

Artistic Experiences in Music Performing and Teaching:
A Flow Study with Teaching Artists

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Abstract

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The purpose of this study was to explore the artistic experience of music teaching artists in two contexts, performing and teaching. This study explored musical artistry through flow dimensions as an operational tool and phenomenology as an analytical lens on the four coordinates of musical experiences: time, space, play, and feeling. Through these processes, I sought to gain new insights into the experiences of teaching artists in ways that have not been previously explored.

Using a newly modified flow state scale, interviews, and focus group meetings as data collection, the artistic experiences of teaching artists were represented through nine flow dimensions. Individual flow portraits were crafted to present nuances, complexity, and anecdotes about teaching artists' experiences. The study found flow characteristics and conditions meaningful in representing the individual experiences. Each teaching artist described a complex interaction of self, subject, and others through themes of self-discovery, self-dialogues, and self-actualization.

Findings revealed multiple relationships between flow dimensions and diverse perceptions of the experience of flow. These findings help to paint a broader picture of artistry and define the artistic experience as it pertains to teaching and performing. Multiple factors and new investigative questions arising from the study are discussed as well. In essence, this study

brings a new critical perspective on music education by illuminating the role of a teaching artist and sharing artistic experiences as a positive and transformative tool for learning.

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All in all, thank you so much, everyone. Let's continue to research.

J. E. P.

Dedication

To the Big C's

Csikszentmihalyi, Clifton, and Custodero

Chapter 1 – Introduction

A Narrative

Part I

It was when this title was bestowed on me that I became aware of who I always had been: a music *teaching artist*. A new sense of purpose formed, and I became aware of my newfound sense of self in the netherworld of performance and education. A *teaching artist* became a term, title, and position that succinctly described my experiences and unique position in this world as a performer and an educator.

In February 2018, I received a phone call from a colleague who was a pianist. She urgently told me to contact someone who was looking to fill in a position at a nonprofit arts organization called Afro-Latin Jazz Alliance (ALJA). I did not know much about the position except that they needed a pianist who had a number of years of experience performing and teaching. Soon after a phone interview, I was offered a position to work at ALJA. I was given the role of a music teaching artist, not realizing how my life would unfold from then on.

Twice a week, I taught afterschool group piano classes at two elementary public schools in the Bronx: P.S. 65 Mother Hale Academy and P.S. 75 School of Research & Discovery. I also had to keep performance engagements with artists both within ALJA and outside the organization. An example of my typical week would look like this:

Table 1.1

A Typical Week of a Music Teaching Artist

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
P.S. 65 3-5 pm	P.S. 75 3-5 pm	P.S. 65 3-5 pm	P.S. 75 3-5 pm	Rehearsals	Performances	Rehearsals

During this time at ALJA, I was also completing my artist certificate at New York University (NYU), studying piano under the tutelage of Alexander Kobrin as well as teaching.

While I had previously served in various roles and positions, it was through my given position as a teaching artist at ALJA that I felt a strong sense of self and a purpose to integrate artistic practice into my teaching as well as to create a unique approach to the musical experience for my students. Fortunately, I was given flexibility of time and license to craft and hone these artistic experiences within my classroom.

Prior to ALJA, I worked in various teaching settings as a non-state-certified teacher, an instructor, and a lecturer. The standard expectation at my previous work positions was to teach musical content without much guidance on how to convey the material. I felt a sense of uncertainty during this period, as I had received no formal pedagogical training during my own conservatory education.

At most, I was given a list of state-guided learning benchmarks, called standardized frameworks. Through years of experience with students, I realized that the multifaceted discipline of music education could never be defined solely by descriptions of the benchmarks, and I struggled with this paradox. I had also never experienced this approach within my own music education, which led me to wonder why the actual teaching/learning component of music did not have nearly as much discourse as that of music performance.

Part II

When I became a music teaching artist in 2018, I was expected to present an artistic component of myself in the classroom. I had the responsibility of practicing my art and engaging students in learning through an artistic experience of music. But the question again was, how?

The concept of an artist in a classroom is a theoretical and philosophical one, far from the practical hands-on application I needed to demonstrate in the teaching setting. I struggled with what exactly was so artistic about music experience and music teaching. It was only later on that I would see this was a turning point, a door being opened for something within me to be revealed.

Throughout my life, I have often associated struggle with an opportunity for growth. I can say that this was one of those incidents where I needed to overcome a hurdle in order to make a big leap. Because I was given the freedom and flexibility to create an artistic experience in my teaching, I had to reflect inwardly on what I knew. To do so, I only had one domain to reference. I reflected on how I experienced music in my art form and conceptualized what an artistic experience is from my own perspective as a musician.

As a pianist, I have felt that the melding of music has always occurred in the dimensions of space and time—when I am completely immersed and engaged to my fullest. My entire past encompasses years and years of different facets of “artistic experience.” At just 7 years old, I played the piano more than I ever did anything else. On some weekends, my desire to practice was so gravitational that I woke up in the morning, went straight to the piano bench, and did not check the clock again until it was time for bed. This was never because I was told to do so but only because I wanted to. I forgot about the hours passing by and only wished my days were longer. As a young child, I sometimes pondered why a day could only be 24 hours and not any longer as I felt it limited the time I could spend playing piano and exploring my passion. This was how much I loved music.

As I grew older and continued my study at a conservatory, I went through rigorous training to increase the quality and consistency of my practice and performance. This required a

detailed analysis of my playing and my surroundings. I had to look externally at what was so internally immediate and automatic for me. I struggled to push my limits at every opportunity I had and, slowly, I experienced a sense of effortlessness and a total unity of my mind, body, and the music at any particular moment within a piece.

Through trial and error, I noticed that the flux of my experience was altered by my state and the condition of my surrounding environment. In every practice session and performance, I juggled to balance multiple modes of attention and control at once. I often felt in a dynamic flux of conscious state throughout the piece until, at one point, I felt a merging of my action, awareness, and control from the beginning of the first note to the very last note of a piece. Transcendence may be the closest word that could describe this feeling of time suspension and sense of freedom. Feeling this sensation for the entire piece only occurred a handful of times and only with pieces that I fully connected with for their entirety.

Later on, I experienced a similar feeling of immersion when I performed together with other musicians—similar only because my experiences were never identical to each other. In any performance, I could never anticipate fully what would happen. As a group, we would enter and share the same time and space, fueled by a mutual desire to create and sustain a sense of unity through our harmonious sound.

These collective personal experiences are what have helped inform and shape my approach to teaching. I carried my musical experiences, relative to time and space, into the present, utilizing every class to create opportunities for my students to engage in their own unique artistic experiences, exploring these parameters. I soon realized that I did not know how to properly describe or organize the complexities of these various teaching moments. I knew what I wanted to achieve in my classroom, but then the “*how*” question remained.

Part III

It was in the midst of these moments that ALJA's supervisor offered me the opportunity to join a professional development program, Teaching Artists Community at Teachers College. In September 2018, I joined the cohort with the purpose of sharing the knowledge I gained with other teachers at ALJA after the completion of the program. Today, I can still trace my time back to the very first day of the cohort. After a brief introduction, Dr. Lori Custodero presented her work on *flow*, an optimal experience in music learning and teaching. Flow is defined as a state of optimal enjoyment, occurring when one is feeling highly challenged and highly skilled for the activity in which she or he is engaged (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990). She introduced unfamiliar concepts such as flow indicators and the connection between flow experience and teaching artistry. She offered five teaching implications which included: (a) autonomy of learners, (b) appropriate challenges, (c) engaging quality of activity, (d) collaborative environments, and (e) assessment in the moment. Listening to her presentation, a light bulb went off in my head, and I knew this was a very defining moment—an epiphany. I was about to experience something life-changing.

From that day on, I was able to define my own process of artistic experience in music and how I practice artistry by using the language of flow, which Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi defined as the conditions and states of flow. I was consciously and subconsciously practicing flow conditions and characteristics in my own artistic endeavors. I observed and reflected how flow appears differently and similarly in my practicing, performing, and teaching. Respectively, I discovered how flow experience offers a link between my musical enjoyment and aptitude. When looking closely at this, I saw flow was meticulously interwoven into the fabric of all my experiences as a teaching artist.

This was what I was missing in my teaching, the answers to so many *hows*. Even now, I still do not know all the answers because many aspects of teaching and performing remain unanswered and unknown. However, these uncharted territories call for staying present in the moment, seeking cues, and finding opportunities to create and play. In his interview with *Wired* magazine, Csikszentmihalyi described how flow is “like playing jazz” (Geirland, 1996). As a teaching artist, I also had to find ways of thinking that allowed me to describe, identify, and assess in the moment of a musical experience for myself and my students.

I knew that I was not alone in this path of becoming a teaching artist. After graduation, my colleagues from the conservatory taught in various educational settings without much teaching preparation or interest. Many of them began teaching without knowing that their career would be dedicated to teaching from a certain point and onwards. Due to these factors, they struggled to enjoy or find teaching to be a satisfying endeavor. A common misconception is that a great performing musician cannot be a great teacher due to old biases and stereotypes. Dispelling that notion, I firmly believe that a great artist can also be a great teacher and vice versa when and if they are able to create an artistic experience in both endeavors.

I identify as a teaching artist because I find my goals and philosophy to be aligned with all that the title encompasses. As my narrative continues to develop, this study aimed to discover narratives of other music teaching artists.

Background

This study investigated the artistic experience of music teaching artists in performing and teaching through Csikszentmihalyi’s model of flow experience, a paradigm of high engagement based on the individual perception of skill and challenge, which blends phenomenology as a philosophical framework and a second analytical method.

A Study of Experience and Artistic Experience

Phenomenology is a discipline and a movement in philosophy with its origin in understanding lived experience and intentionality. A study of experience aims to capture how the self is perceived at an experiential level and how the self can be associated with a different sense of “being-in-the-world.” Phenomenology examines the structure of the experience and consciousness, identifying the relationship within the self, and of time, space, play, and feeling at a given moment (Clifton, 1983; Husserl, 1991; Vagle, 2018).

Founders of philosophical phenomenology such as Husserl, Heidegger, and Merleau-Ponty aimed to understand consciousness in relationship with the “object.” Dahlberg et al.’s (2008) perspective on this relationship holds significance in the events of teaching and performing:

Subject-object and subject-subject relationships do not occur in a vacuum but in a world vibrating of meanings.... The responsibility...is to...find [one’s] way through all these meaning relations and find the best means and the best use of these means in order to see the phenomenon. (p. 172)

Vagle (2018) exclaimed that phenomenology is not singular but plural, unifying philosophy and methodology. Over the years, only a handful of studies applied phenomenology as a tool for description and analysis of musical experience (Clifton, 1983; Ferrara 1984, 1991; Ihde, 2007) and in the field of teaching (Vagle, 2006; Vagle et al., 2017). Current phenomenologists continue to study phenomena through present and in-between consciousness framing post-intentional phenomenology (Vagle, 2018).

In music, the internal elements of experience have been defined by a relationship of music to self, time, space, play, and feeling (Clifton, 1983; Tomlinson & Tighe, 2005). The elements of music shape the experience of an artist and calls for knowing one’s mind at a level of attention, awareness, and consciousness. While Clifton’s critical contribution of applied

phenomenology is situated in the experience based on the structure and elements of music itself, these descriptions can be simultaneously applied to the experience of performing music where the artist becomes an active participant in listening and making music: an *artistic experience*.

The famous violinist Isaac Stern once said, “Music is the thousandth of a millisecond between one note and another; how you get from one to other—that’s where music is” (Green, 2005, p. 2). Stern described an artistic experience in music in which the focus of the musician lies between the notes, *listening* to the length of the millisecond transition from one note to another. To be *in between* the notes means that the artist is present at every point in time with themselves, objects, and others. It is within in these moments where the freedom and playful wonder of music making is possible, an experience that encapsulates all the senses.

An artistic experience in music creates opportunities to explore the process of moving towards the goals and experiencing the surprises that takes an individual *out of place*. In a sense, art is a way of being, at the expense of time and control. The internal elements of an artistic experience invite a phenomenological insight into the “intentional nature of consciousness” or the “internal experience of being conscious of something” (Holloway, 1997).

Teaching Artists

The subject of my study is music teaching artists, and the unit of analysis is their individual lived artistic experience. Teaching artists are unique in that they share a balanced career as both performer and educator. They actively perform, work behind many educational reforms, and interact with a wide range of people *through* the arts. Music teaching artists today carry a special role in education with two main goals: creating a learning experience *in* the arts and teaching artistry *through* the arts.

With a high demand for educational reform since the late 1900s, the Lincoln Center Institute (LCI, 2005) coined the term *teaching artist* for those artists who were teaching part-time at various settings as a catalyst for creative pedagogy. Since then, the term has been used interchangeably with the titles of “visiting artist,” “artist-in-residence,” “artist-teacher,” and “artist educator” (Booth, 2009; Daichendt, 2010). Booth (2009) defined a teaching artist as “an artist who chooses to include artfully educating others, beyond teaching the technique of the art form, as an active part of a career” (p. 3). In essence, teaching artists strive to create artistic experiences by artfully educating in and through the arts.

Teaching Artist and Artistry

The field of teaching artists continues to grow without an exact consensus on the definition of teaching artists and their development of curriculum, pedagogy, and methods. Teaching artists are unique in that they practice and teach artistry. Artistry is defined as “a creative skill or ability encompassing all forms of artistic practices, often engaging in multiple endeavors at once” (Green, 2005). In his book *The Mastery of Music: Ten Pathways to True Artistry*, Green explained that true music artistry rests in “exploring the marrow of music and helping musicians discover and communicate the creativity and character that rest within their own hearts and souls” (p. 2). Green described artistry as an atlas of experiences about searching, creating, and reflecting on the self through music and in music.

Practicing artistry also offers individuals who are narrative-driven lifelong learners to investigate themselves and the world through their art and the art of others. In this sense, artists are constantly assessing their work and progress at every possible moment, struggling “to develop their capacities to reflect and express their perspectives and aesthetic sensibilities, to follow their muse, find their voice, and make art” (Rabkin et al., 2011, p. 46). While these

descriptions illustrate the nature of artistry in a musical experience, there is no systematic approach to operationalize the artistic experience itself.

To investigate further, Daichendt (2010) reframed “artist-teacher” as rather a philosophy for teaching and not as a simple label of a dual role. Daichendt posited:

If there is one idea that ties artists of all periods together, it’s that artists produce objects/concepts and in doing so use a particular way of thinking that aided their production process. If the art teacher does not engage in such thinking, how can one expect the art teacher to facilitate such thinking in the classroom? (p. 64)

Therefore, teaching artists are educators who engage in artistic skills and processes to facilitate their students in a similar artistic experience by creating something new.

Teaching Artist and Creative Minds

In a seminal work on teaching artists, Rabkin and his colleagues (2011) found that teaching strategies based on artist’s disposition aligns with what experts agree are principles of good learning: student-centered, cognitive, and social. Their pedagogy drew from students’ lives, experiences, and interests, in which art is used as a tool to value the originality and voice of the students. The study revealed that the operation and dispositions involved in art making and teaching share complex cognitive processes. Some of the operational processes are:

- Planning and playing;
- Awareness as a whole;
- Pattern finding, making, and breaking;
- Reflecting, assessing, and revising;
- Thinking and feeling; and
- Listening and collaborating.

The key to the cognitive process identified above relies on the balance between the two extreme ways of doing, such as thinking and feeling or reflecting and assessing, requiring artists

to move constantly through the sophisticated modes of cognitive functions (Csikszentmihalyi, 1996). Csikszentmihalyi (1996) explained how play appears cognitively during the artistic experience.

When we think intentionally, thoughts are forced to follow a linear, logical—hence predictable—direction. But when attention is focused on the view during a walk, part of the brain is left free to pursue associations that normally are not made. This mental activity takes place backstage, so to speak; we become aware of it only occasionally. Because these thoughts are not in the center of attention, they are left to develop on their own. There is no need to direct them, to criticize them prematurely, to make them do hard work. And of course, it is just this freedom and playfulness that makes it possible for leisurely thinking to come up with original formulations and solutions. For as soon as we get a connection that feels right, it will jump into our awareness. (p. 138)

In short, Csikszentmihalyi associated play with a moment of presence. It is within presence that play appears and shapes our experience. Teaching artists are constantly in relationship with self, time, space, play, and feeling from a total engagement in the task on hand for the sake of the activity itself.

What teaching artists do involves a complex dimension of the artistic experience associated with a complex cognitive process. The complex network of cognitive processes may be what Kaufman and Gregoire (2016) referred to in their book *Wired to Create* as creative people with *messy* minds. They suggested that messy minds result from the imaginative play of childhood play and adult creativity. Ultimately, teaching artists with *messy* minds are driven to reach their full potential because they find these pursuits are a meaningful way to spend their time and shape their lives.

Teaching Artist and Flow

What teaching artists actually do is difficult to define. The evolving nature and complexities of the definition are perhaps intended to show the diversity of context and

pedagogy that teaching artists are involved in, and they are not reflective of all who identify as teaching artists.

In the 1970s, Csikszentmihalyi (1975) adopted a phenomenological premise to study optimal experience in expert professionals and everyday life. A pivotal book, *Advances in Flow Research*, presented Csikszentmihalyi's (2012) personal account of his phenomenological departure:

Having been exposed to the phenomenology of Husserl, Heidegger, and Merleau-Ponty, I realized that what was missing from the literature was a consideration of the phenomenology of play. The next major realization was that the phenomenology of play seemed indistinguishable when the person felt it in a play situation like a game or in settings that are not usually thought of as play, like music, painting, and even in work. When I started publishing the results of our first interview-based studies, I called the peculiar state people reported when they were "playing" the autotelic experience, Greek for something you might be doing primarily for the sake of the experience itself. Later, to use more accessible language, I called it flow, borrowing from the language of the people we interviewed, which often used the image of flowing waters as an analogy to the feeling they were describing. (pp. vi-vii)

Studies on flow had their origin in examining the experience of autotelic activity where satisfaction and happiness derive from the activity itself. Teaching artists are often associated with a high satisfaction for what they do. They are often emotionally, socially, and personally at everyone's disposal for one reason: to operate at their fullest capacity and feel satisfaction in their experiences (Green, 2005).

The concept of flow experience offers a possible connection between high enjoyment and a balance between high perceived challenges and skills during artistic experiences in music. Based on Csikszentmihalyi's studies (1975/2000, 1982, 1988, 1990), a flow state is defined as a psychological state of absorbed time in a challenging activity and results in satisfaction and well-being of self. In the context of teaching and performing, conditions for flow and characteristics of flow based on Csikszentmihalyi's (1975/2000) work hold great significance.

Conditions for Flow:

1. *Perceived challenges, or opportunities for action, that stretch (neither over-matching nor underutilizing) existing skills; a sense that one is engaging challenges at a level appropriate to one's capacities.* The dynamic nature of performing and teaching demands a high skill set responding to high challenges.
2. *Clear proximal goals and immediate feedback about the progress that is being made.*
In performing, a musical structure unfolds in time, marking and anticipating immediate goals (Clifton, 1983). The feedback can also derive from self and others. In teaching, goals are anticipated in the planning stage to be followed through in class. The feedback is also from self-monitoring and cues from the students. Tomlinson (2004) stated that effective teaching "...emanates from the ongoing assessment of students' needs" (p. 188). In both performing and teaching, self-awareness and self-monitoring function as immediate feedback.

Characteristics of Flow:

1. *A sense that one can control one's actions; that is, a sense that one can in principle deal with the situation because one knows how to respond to whatever happens next.*
The sense of control in both performing and teaching results from a full absorption in a task where confidence is heightened and sustained. Feedback from self, others, and music also assists in developing a sense of control.
2. *Merging of action and awareness.* Custodero (1997) asserted that the "process-participation in music, whether it be performing, composing, or listening, requires the same fusion of doing and perceiving" (pp. 3-4). In teaching, the awareness of opportunities for action fuses into one doing in the present moment.

3. *Intense and focused concentration on what one is doing in the present moment.*

Klausmeier and Allen (1978) described the practice, performance, and transference of music as a total immersion in a musical activity. Teachers also experience deep concentration when they are *with* their students.

4. *Loss of reflective self-consciousness (i.e., loss of awareness of oneself as a social actor).* This is often associated with the experience of time and self-transcendence, in which conscious experience is defined by music. In teaching, high engagement with students and being immersed in a musical activity with them can provide a unique sense of awareness.

5. *Distortion of temporal experience (typically, a sense that time has passed faster than normal).* Many theorists have written about multiple temporalities in music. Stephen Nachmanovich (1990) described this as follows:

The time of inspiration, the time of technically structuring and realizing the music, the time of playing it, and the time of communicating with the audience, as well as ordinary clock time, all are one. Memory and intention (which postulate past and future) and intuition (which indicates the eternal present) are fused. The iron is always hot. (p. 18)

In a musical experience, a common sense of time alters when one is immersed in music. When teaching invites an opportunity for high engagement, a sense of time is distorted.

6. *Experience of the activity as intrinsically rewarding, such that often the end goal is just an excuse for the process.* Teaching artists have often been reported to receive high enjoyment in what they do. Rabkin and colleagues (2011) found that “most find the work itself seriously satisfying. They enjoy doing it, generally want more work,

and most are serious about improving their practice as educators as well as their practice as artists” (p. 192).

The conditions for flow and the characteristics of flow are presented separately above to differentiate clearly between the antecedent for flow and the state of flow. It is important to note that the last three characteristics (*self-consciousness, temporal distortion, and rewarding*) were added to the original model after a study was conducted 27 years later to reflect additional dimensions in the conceptualization of flow.

The activities of music teaching and performing are autotelic in nature and demand a balance of multiple modalities from heightened perception and awareness. Teaching artists find intrinsic motivation and satisfaction in their work, with most reporting a positive effect of teaching on their art making (Rabkin et al., 2011). After investigating the conditions and characteristics, flow offers a model to study the artistic experience of teaching artists.

Summary

This study investigated the artistic experience of music teaching artists in performing and in teaching through Csikszentmihalyi’s model of flow experience and the general principles of phenomenology in research. The study utilized flow as a model to examine the artistic experience of teaching artists who engage in an artistic process in their performing and teaching. One of the main goals of this study was to blend phenomenology as a philosophical framework and use it as a second lens analytical tool to understand the internal consciousness of music performing and teaching that generates flow experience. Given that phenomenology is the study of lived experience and flow is the study of the quality of that experience, this research aimed to combine philosophical and operational approaches to understand the artistic experience and to

embed artistry in the description of the performing and teaching experience. Further connections are analyzed in the literature review of Chapter 2.

Problem Statement

Art organizations employing teaching artists identify their core values and mission statement in great detail but ultimately rely on their teaching artist workforce to find individual paths to teaching. While the term *music teaching artist* provides an opportunity to define oneself as one who is balancing a career in performing and teaching, being a music teaching artist imposes many external and internal challenges. One of the main challenges is to apply an artistic experience of performing to the puzzle of teaching (Daichendt, 2010).

The artistic experience is found in performance and through sharing and educating. By continuing to perform, music teaching artists can develop a means of using their individual artistry to educate others in a richly nuanced manner. Being able to identify the challenges and rewards of performing and teaching is the key. Current research in the artistic experience of teaching artists lacks information about the complexity of the experience and a research methodology to embed artistry in the description of their experiences.

Despite the growing field, not much is known about the artistic experience of performing and teaching and how teaching artists experience and describe artistry in both domains. Teaching artists are a difficult subject to study, but their pursuit of happiness in their work—making an impact on lives—is worth exploring.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this study was twofold. The first purpose was to explore the artistic experience of music teaching artists in performing and teaching. The second was to understand musical artistry through flow and phenomenology in their description of the artistic experience.

By embedding artistry in the description of the artistic experience, this study aimed to capture the depth and quality of the lived experience of teaching artists.

Carefully integrating two methodologies—(a) operational tools of flow and (b) four coordinates (time, space, play, and feeling) of phenomenology on music, I examined descriptions of artistic experience in performing and teaching in an effort to discover how artistry is presented in two domains. For the specific needs of this study, I compiled a new Flow State Scale (FSS) to capture the artistic experience using the flow model (see Appendices A and B). Orchestrating a collective case study design utilizing questionnaires, interviews, and focus group meetings, I aimed to find intersections between performing and teaching in order to decipher what artistry means to teaching artists.

Conceptual Framework

Exploring artistic experience in the lives of teaching artists requires multiple layers of conceptualization and methodology. The conceptual framework below presents core concepts and sub-concepts needed to understand the quality of artistic experience. It is important to note that this framework was malleable to reflect the collected data. This study focused on the two main activities in the lives of teaching artists: performing and teaching.

A performing activity encompasses a broad occasion in practice, rehearsals, and formal or informal performances. Essentially, a performing activity involves oneself engaging in a creative process to develop one's artistic skills and ability, with another formal or informal audience presented. The teaching activity includes any type of teaching setting such as private or group with whom a teaching artist is involved.

To better understand the complexity of the artistic experience, phenomenological insights and flow concepts were used to enhance comprehensive findings and strengthen the

overall validity and reliability of the data collected. Figure 1.1 below presents the conceptual framework for performing activity and Figure 1.2 presents the conceptual framework for teaching activity.

This study borrowed phenomenological positions of self, time, space, play, and feeling, and operationalized flow conditions and characteristics to understand the individual artistic experience of teaching artists.

Figure 1.1

Conceptual Framework for the Artistic Experience of Performing

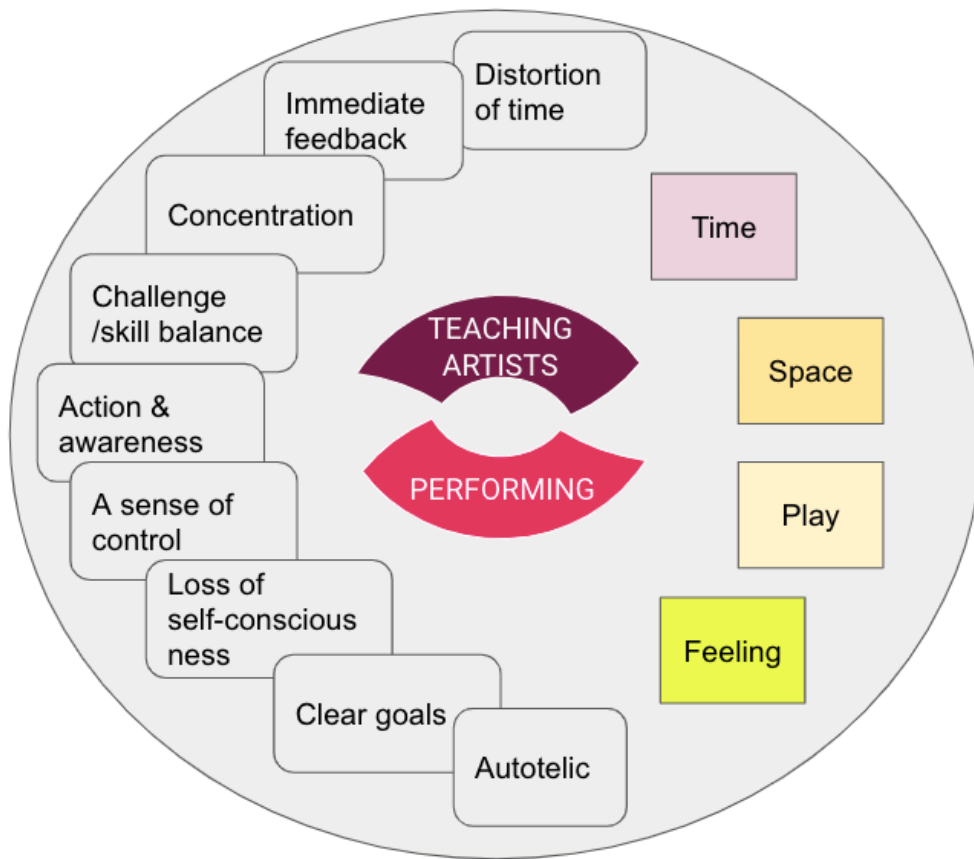
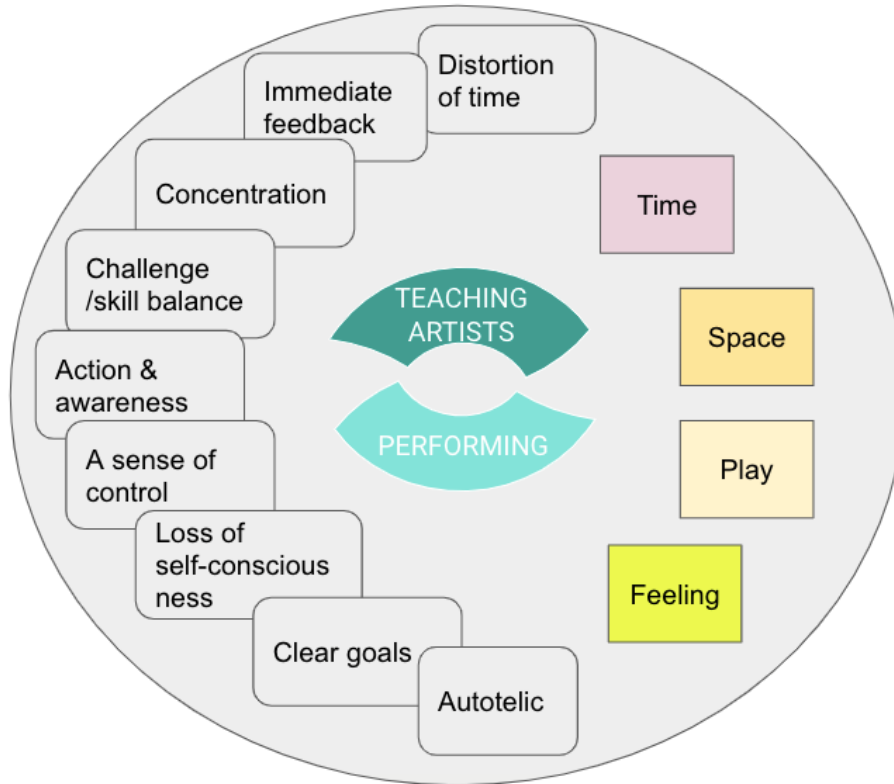


Figure 1.2

Conceptual Framework for the Artistic Experience of Teaching



Plan of Research

Research Questions

RQ 1: How meaningful and useful are flow characteristics and conditions in representing experiences of teaching artists?

RQ2: How is flow individually experienced in performing and teaching?

- a. How do the contexts of performing and teaching influence individuals' experience?
- b. How do past experiences in performing and teaching influence individuals' flow?

RQ3: What do flow conditions/characteristics and phenomenological descriptions tell us about the artistic experience of performing and teaching?

Data Collection

This study employed a collective case study design of questionnaires, interviews, and focus group meetings as well as a blend of the operational tools of flow and four lifeworld themes for data analysis. The questionnaires employed a newly compiled Flow State Scale (FSS-modified) using the nine items from the long FSS, which were previously validated (Jackson & Marsh, 1996) (see Appendix A). The nine items were selected from the 36-item scales (Jackson & Marsh, 1996) by referencing core flow scales (Martin & Jackson, 2008) and short flow scales (Engeser & Rheinberg, 2008) (see Appendices B and C). FSS-modified is employed differently from earlier uses in that it includes an optional comment box after each question. In October 2021, I piloted the questionnaire with FSS with eight doctoral students in one of the doctoral seminars in which I was involved. It was also piloted with two of the participants from the exploratory study in Fall 2020.

About 25 participants were contacted via email through the Teaching Artist Community at Teachers College, and seven participants (28%) agreed and self-selected to participate in this study. The seven participants were Orion, Clay, Eve, Clara, Dash, Joyce, and Yulie. Each participant completed three performing questionnaires and three teaching questionnaires. By slightly varying the Experience Sampling Method (ESM), the questionnaires were administered immediately and within 48 hours after each teaching and performing event between November and December 2021. On the FSS, questions regarding the conditions for flow (challenge-skill balance, clear goals, and activity-related incentives) were purposively separated from the characteristic of flow. The findings from the FSS served as a base for the study in order to understand if and how much the model fits flow in performing and teaching.

Following the completion of the questionnaires, two 1-hour individual interviews with each participant followed. As the last step, one 90-minute focus group meeting with the other participants was conducted via Zoom. The interview served to ask further about their reports on the scales and to investigate in greater depth any additional description of self, time, space, play, and feeling during the events. The focus group meeting was divided into three groups due to scheduling issues. With consideration, both interview and focus group protocols were flexible to reflect the participants' individual responses from the questionnaires.

Delimitations

Participants were recruited from the Teaching Artists Community at Teachers College (TAC@TC) program, in which I also participated for 9 months in 2018-2019. In this program, the concept of flow was introduced and discussed in detail during the first in-person session. The recruited teaching artists' familiarity with the concept provided the necessary grounding for how flow may be experienced and aligned with the artistic experience. This study focused on teaching

artists who self-identified as teaching artists or worked as music teaching artists for an arts organization.

Definition of Terms

Art:

1. the conscious use of skill and creative imagination (Merriam-Webster, 2021).
2. the expression or application of human creative skill and imagination (Oxford Languages, 2021).

Artistic:

1. of, relating to, or characteristic of art or artists (Merriam-Webster, 2021).
2. showing imaginative skill in arrangement or execution (Merriam-Webster, 2021).

Artistic Experience: (in music) an experience in which artist becomes an active participator in listening and making (Clifton, 1983).

Artistry: a creative skill or ability encompassing all forms of artistic practices, often engaged in multiple endeavors at once (Green, 2005).

Experience:

noun:

1. act of consciousness (Smith, 2003).
2. practical contact with and observation of facts or events (Oxford Languages, 2021).
3. practical knowledge, skill, or practice derived from direct observation of or participation in events or in a particular activity (Merriam-Webster, 2021).

verb:

1. encounter or undergo (an event or occurrence) (Oxford Languages, 2021).
2. to learn by experience (Merriam-Webster, 2021).

Flow: a state of an optimal enjoyment occurring when one is feeling highly challenged and highly skilled for the activity in which she or he is engaged (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990).

Phenomenology: the study of structures of consciousness as experienced from the first-person point of view (Smith, 2003).

Teaching artist: an artist who chooses to include artfully educating others, beyond teaching the technique of the artform, as an active part of a career (Booth, 2009, p. 3).

Chapter 2 – Review of Literature

Overview

Experience is not what happens to a man;
it is what a man does with what happens to him.

(Huxley, 1932, p. 5)

The purpose of this study was to examine the artistic experiences of music teaching artists in performing and teaching through carefully interweaving the operational tools of flow and the four coordinates of phenomenology in music. This chapter begins with an overview of phenomenology as a study of lived experiences and how phenomenology has been used to examine lived experiences in music. The second part of chapter connects phenomenology to flow as a model to investigate the artistic experience of music teaching artists and present background of the development of flow as a construct, reviewing various methods of measurement. The last part of the literature review examines the history, role, and mission of teaching artists today, highlighting the gap in the literature on teaching artists. The breadth of this study pertains to enriching the lives of teaching artists by threading artistry across performing and teaching experiences in their lives.

Experience and Phenomenology

Everything begins with consciousness and nothing
is worth anything except through it.

(Camus, 1942, p. 3)

At the Start of an Experience

This study blends the flow model with the general principles of phenomenology as a second lens analytical tool to understand the artistic experience of music teaching artists. This section discusses what a study of experience entailed and how coordinates were developed. A

phenomenological study on musical experience is presented in detail to examine how time, space, play, and feeling play roles in the lived experience of music (Clifton, 1983).

Broudy (1994) postulated that “to experience life...is to sense the drama in every event of nature, in every moment of life, in the conflict of colors and shape, sounds and rhythms” (p. 26). Phenomenology is a discipline and movement in philosophy that studies the structure of experience, the richest narrative accounts at the consciousness level. Phenomenology is established on the philosophical grounding that absolute truth is where personal consciousness begins. An internal experience of being conscious of a given time and space is what creates a feeling of eventfulness. Wittmann (2009) illustrated this idea of event time as a function of self:

$$time=function(self)$$

Husserl (1991), the father of phenomenology, surmised that understanding consciousness at the first-person level creates an opportunity to engage in self-discovery. He claimed that “the waking consciousness, the waking life, is a living-towards, a living that goes from the now towards the new now” (p. 112). Groenewald (2004) claimed further:

[Phenomena] have something to say to us—this is common knowledge among poets and painters. Therefore, poets and painters are born phenomenologists. Or rather, we are all born phenomenologists; the poets and painters among us, however, understand very well their task of sharing, by means of word and image, their insights with others—an artfulness that is also laboriously practised by the professional phenomenologist. (p. 44)

Following the footsteps of Husserl, Heidegger (1927/1962) conceptualized human experience as a dialogue between a person and her world, which he called “Being there.”

Later, Husserl sought to develop a new philosophical method that captures pure “phenomena,” an absolute truth at which personal consciousness begins (Groenewald, 2004).

Husserl thought deeply about how intersubjectivity plays a role in ourselves as:

1. Objectively existing subjects,
2. Other existing subjects, and
3. The other objective spatio-temporal world.

In a sense, phenomenology developed into a method to understand the conditions that help “to give experiences its intentionality” (Smith, 2003).

Phenomenology in Music

Understanding musical experience at an experiential level is critical in this study. Over the years, only a handful of studies have applied phenomenology as a tool for the description and analysis of musical experience from the perspective of a listener (Clifton, 1983; Ferrara, 1984; Ihde, 2007). While Clifton’s work applies phenomenology to understand the experience of listening to music, his four coordinates of experience—time, space, play, and feeling—can be applied to the experience of a performer who is an active participator in and a listener of music.

As Groenewald (2004) claimed, musicians are also born phenomenologists because of the way in which they associate their mode of being with the world. Often, a musical experience is described as a “lived experience” because of the fused qualities of feeling, thinking, and acting in the present (Alperson, 1980; Nachmaninovich, 2019). In music, a constant change of modes in a subjective time and space invites our consciousness to *tune in*. At a deeper level, the changes and balances of modes shape our consciousness in our musical experience.

In his seminal work *Music as Heard*, Clifton (1983) described a musical experience as knowing, feeling, and judging. He categorized the realms and modalities of musical experiences into time, space, play, and feeling. In that being an artist requires close listening and creating of music as an active participator, Clifton’s phenomenological positions serves as a foundation to understanding the artistic experience in music for this study.

