artists' music in uniquely different ways. Robert and Morrissey, however, often spoke about and played music by Classical guitar composers.

Experimentation was ongoing in the participants' music making, but it did not appear to disrupt the flow of music play or learning. They frequently experimented making music in various ways. For instance, participants with electric guitars and equipment (e.g., amplifiers and effects pedals) altered and modified the output of their sound throughout their sessions. In one observation, participants improvised with single-note melodies; they altered the sequence of pitches in the melodies. Robert commented, "It was a nice improve," when he and Morrissey reached a stopping point. Participants regularly expressed to each other how to try new ideas with their equipment or music. For instance, Xavier mentioned an idea for starting a song:

> **Xavier**: Hey, let's do "My Hero" really fast. [Xavier plays a segment of music on his guitar.]
>
> **Max**: Yeah.

Xavier: Start off with the bass line like if it's a drum piece. [Xavier begins verbalizing drum sounds, and Max verbalizes drum sounds with him.]

Xavier's suggestion to play the bass line was not a typical of the way they played the song. Other participants similarly suggested trying different musical techniques (e.g., using a pick, playing faster or slower, using a specific strumming pattern). Bruce, for instance, announced that he would experiment by saying, "I'm just gonna mess with it" just before playing with a non-standard tuning. All participants maintained similar open attitudes to music making.

Participants tested their sound effects, volume, and tone while setting up their equipment. Many participants switched tunings on their guitars at times, for example, from standard to drop-D tuning. Demonstrations of multiple alternate chord grips and fingerings were prevalent with each pair. Evidence of experimentation recurred in many participants' statements such as:

- **Robert**: Keep working on that. I'll try to like, do some riff. [said to Morrissey.]
- **Bruce**: Try to play it slower. [suggested to Chuck.]
- **Morrissey**: I'm gonna try to put my solo super-fast, see how it goes. [Morrissey remarked to Robert.]
- **Morrissey**: Go Leo Brower-fast! [suggested to Robert.]
- **Xavier**: Then, you go backwards fast. Try it! [instructed to Max.]
- **Max**: Try to do it like . . . (Max instructs Xavier while demonstrating.]
- **Xavier**: Let's try that, but let's try it acoustically. [suggested to Max.]

- **Chuck**: Try to find a fuller sound. [asked to Bruce.]
- **Bruce**: Let's try the punk song, see if . . . [Bruce suggested to Chuck.]

These examples indicated experimentation. Their discourse makes clear that they tried different ways to make sounds and play music.

In many instances, participants improvised or simply made up music of their own. Music they did not create consisted of short melodies and full-length songs. I heard music played that was comprised of different genres and that represented various artists and styles. This evidence indicates particular tastes, but also points to their aesthetic motivations individually and as a pair of artists. That participants chose to play in sessions provides further evidence that they maintained routines to practice certain music and that they broke with routine to experiment or learn new music. It also showed that they connected to learn and play music together.

Friend

Each participant was a friend of his peer. Discourse of the friend identity regularly emerged in participants' conversations through laughs, smiles, clapping, and high-fiving. Their personal and amenable cooperation are highlighted in the following discussions.

Personal interactions. Personal interactions between participants were ubiquitous. This subtheme of data interweaved with most of the other discourses identified in this study. The tone of participants' friendship was difficult to separate from the tone used in other discourses. Participants, for example, spoke as friends to learn, to coach each other, and to interact as musical artists. Overall, discourse of the friend identity evidenced itself in personalized ways (tone and meanings) of speaking with their

peer.

Personal meanings were imbued throughout the data. Evidence showed that participants were involved in other personal activities:

Max: Oh crap. I guess we could go back to my house.

Xavier: [Incoherent]

Max: Alright.

Xavier: But just like, we got to get back 'till like, three.

Max: That should be good.

Xavier: So if you want later we could when we're done we could just go and play PlayStation or something. [Xavier chuckles.]

Max: Yeah!

These participants discussed options for what to do after one observation. One reason for being together was not music making. As friends, they got together and experienced various meaningful activities with each other. This was plainly evident.

In joint decision to get together to play and learn music, participants spoke, in part, from identities of self-learners. Data revealed that personal histories between participants and tone of talk were indicative of their friend identities. Joking, playfulness, and humor are attributes of friends and Robert explained their importance with Morrissey:

Harold: Can you explain the back and forth interactions that come up as you learn music together?

Robert: It'll usually be jokes. Like, he'll be playing something like crazy, and I'll

be like, “Aww, that’s crazy dude; you need to teach me that?” or like, or like, I’ll play something else like, “That’s so cool; you gotta teach me that also.”

Harold: So humor?

Robert: Humor. Humor is a big part of it. I guess because of our friendship ‘cause we’re kinda close we feel comfortable with the humor and stuff but I mean if it was someone else I didn’t know; it’d be more formal I guess.

Humor facilitated Robert’s speaking freely with Morrissey. Robert explained that he did not know how he might react if he were interacting with someone else—implying perhaps a teacher or someone not his friend—and surmised that the communication might be “more formal.”

Friend identity talk was not verbose or emphatic, i.e., gushing, and humorous moments did not erupt into hysterics. Chuck, for instance, whispered to Bruce during their second observation. The pair began to laugh afterward, and Bruce asked his peer, “You need to?” It was not clear what that question meant, but I discerned it was personal.

The humorous exchanges between participants were integrated with their serious focus on making music. Morrissey and Robert, for example, spoke in casual and humorous ways about playing their guitars during a discussion of their experiences at a music contest:

Morrissey: [Robert begins to play Morrissey’s song on his guitar.] Yeah, yeah, no, no, don’t do it!

Robert: Don’t do it! [Morrissey chuckles.]

Morrissey: You’ll kill yourself, man! [smiling as he speaks]

Robert: I just think it's fun. [He continues to play.]

Morrissey: Try, play. Imagine trying to play, uh, "Un Dia De." [Morrissey is watching Robert play.] That fast! Oh, whoa! God!

Robert: You wanna try it? [Robert stops playing and looks at Morrissey, smiling.] I'll try to do my solo, too. [Both begin to tune their guitars, but Morrissey starts playing first.]

Morrissey: [speaking while playing] Oh, shit! [Morrissey stops playing for a moment then begins again as Robert begins playing with him.] Ah, you can't do it. Holy . . .

Robert: It's, it's hard, huh? Like the . . . [Robert stops playing and continues to watch Morrissey play.]

Morrissey: Oh, shit! [Morrissey snorts and stops playing.] Ha!

Robert: Remember last year, before we went to State with the judge that you went to the, like, dickhead?

Morrissey: Oh, yeah.

Robert: And there was someone before you that played that song, too?

Morrissey: And I was just, like, "You gave that guy a 'two' and you, and the way I played, you give me a 'two'?"

Robert: Yeah, what's it called? We were there 'cause, remember, I was observing and they were, like, whatever, "Bleh bleh, bleh. I'm from the [incomprehensible] and I'm gonna play 'Un Dia'," and we were like . . . [He snaps his head facing toward Morrissey with a shocked, glaring look in his eyes.]

Morrissey: I know! I was like, "Humph!" [Morrissey grimaces.]

The pair used expletives and spoke expressively. The humorous tone of their discussion demonstrated their familiarity with each other, that is, by smiling, saying, "shit," and the mockingly verbalizing of "Bleh, bleh, bleh." Their playfulness with each other was evident. Personal history was revealed in their reminiscing about previous interactions "at State."

Use of the word "yeah" was emblematic of participants' personal encouragement throughout their interactions. "Yeah" was maintained as a ubiquitous presence. It was widespread, consistently used, and often portrayed a personal meaning. The meanings of "Yeah" included its use to respond in acknowledgement and affirmation of something said (e.g., "That sounds cool," "Yeah"). It was used in exclamation (e.g., after completing a song, participants loudly exclaimed, "Yeah!"). "Yeah" was spoken in empathy and to convey agreement (e.g., after playing some music, one participant looked at his peer smiling and said, "Yeah"). The usage of "Yeah" maintained a tone of positivity and acceptance; therefore, I typically categorized the word as speech associated with the friend identity. "Yeah" was evident 195 times in the transcripts. It was the second most used word in the sessions ("like" was first on the list at 274 times). No other single repeated word maintained so many and emphatic functions.

Amenable cooperation. Discourse of the friend identity was accommodating and showed that participants cooperated with each other. Participants enacted the friend identity by acquiescing to cooperate with their peers. Their collaborations to learn and make music together displayed the discourse of this identity.

In interviews, participants admitted they did not always agree about which songs to play or how to play them. Nevertheless, they often played music that their peers wanted; when asked in interviews, they cited friendship as the reason for acquiescing. Robert explained his reluctance and subsequent compliance to play a song that Morrissey learned by ear but differently from the way he had:

> **Harold**: Do you teach him?
>
> **Robert**: Yes, sometimes. I teach him, like not really teach him like a regular teacher but like, a couple things. Like we were jamming out last time at his house to a like, a Lamb of God song called, "Laid to Rest." I think everybody knows that song and, uh, he was playing it kinda like, 'cause he learns by ear too, and he was playing it kinda different from the original recording. And I'm the kind that I'm like real picky when I learn stuff, it has to be like perfect or it's not OK for me you know? , I know that song like really, really well, he was playing it a little bit different, and I was teaching him you know, the more, uh, technical version of the song.

Robert indicated that he cooperated and accommodated Morrissey by teaching him the particular way he played "Laid to Rest." He also expressed his aversion to playing his peer's rendition of the song stating, "He was playing it kinda different from the original recording." Robert knew the song "really, really well" and accommodated his friend by teaching him the more "technical version of the song." This excerpt is an example of the tone of amenable cooperation all participants demonstrated with their peers.

The participants regularly complied with their peers. For example, Xavier agreed

to end their playing session when Max asked, “You wanna do the questions now?” in suggesting they begin the interview. Other participants’ statements and remarks indicated their compliance and amenable cooperation:

- **Bruce**: Wanna play that? [suggested to Chuck.] etc. below
- **Max**: You can go ahead. [offered to Xavier in starting a song.]
- **Robert**: So, what do you wanna play? [asked to Morrissey.]
- **Chuck**: Up to you if you wanna go more, whatever, it’s your choice. [said to Bruce.]
- **Robert**: You wanna do the one we learned?” [asked to Morrissey, to which he agreed, “Alright.”]

These accounts evidenced the participants’ cooperation with one another. The statements and questions served as catalysts for initiating collaboration in their sessions.

Each of the identities found in this study was interpreted as positioned discourse. Each participant evoked one of the four discrete identities (self-learner, coach, musical artist, and friend) in dialogues with their peer. Communication attributable to identities was idiomatic of the adolescent peers interacting to learn music out of school. Consequently, identities between participant pairs seemed to be necessary or appropriate in the moment.

The data showed that identities both emerged and changed suddenly—short and simple utterances that depicted one identity gave way to another identity in another utterance that immediately followed. Table 7 is an inventory of idiomatic identity combinations of the four discrete identities as depicted between participants in this study.