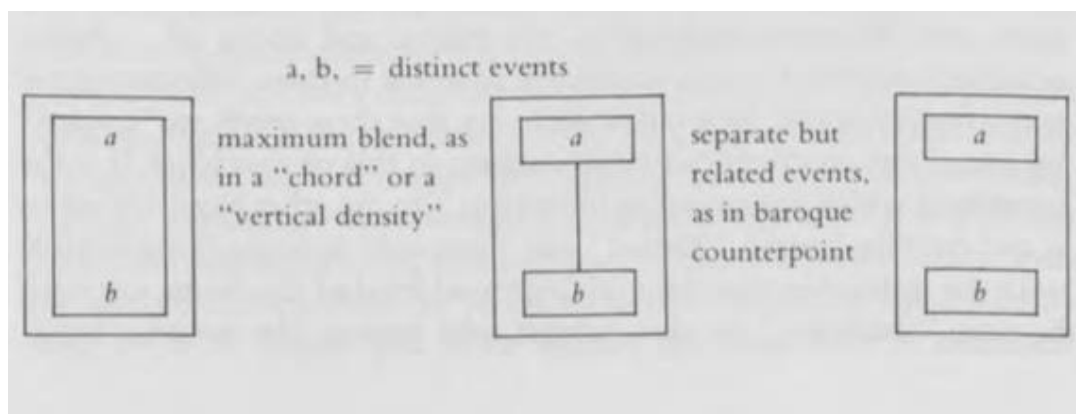
Time in Motion

Clifton (1983) defined the experience as a moment with clear parentheses of beginning and ending in real-world or chronological time. The beginning is where a relationship between object and subject begins. It is where a musical space opens, and melodic shapes are perceived and retained. The variance in tonal contrast and interruption allows for attack, duration, decay, release, and growth of music to be distinguished and heard.

When describing the texture of polyphonic strata, or what Clifton (1983) referred to as a “time strata,” he hypothesized “the possibility of experiencing distinct, different, but variously related temporal actives simultaneously,” as shown in Figure 2.1.

Figure 2.1

Time Strata



Source: Clifton, 1983, p. 125

Clifton borrowed Husserl’s concept of temporality to address the influence of succession resulting in a sense of continuity. A continuity in music involves openness of time, “the idea that past events are forever sealed off from a present which constantly re-searches it, and that future events do not reside in some unknowable ‘other’, ignoring and ignored by, the present situation” (p. 97). To further explain, Clifton surmised that “indubitable event is perceived as fluid because,

for one thing, its full significance is not presented all at once, and there is, then, something for consciousness to do” (p. 99). This aligns with the idea that we bring our past experience to the current to predict the future. Being present with the music alters our sense of time, a condition of lived experience and a characteristic of flow.

Space in Motion

Music not only unfolds through time but also through space. The spatial dimension of music includes elements such as gesture, texture, contour, and patterns. Clifton (1983) borrowed Merleau-Ponty’s concept of motor behavior and synesthesia between musical perception with visual and tactile perception. He suggested that “texture—or space—is what we experience when we hear durations, registers, intensities, and tone qualities of musical lines which might be conceived of as dimensions of musical space” (p. 69). Through the language of texture, Clifton illustrated the idea of surface and depth through webs of lines and dissected the process of faceting in perceiving dominating lines. Texture is a space in which music dictates clear goals and feedback, allowing for participants to perceive the level of challenge and skills. The musical texture therefore reflects the balance of multiple modalities in performing and teaching.

The Play Element

Clifton described play, the contribution of the listener, as one of the critical essences of an experience. This play was also what Husserl alluded to when he referenced intentionality and intersubjectivity in a lived experience. Clifton used the term *acquired spontaneity* to explain: “on the one hand, the role of learning and enculturation, on the other, the unmediated intuitive grasp of musical meaning that is characteristic of the experience of music itself” (Tenney, 2015, p. 207). Here, Clifton described the participation of self as part of the play. This play between experiencing self and experienced music is what leads to a constitution of reality. This concept of

play correlated to Merleau-Ponty's "Being there" or "Dasein." Types of play in the music experience include: the "aleatoric," the "agonic," the "comic" and the "ludic." The "ludic" category is further divided into "ritual" and "heuristic" behavior.

The Stratum of Feeling

Clifton (1983) stated that the spatial dimension in music allows us not only to think the truth but also to feel the truth. He believed that we experience because we feel the emotion of the music and we respond to the associated emotions. He explained this process in detail:

Let it be granted that music does not literally contain feeling, emotions, or for that matter, motion or tonality. But when we say that Tamino's first aria in *The Magic Flute*...is 'tender and dignified,' these terms are not metaphorically in the music either; and when we say that it is 'tonal,' is it literally or metaphorically tonal? Then, to say that all these expressions are metaphorical is still to assume that there is something in the melody which at least corresponds to the choice of metaphor, something which the melody 'has,' once and for all. (pp. 281-282)

Music theorists are tasked to find these objective correlations of "tenderness" and "tonality" in music that reflect our emotional responses to music. In a musical experience, the stratum of feeling music reflects a participant's response to the high enjoyment of feeling the presence through music.

This study is grounded on the idea that experiences help to establish and create meaning in our lives. Clifton (1983) stated that experiences are the agency through which essences become an object for reflection, as vividly described through his four coordinates of musical experience. One of the main goals of this study is to use phenomenological insights to investigate the artistic experience of performing and teaching among music teaching artists.

Flow, an Optimal Experience

Space and time are modes in which we think,
but not conditions in which we exist.

(Einstein, p. 81, cited in Forsee, 1967)

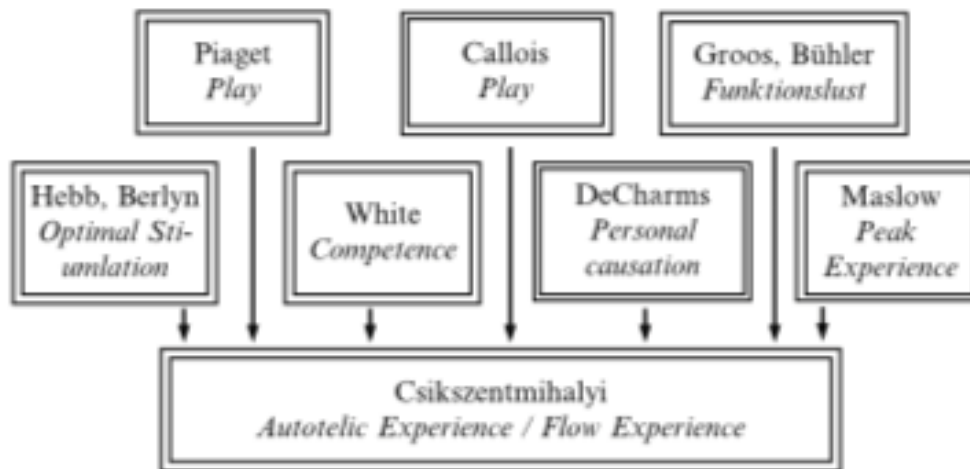
Phenomenology and Flow

In the 20th century, Husserl strived to establish lived experience in all disciplines of science. The discipline of psychology adopted Husserl's method to understand the specific aspects of the human experience in the world (Langdridge, 2007). One leader of this movement in the field of psychology was Csikszentmihalyi, with his seminal work on flow studies.

Husserl (1991) described temporality, or the "absolute time-constituting flow," as an important characteristic of lived experience at the level of consciousness (p. 84). Noticing that many artists were invested in spending a long period of time daily in creating their work, Csikszentmihalyi was interested in studying creativity, artists' personalities, and play activities to understand what made activities enjoyable and inherently motivating. The result after conducting a number of his studies was that flow could be defined as the positive experience of complete absorption in an activity that is both spontaneous and effortless (Csikszentmihalyi, 1975/2000, 1993). Figure 2.2 presents other parallel works at the time that Csikszentmihalyi was conducting his research.

Figure 2.2

Theoretical Precursors of Csikszentmihalyi's Flow Theory



(Engeser & Schiepe-Tiska, 2012)

In his early studies, Csikszentmihalyi (1975/2000) examined a state of peak experience in athletes, climbers, surgeons, dancers, and composers to understand the subjective qualities of their experiences influencing and shaping their lives. Nakamura and Csikszentmihalyi (2014) explained the construct of subjective experience, which were the underlying assumptions in their flow research.

Consciousness is the complex system that has evolved in humans for selecting information from this profusion, processing it, and storing it. Information appears in consciousness through the selective investment of *attention*. Once attended to, information enters *awareness*, the system encompassing all of the processes that take place in consciousness, such as thinking, willing, and feeling about this information (i.e., cognition, motivation, and emotion. (p. 242)

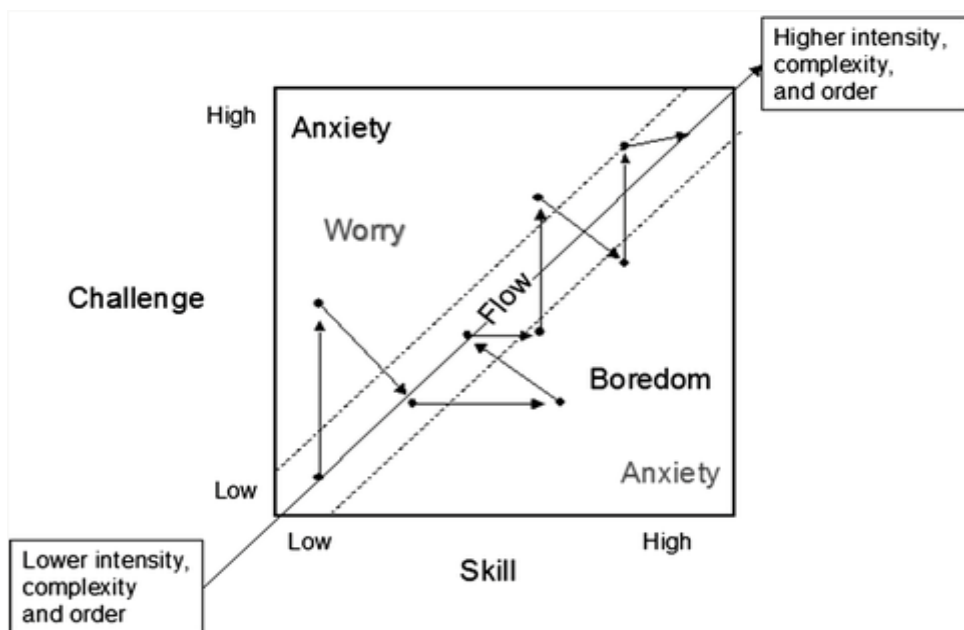
Based on his studies, Csikszentmihalyi took personal accounts from his participants and coined the term *flow* to describe a state of high engagement in an activity that was enjoyable, challenging, and autotelic.

Development of Flow

Flow studies aim to measure a subject's experience systematically; therefore, the model has evolved over the years to reflect various types of people who have been studied. Flow models have been revised and recreated multiple times, starting from the first model in 1975, with added revision in 2000, as shown in Figure 2.3. This particular model shows flow as a channel from low intensity to high intensity, with the balance between perceived challenge and skill.

Figure 2.3

First Model of Flow State



(Csikszentmihalyi, 1975/2000)

In the revision, Csikszentmihalyi captured the subjectiveness of flow experience by referencing the model as an experiential map in which the arrow lines represent the trajectory of a hypothetical walk of a person from low- to high-intensity flow. Here, what Clifton (1983) referred to as play in a musical experience is what Csikszentmihalyi referred to as the

intrinsically fragile balance of modes in an optimal experience, or flow. When one enters flow, they are in a state of “dynamic equilibrium...establishing a balance between perceived action capacities and perceived opportunities” (cf. optimal arousal, Berlyne, 1960; Hunt, 1965). This nonlinear and zig-zag motion, shown in Figure 2.3, is what Sawyer (2013) found in his studies on group flow, which outlined how one learns, asks, looks, makes, plays, chooses, thinks, and fuses in a creative process.

Studies on flow were designed to collect information about both internal and external descriptions of the lived experience (Csikszentmihalyi, 1975, 1990). After years of studies and robust findings, the condition for flow and characteristics of flow were presented as nine dimensions (Table 2.1).

Table 2.1

The Nine Characteristics and Conditions of Flow

Conditions for Flow (external)	Characteristics of Flow (internal)
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Perceived challenges, or opportunities for action, that neither overmatch nor underutilize existing skills 2. Immediate feedback about the progress that is being made 3. Clear proximal goals 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Intense and focused concentration on what one is doing in the present moment 2. Merging of action and awareness 3. Loss of reflective self-consciousness 4. A sense that one can control one’s actions 5. Distortion of temporal expedience 6. Experience of the activity as intrinsically rewarding

(Nakamura & Csikszentmihalyi, 2002)

The characteristics of flow describe the internal state and feelings of someone experiencing flow. The conditions for flow represent the external environment that facilitates

flow experience. The following section focuses on how flow has been studied in the field of music performance and education.

Flow in Music

Studies of flow have been rapidly developing in the areas of music performance, composition, and aural feedback. The complexity of both phenomena (i.e., flow and music) sparked researchers to focus on different conditions, such as emotions, motivations, performance anxiety management, social relationships, creativity, and psychophysiological correlates of flow experience (Bakker, 2005; Bloom & Skutnick-Henley, 2005; Csikszentmihalyi, 1997a; Custodero, 2002; de Manzano et al., 2010; Fullagar et al., 2013; Kirchner, 2011). Depending on the aim of each study, flow was explored with different populations such as children, professional musicians and non-musicians, and those involved in various types of musical activities (Bakker, 2005; Custodero, 2002, 2005, 2012; de Manzano et al., 2010).

There has been increasing research on self-reported flow experiences in the field of music (Bakker, 2005; Bloom & Skutnick-Henley, 2005; Fritz & Avsec, 2007; Hart & Blasi, 2013; Kenny, 2011; MacDonald et al., 2006; O'Neill, 1999; Sinnamon et al., 2012). Csikszentmihalyi (1993, 1997a), who acknowledged the potential for music to provide a unique sense of awareness, posited that music is an activity in which it is easier to reach an experience of flow. The desire to experience and express feeling through music is what “causes people to ‘become a little bit more real’, helping to improve quality of life, happiness, health and sense of community” (Gembris, 2008, p. 107, cited in Chirico et al., 2015).

Flow in Performers

Bloom and Skutnick-Henley (2005) analyzed surveys containing ratings and write-in items from 90 amateur adult classical musicians who, on average, had played their instruments

for 36 years and continued to play 7 hours per week. For their written responses to reflect on “flow” experience, five elements were required: (a) it stood out as a special musical experience, (b) it involved total absorption while playing, (c) the goals were clear, (d) there was confidence in task accomplishment, and (e) attention was focused on playing the music and not on task-irrelevant thoughts. Based on their quantitative data, through multiple regression and analysis, there were sizeable differences in flow proneness between musicians. Bloom and Skutnick-Henley (2005) presented five basic themes about flow experience while playing the instruments:

1. Absorption, heightened awareness, clear-mindedness;
2. Emotional involvement;
3. Sense of connection with others;
4. Sense of everything clicking into place; and
5. Sense of transcendence. (p. 26)

Compared to the six characteristics of flow by Csikszentmihalyi, it is difficult to infer if the characteristic of a loss of reflective self-consciousness related to the theme of a sense of transcendence and, similarly, if the characteristic of a distortion of temporal experience was relative to the theme of absorption. It is also difficult to understand whether the sense of connection with others inhibited the merging of action and awareness or not. However, the quantitative data on proneness to flow showed that the primary findings of this study were the key predictors of flow, which included: (a) self-confidence while playing, (b) desire to experience and express feeling through music, and (c) an ability to play without self-criticism.

Fritz and Avsec (2007) studied the relationship between subjective well-being and flow in 84 students of music using two emotion-related scales and dispositional flow scales (DFS-2) (Jackson & Eklund, 2002, 2004). Two authors found that some dimensions of flow, such as

balance of challenge and skill and clear goals, were related to subjective well-being, while loss of self-consciousness and temporal distortion were not. The study concluded that flow experience is more related to emotional aspects of well-being rather than cognitive aspects.

Sinnamon et al. (2012) administered the Dispositional Flow Scale—2 (Jackson & Eklund, 2002) to 125 amateur and 80 elite musicians at two conservatories of music in a European city. The authors reported high reliability ($\alpha = 0.92$) of this scale. Findings suggested that flow was experienced frequently between amateur and elite musicians, and all nine dimensions of flow were present at various degrees. One of the most important findings of this study was the nonsignificant correlation between the merging of the action and awareness subscale and other subscales. Sinnamon and her colleagues further investigated the loss of self-consciousness dimension because of the anomalous descriptive data. The authors found that loss of self-consciousness did not occur as frequently as flow was reported to occur. Because the loss of self-consciousness was characterized by more ephemeral qualities, the authors suggested conducting future research using multi-method psychometric measures of flow, in-depth interviews, and a longitudinal diary.

Findings from other studies showed that flow was present in musicians, but not all dimensions of flow were of equal importance (Araujo & Hein, 2019; Bloom & Skutnick-Henley, 2005; Fritz & Avsec, 2007; Sinnamon et al., 2012). Araujo and Hein (2019) distributed questionnaires to 168 classically trained musicians, assessing their proneness to flow during musical practice. The study employed the dispositional flow scale (DFS-2) (Martin & Jackson, 2008) and distributed them to several higher education institutions, online social networks, and social events. While the findings suggested that the sample likely experienced flow in their

practice ($M = 33.21$ out of 45), only six flow indicators were frequently experienced while loss of self-consciousness, senses of control, and action-awareness merging characteristics appeared less frequently. The study found a positive association between time transformation ($M = 4.05$) and the number of practice hours.

However, two qualitative studies (Garces-Bacsal, 2016; Hart & Blasi, 2013) found that all dimensions of flow were present. Garces-Bacsal (2016) used in-depth interviews to study the flow experience of one Filipino singer songwriter musician. Hart and Blasi (2013) used informal and semi-structured interviews to study flow experience in six individuals in a musical jam session. In looking at flow individually and as a group, both studies found all dimensions of flow described in their findings.

Table 2.2 presents flow studies on musicians in various settings. Based on the table, four studies (Araujo & Hein, 2019; Bloom & Skutnick-Henley, 2005; Fritz & Avsec, 2007; Sinnamon et al., 2012) that employed quantitative methods showed either negative associations or nonsignificant correlation between flow and (a) loss of reflective self-consciousness, (b) temporal distortion, (c) merging of action and awareness or (d) sense of control. All four studies showed that loss of self-consciousness (*i.e., loss of awareness of oneself as a social actor*) was less associated with flow experience among musicians. An important finding, however, was that out of all six studies, two studies (Garces-Bacsal, 2016; Hart & Blasi, 2013) that employed qualitative methods presented flow as being positively associated with all characteristics of flow in their findings.

Table 2.2*Flow Studies on Musicians*

	Year	Sample	Activity	Instruments	Negative Associations/ Nonsignificant Correlation
Bloom & Skutnick-Henley	2005	90 amateur adult classical musicians	Instrumental playing	Surveys (ratings and written items)	Loss of self-consciousness, temporal distortion, merging of action and awareness
Fritz & Avsec	2007	84 students of music	Relationship between well-being and flow	DFS-2 (Jackson & Eklund, 2002, 2004)	Loss of self-consciousness and temporal distortion
Sinnamon, Moran, & O'Connell	2012	125 amateur and 80 elite musicians	Performing music	DFS-2 (Jackson & Eklund, 2002)	Loss of self-consciousness, merging of action and awareness
Hart & Blasi	2013	6 individuals during jam session	Jam sessions	Informal interview	None
Garces-Bacsal	2016	1 Filipino musician	Singer songwriting	In-depth interview	None
Araujo & Hein	2019	168 classically trained musicians	Music practice	DFS-2 (Martin & Jackson, 2008)	Loss of self-consciousness, senses of control, and action-awareness

Lastly, the conditions for flow were examined through the concept of peak performances. Kenny (2011) differentiated between the term (a) *peak experience* or *flow* and (b) *peak performance*. She defined flow as “a subjective state of intense well-being and enjoyment” and peak performance as “optimal functioning, what is referred to in sport as ‘personal best’” (p. 136). Kenny intentionally differentiated between the two terms to elaborate that the flow results from peak performance. She emphasized that “to achieve peak performance, both physical and psychological preconditions are required.” The psychological conditions include:

1. Goal setting,
2. Imagery,
3. Focus and attentional control,

4. Automatic coping skills—thought control, arousal management strategies, and
5. Facilitative interpretations of anxiety.

The physical preconditions are the use of “motor loops that allow the performer to operate at a subconscious (non-cognitive) level; that is, automatically, integrating all of the components of the task into a single smooth action based on sensory and motor feedback”; when this is achieved, the performer is described as operating ‘in the zone’ or as experiencing ‘flow.’

Kenny’s (2011) study reflected the characteristic of flow as an individual’s perceived level of challenge and skills. Based on this study, Kenny helped to identify the types of feedback received, which are perceived through sensory and motor processes. In this sense, the *experience of activity as intrinsically rewarding* relies on the effort of an individual, facilitating an interpretation of a negative to a positive situation. While Csikszentmihalyi (1975) only referenced the temporal sense of experience, imagery as a psychological condition encompasses both temporal and spatial coordinates of an experience.

Flow in Teachers

Flow has been widely studied in the context of learning, but far less studied through the lens of teaching in music. Several unpublished doctoral dissertations have suggested that flow experience is presented in general teaching and music teaching, but this information has not been formally discoursed in scholarly published studies. Stamou and Custodero (2007) were among a few in the educational setting who implemented flow in a series of professional development workshops with music teachers in Greece to help them recognize flow in their students. Mielke and Rush (2016) traced flow as being beneficial in addressing “the complex educational problem of how to construct meaningful experiences in school” (p. 90). None of these studies, however, necessarily measured the flow state of teaching quantitatively.

Other studies have found “group flow” in both student and teacher being present at the same time (Bakker, 2005; Culbertson et al., 2014). Bakker (2005) integrated emotional contagion theory to examine the crossover of peak experiences in 178 music teachers and 605 students. This study tested the Work-Related Flow Scale (Bakker, 2001), which included 13 items measuring absorption, enjoyment, and intrinsic motivation. Their findings suggested a positive relationship between teachers’ flow and that of their students. Reflecting Hart and Blasi (2013), Bakker’s (2005) study also demonstrated that flow can cross and occur in a group setting. Bakker’s finding also supports more recent study on “group flow” (Sawyer, 2015).

Current Issues in Flow Studies

Despite the abundance of research on flow since its introduction in 1975, the conceptualization of flow remains unchanged and fundamental questions still persist. Initially, flow experience was captured by interviews and later by Experience Sampling Method (EMS), a self-report method developed by Csikszentmihalyi and his colleagues (Csikszentmihalyi & Csikszentmihalyi, 1988; Csikszentmihalyi & Larson, 1987). Other methods such as self-reported questionnaires (Jackson & Eklund, 2002; Jackson et al., 2008), observations (Custodero, 1997, 2002, 2005), and interviews (Seifert & Hedderson, 2010) varied significantly, depending on the specific aim of the study.

Over the years, many predictors and conditions of flow have been identified in diverse fields such as psychology, education, performance, sports, and neuroscience (Bakker 2005; de Manzano et al., 2010; Engeser & Rheinberg, 2008; Goldberg et al., 2006; Huskey et al., 2018; Magyaródi et al., 2013). However, there appears to be significant disagreement among researchers pertaining to the conceptualization of flow and its methodology. Over the past

5 years, literature has shown 24 distinct ways of measuring flow (Abuhamdeh, 2020).

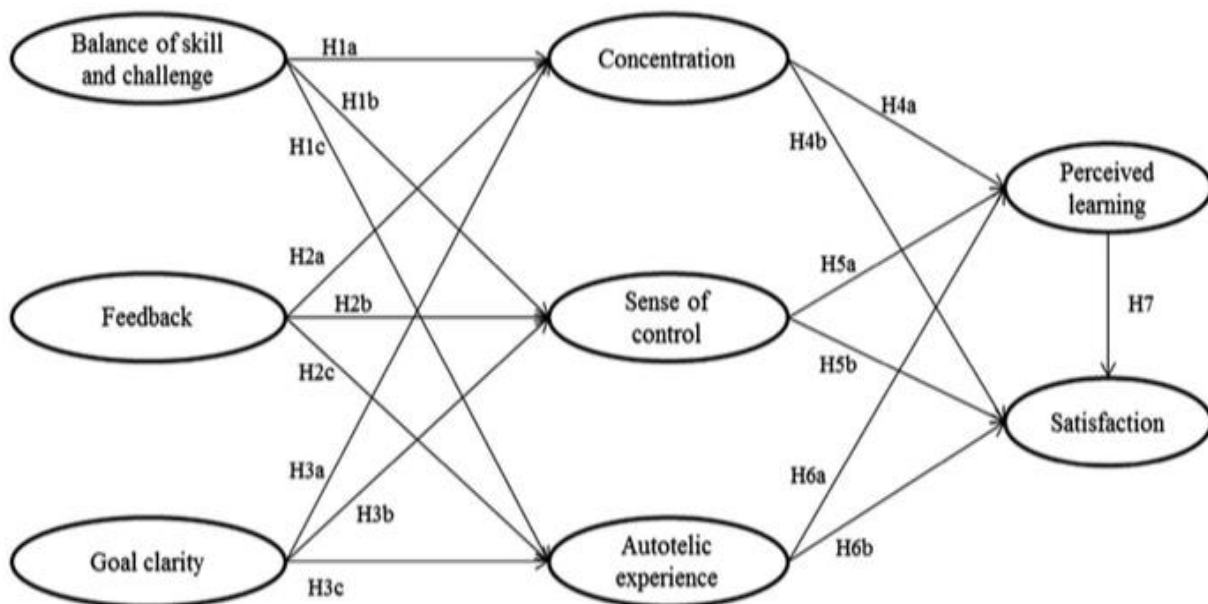
Abuhamdeh outlined three points of inconsistency:

1. inconsistencies in operationalizing flow as a continuous versus discrete construct;
2. inconsistencies in operationalizing flow as inherently enjoyable (i.e., “autotelic”) or not; and
3. inconsistencies in operationalizing flow as dependent on versus distinct from the task characteristics proposed to elicit it (i.e., the conditions/antecedents).

Since the publication of the book *Advanced in Flow Research* in 2012, current quantitative research on flow has statistically analyzed data using structured equation modeling without much success (Figure 2.4). The results are not promising. The variation of findings resulting from the way one conceptualizes flow suggests that the mixed method is highly recommended.

Figure 2.4

Proposed Model from Buil et al.’s (2019) Study



Summary

The first part of this chapter discussed phenomenology as a study of lived experience and how it has been applied to understanding a musical experience. The second part of the chapter provided an overview of the phenomenological underpinnings of Csikszentmihalyi's studies and how flow model and measurements were developed to study the experiences high engagement based on the individual perception of skill and challenge. Current issues on flow studies present inconsistencies in how researchers operationalized flow in their studies. Similar issues were found on current flow studies on musicians:

1. inconsistencies in operationalizing flow as continuous versus discrete construct;
2. negative associations or nonsignificant correlation between flow and some dimensions of flow such as loss of self-consciousness; and
3. inconsistencies in operationalizing global flow.

The last part of this chapter presents background on the participants of this study, music teaching artists, and discuss how artistic experiences have been previously examined.

Teaching Artists

I often think in music.
I live my daydreams in music.
I see my life in terms of music.

(Einstein, 1929, p. 113)

Overview

The participants of this study were music teaching artists. This study aimed to investigate their artistic experiences of performing and teaching by blending flow as a model and phenomenology as a philosophical framework. While previous studies on flow examined performers and teachers in separate roles and/or differentiated the activities of performing and

teaching, this study is unique in that it explores teaching artists who carry active roles as both performers and teachers and discusses their experiences in both fields. Because of this dual role, a teaching artist is defined as

an active artist who embodies and further develops the complementary skills, curiosities, and habits of an educator, in order to achieve a wide variety of learning goals in, through, and about the arts, with a wide range of learners. (Booth, 2014, p. 7)

Today, teaching artists work behind the scenes in many public schools, communities, and organizations, balancing their roles as performers and teachers. Based on the missions of teaching artists organizations, the key role of teaching artists is to embrace and integrate art within learning and to help students to engage in the artistic experience. This poses a question to look back at how artists first became involved in the field of education and to understand their unique processes of integrating art into teaching. Further inquiry into the lived experiences of teaching is necessary to understand who teaching artists are and what they do.

The Background

In the 1960s, arts organizations began to employ artists to teach in Chicago public schools with a great effort to mobilize educational reform (Rabkin et al., 2011). With help from private philanthropies and public agencies, organizations such as Chicago Arts Partnerships in Education (CAPE) partnered with artists to develop new pedagogy with high engagement based on creative and reflective practices. Other organizations such as Urban Gateway and the Center for Community Arts Partnerships at Columbia College Chicago designed a curriculum for artists to work at in-school and afterschool programs, exploring the cognitive connection between the art forms and interdisciplinary learning.

While the idea of the artist in classrooms is older than the modern use of the term, the term *teaching artistry* has emerged in the professional field in only the past few decades (Booth,

2009; Daichendt, 2010; Rabkin et al., 2011). Historically, this field encompassed an array of professional associations, guilds, organizations, conferences, and workshops which claimed to design highly engaging, personally relevant experiences for students of the arts (Booth, 2009; Csikszentmihalyi, 1997b) without official certification or an education degree (Rabkin et al., 2011).

Currently, in New York, some of the cultural organizations that employ teaching artists include performing art venues such as Carnegie Hall or Lincoln Center, musical foundations and societies such as The Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center, and symphony orchestras such as The Orchestra of St. Luke's and The New York Philharmonic. It is estimated that there are just over 1,500 teaching artists employed in New York City (de Barros, 2018).

Artistry and Artistic

While the missions of the teaching artists organizations and the role of their teaching artists are clearly defined, the practical mode of working in this role has not been clearly delineated. There is no consensus on what artistry or even, artistic, means. Nevertheless, the act of being highly engaged in a creative activity or witnessing the event can be inherently described as an artistic experience. In a dictionary, artistic is defined as:

1. of, relating to, or characteristic of art or artists or
2. showing imaginative skill in arrangement or execution (Merriam-Webster, 2021).

Through practicing artistry in their daily activities, delineating a process, and integrating it into their art, teaching artists bring this artistic quality into every aspect of their roles.

Characteristics of Artists Who Teach

Previous studies have described artists who teach as having keen conscious participation, heightened perception, and an ability to make connections between disparate elements, thereby engaging in meaningful life (Ball, 1990; Heck, 1991; Palmer, 1998/2007; Stephens, 1995). They become the facilitator of their own experiences. According to Heck (1991), they utilize

multiple perspectives and potentials. He or she thinks while doing and is engaged in informed action. This individual is involved in a series of dialogues between self and others, inner feelings and outer actions, inner feelings/cognition and outer phenomena. (p. 6)

Essentially, art of all kinds invites an opportunity to see oneself in multiple layers and also through someone else's personality and experiences. Nachmanovich (2019) described this act of empathy as an "infinite nexus of relationship, listening and responding" to oneself and through others. It is in these moments where consciousness is defined (phenomenology) and action and awareness are merged (flow). Heck (1991) further wrote:

In one sense, the qualities which an Artist possesses are akin to the imagination of a young child, where the worlds of reality and unreality, of states of being awake or dreaming, are not as separate as we later allow them to become. And here is the meeting place of Artist and Teacher, for the art of good teaching is to view the world through eyes of a child, to take with the child the journey of discovery again—not however, as is sadly so often the case in schools, towards a loss of imagination and creativity. (p. 6)

Heck's (1991) description of a place where an artist meets a teacher reflects Clifton's (1983) description of *play* and acquired *spontaneity* that shapes the meaning of experiences. Artistic experience in music performing and teaching alters the perception of self, time, space, and feeling, often resulting in a sense of "play." It also mirrors characteristics of flow, the positive experience of complete absorption in an activity that is both spontaneous and effortless (Csikszentmihalyi, 1975, 1993).

Daichendt (2010) described the teaching artist as

a manipulator and creative agent who adapts, reacts, and creates environments to promote students to think through concepts and visual issues. Artist-teacher as a concept becomes an adaptation of two fields: artistic ingenuity uniquely applied to the puzzle of teaching. (p. 65)

Practicing artistry calls for engagements between multiple perspectives and potentials associated with increased sensitivity in striving for an authentic experience. A sense of becoming, through a necessary balance of actions and awareness, is what Booth (2009) referred to as following the guidance of the verbs of the arts (-ing) rather than the nouns of the arts.

In performing and teaching, artists continuously search for an opportunity for high and authentic engagement within themselves and with others. Teaching artists model and encourage learning by making invaluable connections and satisfying artistic experiences within learning. By doing so, teaching artists help students recognize the challenges and complexities of situations by developing “increasingly nuanced and sophisticated strategies for thinking and acting” being *with* them (Immordino-Yang, 2007).

It is important to understand that this study is not about the experience of students but about the experiences of teaching artists who practice artistry and facilitate artistic experience in what they do: performing and teaching. Booth (2009) provided a possible reason to understand why teaching artists do what they do. He asserted that being a teaching artist makes one a better artist. Teaching expands and extends the act of performing by practicing emotional, sensual, and mental habits that can turn into memorable events in life (Greene, 2001). The sense of self-discovery through practicing complex cognitive modes encourages teaching artists to search for opportunities for high and authentic engagements. This is closely related to how the experience as intrinsically rewarding in the dimension of flow and how intentionality plays a role in lived experience.

Artistry, Flow, and Phenomenology

Take advantage of every situation, every minute of it.

(Messi, 2016)

In his book *The Mastery of Music: Ten Pathways to True Artistry*, Green (2005) described musical artistry as a musical journey of self-discovery based on the following premises:

The musicians we think of true masters of their art are the ones whose artistry we admire, and that goes way beyond technique, into a place that even the word “excellence” can barely touch, that almost indescribable realm of human depth which we refer to by such terms as “character” and “soul.” In this book, I propose that character or soul is something that we build over time, by a continuous process of growth that involves human “qualities” such as courage and concentration, humor and creativity. This book will enrich our art by teaching us the character skills which build that elusive quality we call true artistry. (p. 8)

In this sense, artistry is not only a creative skill but a developmental trait that promotes a continuous process of growth involving human qualities and character skills. Green (2005) proposed that being artistic means traveling “the distance between being us and being ever more fully ourselves. It is what’s *inside* you—whether you’re in music...that makes you unique, special, or even great” (p. 8). These descriptions by Green closely align with the internal state of flow (Nakamura & Csikszentmihalyi, 2002).

As previously described, an artistic experience of music teaching and performing creates an opportunity for a multifaceted dimension of subjective optimal experience. It also creates an opportunity for a lived experience where one seeks to understand their coherent self and allows the self to be constructed and negotiated in ongoing musical discourse. A music critic, Stryker stated that these steps to musical artistry are what bridge the experience between the notes, where “not only will you find the music, you just might come face to face with yourself too” (Stryker,

cited in Green, 2005, p. 5). An artistic experience of performing and teaching opens opportunities for positive experience involved in self-discovery and self-growth.

The experience of music teaching artists is phenomenological in its nature. Time is more tangible in a musical experience, and it gives access to observe one's self in a complex psychological state, developing a sense of identity. DeNora (2000) asserted that "music's recipients may not become the music per se, but they become music filtered through themselves and it is this that should be meant by the concept of music's powers to mediate and to inform" (p. 161). It is when "*there is time for...*" becomes the temporal equivalent of the spatial expression "*there is a place for...*" in the artistic experiences of performing and teaching.

Costelloe (1993) elaborated on the complex relationship between time and music:

If inner time is a matter of experiential unity, it must, by definition, be unmeasurable. Meaning conceived of in this sense is not a quantifiable entity. But the mechanics of making music, however—"playing an instrument, listening to a record, reading a page of music" in comparison, takes place by means of tangible objects that have a measurable essence. (Schutz, 1967, p. 171, cited in Costelloe, 1993, p. 443)

Weeks (1990) critically claimed "what the music means for all practical purposes can only be found and tested out in the socially organized occasions of their use" (p. 352). By doing so, the artistic experience of music becomes a social phenomenon of the intersubjectivity of the lifeworld, inviting the perception of the lifeworld to feel possible and intelligible.

In the 1970s, a German psychologist, Falko Rheinberg, found one of the most important aspects while investigating all relevant aspects of motivation in life: "the incentive for learning activities themselves" (Engeser & Schiepe-Tiska, 2012). One of the characteristics of flow is the autotelic nature of the activity where "the act of writing justifies poetry [and that] the purpose of the flow is to keep on flowing" (Csikszentmihalyi, 1975). Similarly, the act of performing and

teaching music justifies no need for external rewards but rather the lived experience of performing and teaching as a reward.

Artistic experience in music offers opportunities to define consciousness in a different way. Schutz (1967) stated that

an altered state of consciousness is only attainable when the beholder is a genuine participant: concentrating, engrossed entranced, enraptured, wholly involved in the scene unfolding before his or her senses. Anything less would be insufficient to accomplish the intentional leap. (p. 449)

Csikszentmihalyi (1993, 1997a) acknowledged the potentials for music to provide a unique sense of awareness and posited that music is an activity in which it is easier to reach an experience of flow. The desire to experience and express feeling through music is what “causes people to ‘become a little bit more real’ helping to improve quality of life, happiness, health and sense of community” (Gembris, 2008, p. 107, cited in Chirico et al., 2015). Bernard (2005) concluded that artistic experiences of music are “central in the way that musician-teachers make meaning of who they are and what they do” (p. 13).

Summary

Despite the abundance of research on flow since its introduction in 1975, the conceptualization of flow remains unchanged, and fundamental questions still persist. The difficulty of studying flow not only lies in the challenges of studying a subjective experience but also in the evolving definition of construct and lack of consistency of how flow is operationalized. By blending a flow model to operationalize the characteristic of an experience and phenomenological insights to analyze the description of the experience, the goal of this study is to capture an altered state of consciousness and the conditions of artistic experience in performing and teaching.

The current study was grounded on an overarching phenomenological view that human experiences are through the consciousness of a tangible object, whether that be music or cues from students. One of the main goals of this study was to investigate how phenomenological insights concerning self-consciousness and flow model can be actively used in the analyses of the teaching artists' descriptions of their artistic experience in music teaching and performing. The next chapter presents an overview of the methodology employed in this study in greater detail.

Chapter 3 – Methodology

We dance to ideas, not to steps.

(Colby, 1922, pp. 7-8)

Overview

Understanding how artistry is learned and taught through artistic experiences means honoring the contribution of both teacher and learner to the educative process of self-discovery. The purpose of this study was to explore the artistic experience of music teaching artists in two types of activities, performing and teaching. This study aimed to understand musical artistry through flow in their description of the artistic experience. To capture the depth and the quality of the lived experience of teaching artists, I employed a case study design (Merriam, 1998) and a philosophical framework of phenomenology for within- and cross-case analysis (Creswell, 2007; Larsson & Holmstrom, 2007).

A total of seven participants—Orion, Clay, Eve, Clara, Dash, Joyce, and Yulie—participated in this study through self-selection. The first phase of the data collection employed *Qualtrics* questionnaires, which were completed by each participant six times: after performing (3) and teaching (3) activities (see Appendices D and E). While the questionnaire utilized nine items from a 36-item FSS (Jackson & Marsh, 1996), the scale was used differently in this study in that it (a) asked the participant to complete it within the proximity of the occurrence of the activity and (b) included a voluntary comment box on each item. The second phase of the data collection employed three parts, as listed in Table 3.1. Comments from the questionnaire were analyzed to craft items on the semi-structured interviews and focus group meeting protocols. Both the interviews and focus group meeting were transcribed and used for thematic analysis based on phenomenology and flow.

Table 3.1

Timeline of the Data Collection

	Type of Interview	Topics	Length of the Interview
#1	Individual	Qualtrics questionnaires	60 minutes
#2	Individual	General discussion about flow in teaching and performing	60 minutes
#3	Focus group	Teaching artist and flow	90 minutes

Using case study design with phenomenology as a second lens analytical method, I carefully blended the data from questionnaires, interviews, and the focus group to gain a rich and comprehensive understanding of the phenomena. In this chapter, I present the exploratory study, research design, instrumentation, participants, data collection, and stages of analysis in greater detail.

Exploratory Study

Exploratory research conducted in the Fall of 2020 was designed to investigate intersectionality in performing and teaching in the lives of three teaching artists. Hour-long semi-structured interviews were conducted online via Zoom with each participant, and characteristics of the artists' flow experiences in performing and teaching were discussed in depth. Pseudonyms were used to keep information and data anonymous. The study employed a phenomenological lens using the four-fundamental existential, or lifeworld, themes (van Manen, 1997):

1. lived space (spatiality),
2. lived body (corporeality),
3. lived time (temporality), and
4. lived human relation (relationality).

Participants

April identified as a female Italian dancer and choreographer. She has been teaching since 1992 in various positions at college, academy, and public school. Currently, she is a teaching artist at two arts organizations in Italy. While serving also as a preschool dance teacher at a public school, she recently joined a historical dance practice performing in large groups. English is her second language.

June identified as a female Chinese American cellist. As a young and passionate educator, she has been teaching for 7 years. She currently serves as a teaching artist with two orchestras in New York City and New Jersey. She performs with her string chamber group regularly and collaborates with other ensembles such as a jazz quartet.

August identified as a female Japanese American pianist and accompanist. She recently celebrated her 50th year of teaching. She currently teaches Dalcroze, piano, and music theory at a pre-college institution in New York City. Recently, she joined a New York-based dance company as a dance accompanist, which involves improvisation, something she immensely enjoys. English is her second language.

Preliminary Findings

Movement

Despite the subjectiveness in the definition and relationship of flow, all participants illustrated flow as moving, or specific to the movement when describing their experiences. April articulated that “the best moments in teaching are connected with movement” and being artistic means to be “moving with the music.” June sensed the shift of energy in a flow experience and examined how this shift of energy required her to tune in. April used the metaphor of “on board, on the ship” as a way to flow through her teaching. These collective descriptions relate to what

Csikszentmihalyi (1975) found in his studies, initially giving a name of *flow* to optimal experiences.

Space as Known and Unknown

When asked to describe their spaces in flow experiences, all participants described their spaces as either orderly or disorderly. April described her act of planning as flow because it provides a space for sequential order. She knew the steps to follow, but there was space for spontaneity and creativity. June referred to the idea of the unknown and known in performance to share her state of alertness and excitement. August's typical lesson plan included three main topics and then space for the unknown. She emphasized, "I know what I want to do today but I don't know how because I have to see the class." Allowing room for creativity, flexibility, and spontaneity is why flow is often coined as improvisation (Hart & Blasi, 2013).

Flow as Creating

June expressed that a new creation is what can contribute to the flow experience. For June, flow occurs when performance becomes a composition of a one-of-a-kind performance and when teaching becomes a composition of a one-of-a-kind teaching moment. August referred to a similar experience when creating the experience that happened collaboratively as a group in teaching and learning. April described her experience of flow as finding new and different ways to organize and balance her skill and challenges. Activities such as building a new drawer or re-organizing the closets differently facilitated flow for her. Across all three participants, the experience of *creating* was one of the intrinsic motivations to be engaged in an activity, thereby facilitating flow.

While the above findings represent shared themes across the three participants (April, June, and August), each also presented a subjective definition, unique relationships, and new

perspectives to flow. Due to the multifaceted concept of flow, overall analyses would have benefited from additional interviews or other extraneous forms of data. Based on this exploratory study, the current mixed-method explanatory sequential design was determined. In the current study, a creative representation of the participants' subjective flow experience, such as drawing, was integrated based on this exploratory study.

Research Design

Using case study design, I purposefully employed three distinct phases in this research: (a) questionnaires, (b) interviews, and (c) focus group meetings. During November and December of 2021, an online survey, *Qualtrics*, was used to administer the modified FSS that was adjusted for the purpose of this research. Interviews and focus group meetings were conducted *on Zoom* to protect participants' health and safety during the COVID-19 pandemic. All participants were recruited from a professional development program, the Teaching Artists Community at Teachers College. A total of seven music teaching artists participated in this study.

All the collected data, individual (3) teaching questionnaires and (3) performing questionnaires, interviews, and focus group meeting transcripts were reviewed multiple times to find reoccurring categories of flow and phenomenology. The within-case analysis examined the similarities and differences between the experience of teaching and performing among each individual while the cross-case analysis examined all individual cases across the board and developed larger themes as a group.

Instrumentation

The instruments used in this study were the questionnaires, semi-structured interview protocols, and focus group protocols.

Questionnaires

After a careful review of how flow had been previously operationalized, an activity-specific scale was necessary to capture the complex state of flow in music performing and teaching. The FSS used in the questionnaire borrowed nine items from the previously validated Jackson and Marsh (1996) 36-item FSS, which originally included all nine dimensions of flow.

In early October 2021, two of the participants from the exploratory study (April and August) volunteered to fill out the modified flow state questionnaire which I designed. Based on their feedback, I revised the questionnaire for clarity and accessibility. Each item used the 5-point Likert scale to collect ordinal data, and I added a comment box to capture short verbal responses for each item.

I referenced the core state scale by Martin and Jackson (2008) and the FSS by Engeser and Rheinberg (2008) without directly integrating the items. In Engeser and Rheinberg's scale, three additional questions related to worry were added (#11-13) and the structure of the scale separates challenge and skill perception items by presenting those items at the end (items with bullets) (see Appendix B). While the core FSS (Martin & Jackson, 2008) does not mix the conditions of flow with the experience of flow, the scale borrows direct quotes from the interviewees, which may limit the subjective responses of the participants. Therefore, the questions on the core FSS were not integrated into the new scale but served as a guide in adopting nine items from the 36-item FSS (Jackson & Marsh, 1996).

While the current modified FSS was similar in length to the short FSS by Martin and Jackson (2008), I carefully selected the nine items from the longer FSS (Jackson & Marsh, 1996) to reflect the experience of music performing and teaching. This scale was specifically designed to capture the six characteristics in flow (#1-6) first, as well as the three conditions of flow (#7-9)

(Appendices D and E). Additionally, there was no reverse scored item on the scale because there was no reverse scored item on the original FSS by Jackson and Marsh (1996). Table 3.2 compares the survey items that were used, modified, and referenced for this study.

In an effort to support the capability of the questionnaire to capture the moment closest to the experience, I collected the data through *Qualtrics*, where participants could easily access a 5-minute-long questionnaire after three teaching and three performing activities. Participants completed the form immediately or as soon as they were able to after each activity. The range of time between activity and the completion of the form lasted from immediately after to within 48 hours. The questionnaire, which includes the FSS which I compiled, was used to capture the experiential grounds of the artistic experience of flow.

Interviews and Focus Group Protocols

In Phases 2 and 3, I conducted interviews and focus group meetings via the online platform Zoom, due to the limits of the COVID-19 pandemic. In the first interview, the numeric and written data from the individual FSS constituted the scope of the 60-minute semi-structured interview questions on performing and teaching. For the second 60-minute interview, the main content was driven by the general discussion of flow in performing and teaching. During the focus group, participants were asked to meet once for a 90-minute group discussion about their responses to the questionnaire and the artistic flow experience. The very last activity during the focus group included participants drawing and sharing their visual representation of their experience of flow in teaching and performing (these are presented in Chapter 5). The interview and focus group protocols were purposefully left open-ended to allow participants to discuss openly what they reported on the questionnaires (see Appendices (G & H)).

Table 3.2

Comparing the Flow State Scales

Flow Dimensions	Item Number (1996)	Original Items (Jackson & Marsh, 1996)	9-item modified short version by the researcher (Park, 2021)	Short Flow Scale (Martin & Jackson 2008)	Core Flow Scale (Martin & Jackson 2008)
Challenge-Skill Balance	#1		I was challenged but I believe my skills allowed me to meet the challenge	I feel I am competent enough to meet the high demands of the situation	
Action-Awareness Merging	#29		I did things spontaneously and automatically without having to think	I do things spontaneously and automatically without having to think.	I am 'in the groove' It feels like 'everything clicks' I am 'switched on'
Clear Goals	#12		I had a strong sense of what I wanted to do	I have a strong sense of what I want to do	
Unambiguous Feedback	#22	I had a good idea while I was performing about how well I was performing	I had a good idea while I was performing/teaching about how well I was performing/teaching	I have a good idea while I am performing about how well I am doing	
Concentration on Task at Hand	#32		I was completely focused on the task at hand	I am completely focused on the task at hand.	I am 'totally focused' on what I am doing I am 'totally involved'
Sense of Control	#24		I felt total control of what I was doing	I have a feeling of total control	I feel 'in control'
Loss of Self-Consciousness	#16	I was not worried about my performance during the event.	I was not worried about my performance while performing/teaching	I am not worried about what others may be thinking of me.	It feels like 'nothing else matters' I am 'in the zone'
Transformation of Time	#17		The way time passed seemed to be different from normal	The way time passes seem to be different from normal	It feels like I am 'in the flow' of things
Autotelic Experience	#36		I found the experience extremely rewarding	The experience is extremely rewarding	

Participants

Sample Selection

The Teaching Artists Community at the Teachers College (TAC@TC) hosts teaching artists of diverse ages, art forms, and racial/ethnic backgrounds. Teaching artists are primarily from the eastern region of the United States, but also include artists from Canada, Italy, South Africa, Singapore, and the Philippines. The program gathers highly skilled artists from all fields, including music, dance, and the visual arts. For the purpose of this study, teaching artists who were performing musicians engaged in teaching in schools and community settings were recruited. Teaching artists who were musicians and had 3 or more years of experience as teaching artists were eligible to participate in this study. Because the participants were drawn from the program, the sample of this study was unique in that participants had been exposed to the concept of flow during their participation in the responsive pedagogy program.

Seven participants were drawn as a purposeful sampling to maximize the possible variation from the TAC@TC program. This group was described as a “typical case sample” because all 25 music teaching artists in the program were invited to participate in this study (Patton, 2002). A total of seven participants volunteered to be part of the study as participant-researcher; therefore, this sample collection method is considered self-selection. The seven participants were Orion, Clay, Eve, Clara, Dash, Joyce, and Yulie, and all were involved in three stages of the data collection. The participation in this study was voluntary with no compensation. Gender, age, socioeconomic status, educational level, race, or ethnicity did not impact eligibility for participation.

Recruitment

Upon receiving IRB approval, I contacted the program coordinator of the TAC@TC, who sent out invitations to participate and provided my contact information (see Appendix I). In consideration of the depth of this study, it was essential to recruit music teaching artists whose professional goals were likewise oriented toward the research problem. An initial email encompassing the scope of the study was sent as an invitation to participate in the study in early November 2021. To those who agreed, an informed consent containing the study's purpose, possible risks, benefits, protection and confidentiality, study method, and participant's rights were sent via email (see Appendices I and J). Signed consent forms were returned electronically, and background surveys were emailed to gather information about the participants' age, gender, ethnicity, educational background, and teaching background before the first phase of the data collection began (see Appendix F). When everyone completed the background survey, they individually began the three questionnaires for teaching and three questionnaires for performing online.

Teaching Artist Participants

Seven teaching artists (age range 29-57, mean age = 45) took part in this study. Participants identified their gender as male (42%) or female (58%). This group represented diverse ethnic backgrounds, African American (43%), Asian (29%), White (14%), and Hispanic (14%). All participants taught for more than 5 hours per week, and a majority of them practiced for more than 3 hours per week. Teaching artists taught in classrooms (48%) and private lessons (52%). All teaching artists were teaching and performing during the time of this study. One of the reasons why some of the other teaching artists could not participate in the study was due to their inactivity in either teaching or performing, exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic. All

teaching artists had three or more occupations in total, which included teaching and performing. Forty-two percent of the participants had lived in other countries before, such as Japan, Korea, and Brazil. A little less than half (42%) had previous conservatory training. More than half (58%) of the participants were residents of the New York and New Jersey area, and some were from Maryland (14%), Mississippi (14%), and South Korea (14%). Table 3.3 presents some general background information about the seven participants in this study.

One of the interesting aspects about this group was that the genres of music they all played was very diverse. Figure 3.1 shows 13 types of music with which seven teaching artists were involved. One of the interesting aspects of this group was that the genre music played was very diverse but could be broken into western classical music and popular music.

Figure 3.1

Teaching Artists' Genres of Music

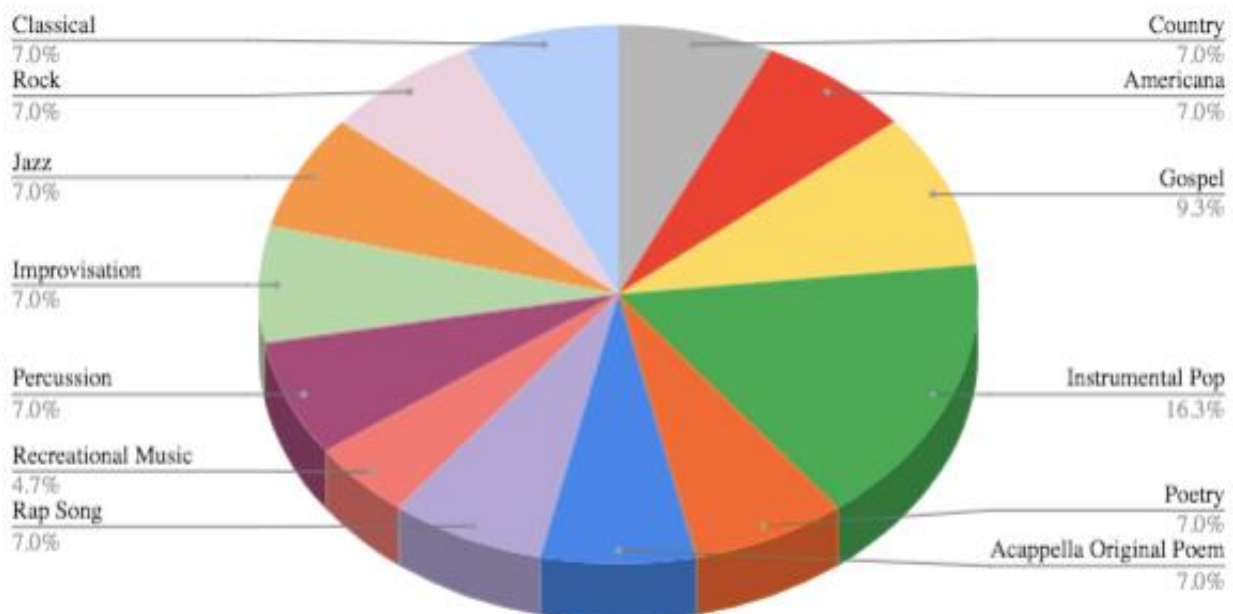


Table 3.3*Participant Pseudonyms and Related Experience*

Participant Pseudonym	Age	Gender	Years of Teaching	Teaching Association	Teaching Age Group	Type of Teaching Setting	Instrument	Type of Ensemble Setting
“Orion”	29	Male	3	Nonprofit organization and private academy	PreK-Elementary school	Individual (in-person)	Drums	Rock band
“Clay”	57	Male	5	Nonprofit organization	Elementary-high school	Individual (online)	Violin	Pop ensemble
“Eve”	32	Female	10+	Private studio, private academy, higher education	Elementary to college	Individual (in-person/online)	Piano	Classical trio
“Clara”	57	Female	30+	Nonprofit organization, private studio	Elementary to adults	Individual (online)	Piano	Church ensemble
“Dash”	43	Male	20+	Nonprofit organization	Elementary to middle school	Classroom (in-person)	Voice: songwriting, parody, hip hop, comedy, poetry, drama	Open mic
“Joyce”	47	Female	20+	Nonprofit organization	Elementary to middle school	Classroom (in-person)	Drums	Drum circle
“Yulie”	56	Female	20+	Public/Private partnership organization	Toddlers to elementary school	Classroom (in-person)	Piano	Choir

Data Collection

Phase I

Using *Qualtrics*, participants accessed the questionnaire using an online device of their choice, such as a phone, tablet, or computer. After each of the three performing and three teaching occasions, participants completed the form as soon as they were able, totaling three questionnaires for teaching and three questionnaires for performing. In this study, a teaching activity included any teaching setting such as a private lesson, classroom, or group lesson. Performing activity included any performing occasion such as rehearsals, run-throughs, or formal or informal live performances as long as an audience such as friends, families, or colleagues were present. Online administration of *Qualtrics* allowed me to access the responses shortly after they had been recorded.

Phase II

Based on the completion of all six questionnaires (three teaching and three performing), interviews and focus group meetings were scheduled within one week of completion. The second phase utilized two individual semi-structured interviews, a method often used in earlier research examining flow (Nakamura & Csikszentmihalyi, 2014). The first interview consisted of 60-minute semi-structured interview questions about the individual responses to the *Qualtrics* questionnaires.

The second 60-minute interview was used for a general discussion on flow experience in performing and teaching. This included their current experiences or past experiences of performing and teaching. In general, the interview was semi-structured and opened with the intention to identify elements of artistic flow experience in music performing and teaching and to

organize them into conceptual categories, much like how Csikszentmihalyi classified flow models and developed characteristics of flow.

Phase III

The last part of the data collection was focus group meetings which lasted about 90 minutes each. Participants were asked to discuss their general responses to the questionnaires and share their perspectives on the relationship between flow and artistic experience. While the intention was to have one focus involving all seven teaching artists, participants were divided into three groups due to their scheduling conflicts, as follows:

Group 1: Clay, Yulie, and Joyce

Group 2: Clara and Orion

Group 3: Eve and Dash

Focus group meeting protocols were open-ended in order to hear more about what the participants had to say about their unique experiences and to reflect on each other's experiences as well (see Appendix H). During the focus group meetings, participants were asked to share words that came to their minds when thinking about teaching artists and flow. These are presented in Chapter 7 as word clouds. Participants were also asked to illustrate their experience of flow in performing and teaching on paper using pencils and then to share them with the group. These visual representations are in Chapter 5. The rationale for the three stages of data collection was that the data from the first phase and their analyses would provide a general understanding of the research questions. The second and third phases would aid in additional resources of data for rich and dense thematic analysis.

Stages of Analysis

All questionnaires and transcriptions of the interview and focus group were analyzed multiple times for a two-part analysis of a case study: a within-case analysis, which includes individual descriptions such as themes, and a cross-case analysis, which includes thematic analyses across multiple cases (Merriam, 2009). Individual questionnaires, interviews, and focus group meetings were analyzed for a within-case analysis. The ordinal data (5-point Likert scale) from the questionnaires were examined for descriptive statistics such as range, mean, and median. The short verbal responses from the questionnaires were used to look for recurring patterns within the experience.

The interviews and focus groups were transcribed and read multiple times. Through multiple processes of textual analysis, I analyzed the written data from the questionnaire, interviews, and focus group meetings for recurring themes or patterns within the categories of flow dimensions. During the textual analysis, themes that inferred the categories of flow and phenomenological lenses were used to find similarities or differences within experiences. Substantial data underwent a process of abstraction, and codes were abstracted to represent flow dimensions operating at multiple levels.

In a case study, the unit of analysis is an important element (Merriam, 1998; Stake, 1995). Merriam described “individual, programs, events, groups, or community” as a single unit of analysis in a case study (p. 19). In this study, the single unit of analysis was each person involved in an activity, either teaching or performing. Portraits of each individual are presented in Chapter 5.

During the analytic process of individual cases, I simultaneously conducted the cross-analysis by taking notes on recurring themes or patterns found within the group about their

experience of performing. Because this was a collective case study, cross-case analysis aimed to find contrasting and supporting themes across participants (Creswell, 2007; Merriam, 1998, 2009). The results from this analysis are presented in Chapter 6.

In a phenomenological study, categories of descriptions are presented through “the structural relationship of linking different ways of experiencing” to present collective human experiences holistically (Åkerlind, 2005). Creswell (2007) explained how assertions or “an interpretation of the meanings of the case” are necessary in a collective case study (p. 75). While the categories of analysis were reflected in the flow model, the phenomenological analysis presented the pre-reflective experience and the essence of being a teaching artist, thereby giving what is it to *be* a teaching artist. The way of being in the world, through descriptions of lived time, space, play, self, and feeling, were key for understanding how experience is “felt and pre-verbal” (Larsson & Holmstrom, 2007, p. 59).

After the thematic analysis was completed, I compared themes to examine how phenomenological descriptions (self, time, space, play, and feeling) and the nine flow characteristics presented artistry in performing and teaching. All cumulative data were analyzed to find similarities and/or differences between teaching artists’ descriptions of artistic experiences in performing and teaching. During the analytic process, I maintained the stance that findings may be interpreted in multiple ways.

Researcher Role and Ethics

There is a trend in the field that celebrates teaching artists while, at the same time, overly romanticizing them. I as a researcher aimed to act as a “neutral foil,” focusing on the variation of experience of each participant (Orgill, 2012). I acknowledge my subjectivity to this inquiry, which results from my background and identity. I am a teaching artist myself and an alumna of

the program from which the participants were recruited. Since being introduced to the concept of flow during the program, I became aware of myself experiencing a different state of flow in various settings and conditions. Acknowledging that my own subjective experience of flow is unique and complex, I approached this research with the following epistemological position: (a) data were contained within the perspectives of my participants, and (b) I would engage with my participants accordingly in this study.

Within the case study design, this study blended the second lens analytical tool using the general principle of phenomenology. While I do hold my explicit beliefs, my primary role as a researcher was to bracket my “own preconceptions and enter into the individual’s lifeworld and use the self as an experiencing interpreter” (Miller & Crabtree, 1992). This type of bracketing is what Husserl referred to as *epoche*, a Greek word that means to stay away from or abstain from the first-order perspective (Groenewald, 2004).

The second form of bracketing directed my participants to focus on what goes within and to think and feel in a most direct way to describe the phenomena of their artistic flow experience of performing and teaching. Marton (1994) described an explorative dialogue between participant and interviewer in detail.

The experiences and understandings are jointly constituted by interviewer and interviewee. These experiences and understandings are neither there prior to the interview, ready to be “read off,” nor are they only situational social constructions. They are aspects of the subject’s awareness that change from being unreflected to being reflected. (p. 4427)

Therefore, both participants and researcher are active participants in shaping and reflecting on the interviews.

Brinkmann and Kvale (2018) compared a researcher interviewer, who “strips the surface of conscious experience,” with a therapeutic interviewer, who “mines the deeper unconscious

layers” (p. 21). Due to the complexity of the conceptualization of artistic experience, my role as a researcher was to act as the therapeutic interviewer who guided the participants to define and identify their experiences through questionnaires, interviews, and focus group meetings. The second-order perspective was already partially implemented in this study as the analytic procedures borrowed categories from phenomenology (Clifton, 1983; Husserl, 1991; Vagle, 2018) and flow (Nakamura & Csikszentmihalyi, 2002). My goal in this study was to provide an open space for participants to access narrative-driven stories, opening local ways for discourse and negotiation of multiple meanings of their lived world (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2018).

The positionality of a researcher and member checking by conducting interviews and focus group meetings serve to contribute to the trustworthiness and validity of this research. Since I directly borrowed the items from the previously validated questionnaire, the validity was not considered a threat. The process of member checking involved asking my participants for respondent validation. During the interview or focus group meetings, teaching artists were given opportunities to “suggest some fine-tuning to better capture their perspectives” (Merriam, 2009, p. 217). Pseudonyms were used for each participant, and information about the organization in which they work was generalized to protect anonymity. Participants supplied written consent before participating in this study. Each participant was given a detailed consent form to inform them of the purpose, procedures, potential risks, and benefits associated with their participation in the study (see Appendices I and J). This research design was submitted to and approved by the Institutional Review Board (IRB) in Fall of 2021.

Summary

Jackson and Marsh (1996) claimed that regardless of which method is employed, involving both qualitative and quantitative measures is optimal for a comprehensive

understanding of any human experience. In a mixed-methods design, the quantitative methods take on a positivist stance while the qualitative methods take on a constructivist stance in that quantitative measures are confirmatory while qualitative measures are exploratory. By deliberately employing questionnaires, interviews, and focus group meetings as data collection methods and using flow as a tool for measurement and analysis with phenomenology as a second lens analytical method, this study aimed to find how artistic flow is practiced and embedded in the performing and teaching experience of teaching artists. Chapter 4 presents how teaching artists described their sense of experience in performing and teaching in terms of flow characteristics.

Chapter 4 – Flow Conditions and Characteristics

Overview

This chapter is dedicated to understanding how nine flow dimensions are presented and experienced in music teaching and performing. I analyzed quantitative data from the questionnaires by using the statistical software *R*, while interview and focus group data were analyzed using qualitative procedures. The purpose of this chapter is to share multiple facets of each flow characteristic and condition across the seven participants in two activities: teaching and performing.

This study utilized a researcher-modified short version (9 items) of the FSS (Jackson & Marsh, 1996). A total of seven participants were recruited for this study, and they each reported on three teaching experiences and three performing experiences. The criteria for the performing setting were that the performance required a live audience. My participants were divided between classical musicians (29%) and popular musicians (71%). There were no specific limits on the types of teaching settings for the teaching questionnaires. In teaching, participants taught group teaching (43%) and private lessons (57%).

The results from the power analysis for the sample size requirement showed that at least 22 individuals were needed to conduct any further associational analysis. Because only seven participants were recruited for this study, and even though they each completed three questionnaires for teaching and three questionnaires for performing ($n = 42$), the quantitative data collected were not enough to show sufficient statistical power. Therefore, only the descriptive statistics for the quantitative analysis portion of this study are shared in this chapter.

In 2002, Nakamura and Csikszentmihalyi classified the nine flow dimensions into (a) characteristics of flow (internal) and (b) conditions for flow (external). Table 4.1 presents the

nine flow dimensions, organized by participants' average scores from highest to lowest, followed by type, descriptions, and corresponding survey items.

Table 4.1

Flow State Scale Dimensions (Jackson & Marsh, 1996)

Flow Dimension	Type	Description	Survey Item
Concentration on task at hand	Characteristic	Total concentration on the task at hand occurs when in flow.	I was completely focused on the task at hand.
Autotelic	Characteristic	An intrinsically rewarding experience.	I found the experience extremely rewarding.
Clear goals	Condition	Goals in the activity are clearly defined (either set in advance or developed out of involvement in the activity), giving the person in flow a strong sense of what he or she is going to do.	I had a strong sense of what I wanted to do.
Action-awareness merging	Characteristic	Spontaneous and automatic involvement. No awareness of self as separate from the actions one is performing.	I did things spontaneously and automatically without having to think.
Unambiguous feedback	Condition	Immediate and clear feedback is received, usually from the activity itself, allowing the person to know he or she is succeeding in the set goal.	I had a good idea while I was performing/teaching about how well I was performing/teaching.
A sense of control	Characteristic	A sense of exercising control is experienced, without the person actively trying to exert control.	I felt total control of what I was doing.
Loss of self-consciousness	Characteristic	Concern for the self disappears during flow as the person becomes one with the activity.	I was not worried about my performance while performing/teaching.
Challenge-skill balance	Condition	Perception of a balance between the challenges of a situation and one's skills, with both operating at a personally high level.	I was challenged but I believe my skills allowed me to meet the challenge.
Transformation of time	Characteristic	Time alters perceptibly, either slowing down or speeding up. Alternatively, time may simply become irrelevant and out of one's awareness.	The way time passed seemed to be different from normal.

Concentration on Task at Hand

Flow is often associated with having an intense and focused concentration on what one is doing in the present moment (Csikszentmihalyi, 1975/2000). According to Csikszentmihalyi (1990), total concentration was one of the most frequently mentioned flow dimensions. In the context of this study, findings showed that concentration was also the highest characteristic experienced in both performing and teaching.

Concentration in Performing

In contrast to the survey item which asked about concentration in the moment, more than half of the participants shared that total concentration is a predetermined characteristic in performing. The reasons for why it is preset varied, however. For example, Dash shared, “I’m almost always zoned in when performing. It is my freedom, my release, and my salvation.” Clara intentionally focused so that she could express her whole self. Clay shared that he focused so that he could be “more self-critical and less pretentious.” Conversely, Eve focused during her performance due to a lack of preparation. Yulie added that her “eyes are completely focused on their legs” when she is accompanying because she has to follow the dancers for whom she plays. Therefore, the individual reasons for the participants’ focus were based on their intention, attention to performance partners, and sometimes a lack of preparation. These responses to musical focus in a performance, such as feeling free, expressing one’s self, or being self-critical, connected to the themes of how performing is intrinsically rewarding, autotelic in nature, and flow-producing.

Some of the participants interpreted concentration as being present in the moment. In this case, one of the indicators of a high concentration level was how much they remembered about their performance when asked to recall it for the interviews. Generally, interviews were

conducted within a week from the completion of their questionnaires. Eve claimed that she must have focused a lot during her performance because she remembered it in great detail. This poses an interesting question: What role does memory play in flow experience? Being in a state of high focus in flow could be further examined by understanding their state of loss of self-consciousness and merging of action and awareness.

In general, classical musicians ($M = 4.50$) elicited a higher concentration than popular musicians ($M = 4.27$). The mean scores were also very consistent in performing with three sets of 5s and three sets of 4s. The overall average for performing across seven participants was 4.33, which was the highest among all other flow characteristics in performing.

Concentration in Teaching

In teaching, concentration was interpreted in many ways that involved the influence of other people, existing personal traits, and the amount of experiences one has. Participants described their concentration as having either singular or multiple types of attention points. Based on their responses, they were generally using highly complex attention such as alternating and multi-divided attention when they were teaching (Scott, 2022). An explanation for this may be due to the multiple temporalities presented in these two activities, as explained more in the last section of this chapter. The following findings supply a further explanation for participants' scoring.

Similar to concentration in performing, some participants explained how concentration in teaching is a pre-planned characteristic. Dash explained below how he focused to be a “Super Teacher.”

It's my normal to be focused because I feel like I'm doing the work that I was born to do. Because I love engaging, and I love talking about these types of things and inspiring kids and dealing with art. That's all right up my alley. (Interview, December 20, 2021)

Dash's inspiration for focus was sourced from his enjoyment of engaging with his students. Orion further explained how teaching itself requires a high level of concentration. In lessons, he was "coaching the student through the beat" and "focus[ing] on explaining it simply and effectively." When doing so, he said he had to pay careful attention to how he was directing and explaining to his student at the same time. The individual reasons for focus in music teaching may vary from intention to situation but, in general, responses showed that concentrating is a major element in teaching and is flow-facilitating.

Several participants expressed how concentration depends on not only the teacher's experience of teaching but also specifically on experience working with their current students or current class. For example, Orion explained that as a teacher with less experience, he has to focus on his students at all times. On the other hand, Yulie, as an experienced teacher, explained that it takes time to get to know a class and to be able to manage them. Therefore, she focuses on her task to teach while paying attention to the class simultaneously. This is an example of multi-divided attention (Scott, 2022). In general, a teacher's level of concentration is closely related to the amount of experience teaching as well as familiarity with a student or class.

Individuals such as students, parents, and other teachers also affected the participants' level of concentration in teaching. Generally, the younger the students are, the higher the concentration level of the teachers. Yulie shared that because she works with toddlers, she has to pay attention to every move. Dash added that he has to be highly focused during teaching because his elementary and middle school students have short attention spans.

Having a bigger audience when teaching also induces higher levels of concentration. Yulie explained that when there are more observers in the classroom setting, such as on Parent Observation Day, she would focus more, not because she was being watched by others but

because her students would act differently in the room with their parents. Yulie also added that she enjoys herself more when there is more audience in the room because it feels like she is also facilitating a show for the observers. For Yulie, having a larger audience increased both her concentration and autotelic experiences.

In general, group teaching (M = 4.56) elicited slightly higher concentration than private lessons (M = 4.50). The mean scores varied, but the range of the means was very high, 4.33-5.00. The overall average for concentration in teaching across the seven participants was 4.52, which was the highest among all other flow characteristics in teaching.

Summary

Table 4.2 presents a comparison of means and ranges for how the participants experienced concentration in both teaching and performing.

Table 4.2

Comparing Means and Ranges for Participants' Experiences of Concentration in Teaching and Performing

Name	"I was completely focused on the task at hand"			
	Performing		Teaching	
	Mean	Range	Mean	Range
Dash	5.00	5.00-5.00	5.00	5.00-5.00
Clara	5.00	5.00-5.00	5.00	5.00-5.00
Yulie	5.00	5.00-5.00	4.33	4.00-5.00
Clay	4.00	4.00-4.00	4.33	4.00-5.00
Eve	4.00	4.00-4.00	4.00	4.00-4.00
Joyce	4.00	4.00-4.00	4.33	4.00-5.00
Orion	3.33	2.00-5.00	4.67	4.00-5.00

Concentration had the highest flow scores overall in both contexts. General findings supported that teaching calls for total immersion in music making, and teaching calls for deep concentration *being with* the students. The most interesting comparison was that the concentration in the performance context was much more stable than in the teaching context.

In performing, concentration was perceived more as a pre-planned characteristic compared to the spontaneity and external circumstances found in teaching.

Experiencing concentration was consistent for individuals across both performing and teaching, with the exception of Orion and Yulie. Orion felt that he had to concentrate more on teaching because of his lack of experience compared to performing. Yulie, who concentrated more because of her work with young ones when teaching, felt more concentration when performing because she was not leading but following others. This raises the question of which of the two—leading or following—requires more concentration.

Autotelic Experience

The end result of being in flow is often associated with the moment being intrinsically rewarding. Jackson and Marsh (1996) explained that “an activity is autotelic if it is done for its own sake, with no expectation of some future reward or benefit” (p. 20). The term *autotelic* originally derives from the Greek words *auto* (self) and *telos* (goals) (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990). In previous flow studies, the end goal was just perceived as the natural result of the process, but Rheinburg and his peers (2003) later aimed to discover more of the complex relationships between motivation and flow.

Autotelic Experience in Performing

In relation to performing, this survey item was most diversely interpreted as being in the moment, after the activity, within the self, or with others. In alignment with the definition of autotelic, participants shared how performing is intrinsically rewarding because it *fuels the spirit at the moment*. Participants described the moment as having an organic energy that is electrifying. Orion described that he feels the experience is akin to “riding this cloud.”

Several participants shared that they perform for themselves and for their own enjoyment. Some participants expressed that performing is their passion and they do it because they love it. During the performance, they enjoy fully being themselves and expressing their musical creativity. Yulie shared that she performs because she enjoys challenging herself. Because performing is challenging in and of itself, participants felt accomplished by doing something difficult. Conversely, Clay explained how the idea of letting go allowed him to enjoy his performances fully. It would seem, then, that the end goal of performance has different emphases for every individual.

However, performing is intrinsically rewarding in the moment because it focuses more on the present and not on the end goals. Some participants expressed how intrinsic reward of the moment is not always enough to qualify the whole performing experience. Orion shared:

I think that performing can be so rewarding in the moment. And then when you are done, you're expecting something to wash over you.... You just get all the reality to set in, and when you finish, it's like I am not riding this cloud.... It can be sobering afterward. But it is what I love about that, too. (Interview, December 21, 2021)

Csikszentmihalyi (1990) stated that after the flow of being lost in self-consciousness, one may come out of it feeling their self in a greater way. This may not always be positive, as in the case of Orion, who felt a deeper somberness after his performance. His statements relate to a paradox between flow and happiness, which refers to the idea that flow is not frequently sought out, compared to other leisure activities, because of the cost it takes (Schiffer & Roberts, 2018). If the extrinsic rewards are not met and the cost seems too high, then the autotelic experience can be diminished or changed. This points to how the concept of flow is more focused on the self and intrinsic rewards rather than on extrinsic motivation.

For several participants, extrinsic rewards were just as important motivating factors in a performance. As an example, Clara performed for healthcare workers because she found it was

meaningful in current times. Dash always performs for others because of a desire to deliver musical experiences to them. Yulie performs because she wants to challenge herself, thereby learning and growing. It can be concluded, therefore, that performing is not only intrinsically rewarding but both intrinsically and extrinsically rewarding.

This survey item generated multiple perspectives and contexts in feedback. In general, classical musicians ($M = 4.67$) reported higher autotelic experiences than popular musicians ($M = 4.00$). This can be related to the feeling of accomplishment in completing a difficult task being more prevalent among classical musicians.