Arrows indicate the flow of communication that the data showed was boundless between the identities. Discourse of the friend identity, for example, was used to address a peer's use of discourse of the musical artist identity.

Table 7

Identity Combinations Between Participants

Identities Conveyed to Peer		Respondent Identities
Friend	↔	Friend
Friend	↔	Musical Artist
Friend	↔	Self Learner
Friend	↔	Coach
Musical Artist	↔	Musical Artist
Musical Artist	↔	Self Learner
Musical Artist	↔	Coach
Musical Artist	↔	Friend
Self Learner	↔	Self Learner
Self Learner	↔	Coach
Self Learner	↔	Friend
Self Learner	↔	Musical Artist
Coach	↔	Coach
Coach	↔	Friend
Coach	↔	Musical Artist
Coach	↔	Self Learner

The combinations of identity discourses used in addressing other enacted identities suggest the complexity of participants' interactions. I was impressed by the identities that emerged in participants' dialogues to learn music together. It appeared that participants evoked and changed identities to facilitate acquiring knowledge and skills, as well as to understand the processes of learning with a peer they consider a friend. Without a teacher, they were figuring out ad hoc how to elicit knowledge, to offer help, to express themselves artistically, and to maintain their friendship. This is also impressive in light of the main identities found in a music class. In school, speaking identities consist of two explicitly understood one-way expressions between the teacher and the student. It is

important to consider that students in school do not change identities; this is to say, the student typically does not decide to teach the class. Teachers probably do not use discourse to identify as a student—except when having deliberately prepared to do so—in front of their class.

The discourses of four identities used in participants' dialogues are clear. Self-learners asked their peer for help, engaged in critical discussions about music, observed their peers, and maintained intense internal focus to learn alone. Coaches prompted a peer to learn, guided them step-by-step through instructions, and encouraged them. Speaking as musical artists, the pairs discussed aesthetics in music—revealing the value of expression in music—and experimented with sound in music making. Participants characteristically spoke as friends; they cooperated and were personal in conversation. The flow of interactions and identity shifting showed a sophistication and an adeptness in interacting to learn music and maintain friendship.

Summary

I observed themes of identity discourses emphasized in together–individual discourses, although they were not exclusive to them. Participants connected, for example, speaking as friends. They used together discourse communicating as self-learners and when one participant coached their peer. They used the individual discourse while speaking as musical artists to learn music with their peer. These findings contribute to answering my first research question and show depth of participants' interactions.

Chapter 6

Independent and Joint Evaluation Communication

My second research question asked: What are the dynamics of self and mutual learning assessments when the research participants interacted to learn music in pairs outside school? The term *evaluation* in this study refers to communication that involved assessing, questioning, and judging, as well as comparing and contrasting of ideas relating to music making. Data analysis focused on both individual and joint communication. Through the lens of relational dialectics theory (RDT), the dialectic of together and independent discourses was evident in the findings; these discourses overlapped discourses in which they assessed independently and together.

I began coding data with two specific questions in mind: what do participants say or imply when evaluating their own playing; and what do participants say or imply when they evaluate their joint playing? Initial coding, however, showed that participants evaluated both the physical/technical aspects of music playing and abstract music concepts. I observed that they assessed what they could do and what they understood about music, songs, and playing the guitar. I therefor adapted my coding agenda to account for the evaluations of conceptual understanding with the following questions: what do participants say or imply in evaluating music and musical concepts individually; and what do participants say or imply in evaluating music and musical concepts as a pair? Resultant findings are discussed in the following sections.

Self-Evaluation

Participants independently assessed many aspects of their skills, sound output,

and understanding of music. Self-evaluations were observed on three levels: of their own playing without their peer, of their own playing with a peer, and with reference to their mutual playing as a pair in order to evaluate their independent playing.

Participants self-evaluated in cases when their peer was not consulted for evaluation. As one participant, Robert, explained, "I guess a lot of it is just mental. We just think it to ourselves: 'Hey! I just learned something.'" Evidence of self-focused evaluation was apparent in physical behavior and not in written or spoken words. Xavier and Max showed me a handwritten note with letters indicating a modified tuning for the guitar, but I did not observe either one of them examine it. I also did not see any other participant examine or use written music or tablature. I surmised that participants thought and self-evaluated until they reported to me in interviews that they had done so.

Each participant expressed a proclivity to self-evaluate. Chuck clarified how he liked to self-evaluate in managing his own growth as a musician: "I'm not into looking for a challenge unless I'm, like playing by myself, like challenge myself." He said he enjoyed playing with Bruce but emphasized he improved as a musician mostly on his own. He reiterated, "I've never liked to go to guitar class; I like learning by myself." All participants agreed that they learned alone through self-focus.

Statements of one or two spoken words characterized some of self-focused self-evaluation. Morrissey, for example, explained that sometimes he exclaimed the word "dang" upon learning a new skill. I attributed participants' exclamations and spontaneous remarks to the theme of self-focused, self-evaluating discourse. Some examples these included:

- **Max**: Ah, crap! [stated after playing a musical phrase.]
- **Bruce**: Dude! Check this out! [stated after playing some musical material.]
- Takes a lot out of me. [a judgment Robert had made following music he just played]
- **Xavier**: Dude, I love how this sounds! No feedback. [said regarding equipment he was adjusting.]
- Alright, I guess I'm gonna practice it. [a self-assessment made by Robert immediately following brief practice of some musical material]
- **Morrissey**: Yeah! [said quietly, as though through his teeth.]

Statements such as these did not always elicit responses from their peers. As spontaneous expressions, these statements seemed to indicate a participant's self-focus. Exclamations often did not signal the start of a dialogue. A lack of peer response demonstrated that such comments and statements were directed at themselves.

Participants sometimes played melodic lines and chord sequences that differed from the ongoing music making with their peer. These digressions of individual music making showed the distraction on the participant's part. Body language—looking at a grip hand or strumming—indicated the guitarist might be playing something for himself. Participants confirmed in interviews that this was always the case. All agreed they often assessed their skills in this way. Xavier corroborated this by saying, "We just kind of learn from each other. But it's not like we'll sit down and explain something bit by bit." Although self-focused self-evaluations appeared frequently in the sessions, they mostly emerged as brief asides.

I interpreted many nonverbal cues as self-evaluation. Participants muttered sounds (for example, humming or grunting) and did certain physical movements (looking at or away from their peer and closing their eyes) that gave indications of such self-focus. Certain shifts in how participants stood, sat, and held their instruments, however subtle, portrayed actions associated with self-assessment. They shifted their guitar, for example, to control their instrument and their body to provide personal comfort. In many instances participants with electric guitars adjusted and managed volume, tone, and sound effects without their peer's help. These adjustments often were the result of self-assessments.

At times participants verbally let their peer know of their desire to self-focus. One clear example occurred when Max stopped playing with Xavier in order to tune his guitar. Max insisted, "Let me tune because I don't want to be out of tune." Acknowledging this, Xavier lowered his volume. Other participants acknowledged that in tuning their peer was self-focused and evaluating himself; namely, they lowered their volume or by stopped altogether while their peer adjusted his [peer is singular] strings.

The participants reported that their self-assessments often involved internal references and mental perspective. The presence of a peer, however, added an external perspective and reference to many participants' self-evaluations. Participants explained in interviews that they watched and listened to their peer at times to gain perspective on their own skills. I observed this occurring in each of the pairs' sessions. Participants were not meeting to perform or merely to show off for each other; rather, in routinely meeting they intended to play music and learn with their peer.

Participants were involved with their peer's self-evaluation by listening and

watching them play. Participants often did not verbalize when attentively listening to and watching their peer. Participants also checked their own playing against what their peer was playing. I observed that participants often did not know, or indicate that they knew, that their peer's attention was focused on them.

I observed recurring back-and-forth looks and glances by participants of their peers while playing. Certain gestures indicated self-evaluation to a peer because, in looking back at their own fingers and strum-hand, the guitarist often heard imitating his peer. Bruce saw Chuck appear to be learning from him: "I noticed he learned because when he finished listening to me play the riff and trying to play it, he's like, 'I like that song.'" Chuck then invited Bruce to play with him because he was trying to play the same riff.

Robert explained how he self-evaluated with his peer:

> **Robert**: When we're, when we're together, like jamming out, it's more like we'll get our tabs, like on our own time, but when we're together it's just more visual stuff.
>
> **Harold**: Like what you're doing with your actual hands?
>
> **Robert**: Yeah.
>
> **Harold**: You'll like play something and he's getting to see your fingers move.
>
> **Robert**: Yes.

Robert affirmed that he and Morrissey visually checked each other's hands ("He's getting to see your fingers move") to assess his learning. This occurred commonly with each pair.

Watching and listening to their peer sometimes motivated participants to play with their peer. Chuck explained how he involved Bruce in his self-evaluations when he stated, “Sometimes I play alone and I fool around with the guitar, see what I can do. Sometimes I tell him like, ‘Look what I can do.’” Chuck also accounted for his involving himself with what Bruce was playing: “Like sometimes, like, ‘Oh, you're doing that? Oh! Alright, let me see if I can do that, too.’” These examples illustrate ways in which participants involved their peers in self-evaluations.

Participants interrupted their self-evaluating peers. Chuck explained why he intervened when he noticed Bruce: “If he’s, like, making a mistake in something, I’ll just, um, go to him and correct him.” Bruce got involved with Chuck’s self-evaluation in order to “correct him.” In the focused group interview, participants explained how they got involved or collaborated in each other’s self-evaluations:

> **Max**: I wrote this finger picking, right? He was trying to learn it and he came and he showed me that he learned it. I was like [smiling, his eyebrows lift and gestures a thumb up.], “Yeah!” [group laughs.]
>
> **Xavier**: We hardly talked though. That’s like one of the few times we talk. We’ll just probably learn it. Like, we’ll look at each other and be like . . . [looks forward and nods his head affirmatively.]
>
> **Max**: I might just, “Yeah! Woo! Oh, yes!” [Max extends his arm and fist-pumps the air.]
>
> **Bruce**: After I taught him something, like I'm just sitting down, like [looks away from Chuck] and he’s just like, trying to play it. He gets it right. I’m like [nods his

head affirmatively and smiles at Chuck.]

Chuck: We don't even look at each other. We're like [mimes playing guitar and looks away from Bruce.]

Xavier involved Max in playing ("He came and he showed me that he learned it"). Xavier emphasized how Max acknowledged him nonverbally by explaining, "We'll look at each other," and by gesturing through a head nod. Bruce explained that after getting involved in teaching Chuck, he acknowledged Chuck's achievement of the material by nodding at him. Head nods commonly occurred between participants and denoted involvement with their peer even if only having listened to them.

Participants were unsuspectingly helped at times, but they also prompted their peers for help. They did not always ask their peer to help with a direct question ("Would you help me?"). Attention by their peer was gained in strumming aggressively, expressing self-criticism, and through loud or sudden exclaiming. Robert, for example, loudly remarked after playing, "Why do I play shit? Do I even know any songs?" Morrissey replied, "It's on standard tune. Switch it to clean." Robert's self-criticism might not have been expressed as a request for help, but it provoked Morrissey to offer a helpful response ("Switch it to clean"). Morrissey had, indicated he was attentive in listening to Robert ("It's on standard tune").

In another example, Chuck began making mistakes that interrupted play with his peer. Chuck had stopped playing and looked at his own hands. He uttered in self-assessment, "Oh, I had, uh," and continued playing the material with which he was having trouble. When Chuck paused in his playing, Bruce also stopped playing and

looked at Chuck. Chuck paused again at another stopping point to look at Bruce, but both participants began playing again. Chuck's glances at Bruce and back at his own hands suggested he was self-checking against his Bruce's playing. In the pair interview following this observation, Bruce explained that he would "show him on my own guitar what he's supposed to do," and Chuck replied, "Mostly, I like looking at him." This explanation corroborated what I observed when Chuck and Bruce paused, looked at one another, and started to play together: Chuck prompted Bruce's help.

Participants asked their peers for help in making sense of certain material. Chuck, for example, simply requested Bruce's help: "Let me ask you a question" and played a chord-strumming pattern. His question was found in the chords he strummed. Bruce responded by holding up his guitar to show his grip-hand fingers and by pulling the strings one at a time with his strum hand. Chuck looked at Bruce's fingers, then, held up his own guitar neck to show Bruce the same chord grip. They both smiled at each other in acknowledgement.

When one participant prompted his peer for help, the verbal and nonverbal exchanges were typically short, sudden, and brief. Max, for instance, questioned Xavier about a phrase Xavier was playing alone. Max first evaluated his own skill and watched and listened to Xavier play; Xavier was not aware of this. Max looked at his own finger placements on the guitar neck and then back at Xavier, who was playing the melodic phrase, and interrupted him asking, "How do you do that one?" Xavier explained, "It's just first finger on the first fret," and played the passage again. Max attempted the passage. Music making continued, but no further talk ensued about that melodic phrase.

Max's self-evaluation here occurred in less than a minute.

Participants discussed musical and nonmusical topics with their peers. The discussions often indicated that participants were self-evaluating. Robert and Morrissey, for example, discussed songs they had learned. Robert asked, "Did you ever figure out the hard part for that 'Laid to Rest'?" "Which one?" Morrissey responded. (They had been playing the song in question.) Robert's question evidenced his searching for understanding from Morrissey. Robert's discourse to self-evaluate emerged in their playing and talking about the music. Other participants similarly self-evaluated with their peers by acknowledging their understanding and validating whether what they played was correct.

Participants announced intentions to evaluate their own musical skills. While Morrissey and Robert worked on single-note solo material, Morrissey said, "I'm gonna try to put my solo super-fast. See how it goes," and began to play. Robert looked on and at one point stated, "Concentrate!" which indicated his active involvement with what Morrissey was playing. Morrissey's announcement evidenced this self-assessment with Robert. The data showed participants could be open when self-checking, as well as reserved about their peer knowing about it.

While playing with their peer, participants also evaluated their own playing. Glances and repeated views at their peer's fingers were the means to self-evaluation. They managed their own playing with what they observed their peer perform. Chuck watched Bruce while they both played in order to learn some chord shapes and to match tempos:

Chuck: I was um, whatchamacallit, I was trying to go at his pace, and trying to learn the same chords at the same time. Which was a mistake on my part.

Harold: Why is that?

Chuck: I screwed up too much.

Chuck indicated he was checking his own tempo with Bruce ("I was trying to go at his pace"). Expressing that he had some difficulty with tempo ("screwed up too much") also indicated his self-evaluation. Every participant visually examined his peer in sessions while the two played music together.

Talking and observing their peers play sensitized participants to musical concepts and skills of which they spoke. Watching Xavier play, Max explained:

Harold: Are there activities that would help you deal with learning music better?

Max: Basically, like, just getting faster and picking up more on what he has.

Harold: In the way of technique or knowledge?

Max: Yeah, like recently he has a song where he plays the string open like . . . [vocalizes a melodic phrase of the song] and I'll watch him play that like, "How do you do that? Like what the?" And we were writing a song one day and he's like, "We should put that part in," so he showed me how to do it and I did it, and we both played the same part right there.

Max observed Xavier playing and related that Xavier had showed him how to put a particular part into a song they co-writing. Max indicted his sensitivity to Xavier's skill and knowledge, as well as his interest in learning from him ("picking up more on what he has" and "I'll watch him play"). Other participants also evaluated their peers and

appeared to learn from them. Participants checked their own knowledge and discovered their peer's knowledge by observing and engaging in brief exchanges. They watched each other and compared their impressions of music, artists, genres, and their playing. Short discussions about concepts sensitized them to ideas in music; they also became aware of differences of opinion about music.

Participants discussed their individual and joint impressions of music, techniques, genres, and artists. These discussions evidenced self and mutual evaluation. They spoke about music preferences, what they knew about many music topics, and they demonstrated their skills and abilities. By talking, participants sensitized each other about their individual knowledge about music and music making. One participant talked about his own musical preferences and the rewards of being exposed to music his peer liked:

> **Robert**: With Morrissey? I mean, uh, like I said, we're used to, like, two different genres. He's more metal and stuff and I'm more, uh, what's it called, I love jazz. I love Ska and anything that has to do with all that stuff. So, I learn from him 'cause I mean I like metal music. That's what I listen to, that's just not what I like to play. And, uh, I learn like some riffs from him. I learn, like, some techniques from him and he learns stuff from me, also. Like, since I guess, uh, metal music doesn't use a lot of more complex chords. You know, like the thirteen chords or the nine chords and stuff. I'm pretty sure he knows them, but to a certain extent, I'm sure he doesn't know some stuff also.

Robert showed that he was sensitive to his peer's musical preferences. He assessed his own and his peer's musical knowledge ("I learn, like, some techniques from him and he

learns stuff from me, also.") and identified their unique musical preferences ("He's more metal. I love jazz."). Morrissey showed his sensitivity regarding his and Robert's knowledge and music preferences:

> **Harold**: Can you describe any challenges you have learning guitar music with [your peer]?
>
> **Morrissey**: With him? Uh, I mean, we haven't taught each, you know like other stuff, but theory, mostly theory, because he knows a lot more theory in guitar.
>
> **Harold**: OK. Is that a challenge for like when you guys are working together?
>
> **Morrissey**: Yeah.
>
> **Harold**: It gets in the way?
>
> **Morrissey**: It gets kinda, well, a little bit, I mean also, I guess it would be. We play, well, he plays a lot of jazz. He's in a jazz band. I'm more into, like metal. A lot of metal.

Morrissey and Robert were sensitive to each other's musical tastes. Morrissey perceived Robert's knowledge and suggested that Robert's knowledge of theory relating to guitar exceeded his own. In answering my question, he assessed that the difference in their music knowledge might be a challenge in their joint music learning.

Mutual evaluation

Participants interacted to assess their playing as they played together. Evaluations of an individual involved the pair focused on one participant's playing. Participants also talked about joint music making to evaluate their playing. Robert and Morrissey, for example, discussed the technical issues Robert was dealing with:

Robert: When you do the, like the triplets, the "trr, trr, trr," do you, like tip the pick sideways kinda a little bit?

Morrissey: Not really. I don't know about, like the fucking triplets?

Robert: Yeah, the triplets, like . . . [Robert demonstrates the technique.]

Morrissey: Yeah?

Robert: Have you ever tried doing, like with, like the pick perfectly like parallel with the string?

Morrissey: Nah, it's too awkward.

Robert: Yeah. [Robert begins playing a melodic phrase using triplets.]

Morrissey: The song "Death Theme" from Death?

Robert: Yeah. So, it's on the fifth? [Robert looks at his grip-hand on the guitar neck and moves his fingers over different strings. Morrissey watches him.]

Morrissey: Yeah. It's on the sixth.

Robert: Sixth? [Robert continues to move his grip-hand fingers and plucks a melodic pattern.]

Morrissey: It's the same thing. Triplets.

Robert: Sounds badass!

The exchange illustrates how a pair focused on an individual's concern about a technique. Robert initiated this discussion about playing triplets. The conversation developed into mutual evaluation concerning Robert's use of a pick and finger placement. Another example was observed between Max and Xavier:

Xavier: What part were you at?

Max: After that, then we went back into the chorus.

Xavier: Well, after that it goes drum.

Max: Drum enters for like two beats, right?

Xavier: Yeah, and then it goes into the chorus again.

Max: I kinda, ah, crap! The songs go acoustic. "My Hero," of course.

Xavier: Well, let's try them all then. I'll bring out the acoustic and we'll try it.

Max: Alright. Let's do it.

Xavier: [incoherent]

Max: I'll try to find a fuller sound for the acoustic.

Xavier: Oh, you might have to lower it a little though.

Max: Yeah, since it's acoustic, you want a deep bass.

Xavier: Yeah.

In this exchange, Max and Xavier evaluated the music. They briefly assessed each other on separate issues and in joint playing. This indicated mutual evaluation of each individual's concerns and mutual evaluation of joint playing. Many of the interactions between participants showed such overlap in conversations. Participants self-assessed both with and without attention from their peer, and they mutual evaluated individual and joint issues.

Participants jointly assessed experiences in playing music. They talked about and compared guitar techniques, feelings when playing certain songs, and personal experiences with music. Robert, for example, spoke about making mistakes. Morrissey recounted his similar experiences:

Robert: Like, for me, like what's it called, with me, like when I know people are looking at me, I get like real, like tense, kinda.

Morrissey: Yeah.

Robert: When I was in there I was like . . . [showing his curled fingers up to his peer.]

Morrissey: That's exactly how I felt!

Robert: At State!

Morrissey: Last year when I was doing, like . . . [demonstrating a pull-off technique with his strum-hand.]

Robert: Dude, I saw your hand! It was like . . . [mimics an awkward strum-hand movement in the air and Morrissey laughs.] What's it called, but, yeah, I mean just, I mean other than that it's just . . . [mimics a flowing movement with his fingers.]

Morrissey: Oh, yeah dude.

These participants related performance experiences and concurred on their feelings of performance anxiety. The tone of their talk was friendly and seemed bonding. Their discourse was open, sharing, friendly, and highlighted their connectedness. In another example, Robert and Morrissey discussed fingernail length:

Robert: Sometimes my nails interfere with my tapping.

Morrissey: Oh, yeah. I rarely cut the thumb 'cause I was just, like, "Ah, I'm just gonna cut it. I don't even need it."

Robert: ‘Til the day you do [smiling]. For me, I don’t know. For me, my thumb, like, my nails aren’t long enough for none of that.