Autotelic Experience in Teaching

Previously, the participants reported high enjoyment in what they do in teaching because they are highly satisfied and serious about improving their practice (Rabkin et al., 2011). Teaching was intrinsically rewarding and inherently challenging because all participants expressed that they always put forth their best efforts. Participants felt rewarded and accomplished after the activity ended if the experience was a positive one. However, the difference between content-based goals and outcome-based goals was important in teaching for some participants because the achievement of these goals shaped their after-flow experience. The complexity of goals in flow is explained further in the clear goals section of this chapter.

The intrinsic reward for teaching was that teaching itself is enjoyable. The factor that contributed to this feeling the most was the connection with students. As Orion shared, “I just like building a relationship with the students. And learning from them. It’s just super rewarding.” Clara explained how she can “connect to a person in a way you haven’t connected before.” Therefore, teaching creates an opportunity for participants to connect deeply with others and put in their best effort.

In teaching, the autotelic experience was interpreted between the participants' perception of the pre-planned rewards or in the moment within self and others. Some participants hesitated from reporting 5s on the survey as they were not sure if their experience was *extremely* rewarding. In the context of teaching, group teaching (M = 4.56) elicited more autotelic experience than private lessons (M = 4.50). This may be due to the difference in the depth of the connection within the experience of teaching and learning, based on the numbers of participants involved in teaching.

Summary

Table 4.3 presents a comparison of means and ranges for the participants' autotelic experience in teaching and performing.

Table 4.3

Comparing Means and Ranges for Participants' Autotelic Experience in Teaching and Performing

Name	"I found the experience extremely rewarding"			
	Performing		Teaching	
	Mean	Range	Mean	Range
Joyce	5.00	5.00-5.00	5.00	5.00-5.00
Clara	5.00	5.00-5.00	5.00	5.00-5.00
Eve	4.33	4.00-5.00	4.33	4.00-5.00
Dash	4.00	4.00-4.00	3.67	3.00-4.00
Clay	4.00	4.00-4.00	3.67	3.00-4.00
Orion	3.67	3.00-4.00	5.00	5.00-5.00
Yulie	3.33	1.00-5.00	5.00	5.00-5.00

Autotelic experience was the second-highest flow-producing dimension in both teaching and performing. This survey question was most diversely interpreted among the participants. One of the critical findings was that not only intrinsic rewards but also end goals were driving flow in teaching and performing, especially in teaching. One of the end goals in teaching was progressively building a relationship with the students and shaping their growth over time.

Orion expressed that the intrinsic reward in the moment of performance could correlate to a lesser degree of enjoyment after the performance. For him, the sense of reward leaves immediately after the performance ends. This is because the motivation that provoked flow is still there, but the activity has concluded. However, if there are extrinsic rewards, the feeling of rewards continues even after the end of the activity. In general, both performing and teaching provided opportunities for participants to face and find satisfaction in challenges.

One interesting comparison was that autotelic experience was more stable in the context of teaching than in the context of performance. Participants reported that teaching was more autotelic ($M = 4.52$) than performing ($M = 4.19$). Experiencing intrinsic rewards was fairly consistent for performing and teaching across all participants, except Yulie. In general, these data suggested that performing and teaching are both highly enjoyable and autotelic.

Clear Goals

Clear proximal goals are one of the main conditions for flow (Csikszentmihalyi, 1975/2000). Jackson and Marsh (1996) defined this condition in which “goals in the activity are clearly defined (either set in advance or developed out of involvement in the activity), giving the person in flow a strong sense of what he or she is going to do” (p. 20). While this flow characteristic encompasses the broad definition of clear goals, the specific survey item asked the participants to decide if they had a strong sense of what they wanted to do after the completion of the activity. Solely from the questionnaire ratings, it is difficult to have a full picture of the type of goals participants were referring to and if they were also pre-planned or developed from the activity.

Clear Goals in Performing

In performing, goals were clear and realistic but not necessarily specific. The survey item was interpreted between pre-planned goals and emergent goals as well as between self and music or self and others playing the music. Others in the case refer to either the ensemble members or the audience.

Goals were divided between personal goals and activity-based goals. For example, some of Dash's personal goals included expressing himself, releasing pressing things on his mind, and reclaiming his identity. For Joyce, music making contains personal goals such as being "free at the moment and to be who you are without judgment and without anything having to be a certain way." Content-based and outcome-based goals were more about others and for others. Some of the activity-based goals included sharing new material, challenging the audience with new ideas, and inspiring and leaving the audience on a good note.

Goals were also divided between individual goals and group goals. Clay's individual goals were goals that he considered realistic and reachable. When setting his individual goals, he generally asks, "Is this doable, or am I just dreaming here?" Group goals depended on whether the participants were leading or following. If they were the leaders of the group, such as a pianist in a trio or a drummer in a band, their goal was to focus on leading the group. If they were following, however, goals were not always clear because goals were defined by others. In her choir, Yulie did not think about goals too much because "You can make a mistake and it does not matter, I mean, because we are in a group." Similarly, Joyce shared how her group goal was about community wellness and was less outcome-based.

Goals in performing were often associated with self-enjoyment. It can be inferred that process-based goals lead to a positive experience if they are set in advance. In general, classical musicians ($M = 4.34$) reported higher clear goals than popular musicians ($M = 4.20$).

Clear Goals in Teaching

In teaching, goals tend to be more spontaneous than pre-planned. Creating goals at the moment and adopting the goals based on feedback from students were apparent in teaching. However, in the beginning stage of teaching, having realistic goals and realizing that they may be out of reach based on a given situation were evident in the data. Generally, it took time for the participants to get to know their students, become comfortable, and be able to read the room to create new goals spontaneously and weave them into their teaching. Knowing what is realistic or not realistic affected how the participants felt about their experience in teaching.

Several participants described their goals as process goals or content goals. Process goals included letting students shine in class, have fun, and feel safe to learn. Joyce explained that it was more about “facilitating, allowing them to flow and create within the boundaries of whatever that activity is.” Content goals for students included developing a good ear, discovering their musicality, and collaborating with others in music making.

Other goals were outcome-based. The desirable outcome-based goals included empowering students to learn independently, thereby giving them an incentive to take ownership of their learning. Clara explained that when the time is right, she prepares students to empower themselves in their learning. Taking time to set up the goals and pacing them through is the key for her. Joyce explained how she reads the room, makes students comfortable with routine, and slowly introduces materials. Orion also shared how he must “break down the how to its most elemental components” for his students to grasp the concepts.

In group teaching, goals were more routine-based with a sense of expectancy, yet activities were open-ended for exploration and collaboration. In private lessons, goals were more driven towards specific outcomes in diverse ways. If the goals were more pre-planned and less moment-by-moment-based, the participants' means for clear goal characteristics was higher. In general, group teaching (M = 4.44) elicited slightly higher clear goals than private lessons (M = 4.33). The difference was due to the context of the setting in which the group teaching was based on a lesson plan involving structure and routine. While there was flexibility, the structure and routine were still in place for effective classroom management.

Summary

Table 4.4 presents a comparison of means and ranges for how the participants experienced clear goals in both teaching and performing.

Table 4.4

Comparing Means and Ranges for Participants' Experiences of Clear Goals in Teaching and Performing

Name	"I had a strong sense of what I wanted to do"			
	Performing		Teaching	
	Mean	Range	Mean	Range
Dash	5.00	5.00-5.00	4.67	4.00-5.00
Clara	5.00	5.00-5.00	5.00	5.00-5.00
Orion	4.67	4.00-5.00	4.00	3.00-5.00
Clay	4.00	4.00-4.00	4.00	4.00-4.00
Joyce	4.00	4.00-4.00	4.00	4.00-4.00
Eve	3.67	3.00-4.00	4.33	4.00-5.00
Yulie	3.33	2.00-4.00	4.67	4.00-5.00

Clear goals were highly present in the context of teaching (M = 4.38) and performing (M = 4.31). Having clear goals was the highest flow condition, compared to the other two conditions: unambiguous feedback and balance between challenge and skill. The types of goals were based on the setting, and goals were either pre-planned or developed during the activity.

Overall, the mean score for teaching ($M = 4.38$) was higher than performing ($M = 4.24$). Having clear goals in the teaching context was more stable than in the performance context as well. In general, goals were more pre-planned in performing and more spontaneous in teaching.

Having clear goals was fairly consistent for the participants across performing and teaching, except for Eve and Yulie. The low mean for Eve in a performance context was due to the fact she had to lead her group and, as a leader, she did not have a strong sense of what she wanted to do. Yulie did not have a clear goal because she was part of an ensemble and was following the conductor. In these cases, intentionality shaped clarity of goals more than the context of the setting.

Merging of Action and Awareness

Jackson and Marsh (1996) described the merging of action and awareness as an “involvement in the flow activity so deep that it becomes spontaneous or automatic” (p. 18). Essentially, “there is no awareness of self as separate from the actions one is performing” (p. 18). In this study, it is important to note that the two keywords, *spontaneous* and *automatic*, were described as two different states by the participants. Participants associated being spontaneous with improvisation and being in control with automatism. A statement such as “lost in the moment” was used to describe action and awareness merging among teaching artists.

Merging of Action and Awareness in Performing

In general, participants’ responses showed that the merging of action and awareness was a cognitive result of performing a highly familiarized piece in a highly comfortable performance setting. Dash explained that he could feel more spontaneous and automatic if he had performed the piece several times in the past. On the other hand, performing a new piece for the first time in an unfamiliar setting could be less flow-producing.

Within the performance, the merging of action and awareness took time. Dash and Orion explained how flow only happens after their minds and bodies are “warmed up.” The state in which they feel spontaneous and automatic occurs after they have played a few pieces into the concert program.

Some participants associated this survey item as being spontaneous or automatic based on what is written in the music. For example, Orion shared, “I think one of my biggest pet peeves about just like certain kinds of music, there’s always a place for it.” Orion’s experience is playing drums in a band that typically performs Americana or country songs. In his comments, he referred to his biggest pet peeve as being that there is always a place for improvisation in different kinds of music. He explained further that there is a place for an improvisational moment within any music. Similarly, Dash added that he strategically leaves some spaces in his performance for improvisation. He performs heavily rehearsed verses of poetry in a style of hip hop and rap, and in between the stanzas, he leaves timing for spontaneity. Even within the perspective of music itself, performing music presents opportunities for action and awareness to merge.

In general, participants felt both spontaneous and automatic while performing but clarified that the two states were different. The first level is feeling automatic. Joyce described this level as more technical and controlled. Feeling automatic usually derives from a lot of practice to make it “look easy.” The second level is feeling spontaneous. Clay described this as more organic, while Joyce described this as “playing with your soul.” Orion called this trusting yourself and taking risks. Overall, it was evident that teaching artists experienced action and awareness merging in both spontaneous and automatic ways, but in two different states in flux.

One of the main descriptions of this flow characteristic is that there is no awareness of self as separate from actions. When participants are in a beginning state of automatism, they do not have an awareness of self, even when their action is performing. Self is lost, however, when awareness leaves and the action of automatism frees one up to focus on the expressivity of other qualities of performance. Attempting to get into a state of being spontaneous raises one's perception of challenge and questions the level of risk tolerance. Therefore, improvisation can be perceived as the result of the highest state of flow in which one's action and awareness merge and there is freedom from automatism.

In general, classical musicians ($M = 4.50$) reported higher action-awareness merging than popular musicians ($M = 4.07$), which may be explained by how much classical musicians may feel more automatic when performing due to the vast number of rehearsals, practice, and ideal of "playing the right notes." The way the participants interpreted and related their experiences to this question was divided between whether they were assessing themselves on how spontaneous and automatic they were in the moment or how they were responding to the spontaneity of other ensemble members' spontaneity. The overall average for this flow characteristic was the third highest, compared to other characteristics, and some participants expressed that the state of being spontaneous and automatic was not always challenging or positive.

Merging of Action and Awareness in Teaching

Many similarities were found between teaching and performing for this flow characteristic. First, the amount of experience in teaching and the time spent with the class or students were the conditions for merging state of action and awareness. Similar to music having its place for improvisation within the piece, having an open lesson plan provided an opportunity

for action and awareness to merge and result in improvisational teaching. Joyce described this as a “shift from moment to moment still within the creative flow.” Dash called this being “on and off track.”

In any given moment of improvisation, teaching artists were spontaneously facing and solving challenges from their students. Clara shared an example of a moment when she “spontaneously helped the student with timing, fingering, and performance directions without having to think.” Participants shared less about being automatic in terms of following lesson plans, rather being more accustomed to automatic spontaneity in problem solving related to teaching.

In general, teachers with more experience had greater instances of the merging of action and awareness because they took more risks and trusted their past experiences. Therefore, action-awareness merging was closely related to their willingness to embrace the challenge and take the chance. In general, group teaching ($M = 4.22$) elicited similar action-awareness merging as private lessons ($M = 4.25$). All classroom teaching artists reported based on how they were responding to their students’ spontaneity, while private lesson teaching artists were equally divided between assessing themselves and responding to their students.

Summary

Table 4.5 presents a comparison of means and ranges for how the participants experienced the merging of action and awareness in both teaching and performing.

Table 4.5

Comparing Means and Ranges for Participants' Experiences of Action and Awareness Merging in Teaching and Performing

Name	"I did things spontaneously and automatically without having to think"			
	Performing		Teaching	
	Mean	Range	Mean	Range
Orion	5.00	5.00-5.00	4.00	4.00-4.00
Dash	4.67	4.00-5.00	5.00	5.00-5.00
Clara	4.67	4.00-5.00	5.00	5.00-5.00
Eve	4.33	4.00-5.00	4.00	3.00-5.00
Joyce	4.33	4.00-5.00	3.33	3.00-4.00
Clay	3.33	2.00-4.00	4.00	4.00-4.00
Yulie	3.00	1.00-4.00	4.33	4.00-5.00

Merging of action and awareness was the third highest characteristic in performing and teaching. In both activities, participants' level of experience was influential, the process of merging took time, and the characteristic occurred in both performing and teaching. The most important finding in performing was that while there are continuous shifts between spontaneous and automatic when action and awareness merge, the two are distinct states, and the self is not separated when that state is automatic. In teaching, participants experienced more invitation of spontaneity coming from others to enter the state of spontaneity. However, participants expressed how the nature of teaching does not allow much room for loss of self, especially in the group setting, because of a necessity to be in tune with or attentive to one's surroundings.

One of the most interesting comparisons was that the merging of action and awareness in the teaching context was much more stable than in the performance context. Teaching also induced slightly more merging of action and awareness than performing. This may be due to how the influence of student spontaneity was more integrated into teaching than performing.

Unambiguous Feedback

Having immediate and clear feedback is another condition for flow. Jackson and Marsh (1996) explained that “immediate and clear feedback is received, usually from the activity itself, allowing the person to know he or she is succeeding in the set goal” (p. 19). For an athlete such as a rower, receiving feedback as a movement was an example. Csikszentmihalyi and Csikszentmihalyi (1988) expanded that depending on the activity, the type of feedback may be diverse. However, the result is the same in that the feedback informs whether one is successfully meeting one’s goal.

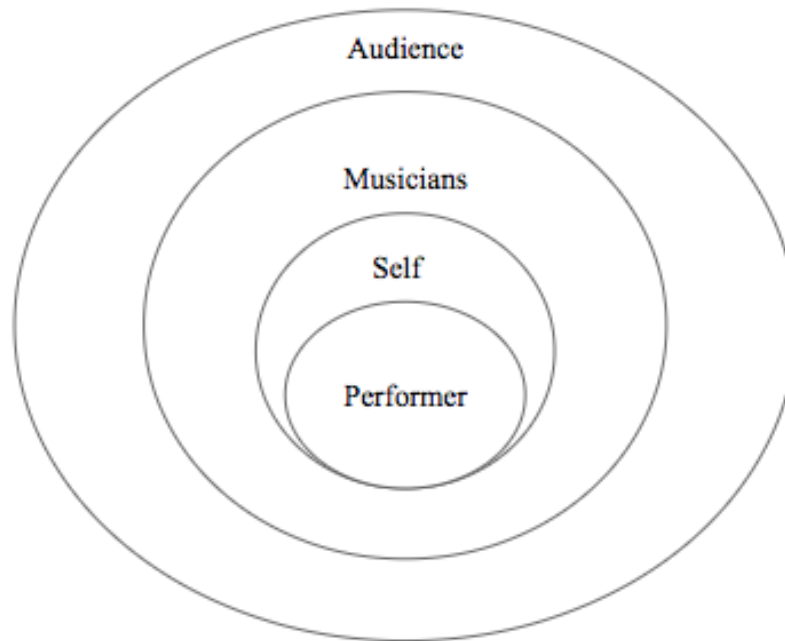
In this study, the feedback for performing came from oneself, others (such as ensemble members), and the audience. For teaching, feedback was perceived through students, parents, and other teachers. Feedback was informative of a judgment from others, which could be internalized similarly or differently. However, how much control one has in the types of the feedback one receives differs. For example, if the feedback is coming from within oneself, it is highly controllable. If feedback is coming from others such as another teacher in the room, one does not have as much as control of the feedback itself, whether it is positive or negative, because it is ultimately coming from others. How one perceives the feedback as either interference or collaborative responsiveness can be individually monitored and controlled.

Unambiguous Feedback in Performing

In performing, the source of feedback could come from one’s self or others, such as the members of an ensemble or an audience (see Figure 4.1).

Figure 4.1

Circles of Feedback Performing



When performing on a violin, Clay described feedback he receives from himself as a self-dialogue, where he is listening to the sound he produces and concentrating on the degree of his physical condition. He described this self-dialogue as having within himself both a teacher and a student, interacting with each other simultaneously. In his words, “I keep in dialogue with myself” to be on *track*.

Similarly, Orion explained how he could perceive whether he was “on track or off track” by playing music with others. He stated, “I definitely had a sense that I was performing well and that other people paying attention were into it.” Through visual cues and listening, he was getting clear feedback from his other ensemble members on how the performance was progressing.

However, perceiving clear feedback from the audience varied among the participants’ experiences. For example, Orion could feel the performance going well if the setting was

intimate and if “people are hooting and hollering.” Dash, on the other hand, had a good idea about how he was performing but not about how the performance was being received. He emphasized that people show feedback in diverse ways and that, sometimes, he would have a “rougher crowd.” Feedback from the audience was vaguer at the beginning of the performance but became clearer as they warmed up to the music and performers.

Responses from the participants showed that various feedback was evident in performance settings. The responses confirmed that not only does feedback inform if one’s goals are successful, but also how adjustments could be made if the goal is not attained. Eve explained that if the feedback is affecting the way she performs in a negative way, she claimed that “I almost have to close my ears and play, so it is not always good that I am having immediate feedback and am aware of what is going on.” If the feedback is an interference, one controls how feedback should be perceived, but if the feedback is a collaborative response, control does not matter in how one perceives it.

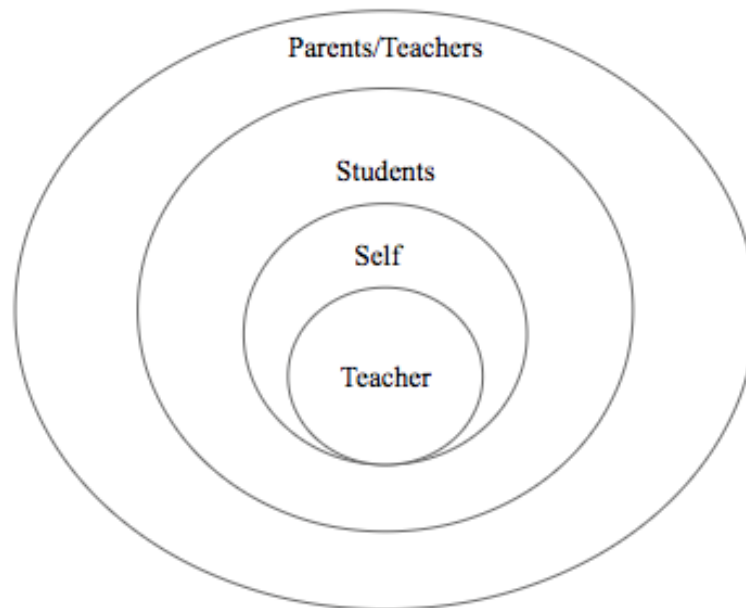
Feedback also varied between visual, physical, and auditory feedback. Visual cues included eye contact, physical cues included movement and body language, and auditory cues included changes in the tempo or progression of the dynamics in the sound. In general, the responses to feedback were detailed and vivid. How one perceived and used feedback differed based on whether the feedback was from being self-involved in the activity, from other musicians, or from the audience. Overall, classical musicians ($M = 4.50$) elicited higher unambiguous feedback than popular musicians ($M = 3.87$).

Unambiguous Feedback in Teaching

In teaching, participants perceived feedback mostly from their students at the moment. Feedback from various sources and the level of control associated with each source are shown in Figure 4.2.

Figure 4.2

Circles of Feedback in Teaching



According to Dash, feedback from one's self is more immediate and easier to respond to, while feedback from others may have to be weighted on a scale. The most cited type of response participants received was from the students.

In relation to performing, participants compared the level of response from their students to the level of other musicians with whom they have performed. Alternatively, feedback from students was perceived similarly to that from the audience in that the response does not always directly reflect the quality of one's teaching due to extraneous variables like peer pressure. Dash provided an example of how he could always gauge his students' reactions relative to a scale. In

group teaching, the feedback could be deceptive due to the element of peer pressure being present in the classroom. In other cases, feedback from the students could simply be related to individual mood on a particular day rather than from the teaching itself. Due to these external factors, feedback from students is not always accurate or clear. In this sense, students can both act as collaborators and interrupters, in which the feedback could be positive (collaborative) or negative (interfering).

Unlike performing, where feedback is more immediate through various senses such as visual, auditory, and physical, feedback from students is more diverse and unclear because it is based more on perception from the receiver. Orion explained how feedback from his students allows him to know if he is reaching the students, adapting to their comfort level, and succeeding in the goals of a particular activity. These conclusions are derived not only from students who are sharing their feedback but also from the individual teacher themselves who is trying to read the room and perceive feedback to have a complete understanding of any situation.

In general, private lessons ($M = 4.17$) elicited slightly higher unambiguous feedback than group teaching ($M = 4.00$). The small difference showed that teachers who teach in a classroom setting perceived a similar level of feedback even with a larger student group.

Summary

Table 4.6 presents a comparison of means and ranges for how the participants experienced unambiguous feedback in both teaching and performing.

Table 4.6

Comparing Means and Ranges for Participants' Experiences of Unambiguous Feedback in Teaching and Performing

Name	"I had a good idea while I was teaching/performing about how well I was teaching/performing"			
	Performing		Teaching	
	Mean	Range	Mean	Range
Orion	5.00	5.00-5.00	4.33	4.00-5.00
Clara	5.00	5.00-5.00	5.00	5.00-5.00
Eve	4.00	4.00-4.00	4.00	4.00-4.00
Dash	3.67	4.00-5.00	4.00	4.00-4.00
Yulie	3.67	3.00-4.00	4.33	4.00-5.00
Clay	3.67	3.00-4.00	3.33	2.00-4.00
Joyce	3.33	3.00-4.00	3.67	3.00-4.00

Clear and immediate feedback is one of the main conditions for flow, yet it was the fifth dimension overall. Feedback in the participants' experiences was diverse in both performing and teaching. In performing, the sources of feedback (self, musicians, audience) were divided equally, while in teaching, the feedback primarily came from the students. In performing, the types of feedback were visual, physical, and auditory, while in teaching, it was more generalized by external factors, such as whether disruption was present or absent.

One of the most interesting comparisons was that the stability of unambiguous feedback was similar in both performing and teaching. The difference between the total average of teaching ($M = 4.09$) and performing ($M = 4.05$) was the lowest among all flow characteristics. In general, experiencing unambiguous feedback was consistent for individuals across performing and teaching, except for Orion and Yulie. For Orion, feedback was harder to perceive because of his short amount of teaching experience; for Yulie, feedback from performing was difficult to perceive because of her experience being in a bigger ensemble.

Sense of Control

Sense of control is one of the critical characteristics of flow. It is also one of the characteristics difficult to define and describe in the context of flow. The original description was about being in control, “a sense that one can in principle deal with the situation because one knows how to respond to whatever happens next” (Csikszentmihalyi, 1975). However, the definition has evolved from being in control to having a “paradox of control” (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990, p. 59) and a “sense of control (Csikszentmihalyi, 1993, p. 181), which refers to the idea that one sees control as possible. Custodero (2002) described control as a sense of potential control in which what one does matters and one’s actions are consequential.

Sense of Control in Performing

In the context of performing, participants shared that the more they were involved in a group, the less often they sensed that control was possible. The fewer people in the group, the higher the sense that control is possible. When performing with a bigger ensemble, a sense of control is described as more of following than exercising control. A sense of control that feels more automatic takes time to build. Clay explained how it takes several attempts and repetitions to feel in control to act freely. Another condition that affected sense of control was familiarity with the venue. If the participants were more familiar with the venue, they felt more comfortable taking necessary risks to feel a sense of control. Similarly, the more participants were prepared or perceived they were prepared, the possibility of being in control increased. Their experiences support the idea of how preparation falls under the category of subjective control, or within what is controllable before the actual performance.

The actuality of performing is about exercising control. In the performance context, Joyce described exercising control as balancing control. This type of control was what participants

described as alternating between following versus creating. This was also the dimension in which you “feel like you can do anything in that state,” as expressed by a runner in Jackson’s (1992) study.

Based on the interviews, more than half of the teaching artists interpreted this characteristic based on their feelings and experience in the moment. In general, classical musicians ($M = 4.34$) reported a higher sense of control than popular musicians ($M = 3.93$). It is possible that this comes from a higher frequency of controlled expectation in performance for classical musicians, compared to how popular musicians experienced control relative to their art.

Sense of Control in Teaching

In group teaching, the sense of control was affected by the type of teaching space. One of the most interesting findings was that teaching artists felt more in control when the space was open but felt less in control when the teaching space was restricted to desks and chairs. Clara stated, “I love that big studio because I can control them.” The more the teacher had experience in exercising control, the quicker the teacher was able to adapt to the space.

One way to feel in control in the teaching context is to have a routine or lesson plan to pace through because, in many cases, students tend to rush and want to move on quickly. Therefore, keeping the pace and building important steps contribute to exercising control and, ultimately, producing flow. When the teacher feels ready, however, the teacher can shift the roles, allowing students to control their learning and lead the class. The ultimate control in teaching is when it comes from the student. A sense of control in self-teaching allows students to build tools for themselves to self-sustain and be self-motivated. It also extends to students who can self-direct and govern themselves in learning, creating a team of learners. When the students are as young as toddlers, however, they are bound to discover more things on their own.

In teaching, participants interpreted the survey questions between their perception of self in the moment or their perception prior to the activity. In the moment of teaching, exercising control manifested as pacing the lessons and shifting roles. In general, private lessons (M = 4.08) elicited a higher sense of control than group teaching (M = 3.78).

Summary

Table 4.7 presents a comparison of means and ranges for how the participants experienced sense of control in both teaching and performing

Table 4.7

Comparing Means and Ranges for Participants’ Experiences of Sense of Control in Teaching and Performing

Name	Performing		Teaching	
	Mean	Range	Mean	Range
Orion	5.00	5.00-5.00	2.67	2.00-4.00
Clara	5.00	5.00-5.00	5.00	5.00-5.00
Dash	5.00	5.00-5.00	3.67	3.00-4.00
Joyce	4.00	4.00-4.00	4.00	4.00-4.00
Clay	4.00	4.00-4.00	4.33	4.00-5.00
Eve	3.67	3.00-4.00	4.33	4.00-5.00
Yulie	1.67	1.00-2.00	3.67	3.00-4.00

One of the biggest findings of this characteristic was that in both contexts of teaching and performing, it was important for the participants to consider alternative options to shape how the activity would progress. The survey item was interpreted mostly as how the teaching artists felt in control in the actual moment of the activity, rather than how they perceived their control beforehand. The balance of control in performing appeared as an alternation between following the music and creating music, while in teaching, it appeared as pacing the teaching content and shifting roles.

One interesting comparison was that sense of control was more stable in the context of performing than in teaching. The difference between the total average of teaching ($M = 3.95$) and performing ($M = 4.05$) was minimal. One of the most critical findings was that except for Joyce and Clara, experiencing a sense of control was inconsistent for the individuals across both performing and teaching. The biggest difference came from Orion, who had less experience and confidence in teaching compared to his experience performing.

Loss of Self-consciousness

Jackson and Marsh (1996) described flow as a state in which consciousness of self disappears and one is in unison with the activity. In flow, loss of self-consciousness does not fully disappear; rather, one is not focusing on one's body and mind in the moment. In the context of this study, consciousness is ordered and defined by music. Participants described this dimension as occurring when the process seemed more intuitive and organic. Orion described it as "living it."

Loss of Self-consciousness in Performing and Teaching

Loss of self-consciousness in performance tends to occur when there is a balance of challenge and skills within a musical piece that is supported by a performer's high confidence, trust, and risk tolerance. Dash explained he is confident and often "gets in the zone" when on stage because he is able to "get the jitters out during the rehearsal." Clay added that "there is an element of risk. But, you know, there's an element of gain as well" when one's attention is not solely focused on information or feedback. The loss of self-consciousness closely aligns with the merging of action and awareness (taking the risk) and autotelic experience (result from the risk). Conversely, there is a paradox between loss of self-consciousness and unambiguous feedback because when one is lost in the moment, one is less perceptive of any feedback.

The setting also affected how much the participants could *let go* during their performance. If the performance was being recorded, they took fewer risks. If the performance was not being recorded, they took more risks. In general, popular musicians ($M = 3.87$) elicited a higher loss of self-consciousness than classical musicians ($M = 3.84$). In essence, the averages showed the level of risk tolerance in a challenging environment between classical and popular musicians.

This survey item was interpreted in the same manner as other characteristics, with inquiry about whether this perception was pre-planned or experienced in the moment between one's self and others. Several participants shared that they were more lost in self-consciousness when teaching because of their familiarity and experience with both teaching and their specific students. For this reason, participants who taught private lessons did not have specific lesson plans at all. Dash, as a visiting teacher throughout his residencies, explained how he is often not adequately informed about his class, such as in the form of IEPs, before arriving. Therefore, it takes him even more time to get to know his students and familiarize himself with the space before he can teach spontaneously. Yulie, who teaches toddlers, did not report any 5s due to a high unknown factor resulting from the spontaneous behavior of their age group, making it important to weigh any risk carefully.

Because there were both objective and subjective dangers within the activity of teaching, there was also an element of taking risks without fully knowing if the challenge and skills were balanced (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990). With regard to performing, this dimension occurred when there was a perception that challenge and skills are balanced with high confidence and desire. In such a case, Clay explained, "once you know you have the ability to do it, now you need the

desire.” The difference between group teaching (M = 4.11) and private lessons (M = 4.08) in the loss of self-consciousness was not significant.

Summary

Table 4.8 presents a comparison of means and ranges for how the participants experienced loss of self-consciousness in both teaching and performing.

Table 4.8

Comparing Means and Ranges for Participants’ Experience of Loss of Self-consciousness in Teaching and Performing

Name	“I was not worried about my performance while performing”			
	Performing		Teaching	
	Mean	Range	Mean	Range
Joyce	4.33	4.00-5.00	4.67	4.00-5.00
Orion	4.00	2.00-5.00	3.00	2.00-5.00
Eve	4.00	4.00-4.00	4.00	3.00-5.00
Clay	4.00	4.00-4.00	4.33	4.00-5.00
Yulie	3.67	3.00-4.00	4.67	4.00-5.00
Clara	3.67	1.00-5.00	5.00	5.00-5.00
Dash	3.33	3.00-4.00	3.00	2.00-4.00

Loss of self-consciousness is the seventh flow dimension overall. One of the suggested outcomes of the analysis was that loss of self-consciousness conflicts with having unambiguous feedback because one does not process the information of self as normally as one would when in the state of lost of self-consciousness. In performing, this survey item was interpreted mostly as a state prior to the start of the activity; in teaching, it was interpreted mostly in the moment of teaching.

An interesting comparison was that while the average mean score for the loss of self-consciousness was higher in teaching, it was more stable in the context of performing. Experiencing the loss of self-consciousness varied for individuals across performing and

teaching. Clay, Yulie, Joyce, and Clara had an average that was slightly lower for performing, while Dash and Orion had an average that was slightly lower for teaching. Only Eve stayed consistent across performing and teaching.

Balance of Challenge and Skills

Balance of challenge and skills is one of the most critical conditions for flow because two elements in balance create a positive experience, while, if left unbalanced, lead to a negative experience. In flow, “the person perceives a balance between the challenges of a situation and one’s skills, with both operating at a personally high level” (Jackson & Marsh, 1996). This happens when the perceived challenge of an activity becomes an opportunity to stretch an existing skill, thereby becoming a growing and learning experience.

Balance of Challenge and Skills in Performing

Participants shared that performing music is inherently challenging cognitively, physically, and emotionally. They said there is this feeling of “pew!” after a performance. Having prior experience informed players to perceive the challenge and evaluate whether it is reachable. However, participants shared that the perceived level of challenge increased as the number of experiences increased, so that it became more difficult to reach a state of flow with more experiences.

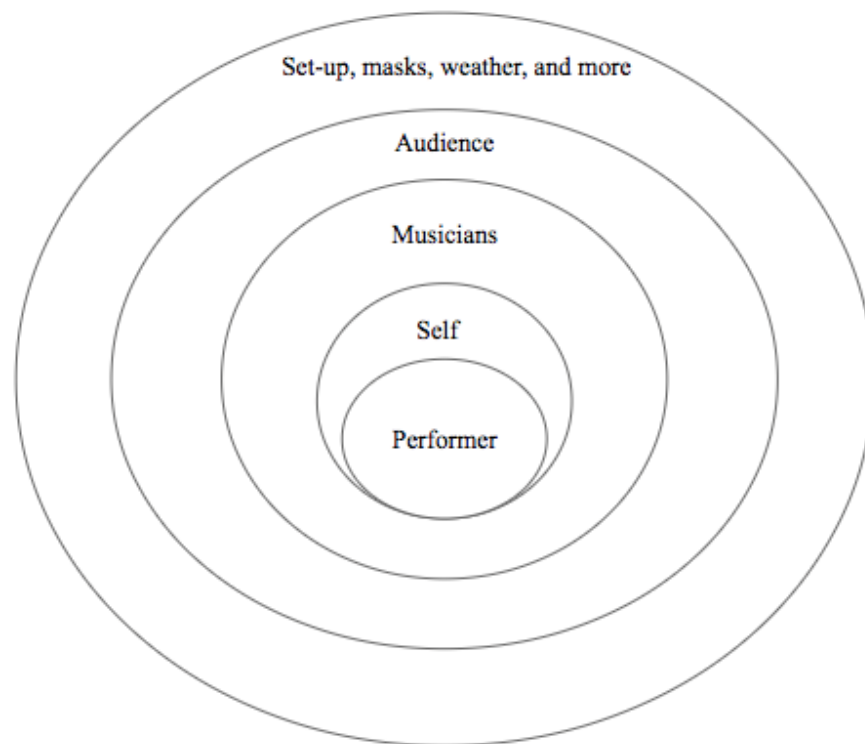
In the context of performances, challenges are divided into internal (subjective) and external (objective). Internal challenges include expectation for oneself and being able to respond to self-feedback. External challenges are those from outside of one’s self, such as playing with others in an ensemble. This directs back to the circles of controls and feedback figures above. Another example of an internal challenge is reducing nervousness and keeping the level of confidence high. For example, Eve shared that sometimes, this feeling of confidence

exceeds her attitude towards the challenge. External challenges, on the other hand, include not knowing what will happen, not knowing how other musicians or audiences may respond, and having sudden set-up or schedule changes.

This survey item was most diversely interpreted among participants, according to the circles presented in Figure 4.3. The perception of this question varied more in performing than in teaching.

Figure 4.3

Circle of Challenges and Influences in Performing



One of the biggest findings was the perception of how the participants dealt with their external challenges. In general, classical musicians ($M = 4.67$) elicited a higher challenge-skill balance than popular musicians ($M = 3.40$), which was the highest difference between the two groups among other flow characteristics and conditions.

Balance of Challenge and Skills in Teaching

Among all the flow characteristics and conditions combined, participants contributed the most comments to answering the question about their balance of challenge and skills in teaching. It is also the only flow condition in which all participants interpreted the survey items as being in the moment between themselves and others, such as students, parents, and other teachers. These findings highlighted how teaching is highly associated with being present in the moment with others, especially with regard to balancing challenges and skills.

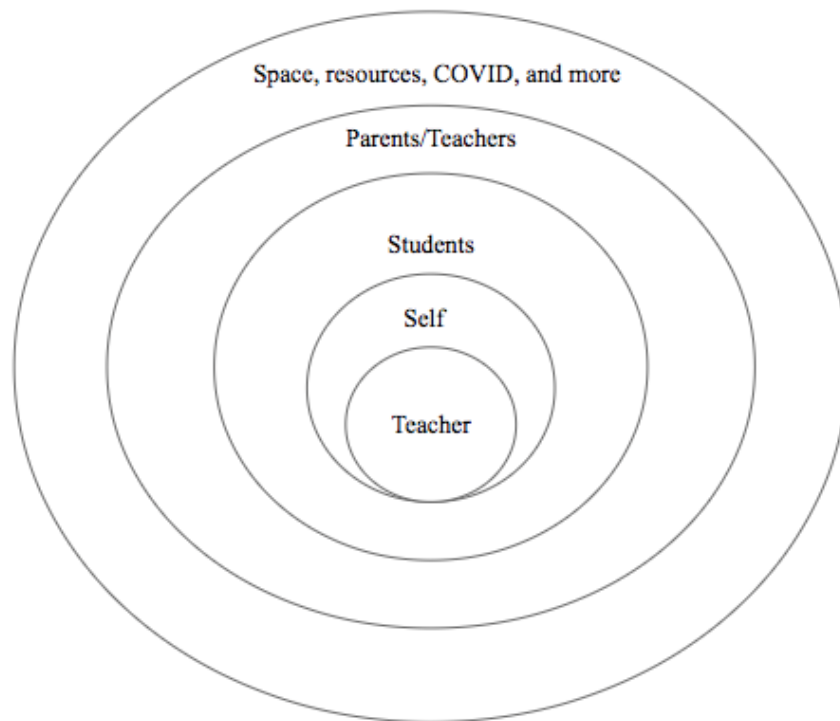
As in performing, participants shared that teaching was also inherently challenging, cognitively, physically, and emotionally. Participants described the act of balancing challenges and skills in teaching as “improvising” through curveballs that are thrown to them. Safe space, familiarity, and trust were all necessary components for participants to take the risks that come with an improvised spontaneous response. When the challenge and skills seemed to be balanced, Orion described it as “all wheels in motion.” This was also described for teachers understanding and meeting students where they are. In teaching, this balance does not always occur from multiple variables.