Morrissey: Really? [looks at his peer’s strum-hand.] Nah, don’t worry. You’re gonna get to the point where you’re not gonna want them long.

Robert: Really?

Morrissey: Yeah, you’re gonna be, like, “I don’t even need them this long.” [laughs]

Robert: For me, well, by the time of the solo, for me, like, I guess they did the job, but I just wasn’t used to them being that short. Like, I’m used to them a little bit longer than this [gestures to his fingernails].

Morrissey: Yeah, because like, well, yeah, like I was doing “Un Dia De Noviembre,” I did have super long nails. ‘Cause, I don’t know, at the time, it felt good, but after I kept on playing, like, I don’t know, they seemed too long.

Robert: And with that sound since it’s all, like, pretty bulky. It’s pretty good.

Morrissey: Yeah.

Robert: But for mine, it’s like, if I add a lot of volume, especially for that part, when I played that at competition, it was, like, it was all low.

Morrissey: Oh.

Robert: And, then, the harmonics part also, like, since I need that nail for the volume without harmonics. It was like, it was lame, dude. I needed, like super long nails.

Morrissey: They have to be, like "Grrr!" [gestures claw-like with his strum-hand.]

Robert: And they chip like at the most horrible time. I remember that one drop-D, I don't know, I still need to find another acoustic.

Morrissey: Yeah.

This example highlights a mutual evaluation of knowledge and skill. Robert initiated this assessment concerning the plight of finger-style guitarists. The depth of their conversation showed their awareness of aesthetic implications and experience with this issue. Both Robert and Morrissey assessed the value of long-versus-short nail length as it concerned techniques (tapping and producing harmonics), volume, and maintenance (chipping).

At times, participants demonstrated music (by playing or vocalizing) to substitute for verbal explanations. They vocalized music, for example, in order to demonstrate their ideas. They sang and vocalized melodic lines when they reviewed music together. Robert used vocalizing to explain a phrase to Morrissey:

Robert: It's fluid.

Morrissey: I could, I mean, I'm like, I mean, I'm like fuckin' screwed up on this part like to . . . [plays chord pattern] because those parts gotta be accurate and . . .

Robert: Yeah, and also just like, it's like, when I hear it, it's like 'dun-duh, duh, runt, dun-duh, duh, duh, deh, DUH,' you know? [Morrissey had begun playing the phrase while Robert was vocalizing it.]

In discussing certain strum-hand fingerings, Robert vocalized during their dialogue. His emphatic demonstration of the melody seemed to indicate tempo, volume, phrasing, articulation, and intensity. Every participant vocalized for his peer either examples of melodies and rhythmic phrases, or he played them on his guitar.

Numerous musical topics emerged in the participants' dialogues. Participants spoke about and evaluated issues such as melodic phrasing, tone, the structure and flow of rhythmic sequences, and the physical execution of guitar techniques. Topics involving mutual evaluation included:

- Music genres, songs, and sound effects in music
- Specific artists and people in local music groups and the abilities the participants perceived in those other musicians and guitarists
- Songs and guitar techniques one learned alone or with others
- Individual past experiences playing music with other musicians
- The pair's past experiences playing music together
- Kinds and uses of equipment (e.g., physical arrangement for practice, and guitar string height above the fret board)
- Sound output (e.g., effects, tone quality, amplifier volume in general and with specific pieces)
- Guitar fret board theory and logic
- Grip-hand exercises
- Strum-hand picking exercises
- Fingernail length

- Pitch patterns for tuning (standard versus other kinds, such as “Drop-D”)
- Correct tuning of string pitches
- Decision making about songs to play in the moment
- Decision making about songs to learn over time
- Scheduling future meetings for rehearsals or music play
- Decision making on song parts played individually
- How songs might start (counting off time) and stop (fading, stopping abruptly)
- Playing in time jointly and the tempo of songs

Participants mutually evaluated such issues. Ongoing play was often halted so they could talk about these issues.

Summary

Participants helped each other during mutual music making. Evaluations were central to participants’ own music learning in this study. Participants assessed their music skills—alone and together—as well as conceptual issues about music. Alone, they checked their own playing skills as well as by watching, listening, and comparing their own playing to their peer. Together, they assessed each other’s technique and skills when playing. Topics they evaluated involved concepts relating to music and music making. Figure 3 shows a spectrum for summarizing the self and mutual evaluations. The points depict five evaluations ranging from the ends the spectrum to the center.

The findings in this and the two preceding chapters show that adolescent musicians interact in complex ways. These findings conveyed to me how adolescent peer communication was apportioned, contradictory, and varied in usage. The theoretical

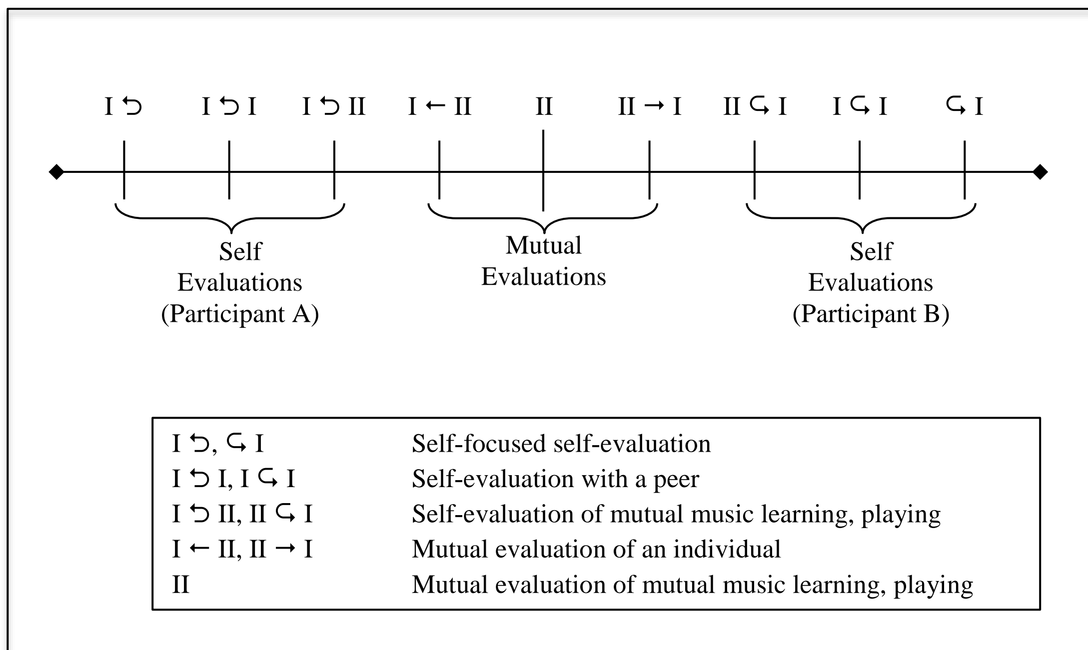

Figure 3. Spectrum of Foci for Evaluation Discourses Identified.

perspective of RDT provided a lens through which to view this complexity. The data were parsed through thematic discourse analysis and the theoretical lens of RDT. The inventory of dialectic discourse highlighted systems of meanings used in independent and joint communication. Dialectic discourses portrayed both central usages of these systems of meanings and marginal usages. How they spoke to learn music evidenced their identities. Participants' identities of talk also shifted—for example, from self-learner to coach—and they took on various speaking identities. The findings also showed that participants assessed themselves both alone and with their peer. Independent and joint evaluations displayed the participants' respect for precision, accuracy, and deliberate action in making music.

Chapter 7

Discussion on Dialectic Discourses in Peer Music Learning

The purpose of this study was to examine the communication of adolescent musicians who learn music outside of school. I focused on how their talk might be perceived. I gathered data about discourses that emerged naturally on-site. Participants played and learned music on three occasions at locations where they normally met. They answered questions individually about how they used communication with their peer and about meanings they perceived in their communication. Each pair answered questions after the final observation. All participants met in a final focus group interview. Through methods of discourse analysis, a substantial spectrum of meanings of everyday talk was derived from the data.

Examining the participants' exchanges showed that many systems of meanings could be extracted from their talk as they learned music with a peer. The results of this study are encompassed in an array of extracted, salient meanings. My initial set of findings included themes of discourses that opposed one another; certain discourses were more central to peer music learning than others. A second set of findings showed that identities emerged in the participants' dialogues; they spoke as friends, as burgeoning musical artists, as young self-learners, and as each other's coach. A final set of findings highlighted the different ways they self-assessed and communicated to jointly evaluate learning. Self-assessing, they focused on their own skills without peer involvement, they focused on evaluating their skills while observing their peer without involving them, and they focused on evaluating their skills while observing their peer while involving them,

e.g., they requested accompaniment or clarification on a concept.

Discussion

My initial thoughts about how American teenagers might use everyday talk to learn music together outside school have changed: I have a deeper understanding that their communication is not a simple matter. Following research experts' advice (Baxter, 2011; LeCompte et al., 1999; Lichtman, 2006; Tracy & Robles, 2013), I now understand how the application of a theoretical perspective has helped researchers investigate and interpret everyday talk. This study showed me that adolescent peer musicians do not learn music through osmosis. Dialogues between adolescent musicians that can seem haphazard are instead made up of complex and intricate systems of meanings. The lens of relational dialectics theory (RDT) was central to my understanding of this and to my subsequent change of thought.

The dynamics of participants' peer-to-peer dialogues were evident in the discourses that emerged. The together–individual dialectic was highlighted by the sets of findings on identities and the participants' communications to assess learning both jointly and independently. Independently, they spoke to assert themselves and learn as an individual. Although researchers such as Allsup (2002; 2003), Davis (2005), and Fornäs et al. (1995) indicated participants in their studies as using together discourse more often. This contrasted what I found with participants in my study. My analysis indicated that participants spoke more frequently in order to learn alone than to learn together. Participants in my study did not come together mainly to learn music and play songs jointly. They met with their peer to play music they themselves liked.

Evidence of identities in this study indicated how participants regulated their own learning (they were their own leaders) and coached their peers. Jaffurs's (2006) described peer-directed talk in a garage band as having no clear leader. Jaffurs's research, however, did not focus on everyday talk as did my study. My findings indicate that participants took on leadership roles by identifying as musical artists and as coaches.

Identities were conveyed in the ways participants spoke and appeared and in how they used everyday talk to learn and play music with their peers. Higgins and Campbell (2010) felt that music teachers should reconsider their interactions with students as a facilitator. These authors, felt that conveying an identity can be important in music education. Goodrich (2007) also saw that high school students in a jazz band took on hierarchical identities; some students identified as mentors while the others as being mentored. Participants in my study portrayed particular identities in communicating and, for however short a moment (a single utterance or glance at their peer), those identities served a purpose. None of the participants announced their identity to indicate they were speaking as a self-learner, a coach, a musical artist, or a friend.