Similar to performing, there are two types of challenges in teaching: internal and external. Challenges that are internal are cognitive, such as assessing, pacing, and multitasking. External challenges could include limited resources from the school, the effects of a pandemic, and the students themselves. Several participants reported that challenges from students themselves, such as ability or desire to learn, were the biggest obstacles in striking a balance. It is also important to note that not only were the types of challenges important in balancing the skills but the number of the challenges as well: if there were too many changes in the teaching setting, participants felt overwhelmed. Both Figures 4.3 and 4.4 reflect the theory of the ecological

system, claiming that there are multiple sites of influences on children’s experiences; this also applies to experiences in human development across ages (Bronfenbrenner, 1979).

Figure 4.4

Circle of Challenges and Control in Teaching



Clay and Joyce, with the lowest average of 2.67 shared that the challenges they face come from the students and their desire to learn. The difference between Clay and Joyce was that Clay believed that more experience equated with greater success for meeting a challenge, while Joyce felt that the amount of experience was irrelevant. Clara, with an average of 5.00, stated that with the number of experiences under her belt, she has not yet felt a challenge in teaching that she was not able to meet. These responses show the importance of an individual’s own perception in interpreting challenges and negotiating the necessary skills to meet the challenges. One of the most interesting findings was that the balance of challenge and skills was the only

flow that elicited the same level between private lessons (M = 3.67) and group teaching (M = 3.67).

Summary

Table 4.9 presents a comparison of means and ranges for how the participants experienced balance of challenge and skills in both teaching and performing.

Table 4.9

Comparing Means and Ranges for Participants' Experiences of Balance of Challenge and Skills in Teaching and Performing

Name	Performing		Teaching	
	Mean	Range	Mean	Range
Clara	5.00	5.00-5.00	5.00	5.00-5.00
Dash	4.67	4.00-5.00	4.33	4.00-5.00
Eve	4.33	4.00-5.00	3.67	3.00-4.00
Yulie	4.00	4.00-4.00	4.00	4.00-4.00
Orion	3.33	3.00-4.00	3.33	2.00-4.00
Clay	3.33	3.00-4.00	2.67	2.00-3.00
Joyce	2.33	2.00-3.00	2.67	2.00-3.00

Balance of challenge and skills is the key definition of flow. In performing and teaching, however, the average scores were the second lowest among the nine flow characteristics and conditions. The averages of 3.67 in teaching and 3.86 in performing showed that both activities have inherent challenges that can be difficult. To achieve flow is to be in a state in which one's perception of challenge and one's perception of skill are both high.

An interesting finding was that in a performance context, challenges were diversely interpreted, while in teaching, the main challenge was interpreted as being in the moment of teaching with students. Challenges in both contexts included internal and external challenges.

This flow condition was closely related to a sense of control and merging of action and awareness.

In general, experiencing balance in challenge and skill was fairly consistent for individuals across performing and teaching. Only three participants perceived and interpreted the question differently between teaching and performing. The difference between the total average of teaching ($M = 3.67$) and performing ($M = 3.76$) was the second to lowest among all flow characteristics.

Transformation of Time

Music and teaching are often associated with having a distortion of temporal experience. In flow, the perception of time either speeds up or slows down. Sometimes, “time may simply become irrelevant and out of one’s awareness” (Jackson & Marsh, 1996, p. 20). Csikszentmihalyi (1990) acknowledged that this dimension may not be as universally experienced because, in some cases, awareness of time is necessary to fulfill the activity, such as swimmers knowing their splits and musicians knowing the meter that organizes the pulse within a piece.

In music, many theorists have written about multiple temporalities in music, a continuous transformation of time. Multiple temporalities refer to many dimensions of times in which one feels at the same time. Polyphonic (vertical) refers to layers of voices at a one point in time, while monophonic (horizontal) refers to how music progresses to time from left to right or past to present. In music, experience becomes a space in which past, present, and future are fused by memory, intuition, and intention (Nachmanovich, 1990).

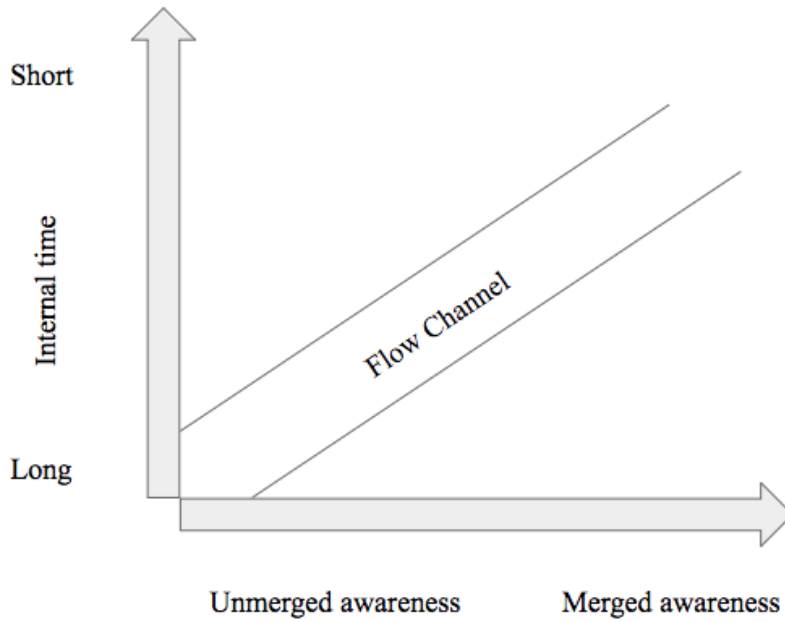
Transformation of Time in Performing

In the context of performing, several participants described two types of time, clock time and event time. Clock time is dictated by the music itself and results from this feeling of automatism from high preparation and repeated practice. Event time is when time is flowing more spontaneously, depending on the degree of one's awareness of time. For Eve, the slower the tempo of the music, the more freedom she felt for spontaneity. Participants reported a lower number in the questionnaire if they felt closer to clock time and higher if they felt closer to event time in which sense of time is altered.

Participants also described a paradox in time when performing exists. Based on the circumstances, time could feel shorter or longer. Eve shared that time felt longer for her when she is using many cognitive skills to play a piece that needed more practice and was too challenging. Conversely, time feels longer when one is not aware of time and is fully engaged and completely engrossed in performing (see Figure 4.5). This experience is described as a "journey," which is often associated with the warm feeling of being with and drawing positive warmth energy from others. Orion explained that when he is "living in it so much," time is not only shorter but *timeless*.

Figure 4.5

Event Time in Flow



To add another layer to this discussion, Figure 4.6 illustrates how time appears in one's cognitive space when awareness is divided and merged.

Figure 4.6

Two States of Awareness of Time

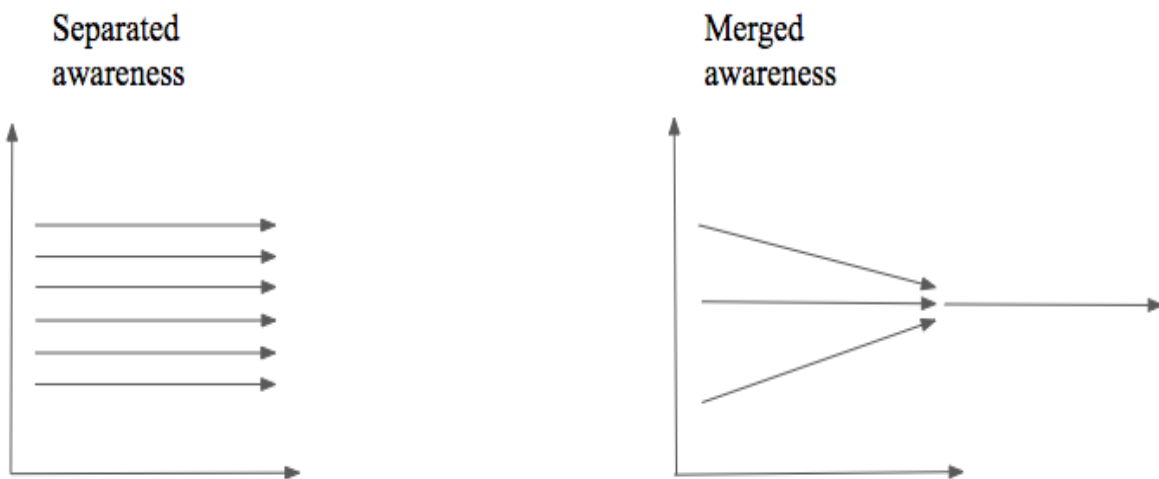


Figure 4.6 reflects the polyphonic strata or time strata that Clifton (1983, in Figure 2.1 of Chapter 2) described about experiencing distinct events as either blended, connected, or separated in music as time moves in motion. The way in which polyphonic strata can be felt either joined, connected, or separated in music reflects how teaching artists described their state during transformation of time when performing.

Most of the participants interpreted this question as time being distorted, while some anticipated distortion of time based on the interaction with others in the moment. Four participants shared an average of 3.33. Dash had the lowest average of 1.33—his experience correlated the quantity of rehearsal time with less perceived feedback and greater expectancy of how time would flow during the performance. Clara, with the highest average of 3.67, explained that the way time passes was neutral because she is performing in *real time*. In general, classical musicians ($M = 3.50$) elicited a higher sense of time transformation than popular musicians ($M = 2.67$).

Transformation of Time in Teaching

In teaching, participants reported that they had a good sense of how time is passing. Similar to performing, time was also divided into two categories: clock time vs. event time. In the case of the clock time, three participants shared that they had an ability to sense the passage of time during class. They physically knew when 30, 45, or 60 minutes have gone by. Dash explained that he is usually hyper-aware of time and can rely internally for clock time. An analogy of this to performance would be how performers repeated rehearse written notes or verses in a rap poem so that they have an awareness of the length of time built into their performance.

Unlike written scores, lessons are generally planned with open spaces and transitions between one activity and the next. Participants emphasized how the way teachers move from one activity to another is key in keeping students engaged. The two figures illustrated above are also directly applicable to teaching. When students are younger, they have shorter attention spans that teachers have to follow at all times. Because of this, Yulie, as a toddler teacher, explained that she does not usually experience the state of merged awareness when teaching toddlers.

Findings showed that the survey question was interpreted as either an expectation of time challenged through a built-in teaching block or an anticipation of time. The two figures illustrated above show that the ways participants experienced time in performing are similar to teaching. While both exhibited relatively low numbers, private lessons ($M = 2.75$) elicited a higher transformation of time than group classes ($M = 2.33$); in this case, the results are difficult to interpret because some participants expressed that it was already the norm for them to feel the time passing differently.

Summary

Table 4.10 presents a comparison of the means and ranges for participants' experiences of transformation of time in both teaching and performing.

Table 4.10

Comparing Means and Ranges for Participants' Experiences of Transformation of Time in Teaching and Performing

"The way time passed seemed to be different from normal"				
Name	Performing		Teaching	
	Mean	Range	Mean	Range
Clara	3.67	3.00-5.00	3.00	3.00-3.00
Joyce	3.33	3.00-4.00	3.00	3.00-3.00
Yulie	3.33	2.00-5.00	2.00	2.00-2.00
Eve	3.33	2.00-4.00	2.33	2.00-3.00
Orion	3.33	2.00-4.00	3.67	3.00-5.00
Clay	2.00	2.00-2.00	2.00	2.00-2.00
Dash	1.33	1.00-2.00	2.00	1.00-3.00

Csikszentmihalyi (1990) previously implied that this dimension may not be as universal as others. In the context of performance and teaching, this dimension has received equivocal support from the teaching artist population in this study. Reports showed that the transformation of time in teaching and performing was not clear-cut because, in both contexts, multiple temporalities were occurring at the same time.

Transformation of time was the lowest flow characteristic among all nine characteristics and conditions. While participants certainly felt a transformation of time in their activities, they had greater awareness of time passing, affecting the state of flow. In both contexts, the two types of time measurement were clock time and event time. In both teaching and performing, participants reported multiple temporalities occurring simultaneously. This flow characteristic, therefore, most closely related to the merging of action and awareness dimensions and other flow characteristics as well.

Except for Clay, experiencing time transformation was inconsistent for individuals across performing and teaching. The total average transformation of time in teaching ($M = 2.57$) and in performing ($M = 2.90$) was the only flow dimension scored below 3.00. In acknowledging that the way time passes is different in the context of performing and teaching, this survey item should be revised to fit the study accordingly.

Conclusion

The purpose of Chapter 4 was to analyze both quantitative and qualitative data across seven participants to understand more deeply each flow characteristic and condition. Critical findings included the following:

1. Both intrinsic and extrinsic rewards are associated with teaching and performing.
2. Flow needs a period of warm-up time from all parties involved.

3. Level of feedback is associated with the level of control of one's perception.
4. One's sense that control is possible when in action contradicts a loss of self-consciousness in a flow state.
5. Sense of control is described as balancing control in pacing, shifting, and inviting.
6. Spontaneous and automatic are two different states of flow.
7. The low average for balance of challenges and skills confirmed that performing and teaching were both perceived as challenging.
8. Multiple temporalities exist in both teaching and performing.

Many additional factors that were important to flow did not necessarily fit into the nine categories, such as perception towards risks, trust, confidence, familiarity, amount of experience, and amount of pre-planned intentions such as goals. Additional interesting findings included how survey items were diversely interpreted in their own way, the relationship between the closely related flow characteristics, and the stability of averages across participants for each flow characteristic. To gain more insights into the individual experience of flow in two contexts, Chapter 5 next presents unique flow portraits of all seven participants.

Chapter 5 – Individual Flow Portraits

Overview

All of my participants are unique individuals who actively perform and teach. Recognizing the various performing and teaching backgrounds and experiences they brought to the study, I dedicated this chapter to understanding the flow experience in performing and teaching for each participant. The purpose of this chapter is to present unique individual flow portraits after a thorough analysis of the combined data.

My goal in this chapter is to allow each teaching artist to present himself or herself using as many of their own words and voices as much as possible. In Chapter 4, each flow characteristic and condition was discussed in the context of performing, followed by teaching. In Chapter 5, participants are divided between private and group class teachers and are presented in order of lowest to highest number of teaching experiences in each group. Their flow experiences in teaching are discussed first in this chapter and each individual profile includes a visual representation which the participants drew of their flow in performing and teaching.

During the process of analysis, I continued to realize that all the teaching artists were unique and full of surprises but also relatable in a way with which I could deeply connect. I consider each teaching artist's case individual yet representative of the general population of teaching artists because of the themes found across all participants, as explained further in Chapter 6.

Private Lessons

This section focuses on understanding more about the experience of flow in the context of performing and teaching private lessons. Flow dimensions such as autotelic experience, unambiguous feedback, sense of control, and transformation of time were more prominent in

private lessons than in group teaching. In this group, the four teaching artists (age range 29-57, mean age = 44) who primarily teach in a private lesson setting are Orion, Clay, Eve, and Clara.

Orion had the least amount of teaching experience and Clara had the highest. During the time of the data collection, everyone except Orion taught for more than 5 hours a week. Both Clay and Clara taught strictly online, and Eve was a mix of online and in person. Only Orion was strictly in person. The age group of their private students ranged from Pre-K to adult, and participants generally taught in studio or private music academies.

This group consisted of one drummer, one violinist, and two pianists. They were all substantially experienced performers with at least 20 years of experience and perform regularly at least once a week. Venues where they perform included a jazz bar, a recording studio, and café salons. They all have played as a part of ensembles, and the types of music they played ranged from Americana, classical, and country to pop music. Participants practiced for more than 3 hours per week, except for Orion who practiced between 2 and 3 hours per week.

“Orion,” the Shooting Star

I want to go be a rock star in front of a bunch of like kids!

If I didn't really freaking love music, I would not be doing any of this stuff.
If that's your guiding light, then you're going to be okay.

Orion is a 29-year-old White teaching artist who is a professional drummer for two bands and a private lesson teacher at a small music academy based in New Jersey. In addition to being a performer and a teacher, he is also a music administrator and radio audio engineer in New York City. During the study, Orion made continuous associations with the symbol of a star. For him, a star embodied who he was in lessons—someone who is bright and illuminating for others. It also represented the powerful exchange of energy that occurs with his band members when performing; he described these moments as when the stars “aligned.” Orion has been drumming

since childhood, but only started to teach about 3 years ago when he felt a deep motivation to begin teaching. Orion was the youngest participant and also the least experienced teacher in this study.

During the week, Orion teaches about 3-4 hours per week and his students range from Pre-K to elementary. Each lesson usually lasts about 30 minutes. Throughout the week, he usually has a few rehearsals for his two bands and performs during the weekend at a bar in the city. Both bands, which consist of one guitarist, one bassist, one singer, and one drummer, play Americana and country music incorporating both originals and covers. Typically, one night's gig lasts about 3 hours.

When I first contacted him, Orion was excited and happy to participate in this study, eager to make new discoveries. Despite his tight schedule, Orion completed three teaching and three performing questionnaires with plentiful written responses in early December 2021, followed by two interviews and one focus group meeting. He was eager to reflect on his life and values and find connections between performing and teaching.

In Teaching

Orion shared that when he arrives to his lessons, he walks in with the intention of being a rock star in front of his students, one who is inspiring and magnetic. His main goal is to encourage students and pursue desirable outcomes by “breaking down the how-to in its most elemental components.” As a young teacher, however, it was particularly hard for Orion to discuss what was worrisome in his teaching.

He expressed that it was difficult for him to empower his students when he was *figuring it out*. The risk factor for him was not knowing if he could help with the challenges that students were facing. He shared that there were moments in teaching when he did not know what to do

next. There were also moments in which he was pivoting teaching strategies but losing confidence from employing strategies that did not always work. His sense of worry was closely tied to whether he felt the task was within his reach and scope as a teacher. Another setback for him was a lack of sufficient equipment, such as having only one drum set in the room.

Orion explained that as a young teacher, he always focused on his students. He also noticed himself “adapting the activity several times to work better with the student and simplifying without much thought.” He explained that pacing is a good way to feel a sense of control and balance in challenge and skills, and he believed that if the teacher paces the trajectory of the lesson thoughtfully, students will meet their challenges. Therefore, much of his focus is on in-the-moment problem solving. When a challenge arises, he meets it by reading the room and responding to the feedback he gets from his students, thereby gaining new information and skills. Although he can be highly absorbed in the teaching situation, Orion explained that he is not always aware of the passage of time to an exact degree. Time feels slower or faster, depending on how much he is aware of his surroundings.

Orion reported that teaching is generally an autotelic experience for him, and he responds positively to his students’ growth and love for music. He enjoys teaching mostly because of building close relationships with his students.

I just find it so much more gratifying.... I usually walk away from teaching experiences feeling that way. I think that’s kind of why I do it, even though I find it way harder than just playing. (Interview, December 20, 2021)

He values the meaningfulness of teaching and views it as long-term relationship building—something that is extremely rewarding to him.

Figure 5.1

Orion's Representation of Flow in Teaching and Performing



Figure 5.1 shows Orion's representation of flow in teaching on the left. There are small circles towering into bigger circles. His experience is not necessarily tangible, but there is this sense of moving, growing, and developing.

I kind of was thinking like shapes, like a round shape doesn't have hard edges, that means that we're kind of moving together nicely. And that we're not reaching sticking points. And that we're advancing up into like, larger. We're kind of moving, we're getting into bigger concepts, we're advancing, and we're getting better. We're learning new things, but in a way that's, you know, kind of seamless and, there's not like, [an edge]. I think sometimes, what I do when I'm not in flow with students is, I feel like we've reached like an edge, and I have to weasel my way out of it or find some new way. So when I don't have to do that, and it's kind of seamlessly flowing together. (Focus group, December 19, 2021)

Orion described flow as being in the moment together, seamlessly evolving and advancing over time. The representation on the right in Figure 5.1 captures Orion's flow in performing which looks very different. His descriptions below expand on this.

In Performing

Orion shared that about 25 minutes into a performance, he is warmed up to start “doing weird shit. Sometimes it’s good, and sometimes it’s bad,” but that period and aspect of performing is what he loves. He suggested that in some music, there are places where he can be totally free in the moment.

I think one of my biggest pet peeves about just like certain kinds of music, there’s always a place for it. If you’re playing country music or jazz, and it’s a lot of improvising, I feel like if you don’t take those risks, you’re losing some of that. And there are definitely times that I do something spontaneous, and it totally fucked everybody up, but you know, that is the beauty of it. (Interview, December 20, 2021)

Orion noted a few critical conditions that allow him to just play freely. These included when he knew the music really well, when he had been playing with a group for a long time, and when he felt comfortable to take risks in playing. He said, “It’s like you’re trusting you.” This happens when he embraces the challenge, trusts his ability to get through the material, and *lives it*.

For Orion, the most prominent flow dimensions in performing were unambiguous feedback, merging of action and awareness, and a sense of control. When performing, Orion explained that he still remains very aware, even when the processes of his action and awareness seemingly merge. He primarily relies on his auditory sense, but ultimately uses all his senses to focus on a complex level, to perceive various types of feedback, and to be in the moment with the group simultaneously.

At the highest state of control, which feels like total freedom, Orion described the moment as “riding this cloud.”

I feel like it’s living in it so much. It’s one of the few places where I feel like, completely enveloped in some sort of feeling or some sort of like that is I’m kind of taken away from, the reality is kind of far to say. Just like the ground-ness, I feel further away, like really lost in something. So, I feel like that tends to make time move faster. That is when I like can tap into that. You are kind of putting all of yourself into something. And you know, you’re not thinking about time. (Interview, December 21, 2021)

In a sense, Orion is so invested in the moment while in a state of deep flow that he experiences a sense of *timelessness*.

Generally, performing is a positive experience for Orion because he enjoys playing and being creative. However, performing is not always challenging for him because of the skillset and familiarity he has developed from his extensive performing career. He shared that performing can sometimes only be rewarding while it is happening.

I think that performing can be so rewarding at the moment. And then when you are done, you're expecting something to wash over you.... you just get all the reality to set in, and when you finish, it's like I am not riding this cloud.... It can be sobering afterward. But, I love about that, too. The quiet after playing and like being alone after that. It's meditative. It's way more grounding than when I walk away from my lessons. I feel like awake. (December 21, 2021)

For Orion, there are more intrinsic rewards than extrinsic rewards after performing, considering that it does not present such an immediate challenge to him.

Referring to his drawing on the right of Figure 5.1, he mostly valued group playing and the kinship of playing with a band. When asked about his flow in performing, Orion mainly shared about the exchange of energy:

I talked a lot about interacting with other performers and playing in a group and kind of feeding off that energy and kind of how that's how I think I experienced flow in performing. So, this kind of five points would be like individuals performing together and you're seeing this interaction. These lines represent energies being exchanged, things that are happening that are physical or non-physical, aural or non-aural, that are kind of things that are happening interactions. Then you have and the audience here that's also interacting with each other. The band is getting that same energy from them as well. (Focus group, December 19, 2022)

In this description, Orion referred to unambiguous feedback and the types of feedback he receives such as physical, aural, and visual. He reaches and sustains flow by being “in tune” and “feeding off” energy from his surroundings. He emphasized that this exchange happens more fluidly if the audience is located at the same level of the performers on stage.

In group playing, Orion shared that it is quite challenging to “lock in with a band in a way that makes people want to move.” When Orion was asked to draw a flow moment in performing, he drew a mix of lines that connected to five points, creating a star. In the illustration, the five points represented the members of the band, and the lines and the small circles at the bottom represented the audience.

In Between Teaching and Performing

Orion expressed that teaching and performing come from the same place, and he does both for the same purpose. He felt that he is a certain type of teacher because he performs, and he is a certain type of performer because he teaches.

I don't know if I could be a different kind of teacher. I don't know if I could be a teacher. I was actually thinking about this like earlier today. I don't think I could teach something that I didn't have the same enthusiasm for. I couldn't be like a science teacher because there's no way I could instill any passion for it in somebody. Maybe that's the only reason I'm a good teacher is that I'm excited about it and I try to get other people excited about it.... If I didn't have that attitude about it, I would not be a good teacher.... As long as you are passionate and love the thing that you're trying to pass on to the young people, then you'll do all right. (Interview, December 21, 2021)

For Orion, the relationship between performing and teaching is cyclic, in which one activity informs and builds from the other.

Summary

In Orion's case, performing was more about being present in the moment because of his balance of challenge and skill and his perception that control was possible. Teaching for him was more about building in each moment to achieve a future goal. In both activities, he demonstrated a heightened sense of awareness and a complex dynamic of interaction with others.

Flow dimensions were more consistent in performing than in teaching for him, which may be correlated to a difference in experience. Orion also shared that he felt more awake after performing because he is more emotionally and physically invested. This experience relates to

what Csikszentmihalyi (1990) stated about how one feels one's self more than ever after flow ends. In teaching, Orion felt more challenged, but he also found it to be more gratifying because of its intrinsic challenges and extrinsic rewards.

“Clay,” the Creative Sculptor

You are living it, you are breathing it, you are celebrating it.

Let's start with the ears and the heart,
the ears from the students and the heart from the teacher.

Clay is a 57-year-old Mexican American teaching artist who is a professional violinist and a private lesson teacher for piano and violin based in New York City. He also works as a composer and producer for television and film. Throughout the study, Clay constantly made a connection to himself as being a creative sculptor of his experience in teaching and performing. The description of how he sculpts is discussed below.

While he has been performing for more than half a century, Clay only recently started to teach about 5 years ago. He was one of the oldest participants in this study yet had a child-like and youthful spirit. Clay teaches more than 5 hours per week, and his students range from elementary to high school. His lessons are usually about 1 hour in length. During the week, he frequently performs for recording sessions, with occasional performances at bars or salons in the city. The instrumentation of the ensemble varies depending on the type of music he performs, but for this study, he reported being in an ensemble with a drummer and a flutist. Typically, each performance and recording session lasts about 2-4 hours.

Clay welcomed my invitation to participate in the study with open arms and eagerness to find something new. In late November 2021, Clay completed three music teaching and three performing questionnaires. He taught private lessons for violin and piano all on Zoom.

In Teaching

In his teaching, Clay emphasized his philosophy on how you have to “bring your heart” and “you have to be you.” Clay explained that it is easy to build too many goals in teaching, so one has to be mindful of creating realistic and reachable goals, which impact how one perceives the level of challenge. His main goals in teaching are to remain spontaneous in problem solving and to challenge himself as a teacher. When doing so, he uses intuition and personal past experiences to react quickly and spontaneously.

In Clay’s teaching, the challenges come from the students, which influence how he reads and adjusts to the situation in each moment. He always raises the question of how we can keep our students engaged and not “disenchanted.” Some solutions he found to empower students were developing a good ear and encouraging them to play for each other. Clay explained how giving students a sense of control in their learning experience allows them to build tools to self-sustain and be self-motivated. One of the important factors for Clay when perceiving challenges was to stop his insecurity, overcome it, and remain motivated to continue. Clay expressed how he felt his lack of experience correlated to not having the skills to meet a challenge.

There are many curveballs that are thrown, and it is my lack of experience that throws many curveballs at me and the only way you gain experience is to have it. It is important to make less and few mistakes as possible and learn fast to be spontaneous and improvise when the curveballs are improvising. (Interview, December 9, 2021)

Clay believed that over time, more teaching experience could help reduce his insecurity and increase his desire to teach.

Clay’s highest flow dimensions in teaching were concentration, sense of control, and loss of self-consciousness. He observed how students tended to rush through their learning process and that too much motivation could sometimes lead them to another place for which they are not ready. He would therefore constantly assess and adjust to keep them “on track.” He explained

that the feeling of action and awareness merging harmonizes with his sense of control when taking risks, and he turns in lessons to meet students where they are. However, Clay shared that this is not always the case for him.

Not every time I'm able to do that. When we're teaching, there's a little price you pay for that because if you don't fix it properly, it can remain unstable until the end of the class. That makes a class not as good as it could have been or as it should have been. But, I was taking certain risks and how do you take the risk?... In lack of flow, we have to learn how to be able to detect rapidly when things are happening.... (Interview, December 1, 2021)

Clay did not speak too much about the cognitive state he is in when teaching, but time generally passed quickly and did not feel any different from the way time passes in other activities for him. This was similar to his feelings on the passage of time when performing.

Figure 5.2

Clay's Representation of Flow in Teaching and Performing

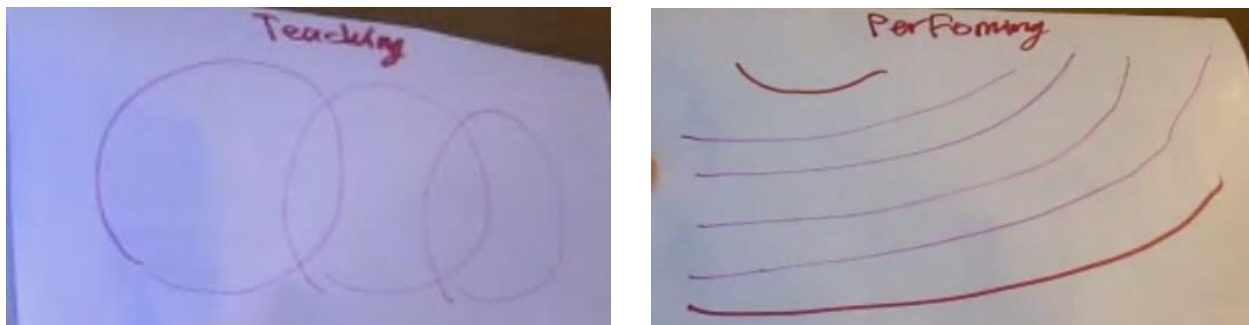


Figure 5.2 above shows Clay's representation of flow in teaching and performing. For teaching, he compared his experience to spiral circles that continue to evolve and unfold. The three important parts of the circles are the student, the teacher, and the topic of learning. The relationship between them is represented as circles that are tightly interconnected.

Well, this resembles the Olympic logo. According to different philosophies, a circle doesn't mean it's closed, right? Because a spiral is a circle too.... So, these are three important parts: student, you, and what you're teaching. And the rings are connected. No

one is bigger between the subject matter, you, and the students. These circles are the same. The fact that they're closed is just in our imagination. This can evolve as long as those three are together. That's what I consider flow. (Focus group, December 12, 2021)

Here, Clay referred to how he sculpts his experience through the interconnection between him, his students, and the subject matter evolving as a whole. One of the important descriptions he made was how each circle was the same size and of the same importance. There is a sense of unity, of one leading to another in a cyclic motion—hence, the idea of a spiral. The drawing is static and in two dimensions, but his descriptions provoke something that moves through dimensions as it evolves. The illustration on the right of Figure 5.2 represents Clay's flow in performing. The descriptions and explanation of his drawing are presented below.

In Performing

Clay's highest flow dimensions were concentration, autotelic experience, sense of control, and loss of self-consciousness in performing. Clay would concentrate by being self-critical of himself and focusing on the very present moment. When he performed, he described being self-critical as an act of wanting to do his best. His conditions of flow in performance, such as knowing the music well, having adequate warm-up time to settle in, being in a safe place, and identifying the places within the music to take more risks were very similar to Orion's description as well.

Clay described his state of mind when performing very vividly in stages. The first state is when he is constantly checking himself. For Clay, there is an imaginary dialogue between him and himself throughout the performance where he is making artistic decisions in the moment. This dialogue is what Heidegger (1927/1962) conceptualized as "Being there." Simultaneously, he is sensitive to his physical condition to be able to seek opportunities to rest, recharge, and

regain in order to reproduce what he imagines the best performance would be. Here, Clay is referring to the economical way of sustaining the state of flow.

The second state is when Clay feels more controlled and automatic. He described this state of flow as if he is being “inserted into the piece” or “wearing nice self-musical clothes.” These moments occur when he is “deliberate in decision making behind the kit and enters an autopilot scenario.” The third type of state is when the process seems more intuitive and organic, balancing a mix of spontaneity and automatism. To Clay, it feels like a continuous layering and stitching that happen naturally in the background. He is immersed in the moment, in a loss of self-consciousness.

There’s a moment where I think the flow really starts when I stay out of my world, and I just start my body language. Making eye contact is more to not supervise, but to have a sense of like ‘I am listening to you guys.’ I don’t know, it’s a mystical thing. That moment makes it less individual by physically creating an environment. (Interview, December 9, 2021)

In the last state, Clay described his surroundings as being very warm, coated in momentum, and woven in a kind of musical tapestry. Musical cues given through body language become a part of the performance, while the performance itself grows in emotion and physicality. When these states are not occurring, Clay finds himself too stiff physically and too nervous mentally to play freely.

The perception of challenge and skill was difficult for Clay to quantify because he felt that performing exists in open space and time, where randomness may occur, which also means the level of perceived challenge and skill are equally unpredictable as time unfolds. However, the poet-performance experience allows Clay to reflect on and analyze the level of challenge more clearly.

Clay also added that he enjoys performing for the sake of performing and is passionate about it. However, he mentioned that he must *let go* after he finishes a performance to truly enjoy what has passed. His motivation lies more in intrinsic rather than extrinsic rewards.

The drawing on the right of Figure 5.2 depicts Clay's representation of flow in performing. He drew layers of lines to show the "craftsmanship" of layering decisions and actions while performing. Clay is a sculptor in the sense that he shapes his own experience, building one layer at a time and reaching the momentum of flow.

I think that flow in performing is when you start to take a breath and you keep evolving with your energy and your tranquility. Even if it's a challenging piece of music, it keeps growing and growing, and it becomes bigger and you embrace it. There's no ceiling and there's no floor. A good flow is that there is no limit to where they go up, to either side, so there's no bad side. This is an evolution. That's why it goes this way...it has to be gentle. You have to be in very much control, trust yourself and be in the zone. In the zone where you feel that maybe you didn't start off as you wanted to. But soon thereafter, you're starting to feel more comfortable. Sometimes, it's good to just not expect so much, be cautious and open and allow yourself to feel. (Focus group, December 12, 2021)

In Between Teaching and Performing

Clay expressed that he has been teaching and performing all his life, even though he officially started to teach as a teaching artist only about 5 years ago. He shared that he appreciated being called a teaching artist because the label validates what he does in teaching and performing.

I have been sharing my artistic knowledge in a way that empowers people and opens their imaginations to be creative and free. Creative freedom, if it has the right mentor, it can be combined with the discipline. My particular philosophy about it is that improvisation, which is something I encourage any of my students to do, is actually the beginning of the composition. (Focus group, December 12, 2021)

Sharing artistic knowledge was part of Clay's experience all his life. He believed in the understanding of discovery through creative freedom. He seeks those moments in both teaching and performing as a creative sculptor.

Summary

Clay often described himself as shaping his experiences, literally and figuratively. For Clay, teaching was more about having a realistic goal and progressing with students in the motion of a spiral. He expressed that the price of risk is higher in teaching, which makes him more hesitant to take those risks.

Performing for Clay was more about building layers and progressing through complex cognitive states in which he is engrossed, cognitively, emotionally, and physically. In general, Clay often used poetic analogies to describe his experiences and was particularly more descriptive about performing than teaching.

In both contexts, Clay showed a heightened sense of awareness and a complex dynamic of interaction with self, others, and the context. Flow dimensions were more consistent in performing than in teaching, which may be explained by the difference in the amount of experience he has between the two. Clay reported the least number of 5s in his questionnaires. It was interesting that he shared more about the reasons why he was not able to achieve flow rather than what it actually feels like to be in flow. For him, teaching and performing were more intrinsically rewarding, and the end of the activities required a release into the moment, to *let go*.

“Eve,” the Artist-Teacher

Teaching makes me clear what kind of a performer I want to be.

Tempo really matters.

Eve is a 32-year-old Korean teaching artist who is mainly a professional pianist and private lesson teacher based in South Korea. She is also a music studio director, college lecturer, and leader of a classical trio with a violist and cellist. Eve is described as an artist-teacher rather

than a teaching artist, as she has vast amount of equal experience in both fields. She has taught since 2011 and has continued to balance performing and teaching for more than a decade.

Eve recently completed her doctoral program in piano performance and moved back to Korea when the COVID-19 pandemic started. Currently, Eve typically teaches more than 5 hours per week, and her students range from elementary to college students. She also practices more than 3 hours per week and performs 2-4 times a month. She performs both as a classical soloist and a chamber musician on formal and informal stages in Daegu, South Korea. In general, each performance lasts between 30 and 60 minutes.

Always curious to find inspiration for her teaching, Eve participated in this study, looking forward to an opportunity to reflect on her own teaching. In early November 2021, Eve completed the three music teaching and three performing questionnaires in the most diverse setting of all participants. She completed two teaching questionnaires after two 60-minute private lessons with an elementary and a high school student. One private lesson was held in person and another was on Zoom. Another of her questionnaires was completed after giving a college-level lecture on the topic of conducting a lecture recital. She completed the performing questionnaires after playing a solo piece by Brahms and then playing in an ensemble, performing jazz and classical chamber music.

In Teaching

Eve's highest flow dimensions in teaching are sense of control, clear goals, and autotelic experience. Eve prepares no specific lesson plan when she teaches privately because she believes that her accumulated years of teaching experience inform her to respond spontaneously in teaching. However, her level of confidence is not always as high in teaching compared to performing.

Compared to my performance where I have this trust that I will be okay, I don't feel the same in teaching because I do not have the same years of experience and do not know if I did well or not one hundred percent. (Interview, December 19, 2021)

Eve would have mixed feelings about her teaching results, despite her amount of teaching experience. She explained that she was not necessarily worried but was not as confident as she is in performing.