Perceiving those identities that adolescent music students might enact in order to speak with peers might be important to those music educators who allow students to informally learn in their classrooms. First, the findings in my study show that participants used a discourse of the self-learner identity. Participants largely spoke to themselves and acted nonverbally thus displaying the discourse of the self-learner. Students identifying as such in our classes might not respond well to being trained or told to help or mentor a classmate. Second—and supporting the point that self-taught students might not want to

teach their peers—participants did not identify themselves as assuming a teacher position. That participants did not strongly associate the meanings interpreted from their dialogues to the term *teacher* and, instead, preferred the term *coach* indicates an understanding of distinctions. They know that what they mean to convey in talking with their peer does not resonate with the same meaning as talk from teachers.

Findings showed participants spoke as musical artists. This might be important for music educators in gaining a rapport with students. A student speaking as a musical artist might sense that a teacher acknowledges the student's identity and facilitate peer learning. Such acknowledgement might appeal to the student, reinforce a bond, build trust, and establish mutual respect. This point is supported by Stickford (2003), who remarked in acknowledging an adolescent guitarist in her study: "His command of the material is complex and thorough, rivaling that of any music history professor with whom I have studied" (p. 261). It is possible that adolescent musicians—speaking from a musical artist's identity—might offer valuable insight about making music to peers in a classroom. He or she might share more of their knowledge as a consequence of their teacher's acknowledgement. It is more typical, however, that self-taught adolescent musicians will not have a voice or be allowed to express artistic opinions about music they learn in school. This disenfranchisement in the music class might deny them a chance to enhance their own and their peers' education.

My findings indicate participants meant to speak with discernment, integrity, and vision while interacting. Finding the discourse of the musical artist identity altered my perspective about what might be occurring when teenagers talk while learning music

outside school. It reminded me that many of the iconic musical artists I admire and whose concerts I attend might have spoken with their peers in similar ways.

Participants assessed their progress through individual and joint communication. They monitored and regulated their own progress and helped each other move ahead. This was accomplished through long and short discussions about music; there were no lectures. Brevity was key in most participants' assessments. Jaffurs (2006) asserted, "In many informal settings, the learner is not making an effort to learn; there is not metacognitive action to understand and remember" (p. 11). The data in my study showed that participants made nonverbal observations of their own and of their peer's playing. I observed them playing certain phrases repeatedly, which showed their intention to commit them to memory. In interviews, participants also told me that they focused on their own learning and playing, as well as on their peers' skills.

In line with Bennett's (1980) and Finnegan's (2007) research, I found specific themes of communication for self and mutual evaluation. Bennett and Finnegan found that musicians made an effort to regulate their own learning and mutually assessed joint music making outside school. Finnegan suggested that popular musicians evaluated each other through apprenticeship. In terms of identities, that is, master and apprentice, this did not become evident in my study. Participants did report sensitivity to each other's skill (mastery) in playing and an understanding of the concepts discussed. I did not find evidence to support any strong case confirming mentoring or ongoing mentorship. The findings mainly establish that participants communicated as self-regulating musical artists. Additionally, the structure of their everyday talk as friends facilitated the oral

construction of their music education.

Limitations

I recognized limitations in this study. One is that an ideal participant sample could not be collected. Another limitation to my study was the fact that I was unable to recruit more beginning musicians. I had hoped to capture the nature of talk between peer musicians at an early stage. The seminal peer talk that only develops outside school by beginners, I conjectured, might resemble the talk by my informal student classroom pairs. Only one participant reported having recently begun to learn the guitar (about five months at the time of first observations). All other participants had from one to several years of experience. Many of the potential participants also did not conform in other ways to my criteria (for example, they were too old).

The aims of my inclusion criteria considered participants in high school, between 13 and 18 years in age, learning guitar with a peer, had access to an instrument, and expressed interest in my study. The sexual identities, genders, economic backgrounds, races, religions, and cultural heritages of potential participants were not the focus of my study. The six adolescent males with Hispanic and Mexican-American backgrounds chosen for this study make up a narrow segment of population. This sample does not represent universal ways adolescent musicians communicate to learn music peer-to-peer. Implications of this study should account for this narrow representation of population. Factors including age, gender, race, and sexual identity can influence how people interact to learn. Further studies might include participants of a diversity of backgrounds and profiles. Specific research focused on gender, sexual identity, and diverse ethnic and

cultural backgrounds will add depth to understanding how young musicians interact dialectically to learn music peer-to-peer.

This study was also limited to a single researcher's perspective of the data. If I had recruited other analysts' perspectives might have influenced the results of my analysis. Multiple data collected and triangulation methods contributed to the rigor and robustness of this study. Two or three analysts, would have added depth and reinforced the validity and reliability in my study.

The binary portrayals of dialectic tensions, differentiated speaking identities, and distinct lines of evaluation communication restricted an appropriate view on the participants' talk. Pairs of adolescent peers in this study served the objective to analyze talk through the lens of an interpersonal communication theory. The many discussions of interconnected meanings did not completely show how they occurred naturally. In-the-moment talk between participants occurred fluidly, although in complex and multidimensional ways. My construction of a complete continuity in peer music-learning interactions might have fallen short of an adequate depiction of moment-to-moment dialogues.

Implications

A perspective on imbued meanings in communication can answer many questions about how people learn music. Communication is essential in music education: In the classroom, we talk meaningfully to teach our students. Results in this study showed adolescent musicians use meaningful talk to self-learn with peers outside school. Music educators might interact differently with adolescents from what adolescent musicians

might do with their peers, but meanings in both instances are meant to influence music learning. With a focus on imbued meanings, music education researchers might ask how communication in school compares with communication outside school. These researchers might question why certain ways of communication outside school influence music learning and whether those ways can be fostered in school.

Perceiving the discourses used between musicians affords us a unique view on their dialogues to learn music. Through the lens of relational dialectics theory, I perceived multiple ways in which peer musicians talk to learn music. Figure 4 is graphic depiction of discourses I found enacted between participants—and in answer to my first research question—in which they communicated independently and jointly. The outer circle frames the domain of everyday talk the peer pairs used to learn music outside of school.

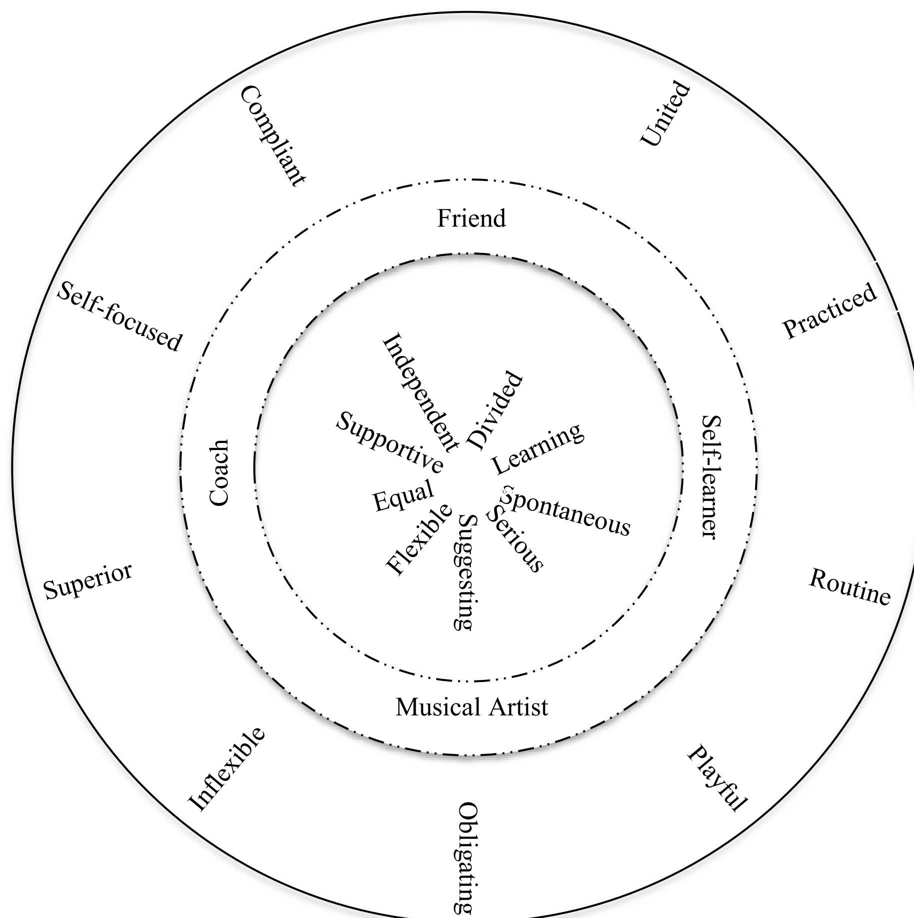

Figure 4. Discourse Sphere of Peer Musicians Learning Music Outside School.
The outermost terms represent the marginal discourses the peer musicians used to learn outside school. The middle ring depicts the titles of the four identity discourses found in the peer musicians' dialogues. The lines of this middle ring are broken to represent the constant overlap of these discourses with the dialectic discourses. Discourses central to participants' peer music learning are depicted in the center. This graphic depiction highlights a perceived view of discourses and might be useful to initiate discussion on the dialogues peer musicians use to learn music outside school.

The findings in this study relate to the different ways of thinking about how

adolescent musicians interact outside school to learn music, that is, informally and self-regulated. Participants did not emphasize speaking as their peer's teacher. Rather, they encouraged and coached each other. They acknowledged and discussed one another's issues as relevant; at times, they corrected their peers. They rejected the notion of speaking from an identity as teacher. The fact that they rejected this identity might impact informal music learning in formal settings. It might benefit music educators to think about the alternative identities students could be expressing to learn music peer-to-peer while in class.

Everyday talk among students might not concern teachers who prescribe predefined ways for students learn music. How people construct understanding, however, from their own point of view—which often emerges through talk—is worth considering. Learners are at the epicenter of knowledge constructed in peer-to-peer interactions. Given that students lack the knowledge and training of teachers, this kind of constructed learning might necessitate the use of everyday talk.

Music education can be advanced by knowledge of how musicians use everyday talk to learn outside school. The findings from this study might be used to advance and support peer music learning in school. Many philosophers agree that humans came to know the world through dialogue; this contention supports my position. Husserl (Husserl, 1970) and asserted that people understand the world through social interaction. Freire (1970) also reasoned, "Human beings are not built in silence, but in word, in work, in action-reflection" (p. 88). Relational dialectics theory provided a way to investigate and view the many structured ways adolescents use talk to learn music peer-to-peer. Music

education researchers can further advance knowledge on this topic with the other perspectives afforded by a variety of interpersonal communication theories (see Manning & Kunkel, 2014).

The framework of my study contributed a perspective on meanings used in dialogues not possible in casual observations of communication. Many meanings emerged in the participants' dialogues; some were more dominant than others. This perspective and the findings in my study build on Green's (2008) research on how popular musicians learn music. Green explained that popular musicians learned in "haphazard, idiosyncratic and holistic ways" (p. 10). The evidence in the current study showed, in contrast, that participants' talk—although enacted naturally—contained evidence of adeptly managed discourses. Adolescent peer communication may continue to be characterized as "haphazard" by casual observers, but the basis for further study and analysis of their dialogues outside school is grounded in this study's findings. What might be casually interpreted in observations might not reflect or explain what actually occurs and what appears haphazard might actually be more complex than can be determined through casual observations.

A disparity occurs in how participants in this study learned together as opposed to Green's (2002) findings about how popular musicians learn. Participants in Green's research indicated that they used recordings to learn music; I did not observe this in my study. A study of informal learners' use of recordings might help us to find the frequency of adolescents implementing recordings in their sessions.

This study might only scratch the surface on how everyday talk functions in

adolescent musicians' interactions with a peer outside school. Although meeting infrequently, it seems they managed to influence each other's music learning. The participants reported meeting with their peers one or two times a month—a range of about 12 to 24 times in a year. This is well below the number of times they would meet in attending my daily guitar class that met for approximately 90 sessions each semester.

Future Research

A study on musicians' conversations during music practice has never been framed for the investigation conceived here. The theoretical view provided the uniqueness of findings in this study. My findings of three core dialectic tensions offer possibilities for continued research with RDT. A quantitative study on the emergence of the particular discourses of together and individual might provide a deeper account of how much adolescent musicians jointly learn versus how much they individually learn. A study on the routines of adolescent music students—and their willingness to try new material, techniques and methods of learning—might highlight some degree of habitual discourse found in their sessions outside of school. Finally, a study similar to Campbell's (2000) on talk between teachers and students might result in findings of dialectic discourses to compare with ones found in my study. Building on my research, other studies on peer musicians' communication—in and out of school—will enhance what we know about communication influencing music learning.

Relational dialectics theory is one of many perspectives that interpersonal communication researchers have used to explore everyday talk (Tracy & Robles, 2013). Studies with RDT and other communication theories might contribute to a better

understanding of dialogues—student/teacher and student/peer—in music education and research in music education.

The sample of this study was adolescent peers. I did not see any evidence of adult supervision or guidance in any of the cases studied here. As a guitar teacher, I have observed instances in which parents or adult relatives have been part of out-of-school music learning of adolescents. In this study, I found much to learn about how adolescent musicians speak while practicing music outside school. It might benefit the field of music education to learn about the types of communication that influential adults (e.g., parents, relatives, teachers, and private music teachers) use to speak with adolescent musicians. A study on the dialogues between adolescents and such influential adults might enhance our knowledge of discourses used. Such a study using RDT might provide another dialectic picture of those interactions. That picture emerging from such an analysis might deepen our understanding of how certain adults influence adolescents.

The field of music education might benefit from research on nonverbal communication. As was the case of other researchers (Allsup, 2002; Goodrich, 2007; Snell, 2007; Stickford, 2003), I observed that nonverbal facial gestures and other body movements connected to how participants learned. A study on the nonverbal actions between self-learning musicians might yield more specific findings.

A Monologue

Someone who says he can play the guitar might pick one up and play. Demonstrating ability validates what he said he could do. In our everyday lives, one often finds a correlation between what people say and the ways people behave and think. In the

spectrum of ways people learn music, self-learning peer musicians are the inglorious bastions of their own *viva voce* music education. A self-learning musician might not declare aloud, “I can learn music on my own.” Some adolescents use nonverbal actions in trying to learn music and often speak this meaning to one or more of their peers. Some of those self-learning adolescent musicians, consequently, show that they can and do learn on their own.

I found that the talk between adolescent peers is comprised of complex, yet organized structures. Systems of meanings in their everyday talk seem to impact their learning despite their lack of formal training and knowledge about music.

With this research, I asked: What do teenagers say to each other when they get together to learn music? The answers were far more complex than casual observations may depict of teenagers talking about music. I understand how one might view teenagers talking about music as haphazard. Having allowed my high school guitar students to learn peer-to-peer in class, I was often nervous that a principal or other administrator might question whether learning was occurring because interactions appeared chaotic. My closer look at peer dialogues, however, suggests that adolescent musicians interact in precise ways to meaningfully address their concerns in learning music.

I found the teenagers in this study to be effective at self-regulating in their learning music without adult teachers. Their discourse functioned to help them interact in meaningful ways. They spoke naturally to indicate that they wanted help, were willing to give help, and were friends. They conveyed explicit and implicit understanding of their aim to achieve an ideal in making music.

Evidence showed participants were there for each other, as well as for themselves. They agreed to play each other's music even when they did not like it. They were mostly flexible and supportive of each other, but at times still insisted on playing certain songs and creating music in specific ways; each wanted to learn things about music that their peers did not want to learn. I saw playful and relaxed interactions, but seriousness in their focus on playing music. Playfulness was not a significant distraction in their sessions; in other words, they did not goof off.

The everyday talk and nonverbal behaviors I analyzed showed participants coming together to play and learn music with their peers. Findings failed to show that participants met more so to learn together than individually as students of music. This contradicted my underlying hunch; I imagined the talk between teenaged guitarists would show they were more connected to learn. I concluded that participants were independent music learners who communicated with peers mostly for the same purpose: to self-learn. They shared musical ideas, indulged each other's song preferences, and openly demonstrated their abilities. They showed maturity in being fair. Jointly, they mostly spoke to express aesthetic appreciation, to demonstrate their aptitude, and simply to be one another's friends.

In the body of literature in music education research, there is little focus on how adolescents talk to learn music. Many researchers (Allsup, 2003; Green, 2002; Jaffurs, 2006) generalized their discussions about talk between peer learners. Those researchers' portrayals of peer learners' talk did, however, provide some context about how adolescent musicians spoke. Summary reductions, however, will not advance our greater

understanding about how teenagers talk to learn music without adult teachers. In line with other researchers' positions (Stickford, 2003; Woodford, 2005), I assert that gaining knowledge about effective ways teenagers learn music can be advantageous to the field of music education. The current state of research on how teenagers communicate to self-learn shows our lack of knowledge to help them speak to each other to learn music.

Adults trained to teach music might perceive adolescent students as using unimportant or irrelevant dialogues while learning. Nevertheless, some do learn music without adult teachers. If existing views lean towards thinking that what adolescents say together is of little consequence that would be unfortunate. Such views might be amplified by with the lack of studies concerning adolescent musicians' peer talk. I hope that this study contributes knowledge and a different point of view as to how peer musicians communicate to learn music outside school.

Appendix A

Boston University Charles River Campus Institutional Review Board

25 Buick Street
Room 157
Boston, Massachusetts 02215
T 617-358-6115
www.bu.edu/irb

Notification of IRB Approval: Expedited Review

October 28, 2013

Harold Odegard
College of Fine Arts
Boston, MA 02215

Protocol Title:	Peer Music Learning Interactions and relational Dialectics Theory: An Analysis of Adolescent Musicians' Dyadic Communication in Self-Teaching out of School
Protocol #:	3320E
Funding Agency:	Unfunded
IRB Review Type:	Expedited Categories 6 and 7

Dear Mr. Odegard:

On October 28, 2013, the IRB reviewed and approved the above-referenced protocol via expedited procedures in accordance with 45 CFR 46.110. Approval for this study is effective from 10/28/2013 to 10/27/2014.

This approval includes the following:
1. Enrollment of up to 6 subjects in the approved protocol.
2. Use of the stamped consent forms (2), assent form, recruitment email, internet ad, focus group questions, and interview questions.

This approval is valid for one year, and will expire on **October 27, 2014.** Please submit a Progress Report, which is located on our website (http://www.bu.edu/irb/), six weeks prior to the expiration of your study.

As the Principal Investigator, you are responsible for ensuring that studies are conducted in accordance with federal regulations, state laws, and institutional policies.

Please note:

- No subjects may be involved in study procedures prior to the IRB approval date or after the expiration date.
- All unanticipated problems or serious adverse events must be reported to the IRB immediately.
- All protocol modifications must be approved by the IRB prior to implementation unless they are necessary to eliminate immediate hazard to subjects.
- All protocol deviations must be reported to the IRB.
- All recruitment materials and methods must be approved by the IRB prior to use.

If you have any questions, please contact me at 617-358-6115.

Sincerely,

Sonia Chawla Wright
Senior IRB Analyst
Charles River Campus IRB

cc: James Imhoff, PhD

Appendix B

Internet Posting

Heading: Teenaged Guitarists Wanted for Research Study
Body of Posting:
Doctoral student at Boston University seeks participants for a research study. If you are learning guitar on your own and with friends, you may qualify to participate in a study in which you will receive gift cards ($60 total) for Guitar Center.

The study will consist of 3 observations and 4 interviews to take place in the month of [month] 2013.

If this sounds like you...

(1) I am in high school
(2) I am learning to play guitar (especially if just starting out)
(3) I play or have played guitar with a friend

…contact Harold Odegard to see if you qualify!

I am a music teacher studying to get my Doctorate at Boston University. Parental consent will be required; forms will be given before study begins.

Phone: 915-533-3339

Email: hjodegar@episd.org

Appendix C

Email Correspondence

Dear Fellow Music Teacher/Musician/Friend,

I am seeking teenaged guitarists for participants in a research study that I will carry out in [month] 2013. I teach high school guitar in El Paso and I am studying to attain my doctoral degree from Boston University.

If you know of any teenagers between 13 and 18 who are learning guitar on their own and with friends, they may qualify to participate in this study. They will be compensated with Guitar Center gift cards totaling $60 if selected. The study will consist of 3 observations and 4 interviews over the time span of one month.

Basic requirements include the following: (1) they are in high school, (2) they are learning guitar—especially if they are just starting out, and (3) they are learning with a friend.

Parental consent will be required; forms will be given before study. If you know of any teenaged guitarists who might be interested, please, will you inform them? My contact information is below. Thank you in advance for your help and recommendations.

Sincerely,

Harold J. Odegard
350 Thunderbird E-34
El Paso, Texas 79912
915-533-3339
hjodegar@episd.org

Appendix D

Introduction

Please read this form carefully. The purpose of this form is to provide you with important information about your child taking part in a research study. If any of the statements or words in this form are unclear, please let me or my Faculty Advisor, Dr. James Imhoff, know. We would be happy to answer any questions.

If you have any questions about the research or any portion of this form, please ask us. Your child taking part in this research study is up to you. If you decide to let them take part in this research study I will ask you to sign this form. I will give you a copy of the signed form.

The person in charge of this study is Harold Odegard. Harold Odegard can be reached at 915-533-3339 or haroldodegard@yahoo.com. Harold's Faculty Advisor, Dr. James Imhoff can be reached at 503-653-3464 or jfimhoff@msn.com. We will refer to Harold Odegard as the "researcher" throughout this form.

Why is this study being done?

The purpose of this study is to examine how pairs of teenaged musicians communicate to learn music out of school.