Eve expressed how time is more rigid in a group class than in private lessons. She feels that time in classroom teaching is more "built-in." For example, if the class is 50 minutes long, her lesson plan for 50 minutes usually covers the exact amount of time. This "built-in" sense of time relates to following and playing a written classical music piece. A 15-minute piece will typically always fall within that timeframe in any performance situation. However, in private lessons, Eve said the way time moves depends on the ages of the students. She explained that the younger they are, the slower time feels because she has to give way to their short attention span. Time also feels more divided because many short activities are involved for this age group.

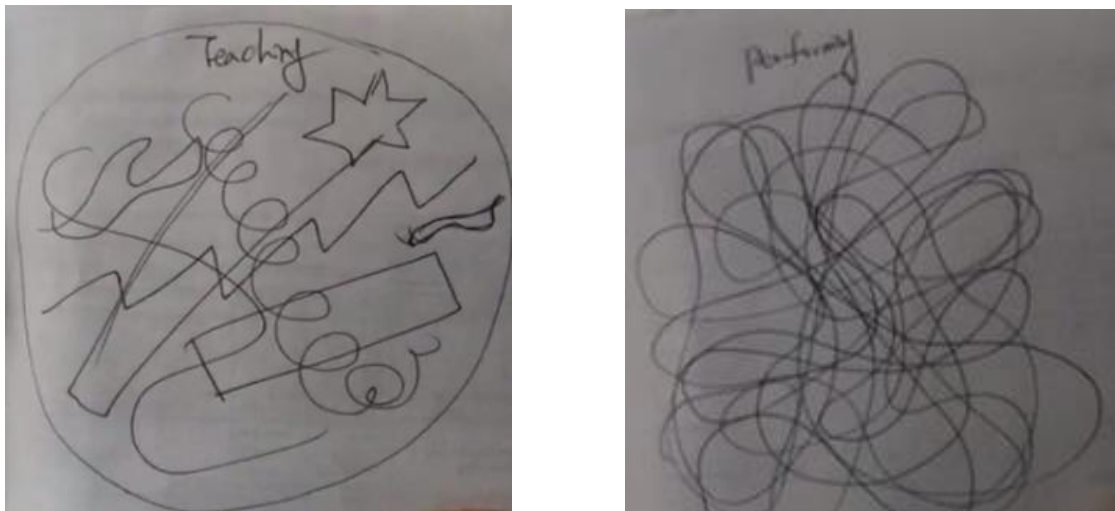
Eve views teaching as a way of satisfying her personal needs. Teaching is autotelic for her, regardless of how her students react, because she does her personal best. When her students feel satisfied, however, she also feels proud and rewarded.

Figure 5.3 below shows Eve's representation of flow in teaching on the left side. While various shapes may resemble a bag of teaching tricks at first, they actually represent the different types of students she faces of all ages, levels, and personalities.

When I'm teaching, we really have to cover all the different ages and all the different cultures, students, and backgrounds so I just drew all in one big circle. Inside the circle, I really have to keep all the different students represented by differentiated shapes. (Focus group, December 21, 2021)

Figure 5.3

Eve's Representation of Flow in Teaching and Performing



Eve explained that the changes in her personality when teaching are similar to her approach to performing various pieces by different composers. The way she connects with different composers resembles the way she connects with individual students. She transforms and meets her students where they are.

In Performing

Eve's highest flow dimensions in performing were balance of challenge and skill, merging of action and awareness, and autotelic experience. Because she mainly plays classical music in which there are many fine details to follow, she would become extremely nervous and hyper-focused "on the changes" that occur in a performance situation if she was not well-prepared. Remarking on one such performance, she said, "I was hyper-sensitive, so everything felt in slow motion." At the same time, however, Eve explained that she feels capable of doing anything. As she explained, "I feel like I always feel like I can overcome it. My philosophy is that I can always overcome by trusting myself in doing so all the time." Therefore, even before

the performance starts, Eve knows that with every challenge she faces, she will overcome it one way or another through the performance.

In her ensemble trio, Eve usually has the responsibility of leading the group. She shared that being a leader changes her state because she has to be more aware of her surroundings, and there is more flux in the sense of time when it is influenced and shaped by others. When she is more aware, however, feedback sometimes impacts her negatively. For example, if other members in the trio are playing out of tune, she finds it difficult to concentrate on performing. In this case, she closes her ears and plays without perceiving much of the feedback.

When Eve is performing alone, however, she feels more in control of herself. Her sense of time becomes more consistent as well. Playing classical music, Eve suggested that tempo usually dictates the speed of time she has to follow. If the music has a fast tempo, she keeps herself steady, but when the music is slow, she becomes more flexible in shaping her time. In a slow tempo, she is more spontaneous and can alter the sense of time.

Lastly, Eve expressed that she usually remembers her flow experiences. She commented on how if she remembers her performance well, it means that she was more “awake” and aware of her surroundings. This poses an interesting question about how flow and memory correlate with one another.

Eve explained that she performs for herself more than anything else. However, when people come to thank her after the concert, she feels very grateful. She feels highly satisfied if her performance connected to someone, as it reminds her of a greater purpose as a pianist.

While she enjoys performing, Eve shared how she is all too familiar with the spontaneity that can occur in performance, similar to Orion, and the resulting lack of excitement that can occur going into such an activity. Therefore, performing for her does not feel like anything new,

as it is mainly repetition over time, which may lead to feeling too automatic and less spontaneous.

The right picture in Figure 5.3 shows Eve's representation of flow in performing. She drew a single line in chaos, turning and curving in various directions. Only one line represents the start and the end of a piece. This also represents how whatever may occur in a performance, there is always a starting point and an ending point.

Whatever I'm doing those times should go and time couldn't stop it. So, I really have to go. The sound should keep going but I don't know where I am going. Where am I? But I need to go in time. (Focus group, December 21, 2021)

In Between Teaching and Performing

Eve shared that teaching and performing have always been one entity for her. She has been doing both for so long that she cannot imagine not doing one or the other. She is an artist-teacher because being an artist informs her on how to explain physical, emotional, and cognitive challenges involved in learning and performing music to her students, while being a teacher informs her on how to be constructively self-critical of her own playing.

I never thought of being a teacher and an artist as being a separate thing. I am a performer, but I have taught for so long that teaching is a natural part of me. I feel that being a teacher helps me to be a better performer. For example, when I am a teacher, there are things that are important when I teach. So, when I practice performing, I focus on that aspect more. I feel like if I stopped one, I can't do other. If I stopped performing, my technique will get worse and I would not be able to explain well in teaching. I would not practice if I did not perform so I think it is important to keep both. Things that I experience as a performer, I wouldn't be able to help my students if I discontinued. (Interview, December 19, 2021)

Summary

Eve stressed that she equally values performing and teaching, and both are of great importance to her in her identity as an artist-teacher. She admitted that she mainly teaches and performs for herself, and this intention shapes how she approaches the two endeavors. She

completely trusts herself when performing because she believes that is what it takes to make it. Teaching and performing are similar to her in the sense that they both demand different approaches and changes of personality based on the individual student or composer. Eve also discussed the difference in her heightened level of awareness when she is performing as a leader of a group or as a soloist. For moments of freedom in a score, she relies on the elements of tempo and rhythm to engage in musical spontaneity. In comparing her two visual representations, it is clear that Eve's perception of flow in performing happens more in the moment than in teaching. Her flow dimensions are both equally consistent in performing and in teaching.

“Clara,” the Artistic Barista

Flow has an energy, a protective energy, and is a safe place that you can go.

I'm performing in real time.

Clara is a 57-year-old Black teaching artist who is a professional pianist and private lesson teacher based in New Jersey. She is also a composer, a podcast host, and a barista. Clara is described as an artistic barista because she serves others to be happy and empowers them to be their full selves (through music and caffeine). Clara has been teaching for more than 3 decades now and continues to perform on the piano. She began teaching as a classroom teacher but then quickly realized that the classroom setting did not suit her. She transitioned into private teaching and found this setting fitting her teaching personality.

Clara usually teaches in New Jersey, but during the time of the study, she was in Mississippi teaching her private students online. During the week, she typically teaches for more than 5 hours per week, and her students range from elementary age to adult. She also practices more than 3 hours per week and performs at least once a week at her church. She performs classical and gospel music at her church and, in general, each performance lasts about an hour.

Clara was excited to participate in this study because she wanted to conceptualize and operationalize her teaching and performing. In late November 2021, Clara completed three music teaching questionnaires after teaching one 30-minute and two 45-minute private lessons for piano. The students' ages ranged from 9 to 16, and all the lessons were held via Zoom. She completed the performing questionnaires after two gospel music performances at church and for a recording playing a jazz piece on the piano.

In Teaching

Overall, Clara reported the most 5s in her questionnaires among all participants. She reported all 5s for her teaching questionnaire except for the survey item regarding time. Clara expressed that she is not worried but relaxed when teaching because she is confident from her previous years of experience and knows the students well. While there are many external challenges in teaching, such as parents' expectations for their kids, Clara expressed that the biggest challenge for her is to motivate students to be willing to learn.

I think a lot about what the student is willing to do. And are they willing to explore the information that's going to allow them to accomplish what they're trying to accomplish here? What are they really willing to do? How can you get the students to play so they really feel like everything they're doing is important? (Interview, December 12, 2021)

Clara encourages and empowers her students to learn independently and gives them incentive to take ownership of their learning. Similar to Clay, Clara shared that sometimes students tend to rush themselves in learning, but when the time is right, she prepares students to empower themselves. She accomplishes this by pre-planning goals before each class.

Clara made a point that she often does not need to think about how to react in teaching because it is automatic for her. She repeatedly stated that she "spontaneously helps the student with timing, fingering and performance directions without having to think." Past experiences inform her sense of control in the present. Because teaching is a two-way street, Clara also

extends a sense of control to her students to self-direct and govern themselves. Time moving quickly in her lessons is Clara's most important indicator of flow.

Clara feels rewarded when the students are (a) having fun, (b) self-directing in their learning, and (c) preparing for exams or competitions. Her autotelic experience is highly aligned with her preset goals. Similar to Orion and Clay, Clara explained that she generally enjoys teaching because she feels connected to each student.

Teaching just reinforced how much I really love it. I can't explain why I do but I just do. Just being able to explain something that I know, turning on a light bulb, becoming a helpful person, or just connecting to that person, in a way you haven't connected before. (Interview, December 8, 2021)

Figure 5.4

Clara's Representation of Flow in Teaching and Performing

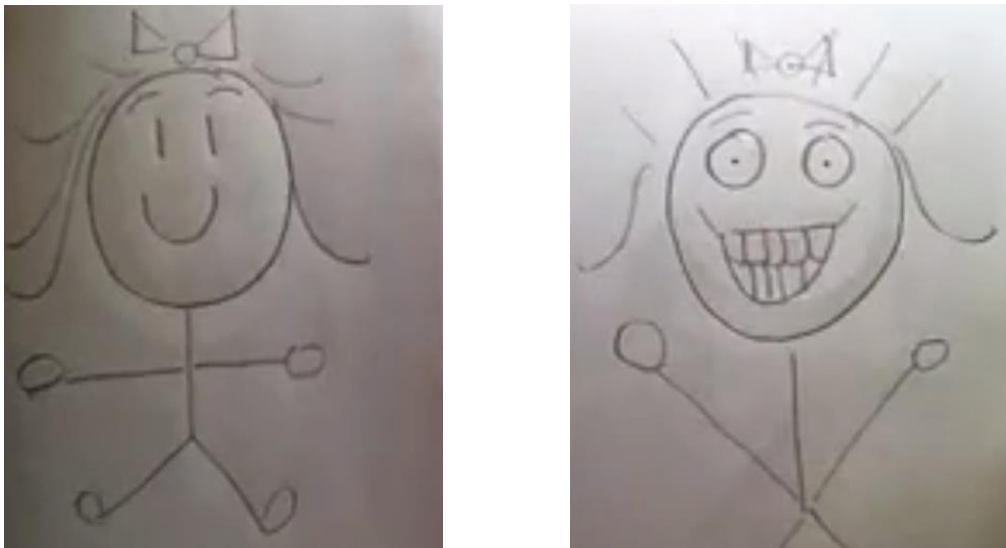


Figure 5.4 above shows Clara's representation of flow in teaching on the left. Clara expressed that she is never in a bad mood when teaching because she views positivity as her duty as a teacher. She stated, "I feel like my responsibility as a teacher, I have to exude positivity at all times." Her attitude toward this aspect may have influenced some of her reported confidence levels in the questionnaires.

When I'm teaching, I find that I'm a little bit more on the visual-auditory side...and the emotions I associate with are warm, subdued, serene, and with a smile. (Focus group, December 19, 2021)

Because she chooses to remain calm, confident, in control, and without worry, Clara is more inclined to feel flow in her teaching. The aspect of having a clear goal and a high level of confidence influenced Clara's flow state in teaching the most. With the right drawing in Figure 5.4, Clara shared her representation of flow in performing. The difference of the two states between teaching and performing are further explained below.

In Performing

Generally, Clara reported 5s on her questionnaires except for the characteristics of merging of action and awareness, loss of self-consciousness, and transformation of time. Clara shared that she often feels in control during a performance due to her years of experience, but also recognized that it takes preparation and several practice performances to feel in control. She expressed that concentration must be the highest to achieve a state of flow, which she differentiates from the feeling of being in sync. For her, flow is more intentional.

Describing her performing experience, Clara stated, "I really go into my own world, and intentionally make it so that I am not distracted by my surroundings." In doing so, she trusts her years of experience and confidence to fuel her performance to its maximum potential. In these moments, Clara is experiencing the moment within herself and discontinues to perceive any outside feedback.

I have to be in sync with myself at all times. I say in sync with myself in the way I express myself. I think to me, that's what makes my flow unique and I'm not going to flow like anyone else. (Interview, December 10, 2021)

In a typical live performance, Clara does not feel any performance anxiety. On the other hand, for a recording session, she felt very differently: "I was super worried because any flaws

would affect the next/participating performer(s).” This highlights how a change of performance setting, such as from a concert hall to a recording session, may alter the experience of flow for a performer.

Clara expressed that when she performs, it is “challenging to listen and respond quickly.” She relies mostly on auditory feedback to go through a performance. Her sense of control in the performance was based on the knowledge she had from past experiences. However, she also mentioned that she might space out momentarily while performing and would need to find a way back to the present.

Sometimes my brain just leaves. I’m like, ‘Oh, shoot, it’s measure 24 now, how am I going to get back on track?’ So, I have to spontaneously know what’s coming next in music to get back on track. (Interview, December 8, 2021)

Clara surmised that we “have to be able to know how to react...and have to be somewhat spontaneous all the time...but at the same time, you rehearse.” She emphasized that she is performing in *real time* and “it’s up to me to pass the time, like how much am I going to be really into it when I’m playing.”

Lastly, Clara explained that her perception of time changes when she is interacting with others. When others are around her, she is influenced by the energy in the room, shaping how much she is immersed in the moment and affecting how she experiences the time passing.

Clara shared that her experiences of performing have been extremely rewarding because her music was intended to be shared with workers at hospitals. In her case, there were many extrinsic rewards for performing because she had a personal desire to connect with people about whom she cared deeply.

In the right drawing of Figure 5.4 above is Clara's representation of flow in performing. She drew a picture of herself with intensified emotion. Her sense is heightened, and her facial expressions show vibrant enthusiasm and energy.

So, the lens of performing is how I feel inside because I get to move around. I'm originally a kinesthetic learner. Here, I am out of control and ecstatic. (Focus group, December 19, 2021)

In Between Teaching and Performing

Clara expressed that she was called to teach and perform and cannot imagine doing anything else.

I think it involves somewhat of a calling. One name comes to mind, Barry Harris. He was the last of the Bebop era. He shared what he knew about music-making, but he was a complete professional. I mean, he recorded with some giants, but at the same time, I think he felt called to share what he knew, which made him a teacher. He had a lot of heart when it came to that. And not every performer does that. But I think he was unique in that way, that type of dedication. When I read about his career, just reading that made me want to be more like that in my quest to be a teaching artist. (Focus Group, December 19, 2021)

Summary

Clara always shares her creativity and positivity with others. In general, she often experiences flow because she is confident and intentional in her actions. In teaching, she explores her sense of control as a two-way street between her and her students. She aims to remain calm and positive as she believes that is her responsibility as a teacher. In general, her flow dimensions were more consistent in teaching than in performing.

In performing, Clara's unique experience of flow occurs when she intentionally syncs herself physically, emotionally, and cognitively. She is very aware of how each individual experiences flow in a completely different way. Clara also described a cognitive state in performing in which she would momentarily lose track of where she was in the music and then

find her way back. For both teaching and performing, she had intrinsic and extrinsic motivation, with slightly higher stimulation in performing.

Conclusion of Private Teaching Artists

All teaching artists who taught private lessons shared that teaching is rewarding because it is intrinsically challenging but extrinsically rewarding. For them, teaching was more about progressing and building relationships with students, while performing was more about creating in the moment. In performing, their complex cognitive processes revealed three states, which could be experienced as singular, a combination, or all three in flux. They described these states as being either on track or off track. In both endeavors, either having realistic goals or being able to let go after the activity ended was important. The experience of time passing was normal for all participants because their immediate goals were aligned with the exact passage of time, as in performing music in a given tempo or pacing through a lesson plan.

In general, having more experience and confidence influenced the level of flow. A positive relationship between the amount of experience performing and three flow dimensions—concentration, autotelic experience, and balance of challenge and skill—was found. In the context of teaching, a positive relationship between experience and three flow dimensions—merging of action and awareness, sense of control, and autotelic experience—was found. It was important to note that having an abundance of experience in a field sometimes hindered flow. All participants experienced more stimulation in performing and, in general, flow dimensions were more consistent in performing than in teaching.

Group Teaching

Previous analysis showed that flow dimensions such as concentration, clear goals, merging of action and awareness, and loss of self-consciousness were more prominent in group teaching than in private lessons. The goal of this section is to examine the experience of flow in the context of performing and group teaching. The three teaching artists (age range 43-56, mean age = 49) who primarily teach in a group setting are Dash, Joyce, and Yulie.

Dash had the least amount of teaching experience, and Yulie had the highest amount. The age group of their students ranged from toddler to secondary. They all taught in person either during the day or after school as part-time instructors or via residencies.

The performers in this group consisted of one poet-rapper, one drummer, and one pianist/singer. They were all substantially experienced in performing, with at least 20 years of experience, and regularly perform at least once a week. Their performance venues included open-mic nights, churches, homes, and concert halls. All participants played as a part of an ensemble, and the genres of music they played included poetry a capella, hip hop, rap, gospel, and classical. All participants taught more than 5 hours per week and practiced more than 3 hours per week.

“Dash,” the /Slasher/ aka Educator-Entertainer

How can I tell you that you're wrong about your experience? I don't know your experience.
Art is a way for me to get to know your experience.

Flow is GLOW!

Dash is a 43-year-old Black teaching artist who works in the most diverse art forms of all the participants. His performing art consists of parody, poetry, hip hop, comedy, and drama. Dash is an open-mic host, playwright, public speaking coach, and classroom educator based in Washington, DC. Because of his many roles, Dash identified as a slasher—somebody who

cannot be put in a box. The description of Educator-Entertainer most completely encompasses what he does and stands for.

Dash has been teaching for more than 20 years and continues to strive for “creativity as a means to solve problems that do not exist yet.” Dash’s background is unique in that he started his career as a science teacher and quickly realized that the role was not for him. He became a teaching artist as a creative means for expression.

During the week, Dash teaches for more than 5 hours, and his students range from Pre-K to middle school. His classes usually last an hour. He also practices more than 3 hours per week and performs several times during the week, mostly at open-mic shows. His performances usually last from 5 to 30 minutes.

Despite his busy schedule, Dash participated in this study with enthusiasm to examine more deeply his own experiences as a teaching artist. Between November and December of 2021, Dash completed three music teaching questionnaires with detailed comments. He completed them after teaching three 60-minute classes on film production and public speaking. There were about 20-30 students in each class who were 6th-8th graders, and all the teaching events were part of his residencies at public schools and afterschool academies. He completed the performing questionnaires after performing a capella original poems and hip hop on open-mic nights.

In Teaching

Dash’s highest flow dimensions in teaching were concentration and merging of action and awareness. He comes to teaching with an idea to “marry himself” to a plan. He is clear about his goals in teaching, but also understands that some goals are only fully achievable in an ideal setting.

Dash acknowledged that young people in elementary and middle schools have short attention spans, so it is his responsibility as a teacher to concentrate and be a “Super Teacher.” Dash added that for larger groups, he is more hyper-attentive to the time, compared to working with a smaller group of students. He mentioned that it took some time for him to become familiar with his class so that he could be spontaneous, automatic, and comfortable. However, Dash explained that what makes teaching interesting are those exact aspects of chances and spontaneity.

But I wonder how much “total control” any educator can have considering the unpredictable dynamic of working with others, especially young adults. Should “total control” be a goal? I don’t know how in control sometimes you can be, especially the more other people are involved and especially when you’re dealing with kids who are just necessarily unpredictable. Part of what makes the work so magical is also part of what makes it so not necessarily controllable.... I’m pulling enough rabbits out of hats by being a teaching artist, what we do is already magic. (Interview, December 20, 2021)

Essentially, Dash pointed out that if there are too many changes at once, it is hard to “control” the situation, especially as a visiting guest teacher. The magical aspect of teaching can only happen when there is a free space for it to exist.

Dash also explained that one of the biggest challenges he has faced was the pandemic necessity of conducting virtual education instead of in-person, which negatively impacted his students.

[Students] had a whole year and a half, basically, of virtual education. So, they missed out on a whole year of socialization with other kids their age. So, if you have an eighth grader, you kind of have a seventh grader, if not a sixth grader, mentally and socially. So that’s why I had an eighth-grade kid rolling around on the floor. (Interview, December 18, 2021)

Due to these circumstances of delayed development, Dash frequently checks in on his students by gauging their reactions on a scale. In this case, Dash is treating his students 1-2 years younger than they are. In terms of flow dimension, he came to realize that his spontaneous off-tangent

moments in class, often coming off a student's question, were his own action and awareness merging together. He also has a good gauge of time passing because he has done many time-sensitive activities, such as running track, bartending, and poetry slams.

So my relationship with time is kind of deep because I ran track a lot. Between running track and waiting tables being a bartender, you need a kind of internal clock to know. It's uncanny sometimes, like, when I'm working out or whatever, I tend to feel like it's 11:47. Then I look at my clock, and wow, it's 11:47, maybe like 46, or 48. So I generally have a good feel for how much time has passed. When I was working at a restaurant one time, we had a clean-hands competition. And one of the things was you're supposed to wash your hands for 30 seconds without looking at a clock. And I would always be the team member who was on time. Or even when I am using my mouthwash. I'm pretty good at just counting out actual seconds in my head and filling that time. (Interview, December 18, 2021)

Regarding the survey item of time, Dash found that he senses time passing at a normal pace. The overall results and reactions to this survey item suggested that it may be a bit misleading in the context of music teaching and performing.

Dash's personality is to always give full effort every time. Having fun with a high desire for it already empowers him to feel autotelic towards teaching in general. Dash also finds most student interactions rewarding because he is aware that he may be "contributing to these students developing their voices and trying something they may not have tried before."

Figure 5.5 shows Dash's representation of flow in teaching in the left illustration. Dash imagined flow occurring when he could give and receive more freely, building trust. Responding to questions, meeting challenges, and forming special types of connections were the conditions for flow.

With the teaching, my eyes are open, my hands are open, and with a slight smile. My hands are open because I can give and receive more freely. Teaching is more about giving, and also being open to receiving in a different way from the students. But you got to give first, so they trust you. And then you can receive so my hands are open. And the responses are more question marks. But the idea of teaching is you're supposed to get them comfortable asking questions. (Focus group, December 21, 2021)

Figure 5.5

Dash's Representation of Flow in Teaching and Performing



In the right of Figure 5.5, Dash drew himself with eyes closed, shouting, and exclamation marks to represent flow in performing. A further description is given in the following section.

In Performing

Dash's highest flow dimensions in performing were concentration, sense of control, and clear goals. Goals for performing included (a) expressing himself; (b) releasing worries; (c) sharing new material; (d) reclaiming identity; (e) gaining a different performance experience; (f) challenging the audience with his ideas; and (g) inspiring, relaxing, and leaving the audience on a good note. His goals align with the responsibility he feels of the role he is in.

I also kind of riff and crack jokes about stuff that's going on throughout the night, just to make the audience comfortable and help make it an engaging experience a comfortable experience for everybody. Because a lot of times, it'll be a first-time performance, and they're nervous and stuff. And so, you want to loosen them up.... So that's my role. (Interview, December 20, 2021)

Dash shared that he always feels pretty confident about performing because of his experience and being “a born performer.” Dash explained that he could feel more spontaneous and automatic if he had performed the piece several times in the past and warmed up before the performance. He was in complete control when he had many rehearsals and performed at a home venue with an intimate audience. In general, Dash felt that he is skilled and experienced enough to respond to his audience organically in the moment. On the other hand, restrictions, such as wearing a mask, presented great challenges for him because he was not able to interact fully with others.

Dash associated the state of being in flow as a “glow” in which self-actualization occurs. He equated it with the feeling of being outside of one’s body. This experience varies from loss of self-consciousness in that a state of separation is felt between spirit and body.

There is a movie called *The Last Dragon* and it’s about a kung fu master. He’s young and he still doesn’t think he’s a master yet. And so, his master leaves him to find the glow on his own. The glow is this level of energy that you can achieve when you’re super focused, realized, and self-actualized as a kung fu master. Your body actually glows, and all of your bodies have a supernatural amount of power. You can see them exploding when you hit someone. And to me, the glow connects to flow because of self-actualization. When there are moments when you can be in the zone of like, you’re teaching, and you’re like, wow, your picture is almost like an out-of-body experience. You’re picturing yourself doing what you’re doing while you’re doing it. So, to me, that’s flow. That’s the glow, those moments when you realize I’m doing exactly what I’m supposed to do. (Interview, December 20, 2021)

Dash is describing his out-of-body experience in which he visualizes himself outside of his body. His explanation gives phenomenological insights into how he experiences self in performing. This state is what Clay referred to as his first state of flow. Even in an out-of-body experience, Dash is well aware of time passing because his rehearsals and preparation inform the same timing to play out in any situation.

Dash finds renewed energy in “sharing new material...at a home venue with an intimate audience.” This “organic energy” from the crowd helps spur him on and fuels him. While he is confident in his performances, he is sometimes unsure about how the audience receives him.

Dash’s illustration on the right of Figure 5.5 shows his representation of flow in performing. He has pictured himself with his eyes closed, shouting out to the microphone. He is portraying the energy that he is giving and receiving.

This is me performing. My eyes are closed, but my mouth is wide. I’m giving out all this energy. And these are like a combination of things I’m seeing in people’s responses. So, you see in question marks, exclamation points, question marks with exclamation points. My eyes are closed because I’m focused on myself. And like this performance is more so about me, it centers on me and my ideas. And my expression is my release. It’s me doing something for myself, feeding myself. (Focus group, December 21, 2021)

In Between Teaching and Performing

Dash identified as a slasher and entertainer—someone who ignites creativity in the classroom. As an entertainer, he is able to engage in many areas of art and finds fulfillment in being so diverse: “I’m hard to kind of put in the box. I like how kind of broad ‘entertainer’ is. I think that’s a testament to I can’t pin this person down.”

Dash shared that being creative to him means solving problems that do not exist yet and finding enjoyment in unpredictability. In everything he does, he gives his all and utilizes his “whole self” in performing and teaching.

I think that teaching makes me a better performer. I started out as a high school science teacher. If you would have shown me twenty years ago doing that, rapping about World War Two to a class and that’s all I do now, he would be surprised. I feel like I’m just doing what I was born to do. A combination of education and entertainment. That’s me. (Interview, December 20, 2021)

Summary

Dash completely fits the descriptor of an entertainer-educator. He feels like a super teacher when he is teaching because he is using all of his senses to focus and spontaneously react

to his students. An interesting insight he discussed was how being in total control is only possible in an ideal world. In terms of passage of time in teaching and performing, Dash feels he has an internal clock that helps him to gauge the length of time that has passed accurately. Dash was the only participant who expressed a relationship with passage of time outside of the contexts of teaching and performing.

His flow dimensions were more consistent in performing than in teaching. One of the most interesting findings was about Dash's concept of self-actualization when performing. This idea is slightly different from a loss of self-consciousness, as it presents as an out-of-body experience that occurs when he is separated from self, but is still physically, emotionally, and cognitively invested.

“Joyce,” the Empower-er

DRUM IT OUT: Nothing is ever forced; it is always invited.

You get to just exist and be and create.

Joyce is a 47-year-old Black teaching artist who is a professional drummer and a classroom teacher based in New York City. She is also a songwriter, producer, and music director. Joyce has been teaching for more than 20 years and strives for well-being and community wellness through her work. Joyce is the Empower-er because she connects with others to empower them in both teaching and performing. For Joyce, her work is all about wellness and community.

During the week, Joyce teaches for more than 5 hours, and her students are Pre-K to middle school. Her classes usually last an hour. She also practices between 2-3 hours per week and performs several times during the week, mostly in drum circles and interactive drumming. Her performances last anywhere from 45 minutes to 2 hours.

Despite her busy schedule, Joyce participated in this study to find a connection between her busy life and making sense of her purpose as a professional teaching artist. Between November and December of 2021, Joyce completed three music teaching questionnaires after teaching three 60-minute drumming wellness classes with 10 students. Two of the classes were held after school, and all three classes were held in person. Joyce completed the performing questionnaires after two drum circles and one two-piece band performance at church. She performed hand percussion, gospel music, and improvisation in those performances.

In Teaching

The autotelic experience was the highest flow characteristic in both teaching and performing for Joyce. Joyce's goal in teaching is to create a beautiful experience for everyone. She acknowledges everyone before class ends and sees herself more as a facilitator, allowing the students to flow and create within given boundaries. She tries to stay open to "natural" flow because it also engages her students. In each class, Joyce incorporates activities that are familiar but also expects students to express themselves through their own individual creativity, fostering self-empowerment and thereby contributing to a sense of unity within the class.

Joyce expressed that kids are not used to quick change, so they have to be slowly introduced to new concepts. As a teacher, she constantly reads the room and reacts spontaneously to her students. One of her main goals in teaching is to build teamwork and develop young leaders and scholars. To achieve this, she is very intentional about her lesson plans while staying open to the possibility of the moment. She emphasized the importance of creating a safe space where students feel comfortable to give their personal best.

In her drum circles, Joyce comfortably engages in multitasking, such as counting, observing, checking, and playing. This process has become less difficult for her after practicing it for many years. Her teaching also requires a multi-divided attention approach in that she has to engage in several activities simultaneously, such as checking in on herself while taking care of students.

I guess it just comes from the practice of doing it routinely. Because, again, I need to acknowledge everyone in the room...and then, of course, being a drummer, on a drum set, I have four different syncopations at the same time. So, my right hand is doing my lap, my right foot, my left foot, all different, syncopation. And so, I've grown accustomed to multitasking, if you will. So, I don't have to, like really think hard about it. It's just kind of I know, it's not easy. But I think that just growing accustomed to, you know, doing things like this over the years, it just becomes more natural. (Interview, December 12, 2021)

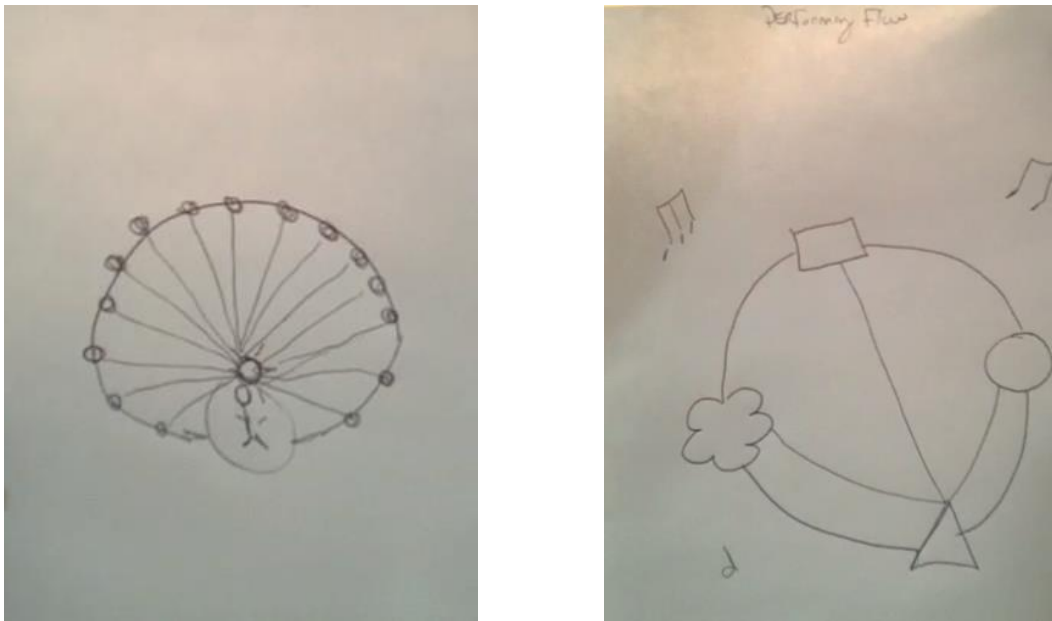
Although Joyce allows for herself and her students to immerse themselves in an activity where the feeling of time passing may expand, she has to retain control of the class time because of the set 60-minute block. Over the years, she learned to shift from activity to activity based on students' responses. She focused on fluid transitions without disengagement and as few interruptions as possible.

In summary, the act of teaching in itself is rewarding and fulfilling for Joyce. Teaching is innately an autotelic experience for her. Seeing her students enjoy themselves further adds to the rewarding experience of teaching for Joyce.

Figure 5.6 below shows Joyce's representation of flow in teaching in the drawing on the left. Joyce described how she wants to facilitate a flow experience for students to connect to. She believes this type of connectedness is extremely important and deeply rooted in her way of approaching teaching. A sense of connection in which either the teacher or students lead is how flow is presented in Joyce's teaching.

Figure 5.6

Joyce's Representation of Flow in Teaching and Performing



Normally, when I teach, I create a circle so I can see everyone's faces and make sure I acknowledge everyone. And this is me, the little stick figure. But then I've connected the circle to me all the way around, which are my students and at some point, within the teaching flow, I provide a space [and] a platform for everyone to connect to, in their own way. So, at some point, before the classes are over, everyone has connected to the platform in some way. And I have connected with all of them individually, in a way as well. So, that's the purpose of the teaching flow. (Focus group, December 12, 2021)

In Performing

In Figure 5.6, Joyce used different shapes in her visual illustration of flow in performing. The way her illustration appears to move is explained by the interaction she feels when performing. The main goals for Joyce in performance are to feel free, to release, and to “play with your soul.” For Joyce, creative self-expression and recreational music-making are both essential:

Because it releases concerns and it releases boundaries. It allows you to just be free, at that moment, and to be who you are, without judgment and without anything having to be a certain way. So, we have fun. It's about community wellness. That's my passion. (Interview, December 12, 2021)

This mode of ease in performance is rare and can often be lost among professional musicians. Joyce maintains a balance of control rather than forcing “total control” of what she is doing. As an example, when performing on drums with other musicians, she prefers to keep the backbeat while allowing others to lead and create. She is also keenly aware of the passage of time in performance, which allows her to accomplish everything before a set concert end time. Both of these examples reflect her personal belief that teaching artists are typically problem solvers, catering to others’ needs. She receives cues from others to inform her decisions and actions in the moment.

When Joyce is completely engrossed in a performance, it feels elongated, but in reality, time has passed more quickly than she perceived.

That’s normal because we’re having so much fun the whole time. Like you don’t really think of the time at all. Actually, I would be in a flow the whole time. You get so caught up in other people, their freedom of expression, and we are literally on a journey the whole time. (Interview, December 10, 2021)

For Joyce, performing is an autotelic experience for everyone involved. It is meaningful for her because she is facilitating positive and community wellness. Fun is the most important keyword for her when she is performing.

Figure 5.6 also shows Joyce’s representation of flow in performing on the right illustration. She drew the shape of a drum circle session in which everyone is connected by the lines. Each shape represents a unique individual member of her group who contributes to, connects with, and leads at a certain point in time, creating a sense of community music.

I’ve got a circle, I’ve got different shapes within the circle. That’s because these are different musicians that play different instruments. So even though we’re collectively together, everybody is still an individual. And at some point, we’re able to flow on our own instruments, whether it’s a song that we learned or if it’s just improv. Sometimes, I come into something like this, sit down and still connect and get through a performance on the spot. And again, that rehearsal piece is important because when I learned songs, I dissect them from beginning to end. So, I’ll always know it no matter where I am, right?

When you're performing, you still have this nonverbal communication that happens when you're playing in a band. It's like building their life without saying things, or if they want to kind of bring it down. It's the body language, but there's always some type of flow and shift that happens, even in performances. Sometimes that improv piece can take its course and once you have completed it, you might go to a reprise. There's an opportunity for flowing in anything that we do. And it's always fun for me to see where it takes us. (Focus group, December 12, 2021)

In Between Teaching and Performing

Joyce's goal in teaching and performing is the same: community wellness. She believes that both are intimately connected:

I believe they coexist. I am who I am natural. That teaching piece, like everybody needs some type of structure in their life, if they're going to do something, they need to kind of map out things in order to kind of see things through. But the musician piece, that still exists, because when you're playing with a band, when you're doing things, there still has to, it has to be some level of structure and still room to create. So they tend to kind of coexist and they kind of work hand in hand. Because even outside of music, if there's a change in the flight, you adapt. And you make choices. Right? And so, you know, to me, music is life. You know, you have your ups, you have your downs, you have your highlights, you know, you have your times where it may not go as planned, you know, so that is what life you know, life happens, music happens. And so, I hope that's helpful, but, you know, in my mindset, you know, a lot of things kind of coexist and kind of work hand in hand. (Focus group, December 12, 2021)

The key for Joyce in both teaching and performing is an organized structure containing space for change, adaptation, and finding new ways of making connections. Her greatest purpose for both performing and teaching is a center of well-being, flowing from and to each person.

Summary

Joyce's teaching experience centered around teachable moments, nonverbal language, creative self-expression, and social-emotional learning. She aimed to provide students with space to engage, grow, and express themselves to feel empowered and connected. Her teaching was grounded on intentionality and individual approach.

Joyce believes that a teacher needs to be open to natural flow when it happens and should act as a facilitator of the flow. Rather than focusing on the length of time in activities, she wants

to focus on the transitions in between the activities, which are often challenging to control. Her flow dimensions are more consistent in performing than in teaching. In performing, Joyce focuses on being completely free and releasing into the music and surroundings. In teaching, she allows other ensemble performers to connect, contribute, and lead. Her idea is that there is always an opportunity to flow in anything she does:

Teaching artists, we always learn, and we always grow. There's never enough to know, and there are always teachable moments. Music is the art of life. (Interview, December 12, 2021)

“Yulie,” the Show Host

I'm lucky to have that kind of student who thinks is funny. And who gets it.
And who understands and who uses it.

If students get it, my flow got bigger.

Yulie is a 56-year-old Japanese American teaching artist who is a professional pianist and a Dalcroze and music theory teacher. She is also a singer and a ukulele player. Yulie has been teaching for more than 20 years and describes her classroom teaching style as hosting her own show with everyone involved.

Yulie first studied piano performance in Japan but moved to New York City to study Dalcroze. Only a few years ago, she returned to performing on the piano while continuing to teach. She works in the heart of New York City and enjoys how progressive, social, and political changes can impact the class content she teaches. During the week, Yulie teaches for more than 5 hours, and her students range from toddler to elementary. She was the only participant who teaches toddlers. Her classes usually last between 45 minutes to 1 hour. She also practices more than 3 hours per week and rehearses and performs a few times a week, accompanying a dance class and singing in a choir. Her performances usually last from 1-2 hours.

Yulie welcomed the invitation to join the study with the aim of understanding how teaching and performing are connected in her life. In early December of 2021, Yulie completed three music teaching questionnaires after teaching two 45-minute Dalcroze classes and one 60-minute theory class. The age group of her classes ranged from toddler (4-5 students) to kindergarten (14 students). While Yulie is part-time faculty, her busy work schedule mimics the responsibility of being full-time. All of her classes were held in person. Yulie completed three performing questionnaires after accompanying a dance class, rehearsing and performing in a women's choir with 20 people. She improvised for the dance class and her choir sang traditional two-part choral music.

In Teaching

The overarching goals in Yulie's teaching are to (a) let students shine in the class, (b) have fun, and (c) create a safe environment to learn. Yulie often described her teaching as a show or a theater where she is acting. She related the "performance aspect of teaching" to actual "performing." For this, she explained how working with younger children fits her style and approach to teaching because they tend to be more spontaneous and open.

But you really have to be open to new ideas in the outer box, right? I don't create a teaching plan. I lost it a long time ago because I wanted to be able to move from what I see from the kids. (Interview, December 12, 2021)

While Yulie does not have worries about her teaching, she has to be very careful, especially with her younger students. She remarked, "For toddlers, anything can happen. So, it's much more, I guess, unpredictable. I think in every class, there's some predictability, but maybe for toddlers even more." She also expressed how it can be dangerous to assume that her students have not learned anything yet, especially her younger students.

In her Dalcroze class, Yulie explained that toddlers are at a very sensitive age and she must pay attention to their every move. She expressed that she is not necessarily worried about how she is teaching, but rather tries to be careful about her approach:

Especially I found that toddlers' class is unpredictable every week. So that and I didn't realize that I'm working extra hard. I think teaching toddlers' class is the hardest. It depends on the teacher, but I tended to observe the mood. And then I tried to read their mind and it's hard to read with this group. (Interview, December 19, 2021)

One of her questionnaires was reported on a Parent Observation Day for her toddler class. Yulie noticed herself focusing more on her students that day because they acted differently when their parents were in the room. She stated that she enjoyed herself more with a larger audience in the room because she felt that her class became more like a show she was hosting.

For Yulie, having more audience members increased both her concentration and autotelic experience. A factor that contributed to Yulie's sense of control was the type of space she was in. She explained, "The Dalcroze class almost has the theater kind of aspect, that I'm running the kind of the show thing. I love that big studio because I can control them. And I can have fun as well." When she had to move her class to a more traditional type of setting with desks and chairs, she experienced a different side of her students' behavior and adjusted accordingly. Similar to Dash, Yulie expressed how too many changes could cause disruption. For instance, when there were many COVID-19 cases among her students, the dynamic of her class changed dramatically because of the reduced size. She felt that the drastic change hindered all parties involved in being in a state of flow.

A safe place is another important factor for Yulie in order for action awareness to merge. She explained that it takes time to get to know and manage her class because, much like Joyce, her focus is divided among multiple tasks. When she concentrates, Yulie focuses on the task at hand (to-do's) and pays attention to her students at the same time.

Like Dash, Yulie has a set of time blocks (45 minutes) that she has internally developed over her 23 years of teaching experience. The specific situation in the class dictates how those time blocks are shifted.

I think I'm just guessing that the way you're having fun, time flies. When you're having a hard time, I'm going slower. I think it's experienced. When some issue happened, I can and know how to fix it right away. So, if I don't have the issue then I can have fun. No matter what, forty-five minutes is forty-five minutes to me. (Interview, December 19, 2021)

Yulie's level of autotelic experience in teaching is affected by the parents' and students' enjoyment of the music. She always enjoys the presence of the parents and feels confident teaching in front of them, describing how she now relies on experience to "make sure everybody is happy."

I love my parents' class. I love Open House because I think I have enough experience to enjoy it. At the beginning of my teaching twenty years ago, I didn't enjoy it and I would have dreams about running the class, in my sleep, practicing how I would run the class. (Interview, December 12, 2021)

Figure 5.7

Yulie's Representation of Flow in Teaching and Performing

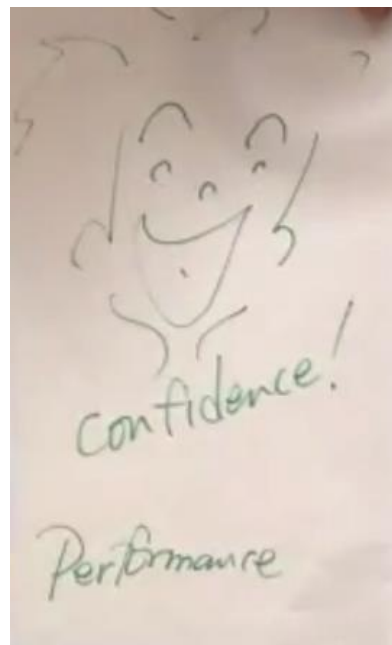
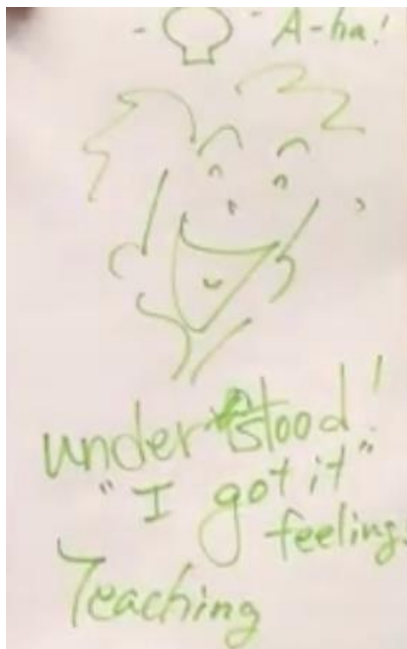


Figure 5.7 shows Yulie's representation of flow in teaching (left) and performing (right). She feels flow when she notices her students experiencing the Aha! moments. She mentioned that when this happens, her flow grows. Her experience relates to the concept of shallow and deep flow (Moneta, 2012).

Yeah, I put the same face right [as performing]. I mean, the smiley face. So, the teaching is like an Aha! moment if I got the student. So that flow happens when a student has a moment of "I understood, or I got it." If that happens, my flow got bigger. (Focus group, December 12, 2021)

On the right side of Figure 5.7, Yulie depicted herself in flow performing with the same facial expression as in teaching, using "confidence" as the keyword. More about her performing experience is described below.

In Performing

When Yulie performs alone, her goal is to help others and to "be musically funny," which is closely related to her level of autotelic experience. When performing as part of a group, however, her goal is not always completely clear because she is usually following a leader in the group. She expressed, "You just have to do it and just have to pull yourself together. You can make a mistake and it doesn't matter. I mean, because we are a group."

In a group setting, her sense of control is low because the control resides in another person or entity. She explained, "I'm joining them. They have a piece and they have a form and you're following. I was controlled by the song." For Yulie, the sense of control in a group comes from either the teacher, the conductor, or even the music.

In performance, many diverse factors influence Yulie's experiences. These factors include level of experience, feeling of responsibility, and the balance of challenge and skill. Most importantly for Yulie is the value of her personal effort. As an example, while she is not confident in her accompanying because it is a new field for her, she still finds value and

satisfaction in trying her best. This relates to the concept of what one does matters (Custodero, 2002). However, Yulie also acknowledged that the experience of rising to any challenge becomes more frequent as her experience doing it grows.

As other participants expressed, Yulie finds that her sense of time in performing unfolds from the music she is playing because “the form was already in [her] brain.” When speaking of the whole experience of accompanying in her dance class, Yulie claimed, “For the tap dance, it always goes fast, but I’m using a lot of thinking process. I think I’m using a lot of brains in that class.” In contrast to teaching, time feels faster for her in performance when she feels challenged.

For Yulie, the performing experience becomes rewarding when everyone involved is having fun. After a performance, she stated, “I was able to shine. I was able to make people laugh and that’s not what everybody can do right? So, I felt good.” She also explained that the experience can be both challenging and fun at the same time. When she is challenged by an activity and accomplishes it, she feels internal satisfaction, from achieving a difficult task, as well as external reward, by helping others. The conditions for flow in her performance result from being fully prepared in the repertoire and genre of music she is playing. She believes that having this preparation and confidence plays a significant role in being in a state of flow in a performance:

For the performance, you really have to prepare for flow. You really have to practice. You really have to be ready. Preparation is the most important thing, I think. I don’t think you can have flow in a performance if you didn’t practice. So, flow for the performance to me is like confidence. I mean, you have to be confident and competent. (Focus group, December 12, 2021)

In Between Teaching and Performing

Yulie connected teaching with performing by treating her classes like a performance or show. She shared that her audience of students and/or parents inspires her to have this engaging

performance aspect in the classroom. This gives her confidence as a teaching artist because she is creating artistically in both endeavors. Another way she engages her students in an artistic way is to intentionally present them with high-level music:

I want to choose a material that is real and artistic, I guess, so a real piece. I even do *The Magic Flute* for the third graders, too. And I use a real recording of it. So, I just wanted to choose the good material to teach the high level of whatever I'm trying to expose them to. So, artistry to me is choose that. Good, real musical art. (Focus group, December 12, 2021)

Summary

Yulie's flow descriptions are organized into pre-reflective and reflective as well as external and internal. Her sense of control is heavily dependent on age group: the younger the students, the less control she feels she has. In teaching, Yulie often found that too much change affects sense of control negatively. Therefore, building a frame of expectation was important for moments of spontaneity to occur.

Like Dash, Yulie is able to feel the passage of time internally in a set time block for her classes. However, she is not focused on this aspect because she is staying present in the moment. She mentioned that it is important to question feedback from students and never assume how and what they are learning, but rather she reads their cues in each moment as much as possible. She also engages her students with artistic intention by presenting them with high-level music.

In performing, Yulie's goal is to have fun and to follow others in a group setting. In a larger group such as a choir, she feels safe to be herself and make mistakes. When performing, she feels that the passage of time is dictated by the music itself, and her level of preparation correlates to her confidence in performing.

Conclusion of Group Teaching Artists

Participants Joyce and Yulie perform in ensembles and teach in classroom settings, while Dash performs as a soloist and teaches group classes. Joyce and Yulie both view teaching through the lens of performance, in which their students are either listeners or part of the ensemble. The participants' primary goals in teaching are to create enjoyment, help each student have an individual voice, and teach with intention.

For this group, there was less detailed discussion about the cognitive state when teaching or performing. The participants mostly shared about the conditions that affect their state of flow and the after-effects of teaching and performing. All participants had an accurate gauge of time as they could internalize a set amount of time that passed in their classes. Dash was the only participant who shared a deep connection to the passing of time. He was also the only participant who discussed flow in the context of self-actualization through out-of-body experiences.

Joyce shared that a state of flow can also come from the students and other ensemble members (a two-way street that she embraces), while Yulie emphasized that teaching a group of toddlers brings a whole different set of spontaneous challenges that she finds very enjoyable.

All participants expressed that there needs to be an acknowledgment of what is realistic in both contexts and to be able to stay present in the moment without worry over what will happen next. In general, having more experience and confidence positively influenced the level of flow. No direct relationship was found between flow dimensions and the amount of experience participants had in teaching. Except for Yulie, flow dimensions were more consistent in performing than in teaching.

Chapter Conclusion

Considering that my participants came from a diverse population of musicians with various backgrounds, the purpose of Chapter 5 was to examine how flow was present and experienced in the context of performing and teaching in each individual. The chapter was divided to explore similarities and differences among those who teach private lessons versus group classes. After close examination, each flow profile was found to be unique based on individual experience and personality.

The participants all agreed that teaching and performing are autotelic in nature. They felt intrinsic and extrinsic rewards in both contexts yet shared that it is important to let go and move on after a performance. The participants who taught privately were more descriptive about their cognitive states when teaching and performing, compared to those who taught group classes.

Across the board, participants described teaching as being *in tune* and performing as being *in the zone*. In general, the experience of time passing in teaching was normal for the participants because they were familiar with how it played out in other contexts, such as performing. Participants who taught in classrooms had a strong sense of a set amount of time, like a teaching block; Dash, in particular, had a deep connection with the movement of time based on his diverse experiences. Participants were mainly divided on whether flow is intentionally created or happens by chance.

In general, increased experience and confidence positively affected level of flow. Familiarity created trust which also influenced risk tolerance. There was a positive relationship between flow dimensions and the number of experiences teaching in the private lesson group. Overall, flow dimensions were more consistent in performing than in teaching.

Chapter 6 – Discussion

Overview

The purpose of this study was to explore and examine the experience of teaching and performing using flow as an operational tool and phenomenology as an analytical lens. Findings were first presented according to each flow dimension. In Chapter 5, portraits of the participants were used to share unique facets of their flow profiles. This chapter is dedicated to analyzing and synthesizing findings across cases and discussing findings in relation to current literature.

Phenomenology and Flow

The analytical lens of phenomenology and operational tools of flow was carefully integrated into this study to capture the artistic experience of performing and teaching. Because Csikszentmihalyi (1997b) claimed that artists are able to discuss their work at a higher cognitive level, phenomenology was used to explore the structure of teaching artists' experiences and their consciousness through time and space. Flow was utilized to examine the condition and characteristics of a state in which teaching artists are highly engaged in performing and teaching. In this study, findings are presented through flow dimensions and the structural relationship linking different ways of experiencing flow.

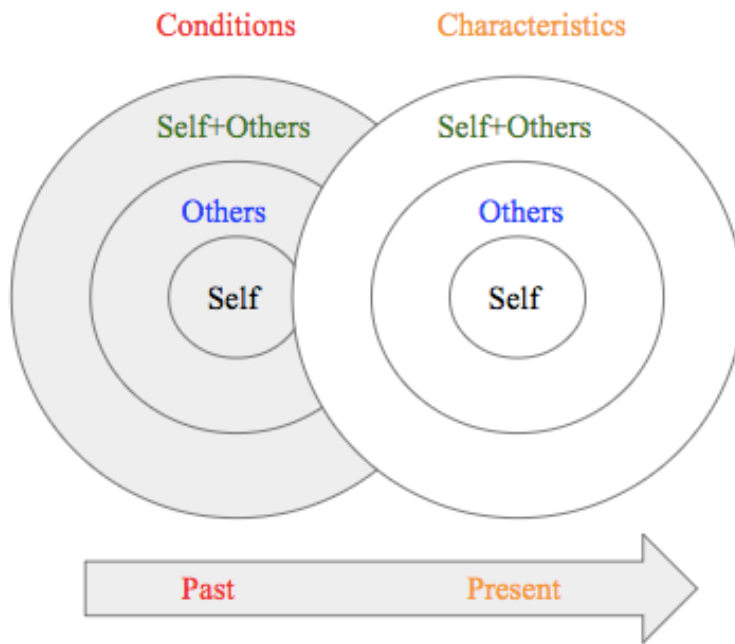
Phenomenology in Flow Studies

While the initial intention of this study was not to examine the scale used in this study, findings showed that the responses from the 9-item modified short version list presented different meanings and ways of experiencing flow in the contexts of performing and teaching. Previously, terms and vocabularies used in the flow state scales (FSS) were criticized for not being sufficiently precise as flow is naturally multidimensional (Wright et al., 2014). As examples from the participant study, Clay interpreted the concentration item as a proposed

condition, while Yulie interpreted it as an experiential element of flow. Some participants perceived the clear goals dimension as preset goals, while others interpreted it as the emergent goal that appears during flow with feedback from self or others. Table 6.1 presents how flow dimensions were interpreted by teaching artists based on whether their perception of the dimensions was pre-planned or in the state of flow, and based on their awareness of self, others, or both in the shared time and space of the experience.

Figure 6.1

Phenomenological Interpretation of the Flow Items



Although all flow items used in this study, minus the time item, were intentional in capturing the experiential state of flow, participants still differed in their interpretations of experiential and proposed conditions. However, findings from current studies supported that all flow dimensions were positively associated with the experiences of performing and teaching among teaching artists. Findings from this study revealed that understanding how participants

perceive flow dimensions informs how to phrase flow-related questions to teaching artists in future studies. Essentially, flow dimensions help to understand the conditions and characteristics of experience, while phenomenology helps to understand the experiential state through consciousness.

Understanding how teaching artists perceived, interpreted, and self-reported their experiences differently for each survey question was critical. Previous large-scale quantitative flow studies on musicians showed that not all flow dimensions are equal in importance (Araujo & Hein, 2019; Bloom & Skutnick-Henley, 2005; Fritz & Avsec, 2007; Sinnamon et al., 2012). Results from these studies included less association of loss of self-consciousness with flow experience among musicians (Araujo & Hein, 2019; Bloom & Skutnick-Henley, 2005; Fritz & Avsec, 2007; Sinnamon et al., 2012). However, qualitative flow studies showed that all flow dimensions were positively associated with musicians in some ways (Garces-Bascal, 2016; Hart & Blasi, 2013).

To understand the *subjectiveness* of flow experience, studies are recommended to incorporate qualitative methods applying the analytical lens of a phenomenology of perception, to uncover the experiential state of flow more fully (Jackson & Marsh, 1996). Findings from the current study support this and present one method of application.

Flow States and Consciousness

Csikszentmihalyi (1996) shared that artists undergo sophisticated modes of cognitive function operating at a high skill. In a previous study, Csikszentmihalyi and Nakamura (2002) organized the nine flow dimensions into conditions and characteristics. The conditions acted as antecedents to flow, and the characteristics described the states in which one is in flow. The participants described the process of going into and out of flow as attending to, being aware of,

and being conscious of themselves and others in a fluid state. Many described this process, sensing that control is possible, as being “on and off track.”

Csikszentmihalyi and Nakamura (2002) explained that consciousness begins with selective attention that leads to one’s awareness, followed by processes such as willingness, thinking, and feeling. Similarly, participants who performed written musical scores or written verse shared three distinctive states in which they found themselves when performing. The first state was uniquely described by Dash as a sense of self-actualization, in which the self feels separated from its physical body, like an out-of-body experience. This separation occurred in a state of being highly attentive to oneself. In this state, there is not much room for automatism or spontaneity because one is consciously pacing through a performance. Plainly, one is simply doing what one can. However, when one sense that control is possible, Clay describes the experience of having a “self-dialogue” while doing what he is doing.

From this state, Bloom and Skutnick-Henley (2005) conjectured how the ability to perform without self-criticism is an important condition to transition to the second state, when the “self” begins to merge. In this second state, self-actualization fades as increased physical focus creates more automatic control and a disassociation with perceived outside feedback. This is sometimes referred to as the autopilot state and was described by participant Orion as “riding a cloud.” The last state occurred when participants reached a certain level of automatism and gained the highest level of control—namely, freedom of each moment. Many participants used the phrase “living in it” or “all wheels are in motion” to describe this experience. In this state, outside feedback is perceived, but one is reacting to the feedback by “creating” something new in one’s action. While self-consciousness is described as being “lost,” participants are *sub-conscious*, not, *unconscious* (Kenny, 2011).

In effect, the first state occurs when one is overly aware of oneself and others. The second state occurs when awareness starts to merge, leading to the feeling of being more “on track.” The last state occurs when one embodies the freedom to create while staying “on track,” and is able to respond freely and spontaneously to self and others who are involved in their experience. Therefore, how one perceives the feedback as either interference or collaborative responsiveness can be individually monitored and controlled.

It is important to note that one state leads to and builds from another. The third state thus results from the first and second states. Moneta (2012) argued for a consideration of including the level of involvement of these states in tasks as either “sub-optimal” or “shallow” flow. Csikszentmihalyi (2009) described that in flow, the mind is “left free to pursue associations that normally are not made.” In this state, one is incompletely in sync with body, mind, and emotions, and actions are consequential. Orion described this state as feeling like “all wheels are in motion.” Only in the last two states is the perception of self not separated but unified. The description of the states supports how flow affects the “kind of processing style and allocation of cognitive capacity” (Landhäußer & Keller, 2012). The variance in the three states could be a possible explanation for musicians reporting less frequency of loss of self-consciousness in flow, as measured by the Dispositional State Scale (Sinnamon et al., 2012). Ultimately, this study found that sub-optimal states exist on three levels for those whose music making is not improvisatory and whose flow states remain fluid.

It is critical to note that the descriptions above were exclusive to those who performed written music and written verses. Those who improvised as a natural part of their music making, such as Joyce, experienced performing as something that was already spontaneous and a process of creating in the moment. For these participants, teaching contained the same element of

improvisation because their lesson plans were left open for spontaneity to occur. In teaching, participants did not clearly define each state, as mentioned above, because many external variables influenced and interrupted their state of consciousness. Particular to group teaching, participants shared that even if their attention was divided due to the size of a class, they could still create a feeling of “connectedness” of being together as if they were performing in an ensemble. A possible explanation for this is how musicians can feel multiple events as one, which can be compared to the maximum blend of the chord in Figure 2.1 (Clifton, 1983). The descriptions above explain how the contexts of performing and teaching influence flow.

Time in Flow

Participants reported that their sense of time in flow did not differ from normal in performing or teaching because they were accustomed to the passing of time within those boundaries. Many described that their sense of time was initially shaped by the length of the music they were playing or the length of their teaching (clock time). For example, Dash shared that he developed a deep connection with clock time from performing for poetry slams, which had a 3-minute time limit. Other activities in his life, such as running and bartending, also required sensitivity to clock time. Because of his past experiences, Dash expressed that he was keenly aware of the clock time passing when teaching, which can be referred to as a “teaching-block time.”

In performing, Clara described clock time as performing in *real-time*. As she explained, “It’s up to me to pass the time, like how much am I going to be really into it when I’m playing.” This intentionality of engagement is what influences the quality of event time in performing and teaching. A sense of being highly engaged within a given length of time altered teaching artists’ sense of time passing (event time). Based on their level of merging of awareness, time was

described as either shorter or longer (Figure 4.5). Eve previously shared that she feels everything in slow-motion when she becomes hyper-sensitive and hyper-aware of the situation. These two states of awareness of time are illustrated in Figure 4.6, which aligns with the idea of how distinct musical events can be blended as a whole, connected, or completely separated (Clifton, 1983). Teaching artists claimed that in performing and teaching, temporal experience is already distorted, and the way time felt shorter or longer depended on their level of awareness and obliviousness of time, self, and others.

Flow as It Unfolds in Time

The teaching artists shared that they were accustomed to the way time unfolded because performing music organizes their consciousness relative to time passing from the past to the present to the future. As the experience unfolds over time, participants described how being in a state of flow requires a period of “warm-up time.” The first two cognitive states described above reflect the task-oriented attention required during this time in a performance. Orion expressed that only after playing 25 minutes into his performance with the band, he could feel like he was “doing something.” Clay also expressed that he needed a section of the music to be repeated once or twice during the performance before he could start “feeling” it. In teaching, Joyce would use the warm-up time of working on a familiar activity before opening up the space for new collaboration and creative expression.

Figure 6.2 represents how all teaching artists described their sense of before flow, in flow, and after flow in relation to their state of awareness. In 2005, Custodero presented three flow indicators found in young children: (a) anticipation, (b) expansion, and (c) extension. These flow indicators were also found among teaching artists who described their experiences in flow like a fluid flux in a cycle. Anticipation was presented through the pre-planned conditions for

flow, expansion as the state of being in flow, and extension as the state of consequence in which one state leads to another.

Figure 6.2

Flow Envelope

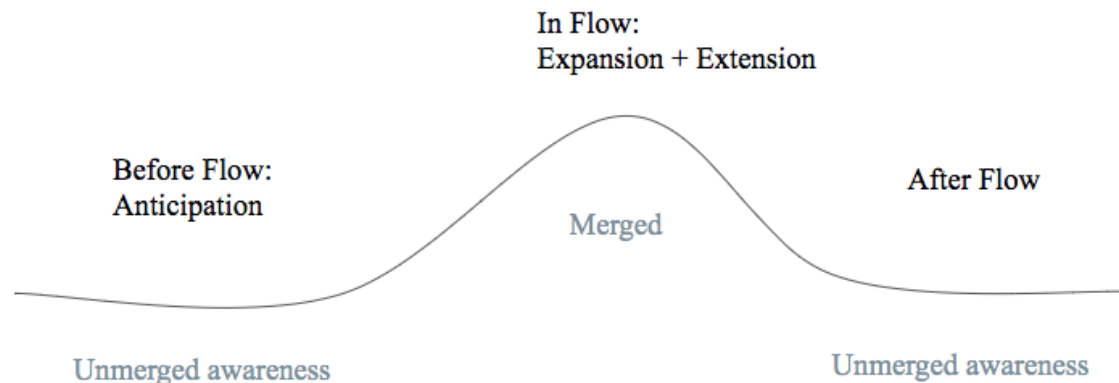
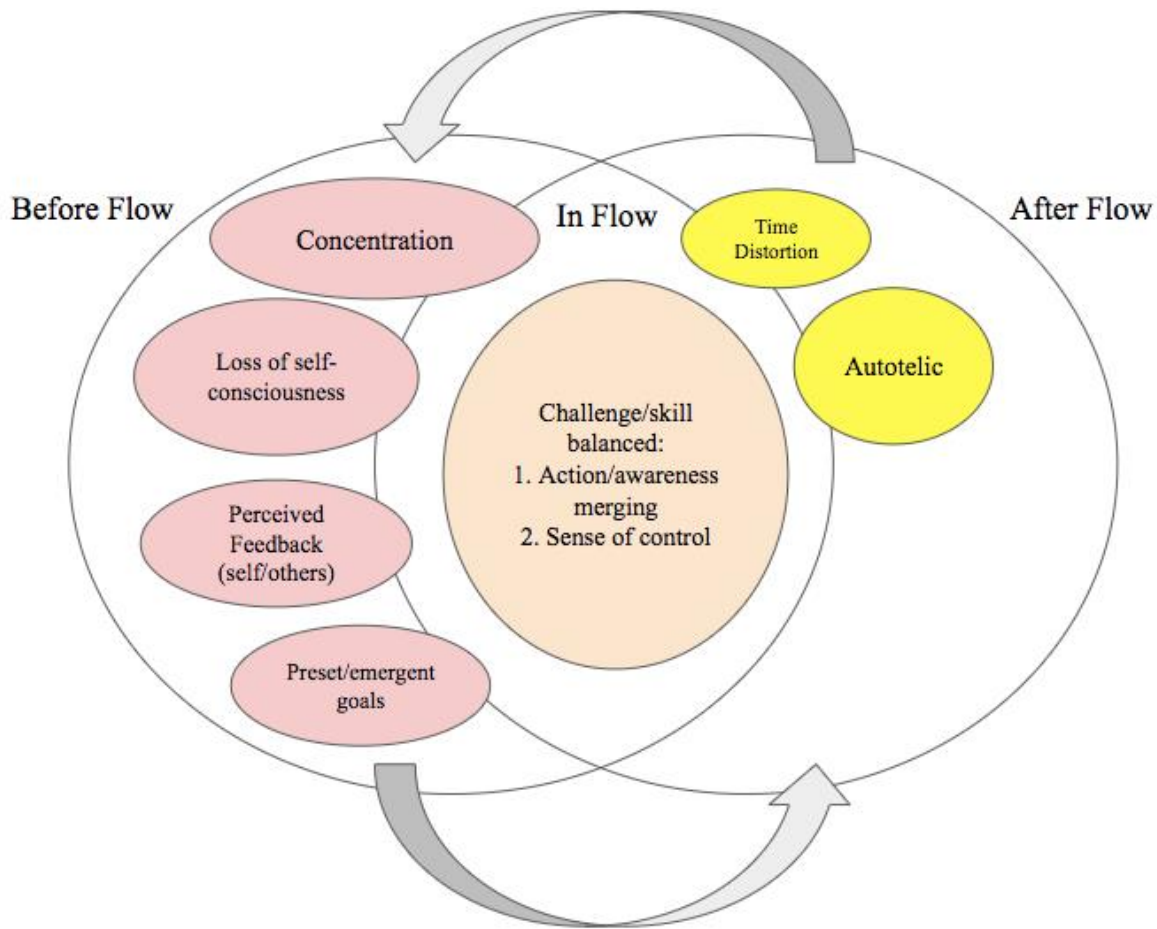


Figure 6.2 presents the relationship of flow dimensions before flow, in flow, and after flow. Four purple circles represent the conditions or antecedents to flow. The pink circle is the state of flow in which the balance of perceived challenge and skill is presented through the characteristics of action and awareness merging and a sense of control. The purple circles represent before flow and overlap into the state of in flow. The green circles represent the effects of being in flow, which are transformation of time and autotelic experience. It is important to note that feedback is interpreted as the type of feedback received vs. how one is in control of perceiving while performing and teaching. The goals are also divided into preset goals, which are pre-planned, and emergent goals that unfold when one is in the state of flow. Participants' descriptions of flow were more continuous than discrete in the moment. An important finding of this study was that participants described the relationship before, during, and after flow as cyclic, repeating over time. This raises the question of whether the flow process is intentionally manifested or remains circumstantial.

Figure 6.3

Before Flow, In Flow, and After Flow in the Context of Music Teaching and Performing



To this day, scholars (Bakker 2005; Buil et al., 2019; Moneta, 2012) in the field have proposed diverse and new models of flow separating antecedents and flow states; they aim to understand the relationships between these models, most of which are supported by mass quantitative data and by using the factor sequential equation modeling to test the models. When exploring all these models and their advancements, it is clear that the models alternate, and the relationship between the conditions for flow and the characteristics of flow continuously shifts. In the current study, the qualitative analysis of the data was conducted to create individual flow models, which then evolved into the proposed model in Figure 6.3. It is important to note that the

circles often overlap, and flow is cyclic in the sense that it repeats itself. Supporting the ideas of Sawyer (2003, 2013, 2015, 2017) and Bakker (2001, 2005), flow is driven by collaboration and partnership with others, resulting in the cyclic nature of teaching and learning.

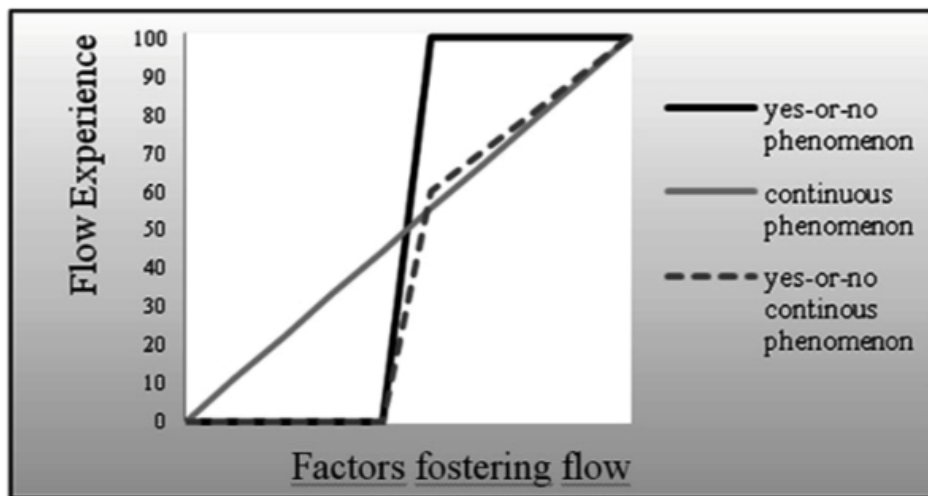
Discrete or Continuous?

The structure of Figure 6.3 may provide some clues to conceptualizing flow as a continuous or discrete state. To understand more about the intensity and frequency of flow, Engeser (2012) presented Figure 6.4 in the last chapter of his pivotal book on flow, *Advances on Flow Research*, to propose a possible relationship between flow and the factors that foster flow. He shared that there are three possibilities to conceptualize flow in future studies:

1. Flow is present or not present.
2. Flow is high or low, or more or less frequently experienced.
3. There is a threshold for flow and flow intensifies as factors increase.

Figure 6.4

Possible Relationship Between Factors Fostering Flow and the Experience of Flow



(Engeser & Schiepe-Tiska, 2012)

Based on this study, a collective flow experience by teaching artists supports continuous phenomena or yes-or-no continuous phenomena, depending on how the start of performing or

teaching itself is defined and served. For example, many participants described how warm-up time is a necessary component of performance to build over time, which supports the concept of a continuous phenomenon. However, if one considers the conditions of performing and teaching themselves as a starting place for teaching artists to be above the threshold, yes-or-no continuous phenomena would reflect their experience more clearly. In such a case, teaching artists would be experiencing a more shallow flow at the start of performing or teaching, which resonated with Yulie's experience when she said that she could feel "flow getting bigger!"

In understanding whether flow is continuous or discrete, the relationship between flow and memory is important to consider, as brought up by Eve. This complex relationship played a role in why Csikszentmihalyi wanted to steer away from stimulated recalls and use experience sampling method on the spot. While either one has its pros and cons, understanding the relationship between neurocognitive mechanisms and memory underlying the experience of flow may be essential.

Another point to consider is that to grasp the full scope of consciousness experience, the experience should be described relative to the time in the world in which we live. In an "optimal" state, would the manner in which time passes differently from normal encompass fluid transitions from flow to non-flow and vice versa? In the context of this study, the analysis showed that sense of time was situated differently because awareness of time passing was a skill that participants had already developed as musicians. Especially for classical music, the written music itself already dictates how time will flow for its performance.

In addition to time being situated differently in the setting of music performance, Chapter 4 explained how multiple temporalities occur vertically as time passes from past to future. This sense of multiple temporalities does not change between one state to another; rather, how

conscious one is of the temporality changes. Csikszentmihalyi (1990) stated how the transformation of time may not be universal due to the nature of some activities that require attention to time. In the case of this study, a transformation of time did not function as an indicator for flow, but it did serve to illuminate how complex temporality exists in performing and teaching and how time is a relevant component in studies aiming to understand the full range of human experience.

Abuhamdeh (2020) posited that, unlike most psychological constructs, flow is “a term coined by a specific psychologist to represent his particular conceptualization of optimal experience” (pp. 8-9). In other words, the term *flow* comes with Csikszentmihalyi’s conceptualization “pre-installed,” and this is the default conceptualization. Wright and his colleagues (2014) also stated that in their study, reversal theory showed that flow is not only one type of optimal experience, but multiple. The findings from this study present a modified or revised version of Csikszentmihalyi’s conceptualization of optimal experience in the context of music performing and teaching.

Flow as a Space for “Play”

Chapter 5 presented illustrations of flow by the individual teaching artists in the form of shapes and lines. The participants generally described their intersubjectivity in a lived experience of performing and teaching as positive, or “having fun.” For example, Orion associated the experience of flow as a star shining and glowing. Yulie described her experience as “I was able to shine. I was able to make people laugh and that’s not what everybody can do right? So, I felt good.” In those moments, teaching artists described that a feeling of warmth comes from being in the state of flow.

In performing, the participants described the exchange of energy as “organic,” like the feeling of being tightly connected together. From their descriptions, the word “energy” was used to describe the spontaneous exchange of feeling, reading, giving, and feeding, that occurred while performing. This characteristic of doing multiple endeavors at once was what Green (2005) described as artistry. Table 6.1 presents words that the teaching artists used to describe the nature of play and space in their flow experience.

Table 6.1

Descriptors of Play and Space in Teaching and Performing

	Teaching	Performing
Play	Connecting Meeting Unifying Problem-solving (questions/challenges) Taking risks Changing in personality Giving freely Receiving freely Smooth transitions	Layering Stitching “Feeding off energy” Expressing Being creative Freeing Leading Following “Self-dialogue” “Self-actualization” “Craftsmanship” Controlling Giving freely Receiving freely
Space	Safe Moving Evolving Advancing Smooth Unknown-open Structure (to create)	Safe Unknown-open Place for it in the music Structure (to create)

In teaching, Joyce described that playing was a form of community wellness, where everyone could feel, express, and release as a collective group. Play also appeared as the exchange between *leading* and *following*, or the “shifting of roles” that occurred in the moment.

While this study did not collect data from other participants involved in the experience, the description of the dynamic and interactive nature of performing and teaching shared by teaching artists supports group flow (Bakker, 2005; Culbertson et al., 2014, Sawyer, 2003, 2013, 2015, 2017).

Looking at the way participants described play and space in their experience, multiple frames of awareness are evident, and performing and teaching require continuous negotiation and collaboration with self and others. Teaching artists described play as having organic energy, warmth, glow, and shine in a safe space to create and move.

Flow and Artistry

Green (2005) described artistry as a creative ability to engage in multiple endeavors and potentials all at once through conscious participation. The lens of phenomenology shared that teaching artists *tune in* to multiple potentials, practicing their music-making in teaching. They described it all as, in essence, a performing. Teaching artists expressed that practicing music-making occurred through a complex interaction of self-dialogue, self-actualization, loss of self-consciousness, and merging of their awareness and action. Embracing artistry leads to artistic exploration and cultivation of artistic experiences.