I am asking your child to take part in this study because they have met qualifications required for participating in this study—they are a teenaged musician just starting out to learn guitar on their own.

Only six subjects will take part in this research study, which is being conducted as part of my doctoral program at Boston University.

This study is solely initiated by Harold Odegard to meet requirements for obtaining a doctorate in music education. No agency or sponsor is paying for this research to be done.

How long will my child take part in this research study?

I expect that your child will be in this research study for four weeks. During this time, I will ask to visit and observe them while they are learning guitar with another participant in the study a total of three times. Meeting locations can be at suitable locations for observing their interactions to learn guitar (e.g. their friend's garage).

What will happen if I give consent for my child to take part in this research study?

If you grant permission for your child to participate in this study, he or she will be observed playing and learning guitar with another participant once a week for three weeks. This study is meant to enhance understanding of how communication affects how teenagers learn music without teachers.

Each observation will be approximately 60 minutes in length. Observation sessions will take place where your child and friend normally practice together. Personal homes, a friend's garage, or other safety-assured locations are anticipated.

Your child will be asked questions in interviews after each of the first two observations. These two interviews will be one-on-one with the researcher. A third will be a paired interview with their friend. Each interview is anticipated to be up to 45 minutes in length. In the final forth week, all six participants will be interviewed as a group—the focus group will take place at The Guitar Center in El Paso.

If you agree in allowing your child to take part in this study, we will ask you to sign the consent form before we do any study procedures.

Audio and Video Recording

I will be audio and video recording your child during this study and it will be possible to identify them in the recordings. I will store these recordings in a locked cabinet and only Dr. Imhoff will be able to see them. I will label the recordings with a code instead of your child's name. The key to the code connects your child's name to the recordings. I will keep the key to the code in a password-protected computer. The recordings will be used and stored for about 10 months (the duration of this study).The transcripts will be stored for 7 years, which is Boston University's policy. If you do not want your child to be recorded, then this study is probably not right for them.

How Will You Keep My Child's Study Records Confidential?

I will keep the records of this study confidential by keeping audio and videotapes in a locked cabinet, recorded data on a computer designated only for use in this study, and in limiting access to the records to the researcher and Faculty Advisor. I will make every effort to keep your child's records confidential. However, there might be times when federal or state law requires the disclosure of your child's records. All notes and transcripts of audio/video data will be stored in the researcher's home in a private file cabinet and key-locked for security.

Study Participation and Early Withdrawal

Taking part in this study is your child's choice. Your child is free not to take part or to withdraw at any time for any reason. No matter what they decide, there will be no penalty or loss of benefit to which they are entitled. If your child does decide to withdraw from this study, the information that you and they have already provided will be kept confidential.

If the researcher can withdraw the subject: Also, the researcher may take your child out of this study without your permission. This may happen because:

- The researcher thinks it is in the participant's best interest
- They can't make the required study visits
- Other administrative reasons

Future Contact

I would like to contact your child in the future to briefly follow-up on this study and to see if the transcriptions of their interactions are accurate.

Do you agree to let me contact your child in the future?

______YES ______NO _______INITIALS

What are the risks of my child taking part in this research study?

There are no anticipated or harmful influential risks from observing and interviewing your child about their music learning with a friend.

If I see something that looks like risk or a harmful situation, I will immediately cancel the observation or interview and respond with appropriate actions if necessary (calling of parents, for example).

Observation Risks

Your child may feel nervous, anxious, or distracted to play guitar with their friend while being observed. They can tell the researcher at any time if they want to take a break or stop the observation.

Individual, Paired, and Focus Group Interview Risks

Your child may feel confused, anxious, or unable to answer some of the questions. They can tell the researcher at any time if they want to take a break or stop the interview.

Your child may be confused, anxious, or unable to answer some of the questions and topics I will ask about. They do not have to answer any questions they are unable to answer or that make them feel uncomfortable.

Loss of Confidentiality

The main risk of allowing me to use and store your child's information for research is a potential loss of privacy. I will protect their privacy by labeling your information with a code and keeping the key to the code in a password-protected computer.

Focus Groups

I will ask your child and the other people in the group to use only first names during the group session. I will also ask your child not to tell anyone outside the group what any particular person said in the group. However, I cannot guarantee that everyone will keep the discussions private.

Are there any benefits for my child from being in this research study?

There are no probable benefits to your child from taking part in this research.

Others may benefit in the future from the information that is learned in this study. We hope to increase understanding of how adolescents communicate and work together in learning to play an instrument.

What alternatives are available?

Your child may choose not to participate in this study.

Will my child get paid for taking part in this research study?

Your child will receive compensation in the form of gift cards for participation in this study. I will give your child gift cards of $60 value for taking part in this study. They will receive the first gift card after the first interview in the amount of $20 and the second gift card at the final focus group in the amount of $40. Gift cards will be redeemable at the Guitar Center music store.

If I have any questions or concerns about this research study, who can I talk to?

You and your child can contact us with any concerns or questions. Our telephone numbers are listed here: 915-533-3339 for Harold Odegard (the researcher) and 503-653-3464 for Dr. James Imhoff (the Faculty Advisor). Our emails are listed here: haroldodegard@yahoo.com for Harold Odegard and jfimhoff@msn.com for Dr. James Imhoff.

If you have questions about your child's rights as a research subject or want to speak with someone independent of the research team, you may contact the Boston University IRB directly at 617-358-6115.

Statement of Consent

I have read the information in this consent form including risks and possible benefits for my child. I have been given the chance to ask questions. My questions have been answered to my satisfaction, and I agree to allow my child to participate in the study. I have been given a copy of this form.

SIGNATURE

____
Name of Subject's Parent

____________________________________ ___________________
Signature of Subject's Parent Date

____
Name of Subject

I have explained the research to the subject's parent and answered all his/her questions. I will give a copy of the signed consent form to the subject's parent.

____
Name of Person Obtaining Consent

____________________________________ ______________________
Signature of Person Obtaining Consent Date

Appendix E

Introduction

Please read this form carefully. The purpose of this form is to provide you with important information about taking part in a research study. If any of the statements or words in this form are unclear, please let me or my Faculty Advisor, Dr. James Imhoff, know. We would be happy to answer any questions.

If you have any questions about the research or any portion of this form, please ask us. Taking part in this research study is up to you. If you decide to take part in this research study I will ask you to sign this form. I will give you a copy of the signed form.

The person in charge of this study is Harold Odegard. Harold Odegard can be reached at 915-533-3339 or haroldodegard@yahoo.com. Harold's Faculty Advisor, Dr. James Imhoff can be reached at 503-653-3464 or jfimhoff@msn.com. We will refer to Harold Odegard as the "researcher" throughout this form.

Why is this study being done?

The purpose of this study is to examine how pairs of teenaged musicians communicate to learn music out of school.

I am asking you to take part in this study because you have met qualifications required for participating in this study—you are a teenaged musician just starting out to learn guitar on their own.

Only six subjects will take part in this research study, which is being conducted as part of my doctoral program at Boston University.

This study is solely initiated by Harold Odegard to meet requirements for obtaining a doctorate in music education. No agency or sponsor is paying for this research to be done.

How long will I take part in this research study?

I expect that you will be in this research study for four weeks. During this time, I will ask to visit and observe you while learning guitar with a peer for a total of three times. Meeting locations can be at suitable locations for observing your interactions to learn guitar (e.g. a friend's garage).

What will happen if I give consent to take part in this research study?

If you agree to participate in this study, you will be observed playing and learning guitar with another participant once a week for three weeks. This study is meant to enhance understanding of how communication affects how teenagers learn music without teachers.

Each observation will be approximately 60 minutes in length. Observation sessions will take place where you and friend normally practice together.

You will be asked questions in interviews after each of the first two observations. These two interviews will be one-on-one with the researcher. A third will be a paired interview with your peer. Each interview is anticipated to be up to 45 minutes in length. In the final forth week, all six participants will be interviewed as a group—the focus group will take place at The Guitar Center in El Paso.

If you agree to take part in this study, I will ask you to sign the consent form before we do (or continue, if your eighteenth birthday occurs) any study procedures.

Audio and Video Recording

I will be audio and video recording you during this study and it will be possible to identify you in the recordings. I will store these recordings in a locked cabinet and only Dr. Imhoff will be able to see them. I will label the recordings with a code instead of your name. The key to the code connects your name to the recordings. I will keep the key to the code in a password-protected computer. The recordings will be used and stored for about 10 months (the duration of this study). The transcripts will be stored for 7 years, which is Boston University's policy. If you do not want to be recorded, then this study probably is not right for you.

How Will You Keep My Study Records Confidential?

I will keep the records of this study confidential by keeping audio and videotapes in a locked cabinet, recorded data on a computer designated only for use in this study, and in limiting access to the records to the researcher and Faculty Advisor. I will make every effort to keep your records confidential. However, there might be times when federal or state law requires the disclosure of your records. All notes and transcripts of audio/video data will be stored in the researcher's home in a private file cabinet and key-locked for security.

Study Participation and Early Withdrawal

Taking part in this study is your choice. You are free not to take part or to withdraw at any time for any reason. No matter what you decide, there will be no penalty or loss of benefit to which they are entitled. If you do decide to withdraw from this study, the information that you have already provided will be kept confidential.

If the researcher can withdraw the subject: Also, the researcher may take you out of this study without your permission. This may happen because:

- The researcher thinks it is in your best interest
- You can't make the required study visits
- Other administrative reasons

Future Contact

I would like to contact you in the future to briefly follow-up on this study and to see if the transcriptions of your interactions are accurate.

Do you agree to let me contact you in the future?

______YES ______NO _______INITIALS

What are the risks of taking part in this research study?

There are no anticipated or harmful influential risks from observing and interviewing you about their music learning with a peer.

If I see something that looks like risk or a harmful situation, I will immediately cancel the observation or interview and respond with appropriate actions if necessary (calling of parents, for example).

Observation Risks

You may feel nervous, anxious, or distracted to play guitar while being observed. You can tell me at any time if you want to take a break or stop the observation.

Individual, Paired, and Focus Group Interview Risks

You may feel confused, anxious, or unable to answer some of the questions. You can tell me at any time if you want to take a break or stop the interview.

You may be confused, anxious, or unable to answer some of the questions and topics I

will ask about. You do not have to answer any questions you are unable to answer or that make you feel uncomfortable.

Loss of Confidentiality

The main risk of allowing me to use and store your information for research is a potential loss of privacy. I will protect your privacy by labeling your information with a code and keeping the key to the code in a password-protected computer.

Focus Groups

I will ask you and the other people in the group to use only first names during the group session. I will also ask you not to tell anyone outside the group what any particular person said in the group. However, I cannot guarantee that everyone will keep the discussions private.

Are there any benefits from being in this research study?

There are no probable benefits to your taking part in this research.

Others may benefit in the future from the information that is learned in this study. We hope to increase understanding of how adolescents communicate and work together in learning to play an instrument.

What alternatives are available?

You may choose not to participate in this study.

Will I get paid for taking part in this research study?

You will receive compensation in the form of gift cards for participation in this study. I will give you gift cards of $60 value for taking part in this study. You will receive the first gift card after the first interview in the amount of $20 and the second gift card at the final focus group in the amount of $40. Gift cards will be redeemable at the Guitar Center music store.

If I have any questions or concerns about this research study, who can I talk to?

You can contact us with any concerns or questions. Our telephone numbers are listed here: 915-533-3339 for Harold Odegard (the researcher) and 503-653-3464 for Dr. James Imhoff (the Faculty Advisor). Our emails are listed here: haroldodegard@yahoo.com for

Harold Odegard and jfimhoff@msn.com for Dr. James Imhoff.

If you have questions about your rights as a research subject or want to speak with someone independent of the research team, you may contact the Boston University IRB directly at 617-358-6115.

Statement of Consent

I have read the information in this consent form including risks and possible benefits. I have been given the chance to ask questions. My questions have been answered to my satisfaction, and I agree to participate in the study. I have been given a copy of this form.

SIGNATURE

____

Name of Subject

______________________________________ ____________________

Signature of Subject Date

I have explained the research to the subject and answered all his/her questions. I will give a copy of the signed consent form to the subject.

____

Name of Person Obtaining Consent

____ _______________________

Signature of Person Obtaining Consent Date

Appendix F

Assent Form

What is a Research Study?

I want to tell you about a research study I am doing. Research studies help us to learn new things and test new ideas. People who work on research studies are called researchers. During research studies, the researchers collect a lot of information so that they can learn more about something. I am doing this study because I would like to learn more about how teenaged musicians communicate to learn music out of school. I am asking you join this study because you are a teenaged musician starting out to learn guitar.

There are a few things you should know about this study:

- You get to decide if you want to be in the study
- You can say 'No' or 'Yes'
- Whatever you decide is OK
- If you say 'Yes' now, you can change your mind and say 'No' later
- No one will be upset if you say 'No'
- You can ask us questions at any time
- We will also get permission from your parent/guardian for you to take part in this study

What will I do if I am in this research study?

If you decide to be in this study, we will ask you to: allow me to observe you and another person while you play guitar together and answer questions about your learning guitar with that other person. During this study, I will ask to observe you three times and interview you four times. This study will take place over four weeks. Interviews will occur immediately after each observation of your practicing unless there is a need or you request for a change of time and location. Interviews will include two one-on-one, one with you and your partner, and a final focus group interview involving all participants in the study. The observations will occur once a week over three weeks. After the first and second observations, I will interview you and your partner one-on-one. After the third observation, I will interview you both. Finally, I will ask that you and your partner take part in a focus group at the The Guitar Center in El Paso with all the other participants.

Video/Audio Taping

I will video/audiotape the interview sessions that are part of this study. This will help me to remember what I observed and we talked about in the sessions. If you do not want to be recorded, then this study may not be right for you.

What else could happen to me while I am in this study?

There are no anticipated risks from me observing and interviewing you about learning music with a friend.

If I see something that looks like risk or harmful situation, I will immediately cancel the observation or interview and call of parent or guardian, if necessary.

If I join this study will it help me?

- Being in this study will probably not help you
- This study will help others to learn more about how teenagers learn music with each other

Will I be paid to do this study?

- To thank you for being in this study, I will give you $60 in gift cards that can be used at the Guitar Center. After the first interview, you will receive a gift card for $20 and after the final focus group, you will receive a gift card for $40.

What will happen to my information in this study?

I don't plan to tell anyone or share your name or other information about you if you join this study. However, there is a small chance that other people could find out your information. I will do our best to make sure that doesn't happen.

There are some reasons why we would share your information:

- If we found out you were in serious danger
- If we found out that somebody else was in serious danger

Taking part in this research study

You do not have to take part in this research study. You can say 'Yes' or 'No'. You can say 'Yes' now and change your mind later. All you have to do is tell us you want to stop. No one will be mad if you don't want to take part in the study or if you change your mind about taking part in the study. Your parent or guardian can also decide to have you stop taking part in this study—that is OK too.

Contacts

If you have any questions about this study, you can talk with me, Harold Odegard, or my Faculty Advisor, Dr. James Imhoff at any time.

Contact me at 915-533-3339 or haroldodegard@yahoo.com.
Contact my Faculty Advisor, Dr. James Imhoff, at 503-653-3464 or jfimhoff@msn.com

I will give you a copy of this paper.

Agreement

I have read the information in this assent form including risks and possible benefits. I have been given the chance to ask questions. My questions have been answered to my satisfaction, and I agree to participate in the study.

SIGNATURE

____
Name of Subject

____________________________________ ____________________
Signature of Subject Date

I have explained the research to the subject and answered all his/her questions. I will give a copy of the signed assent form to the subject.

____
Name of Person Obtaining Assent

____________________________________ ____________________
Signature of Person Obtaining Assent Date

Appendix G

The following list includes the protocol I used for observations:

1. Equipment check (before meeting)
2. Greet participants
3. Set up video equipment
4. Start video recorder
5. Note date and time
6. Note participants and location
7. Starting activities descriptions
8. Ongoing peer interactions explanations
9. Equipment check (during)
10. Notes about ending peer interactions
11. Pack up equipment
12. Verify and note next observation or interviews
13. Thank participants

Appendix H

The following list includes the protocol I used for interviews:

1. Equipment check (before beginning)
2. Greet participants (at focus group interview) and/or explain interview focus
3. Set up audio equipment
4. Start audio recorder
5. Note date and time
6. Note participant(s) and location
7. Equipment check (during)
8. Pack up equipment

14\. Verify next interview (or member checks)

15\. Thank participant(s)

Appendix I

I worded the following interview questions informally and in consideration of age ranges for each of the one-on-one and paired interviews:

1. Describe challenges you have learning the guitar or music with [name of the peer].
2. What rewards do you think you get from playing music with [name of the peer]?
3. Can you describe how your peer helps you learn music on the guitar? Do they teach you?
4. Can you describe how you help them learn music on the guitar? Do you teach them?
5. Explain the back-and-forth interactions that come up as you learn music together.
6. Explain what conflicts come up between you and your peer as you learn music together. (For example, how push-and-pull forces or opposing demands from your peer arise in learning how something works or sounds.)
7. Describe conversations that create tension between you and your musician peer. Explain what are those tensions like?
8. Do you think those tensions have any negative outcome? If yes, explain in which ways are they negative?
9. Do you think those tensions have any positive outcome? If yes, explain in which ways are they positive?
10. How do you or you and your peer manage how decisions are made in learning music? Can you explain?
11. How do conflicting issues or tensions between you and your peer have effects on your learning music? Can you explain how?
12. How do conflicts or tensions between you and your peer have any effects on your personal life? Can you explain how?

13. Describe how you and your peer set goals for music or skills to learn.
14. Describe how you and your peer gauge that you have learned a skill or some music.
15. What help, if any, would you like to receive from your peer? Are there activities you think would you to deal with tensions or conflicting issues to learn music?
16. Is there anything else about learning music with your peer out of school that you would like to share?

Appendix J

I worded the following questions informally and in consideration of age ranges for the focus group interview:

1. Can you describe the challenges of learning music on guitar with only one peer?
2. What rewards are there from learning the guitar and music with only one peer?
3. How do you think it helped you learning music with one peer rather than with two or more others?
4. Can you explain how teaching occurs between a musician and their peer? Describe how you see the teaching and know it is going on?
5. If you learned from your peer, can you describe how they taught you?
6. Can you list and describe back-and-forth interactions that came up frequently?
7. Can you describe when you or your peer was open in your interactions? This is to say, when you felt friendly, amicable, and all right with telling the other person that they were doing well or did something wrong?
8. Can you describe when there were push-and-pull forces or opposing demands from you or your peer (or you and your peer) to learn or teach each other?
9. Can you describe tensions between you and your peer while learning? If yes, can you describe what those tensions were like?
10. Do you have any ideas about why tensions in your interactions may have existed? Do you think tensions are necessary to learning?
11. Were any of the tensions you felt happened or reflect on now negative? If yes, in which ways are they negative? If no, can you explain why?
12. Were any of you aware of how you and your peer managed learning? If yes, can you explain how you assessed or determined that your peer learned something?
13. Describe when you felt uncertain about how to learn without your peer.

14. Explain how you feel you know your peer in ways that the researcher could not or cannot see or know about.
15. Is there anything else about learning music with a peer out of school that you would like to share?

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CURRICULUM VITAE

HAROLD JAMES ODEGARD

Education

D.M.A.	Boston University, Music Education	2019
M.M.	The University of Texas at El Paso, Music Education	2004
B.M.	The University of Texas at El Paso, Music Education,	1997

Professional Experience

Music Teacher 2014-Current
El Paso Independent School District – El Paso, TX
Teaching elementary school general music organizing and arranging concerts for recurring school and community events.

Guitar Teacher 2005-2014
El Paso Independent School District – El Paso, TX
Taught beginning to advanced high school guitar classes for all grade-levels.

Guitar Teacher 2003-2006
The El Paso Community College – El Paso, TX
Implemented self-created guitar method for teaching multiple, concurrent ten-week sessions for children and adults.

Music Teacher 2002-2004
Gadsden Independent School District – Gadsden, NM
Taught elementary school general music organizing and arranging concerts for recurring school and community events.

Choir Director and Music Teacher 2000-2002
Clint Independent School District – Clint, TX
Choir director for junior high and taught elementary school general music and pre-band for school concerts and community events.

Guitarist 2000-Current
Jazz Over Easy – El Paso, TX
Founding and current member of the professional jazz combo.

Guitar Instructor 2000-2001
La Guitarra Music School, – El Paso, TX
Collaborated in creating the local music school business and taught beginning to advanced students.

Music Teacher 1998-2000
Socorro Independent School District – Socorro, TX
Created and taught the school's first elementary string orchestra and pre-band program for growth of future school music programs.

Interim Guitar Instructor 1997-1999
The University of Texas at El Paso – El Paso, TX
Taught beginning guitar courses and assisted in lecturing for Jazz-to-Rock history courses.

Upright Bass Instructor 1994-2000
El Paso Philharmonic Strings – El Paso, TX
Taught middle and high school upright bass students involved in a non-profit, citywide youth orchestra.

Upright Bassist 1992-1993
National Touring Musicals – New York, NY
Performed upright bass professionally for an off-Broadway touring company in the United States, Canada, and Asia.

Bell Choir Director 1990-1992
Mount Hope Lutheran Church – El Paso, TX
Assisted teaching bell choir to congregation members. Directed performances for church and community.

Professional Tutor & Peer Mentor 1990-1996
The University of Texas at El Paso – El Paso, TX
Mentored at-risk college students as certified Master Tutor. Taught college-level study skills.

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