The teaching artists shared that performing and teaching are both inherently challenging and intrinsically rewarding. They described how performing and teaching create an opportunity to transform their experiences into flow because the conditions that foster flow, as shown in the purple circles in Figure 6.2, are present. Their work brought a sense of renewal, lifelong learning, and well-being of self and others. They are excited about what they do and enjoy bringing their full selves to their work, utilizing all senses and perspectives and creative freedom through constant negotiation and collaboration. Findings supported that teaching artists are facilitators of

their own experiences, and the key to artistry is in knowing how to prepare (antecedent) into flow and merge into a state of flow.

Flow Experiences Between Performing and Teaching

Chapter 4 presented the experience of performing and teaching organized by the nine flow characteristics and conditions. In Chapter 5, individual portraits of teaching artists were described as flow profiles unique to each individual. In this section, the specific ways that teaching and performing influence and shape flow experiences across teaching artists are discussed in further detail.

Table 6.2 presents the collective quantitative data for each flow dimension across participants, divided into performing and teaching. In general, the order of the highest flow dimensions to the lowest was fairly consistent between performing and teaching. The highest flow characteristic in both teaching and performing was concentration.

Table 6.2

Sample Average Score of Flow Dimensions

Flow Dimensions	Type	Performing	Teaching	Difference
Concentration	Characteristic	4.33	4.52	+0.19
Autotelic	Characteristic	4.19	4.52	+0.33
Clear goals	Condition	4.24	4.38	+0.14
Action-awareness merging	Characteristic	4.17	4.24	+0.07
Unambiguous feedback	Condition	4.05	4.09	+0.04
A sense of control	Characteristic	4.05	3.95	-0.10
Loss of self-consciousness	Characteristic	3.86	4.10	+0.24
Challenge-skill balance	Condition	3.86	3.67	-0.19
Transformation of time	Characteristic	2.90	2.57	-0.33

The only average below 3 for any survey item was transformation of time. The data from the interviews revealed that this was largely because the survey item was phrased in a way that asked if time was different from normal. Participants expressed that temporal distortion already

inherently exists in performing and teaching and found the survey item to be redundant. The results showed that distortion of time occurs more in teaching because it is generally more improvisatory and spontaneous.

After transformation of time, the lowest characteristic for teaching and performing was balance of challenge and skill. The act of performing and teaching requires high skills to meet the demands of challenges. However, most participants did not exhibit a lot of confidence in their ability to find this balance as their subjective assessments of their skills to meet challenges was low.

This finding may be related to the idea that flow is not always optimized by only the balance of challenges and skills (Rheinberg et al., 2003). Previous studies also hypothesized that the relationship between challenge and enjoyment was very unstable (Abuhamdeh & Csikszentmihalyi, 2009, 2012), but this was not the case in the current study because a level of autotelic experience was the second highest-ranking flow dimension.

Excluding the time item, the biggest difference between the contexts of performing and teaching was that the level of autotelic experience was higher in the context of teaching. Orion's perspective was that teaching was more about "looking forward to something" after it ended and creating an "impact" on students' lives. The smallest difference between performing and teaching was in unambiguous feedback.

One unique observation from Table 6.2 was that strength of the relationship in which one felt their action-awareness merging was higher than the loss of self-consciousness in the contexts of performing and teaching. As shown in Figure 6.2 flow is associated with the merging of action and awareness. When this occurs, a sense of self disappears. However, the teaching artists

reported a high merging of action-awareness and low loss of self-consciousness. Their experience reflected the different degrees of an awareness of self during teaching or performing, as explained in the phenomenology section. In the case of this study, the survey item for loss of self-consciousness stated, “I was not worried about my teaching/performing while teaching/performing.” Essentially, it asked about a level of confidence in taking risks or facing challenges in a given situation. The definition of loss of self-consciousness described the state of being in one’s sense of self in a way that is not separated but merged (Csikszentmihalyi, 1975). Therefore, loss of self-consciousness is both a preset (sense of worry) and a state (sense of self merged). From the numeric data, however, the teaching artists reported that there is some sense of worry in both teaching and performing because of not knowing what might occur in either context. While the teaching artists were generally more experienced in performing, their sense of worry was also higher in performing.

In previous quantitative flow studies among musicians, either negative or nonsignificant correlations were found between flow and two or more of the dimensions, such as loss of self-consciousness, temporal distortion, merging of action and awareness, and sense of control (Araujo & Hein, 2019; Bloom & Skutnick-Henley, 2005; Fritz & Avsec, 2007; Sinnamon et al., 2012). In this study, as shown in Table 6.2, quantitative data of the merging of action and awareness, sense of control, and loss of self-consciousness all exhibited a positive relationship with flow.

While performing and teaching resulted in a fairly similar pattern of strengths (ranked from highest to lowest), Table 6.3 also captures the prominent flow characteristic presented in each context.

Table 6.3

Prominent Flow Characteristics Between Teaching and Performing

Teaching	Performing
Concentration	A sense of control
Autotelic experience	Challenge/skill balance
Clear goals	Transformation of time
Action/awareness merging	
Loss of self-consciousness	
Unambiguous feedback	

Excluding the time dimension, only a sense of control and challenge and skill balance were higher in performing compared to teaching. Transformation of time is left under the context of performing but should be interpreted as occurring more frequently in teaching.

Flow Experience Between Group Teaching and Private Lessons

After giving an overview of the similarities and differences in the context of performing and teaching, the following sections examine the strength of flow characteristics and conditions in the contexts of group teaching and private lessons. Table 6.4 highlights the prominent flow characteristics that were more present in either context. This table represents the influence of the number of participants involved in flow experiences.

My participants were divided between those who taught group classes (48%) versus private lessons (52%). Balance of challenge and skills is not represented in this table because the average of the flow dimension was identical between group teaching and private teaching ($M = 3.67$). This finding supported that size of the teaching group did not affect how one perceives level of challenges or skills. Other flow dimensions, however, were divided between the two teaching contexts.

Table 6.4

Prominent Flow Characteristics and Conditions Between Group Teaching and Private Lesson

Group Teaching	Private Lesson
Concentration	Unambiguous feedback
Autotelic experience	Sense of control
Clear goals	Transformation of time
Action-awareness merging	
Loss of self-consciousness	

Clear goals, loss of self-consciousness, action-awareness merging, autotelic experience, and concentration were higher in group teaching, while unambiguous feedback, sense of control, and transformation of time were higher in private lessons. Therefore, various conditions and characteristics fostered greater flow than others, depending on the number of participants involved. In general, participants who taught private lessons elicited a slightly higher flow than those who taught in a group setting.

The teaching artists reported that the number of people involved in an activity affected flow dimensions in different ways. This points to how flow is both context-specific and activity-specific, supporting the idea that the experience of flow is not solely based on the individual but also on the circumstances of their experience.

Flow Experience Between Popular and Classical Musicians

The difference in description of state of flow between participants who performed written music and those who improvised in their music making was discussed earlier in this chapter through the lens of phenomenology. Table 6.5 presents that the genre of music that teaching artists perform is influential.

Table 6.5*Prominent Flow Characteristics Between Popular and Classical Musicians*

Popular Musicians	Classical Musicians
Clear goals	Autotelic experience
Loss of self-consciousness	Balance of challenge-skill
	Concentration
	Unambiguous feedback
	Action-awareness merging
	Sense of control
	Transformation of time

All participants, except Eve and Clara, were considered popular musicians. Flow characteristics were more prominent among classical musicians, with the exceptions of clear goals and loss of self-consciousness. In understanding this finding, it is critical to determine whether the activity of performing is time-specific. For example, in classical vs. popular music, distortion of time may be experienced similarly, but the length of the music is preset in classical while it is more open-ended in popular music. Another aspect to consider is how much the activity allows for freedom of control or, in a figurative sense, how one is “creating” something new in the moment. Table 6.4 shows that while popular music allows for more in-the-moment creating through spontaneity, the contexts of high challenge and high skill in performing classical music were more flow-generating. In essence, although popular musicians experienced less worry and more freedom of spontaneity in their performances, the experience of classical musicians aligned more with the concept of flow, a positive state in which one feels highly challenged and highly skilled (Csikszentmihalyi, 1975). In general, findings showed that there was a difference between how flow dimensions are organized in strength based on the setting and the nature of an activity.

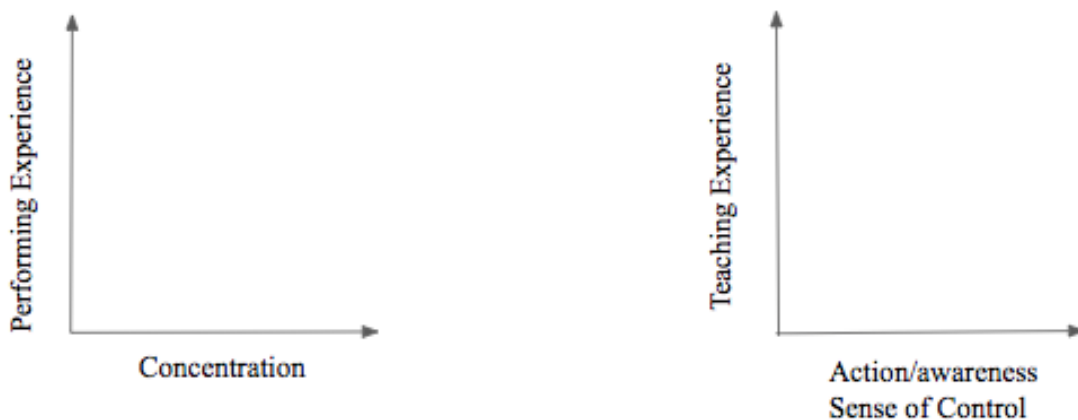
Relationship of Past Experiences to Present Performing/Teaching

Aside from contexts and activities influencing flow experiences, the relationship of past experiences to present performing and teaching also affects the intensity of flow among teaching artists. In Table 6.2, the teaching artists reported that they felt more sense of control and balance of challenge and skill in performing, based on their number of previous experiences and the trust they built from them. While this relationship is critical for understanding the level of confidence among teaching artists in performing and teaching, only years of experience is discussed here because there was no psychometric to measure the level of confidence using the quantitative method.

A direct relationship between years of experience and present performing/teaching was only found with private lesson teachers. There was a positive relationship between the experience of performing and the one flow dimension, concentration. There was also a positive relationship between the experience of teaching and the two flow dimensions of merging of action and awareness and sense of control (see Figure 6.5).

Figure 6.5

Relationship Between Years of Experience in Performing and Private Teaching and Flow Dimensions



In previous studies on teaching artists, Rabkin and his colleagues (2011) shared that teaching artists generally had high satisfaction from their teaching work. It is interesting to note that this relationship was not found among those who taught in both private and group teaching. Additionally, no relationship was found between the balance of challenge and skill and years of experience, which showed the nature of *subjectiveness* in flow studies.

Among teaching artists who taught in group classrooms, no direct relationship was found between flow dimensions and the number of experiences. While this study did not have enough statistical power to conduct further analyses such as correlation, confirmatory factor analysis, sequential equation modeling, or latent variable analysis, basic descriptive statistics showed that there are some relationships between factors/conditions and other flow dimensions.

Although this relationship was examined mainly through the lens of cumulative experience, participants also shared that familiarity with others and space was the key to how much they perceived their skills to meet the challenge. Building trust through familiarity, experience, and a safe space influenced participants' confidence level. The importance of sustaining a level of high confidence supported the idea that self-confidence is a predictor of flow (Bloom & Skutnick-Henley, 2005).

Full Circle: In Between Teaching and Performing

More differences than similarities were found between the flow dimensions in both teaching and performing. These differences in the findings supported how individuals' visual representations of flow in teaching and performing differed based on context, as described in Chapter 5. Flow experiences are context-specific and activity-specific; therefore, the drawings were diverse representations of personal experiences.

Aside from these differences, the teaching artists emphasized that performing and teaching were both highly connected. Group teaching was akin to performing in an ensemble. Understanding the music of composers was similar to developing individual relationships with students, a sign of an empathy. What drove flow was the idea of collaborating and being with others through partnership (Bakker, 2001, 2005; Sawyer, 2003 2013, 2015, 2017).

The relationship between performing and teaching is a cyclic one that is united in what Clay called a “discovery through creative freedom.” Green (2005) claimed that musical artistry is a continuous journey of self-discovery that promotes growth in human qualities and character skills. Both of these fields offer opportunities for an artistic experience in which one is a genuine participant of the experience, highly engaged and engrossed (Schutz, 1967).

Participants Dash and Eve explained how they invested their whole selves—physically, emotionally, and cognitively—in the same way for both teaching and performing. Teaching for Clara was an extension of performance, while Yulie stated that she felt she was hosting her own show when teaching. Joyce described how teaching and performing for her were connected by the intrinsic and extrinsic goals of community wellness. The desire to feel and express through performing music and music teaching is what Gembris (2008) described as *becoming more real* and achieving quality of life and happiness through a sense of community. This occurs when goals are related to subjective well-being (Fritz & Avsec, 2007).

The Individuality of Flow Experiences

Participant Clara shared that the way she is in sync with how she expresses herself fully makes her flow unique to herself. She said, “It’s not like I am going to flow like anyone else!” This section is dedicated to examining the individuality of flow experiences and contributing

factors in addition to differences within the contexts of performing and teaching. Figures 6.6 and 6.7 present individual mean scores for flow dimensions in performing and teaching.

Figure 6.6

Individual Mean Scores for Flow Dimensions in Performing

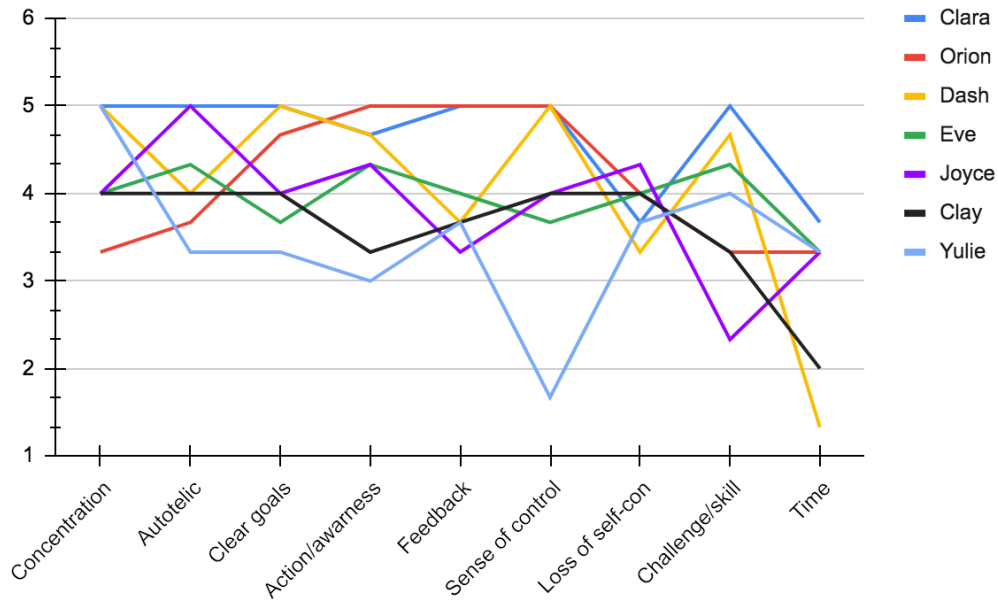
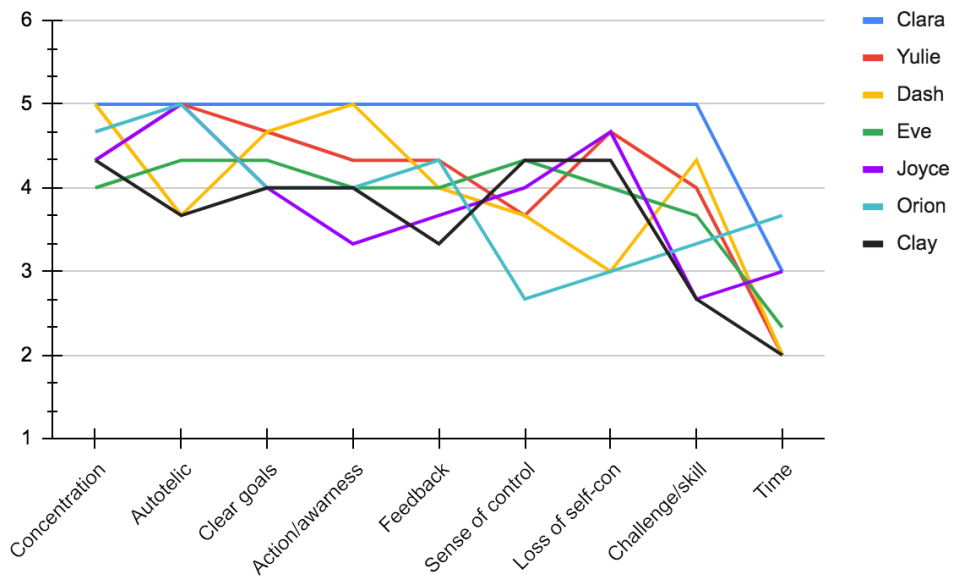


Figure 6.7

Individual Mean Scores for Flow Dimensions in Teaching



Figures 6.6 and 6.7 represent the dynamic combination of flow dimensions among the participants' experiences in performing and teaching. The flow dimensions are listed from the highest to the lowest mean across participants. In this study, concentration had the highest average among participants, while transformation of time had the lowest. The individuals are also presented based on the highest to the lowest averages of flow across two contexts. For example, in performing, Clara reported the highest average overall flow score, while Yulie reported the lowest.

The range of each flow dimension showed stability or variation in the experience of a flow dimension across participants. A smaller range, or the less the scores are apart, equates to the stability of the experience of the flow dimension. A larger range, or the more the scores are apart, shows more variation in how flow dimension is experienced. As an example of a stable flow dimension experience in Figure 6.6, scores are clustered on feedback and loss of self-consciousness. Similarly, in Figure 6.7, scores are clustered on clear goal and feedback.

Personal Traits

It is important to note that the participants all worked several jobs simultaneously during the time of the study. Not one single participant held sole performing and teaching positions. Their interests and curiosities extended to other fields, such as entertainment and administration. When I asked my participants during the focus group if they could imagine being full-time classroom teachers, they all vehemently disagreed. Many of their paths to becoming teaching artists were generally not straightforward, and many experienced multiple career shifts. For example, Yulie left her solo performance studies in Japan to come to the United States to study Dalcroze. Clara left classroom teaching for private teaching, which suited her better. Dash had started in science classroom teaching before transitioning to group teaching, and both Clay and

Orion have only started teaching within the last few years. It would be interesting to repeat this study as a longitudinal study—which the field of flow studies currently lacks—with the same participants over the next several years. Differences in cultural norms also affected participants, as Yulie shared that her move from Japan to the United States allowed her to become freer and more open to taking risks.

In Chapter 5, Clara, Dash, Yulie, and Dash drew portraits of themselves to represent their flow states in performing and teaching. The other participants drew the space in which flow was experienced in their teaching or performing setting. In Figure 5.4, Clara’s portrait looks happy and calm with eyes closed while teaching, while for performing, she looks ecstatic and enthused with eyes open. Regarding her representation of teaching, she said, “I feel like my responsibility as a teacher, I have to exude positivity at all times.” Her experience was similar to Dash, who in Figure 5.5 drew himself with open arms, open eyes, and lots of question marks when teaching, but with closed eyes and lots of exclamation marks when performing. For both Clara and Dash, emotional stimulation is at a higher level in performing. This contrast of open and closed in their portraits reflected their energy level and willingness to perceive feedback in each experience. As a comparison, in Figure 5.7, Yulie was smiling with happiness in both her teaching and performing portraits. These self-portraits of flow illustrated subjective and personal experiences in the moment of being with self and others.

Autotelic Personality

While Clara’s personality synced well with the idea that “flow has an energy, protective energy and is a safe place that you can go,” most other participants felt less or more likely to take risks, regardless of their level of familiarity, perceived safeness, and amount of experience. Yulie and Joyce both exhibited autotelic qualities as they remained positive about their experiences of

teaching and performing, regardless of end result. Nakamura and Csikszentmihalyi (2005) shared the importance of investigating why certain people seek challenging activities and do not “prefer states of control, relaxation, and even apathy” (p. 101). Therefore, they argued that personality trait is associated with a tendency to flow.

The evidence for autotelic personality can be found by exploring not only the motivation for flow but also the state of after flow. Teaching artists reported not only the intrinsic rewards of being in flow, but also the extrinsic rewards after teaching. In teaching, mostly intrinsic rewards were present as motivation for flow. In after flow, Orion expressed that he felt “washed away” and more somber after an activity had ended. Clay also expressed how it is important to understand that some goals are only fully achievable in an ideal world and having realistic goals was critical. What appeared to be more important to the participants was the value of doing their best. This supported the idea of the association of artists with a characteristic of being fully invested in an activity (Green, 2005).

Abuhamdeh (2020) shared that there are still flow studies that do not account for the autotelic experience and, therefore, do not include it as a factor in those studies. In this study, the autotelic experience was the second highest flow dimension across participants, asked on individual perception. Kenny (2011) explained that an activity that is intrinsically *rewarding* is based on the effort of an individual to facilitate the interpretation of a negative to a positive situation. Kenny was referring to how teaching artists may transform challenges that arise from a negative situation into a positive situation by relying on their confidence and skills. While individual personality could affect how one perceives a challenge and the skills needed to overcome it, the current research on autotelic personality “cannot fully capture the complexity required to account for the theoretical concept” (Engeser, 2012, p. 189).

Interaction of Flow Characteristics and Conditions

Throughout the analytical process, I noticed that there was a unique interaction between flow characteristics that either confirmed or contradicted how flow was conceptualized. Reasons for some relationships included that flow dimensions are multidimensional, individual flow exists, and there is limitation on capturing the flow dimension through misleading survey items that are not specific to context or activity. The dimensions of flow were divided among responsibility, condition, emotional state, attention, and action. In this section, these interactions are uncovered and analyzed.

The Facets of Concentration

One of the most common and familiar characteristics of flow in this study was concentration. The specific survey item asked if one was “completely focused on the task at hand” and participants strongly agreed. They described how they were concentrating at the highest during both performing and teaching because they were fully “involved” and awake.” Flow is often associated with intense attentional focus on the task at hand (Nakamura & Csikszentmihalyi, 2002). This deep attentional involvement is associated with the merging of action and awareness and loss of self-consciousness (Dietrich, 2004). Figure 6.3 presents how concentration is a pre-planned condition and also a state of flow characteristic.

In an attempt to understand the cognitive function and ways in which one concentrates during flow-related tasks, previous studies utilized the descriptions of task involvement in an activity to capture the central cognitive phenomenon of flow (Abuhamdeh, 2020). However, task involvement does not necessarily imply an enjoyable or a motivating experience. In moments in which attention is divided and alternating, awareness and actions are not merged, which can be referred to as “following.” In moments in which attention is single-focused and sustaining,

awareness and actions are merged. This is described sometimes as “leading” or “creating” by teaching artists.

The teaching artists explained how following students in teaching is similar to following other musicians in performing. They also described how leading students in teaching is akin to leading an ensemble group when performing. These attentional states are fluid because there are exchanges of energy and ideas. Shifting of roles also changes the attentional state, in which one changes from following to leading and vice versa. In performing, the task at hand requires more immediate skill and dynamic fluidity of cognitive attention to time passing through the music. In teaching, shifting roles take the form of an invitation.

At Play: Feedback, Sense of Control, Action and Awareness Merging, Loss of Self-consciousness

In a musical experience, participants, self, and others constitute “play” (Clifton, 1983). Csikszentmihalyi (1975) explained that in flow, how feedback is perceived is critical because it impacts a sense of control, leading to the merging of action and awareness and loss of consciousness. When feedback was interruptive, the teaching artists described it as “problem solving.” For example, in performing, Eve described how she sometimes does not listen intentionally to be able to focus if feedback is not constructive.

While perceiving feedback in teaching, sense of control appears in two ways. One is through pacing teaching content strategically with expectancy, routine, and space for creativity within the lesson plan. The second is empowering the students, allowing a shift of roles and thereby creating team players. In performing, a sense of control appears in two ways as well. The first is balancing between following the music and creating the music. It is extremely important to note here that repertoire is a factor because certain types of music allow for more freedom than others. Tempo is also another key musical element that contributes to the balance of

challenge and skill as well as a sense of control. The second sense of control is between perceiving and reacting to feedback from other musicians or audiences. In this study, the types of feedback the participants received included verbal, visual, aural, and physical. Emphasis is given to the clarity of the feedback and how well it is perceived. Yulie specifically mentioned that the younger the students are, the more difficult it is to read feedback.

The way in which feedback is perceived or not perceived combined with a sense of control affects the quality of awareness. Generally, the participants could perceive various types and levels of feedback and control its effect, either positively or negatively, depending on their state of being in the moment. Dash gave specific feedback on how the survey item, “I felt total control of what I was doing,” was not accurate because of the practical impossibility of total control. He suggested rephrasing it in terms of exercising control, which is more aligned personally to how he experiences a sense of control.

Summary

In my analytic process, it was evident that the vocabularies used in the survey items allowed for diverse interpretation regarding time and space. Across participants, the survey items were interpreted as experiential or preconditioned. The lens of phenomenology was used to capture the structure of teaching artists’ experiences in time and space. Findings supported that flow is continuous and cyclic. A parallel relationship between flow and artistry was explored through the lens of phenomenology.

Comparing the context of performing and teaching, quantitative findings showed that some flow dimensions were more prominent in either performing or teaching contexts. While flow is generally more consistent in performing, the data showed that teaching induces a diverse

multidimensional flow state. The data also supported the idea that flow should be analyzed as context- or task-specific.

Balance of challenge and skills was equal between group and private teaching. Classical musicians elicited higher flow in seven dimensions while popular musicians elicited higher flow in two dimensions. More analysis may be needed to further understand the relationship between repertoire or genre of music and flow.

There was a positive relationship between number of years of performing and teaching for those who taught private lessons. There was no relationship between the amount of experience with flow dimensions for those who taught classroom groups. Individual flow dimensions showed that each individual carries a unique flow profile that is dynamic and multidimensional, influenced by personal traits and autotelic personality. Some of the most interesting interactions of flow characteristics and conditions were between feedback and three characteristics of flow states—sense of control, action and awareness merging, and loss of self-consciousness.

Conclusion

Using the operational tool of flow and the analytical lens of phenomenology, this chapter closely examined the main findings of teaching artists' experiences of performing and teaching. The chapter presented a rich discussion of the analysis of this study in relation to the current literature on flow, which lacks studies about teaching artists in general and their experience of flow in performing and teaching in particular.

The participants joined this study in an attempt to explore their lives in teaching and performing more deeply and in the context of flow, as well as to seek a connection to purpose as teaching artists. Responses from the participants supported Greene's (2001) description of

teaching as an expansion and extension of performing by practicing emotional, mental, and physical habits that transform into life events. Both endeavors provide opportunities for self-discovery and high authentic engagement with oneself and others. Findings supported that time is more tangible in musical and teaching experiences and opens access to developing a sense of identity. Performing and teaching provide a unique sense of awareness and a desire to experience flow. While there are still more questions than answers, the insights from the participants contribute to critical implications for further research. The next and last chapter answers the research questions, recommends future research, presents the limitations of the study, and addresses implications for music education.

Chapter 7 – Summary, Recommendations, and Implications

Overview of the Study

In this chapter, I answer research questions, suggest recommendations for further research, address the limitations of this study, and discuss the possible implications for practice in music education. The purpose of this study was to examine the artistic experiences of performing and teaching among seven music teaching artists. I sought to create opportunities to listen and discover through the operational tool of flow and the analytical lens of phenomenology. I designed this study to investigate the performing and teaching experiences of individual teaching artists in a way that has not been previously attempted.

The current study is about examining the artistic experiences of performing and teaching among seven teaching artists. The four coordinates of phenomenology—space, time, play, and feeling (Clifton, 1983)—were used to gain the richest narrative accounts at the consciousness level. The operational tool of nine flow characteristics and conditions was used to capture the dimensions of the artistic experiences.

At the beginning of the flow studies, Csikszentmihalyi (1975) reflected on the philosophical stance of phenomenology and applied research in psychology to design a method that would capture and operationalize the experience of people who are completely engrossed in their activity. Flow is conceptualized as a subjective state of enjoyment where one's action and awareness are merged, self-consciousness is lost, and high challenges and skills are perceived (Csikszentmihalyi, 1975/2000). To measure subjective experience systematically, the Experience Sampling Method (ESM) was designed, and several flow models were developed, as discussed in Chapter 2. Early on, Csikszentmihalyi (1975) acknowledged that music creates a unique sense of awareness and temporal distortion that alters consciousness.

This study integrated a research design with questionnaires, interviews, and focused group meetings to capture a full consciousness experience of performing and teaching among seven teaching artists. Multiple data analysis strategies were applied throughout the several stages. Using flow characteristics as a set of operational tools and phenomenology as a descriptive tool, this study presented a full conscious experience of teaching and performing, with the goal of finding the connection between the two endeavors.

Research Questions and Findings

In this section, the research questions guiding this study are addressed using the critical findings pertaining to this research.

RQ 1: How meaningful and useful are flow characteristics and conditions in representing experiences of teaching artists?

Flow conditions and characteristics were meaningful and useful in representing the dimensions of the artistic experience in teaching and performing. Results showed that all dimensions were presented in both endeavors and that teaching and performing are innately flow-generating. The only flow dimension that showed a negative relationship was the transformation of time, and this was due to the survey item reflecting on the distortion of temporal experience that was already presented in teaching and performing. Because the question asked whether the way time passed was different from normal, most participants reported disagreeing with the survey item because the way time passed differently in their experiences was normal for them. The confusing language used in the survey resulted in participants answering the survey item as a reverse scored item or anti-flow survey item in which the negative score represented a high relationship. A consideration for revising this survey item specifically for the contexts of musicians is highly recommended.

Teaching artists shared that their intention to be fully themselves in all the work they do makes concentration not only a characteristic but also a pre-condition to flow. Concentration, which was the most familiar word with which teaching artists associated flow, was pre-planned but also influenced by others such as ensemble members, audience, students, and parents. Descriptions of different types of attention and awareness reflected how one perceived feedback and a sense of control through their consequential actions.

Participants also shared that there were many reasons why performing and teaching were autotelic for them. In general, performing was a way to express and to be creative, being fully immersed in the experience. Teaching was a way to connect with students, to facilitate flow, and to build a relationship with them. In this study, teaching artists reported a high autotelic level while having a neutral perception of challenge and skill. This may be explained by how autotelic personality could falsely inform and shape the experience. In peak performance, facilitative interpretations of anxiety were one of the psychological conditions (Kenny, 2011).

While flow is a positive experience in itself, participants shared that after-flow could be either positive or negative because the motivation to pursue the activity still persists, but the activity has ended. Across cases, individuals had a unique combination of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation for both performing and teaching.

There were both goals that were pre-planned and goals that derived from emergent motivation in the act of doing. In performing, some personal goals were to be “free” or to release,” while content-based goals involved performing with others. In teaching, participants shared that knowing ahead of time which goals were realistic and achievable was critical. Teaching artists intentionally left their lesson plans loose to leave space for new goals to be created in the moment of teaching and learning. This is what teaching artists referred to as

artfully “pacing” their teaching. During the pacing, teaching artists explained that shifting roles, where students become leaders and empowering their students to be collaborators in the experience, was the key.

How teaching artists described their experience aligned with the flow channel theory (1975/2000) shown in Figure 2.3. Teaching artists shared that flow usually takes time. The opportunity for flow is presented in both the context and the artistic processes of teaching and performing. Essentially, teaching expands the act of performing (Booth, 2009). In this study, artistry can be described as a creative skill in knowing how to anticipate flow and to take the necessary risks to be in flow.

Teaching artists described that their action and awareness merged when they began to feel automatic and spontaneous. Here, it is important to understand the type and source of the feedback one receives when performing and teaching. It is also equally critical to understand how one is open or closed about perceiving feedback, depending on whether the feedback is collaborative (positive) or interfering (negative) relative to their state of awareness. The paradox of feedback and loss of self-consciousness is relevant because one source of feedback could come from the self. For example, having a good ear to hear oneself perform is a type of feedback from the self. This can be further explained by the subconscious level of operation when one is using a motor loop from sensory and auditory feedback (Kenny, 2011). Studies on peak performance and understanding the optimal functioning may shed light on the inner cognitive mechanism behind flow.

In flow, a sense that control is possible begins with perceived feedback that informs emergent goals in the act of doing, followed by immediate actions. The mode in which one is unaware or aware of these cognitive processes depends on whether one is in the state of

following music or creating music. In teaching, it would depend on whether the teacher is pacing through the lessons or collaborating with the students. Participants found that in these complex interactions of self, subject, and others, the number of people involved in the activity and familiarity of the music, space, and others contributed to their sense of action and awareness being merged or not merged.

In both the quadrant model (Csikszentmihalyi & LeFevre, 1989) and the 16-experience fluctuation model (Massimini et al., 1987), flow was conceptualized as a discrete subjective state in which both challenge and skills are high. In 2000, Csikszentmihalyi proposed that flow is continuous in a channel in which intensity is measured by high or low, based on the level of perceived challenge and skills (see Figure 2.3). In this study, the score for the balance of challenge and skills was second to lowest. Participants reported that they felt neutral about how they were challenged in performing and teaching but believed that their skills allowed them to meet the challenge. It is important to note here that flow experience is subjective and, therefore, differs from peak performance, or optimal functioning (Kenny, 2011). Many other conditions and characteristics also affect flow, and they should be explored in detail. A possible explanation for neutral challenge and skill level may lie in how teaching artists experience flow, as either shallow or deep based on intensity (Moneta, 2012). Findings from this study supported that flow should not be defined solely by the ratio of challenge and skills (see Figure 2.3). This study found that other variables such as personality, motivation, environmental factors, and familiarity influenced flow experiences.

In both performing and teaching contexts, participants reported that continuous transformation of time occurred. How one experienced time depended on their level of attention and state of awareness. Figure 4.6 presented the two states of awareness in time. The first state is

described as alternating multi-divided attention at a conscious level. The second state can be described as single-focused attention where the motor loop allows teaching artists to operate at a non-cognitive or subconscious level (Kenny, 2011). In general, many flow dimensions were reflective of how teaching artists experienced teaching and performing. Findings showed that there are complex relationships between flow dimensions that affected one dimension to another. Overall, operational tools of flow helped to illuminate the artistic experiences of performing and teaching among teaching artists.

RQ2: How is flow individually experienced in performing and teaching?

Each teaching artist presented a unique flow portrait of their performing and teaching experience, in which no two people were alike. For each individual, some of the characteristics served as pre-conditions, such as concentration. The more dimensions that were pre-planned, the more likely it was to experience flow. Each participant displayed a combination of varied strengths and weaknesses of the nine flow dimensions in their individual portraits. For example, the balance of challenge and skills was the highest in Clara but lowest in Joyce in performing. In teaching, a sense of control was highest in Clara but lowest in Orion. Examining each individual portrait and cross-analysis is a necessary component of this study.

2a. How do the contexts of performing and teaching influence individuals' experience?

Teaching artists (Dash, Clara, Yulie) all experienced more emotional stimulation in performing. They described their feelings as ecstatic and glowing. The physiological conditions of not being in flow were of feeling tense, stiff, and nervous, resulting from their perception of a difficult challenge. This was not evident in teaching among the seven teaching artists. The two flow dimensions that had the highest variation among the participants were sense of control and balance of challenge and skills.

In general, teaching artists described their experience of performing as craftsmanship. This is reflective of the process of merging multiple frames of awareness into one. Participants were able to communicate their experiences at a higher cognitive level when describing their experiences of performing. Words such as “being on track or off track” and “all wheels are in motion” were used to describe the relationship between action and state of being in performing. The interaction of self, subject, and others was described more clearly through the concepts of self-dialogue and self-actualization.

Performing was autotelic for teaching artists because it provided an opportunity to express themselves fully and freely. The population of this study included classical and popular musicians who were all highly experienced. Popular music included diverse genres of music, such as gospel, rap, hip hop, and country, as shown in Chapter 3. Findings showed that classical musicians had six flow dimensions that were more prominent, while only two flow dimensions—clear goals and loss of self-consciousness—were more prominent among popular musicians. Popular musicians perform music that is freer in the sense that there is more room for improvisation and not all musical notation is necessarily “written out.” They have a unique sense of what to do in performance (clear goals) because their preset goals allow space to improvise. Improvisation creates more room for teaching artists to immerse themselves fully, without separation of self. In the context of popular musicians, the *unknown* or *unpredicted* space and time in performance was expected as they were creating spontaneously while performing. In a classical performance, however, there is a build-up of expectation of the “right” notes and practiced perfection; therefore, the unknown factor plays a bigger role. The challenges of *the unknown* are combated by many of their preset goals.

In general, teaching artists experienced an exchange of organic energy when performing in an ensemble. Teaching artists expressed that the number of participants in a performance influenced how they experienced flow. For larger ensembles, there was less sense of control and balance of challenge and skills. The perception of challenge decreased when the level of expectation decreased. As an example, Yulie said that she enjoyed performing with a larger group, like a big choir, because mistakes would be less noticeable. In a larger group setting, the sense of following is bigger than a sense of creating due to the number of participants contributing to the experience. The larger the group, the higher amount of feedback received and perceived.

Teaching artists also had a good gauge of musical time and could intuitively know if it was passing in a slower or faster pace when performing. For example, a cello sonata could have 300 measures, played at 120 bpm, and would be anticipated to last around 15 minutes. If the music is more open and improvisatory, there is less sense of the length of time. To be even more specific, Eve, who is a classical musician, expressed that not only did the type of music affect her sense of time but also the given tempo. For example, if the tempo was too fast, there was little room for her to be free, while if the tempo was slower, she was able to improvise between the pulse and meter. Violinist Isaac Stern spoke about this quality in music as being in between the notes and how a person gets from one to another (Green, 2005). Despite the contextual difference between popular and classical music, all flow dimensions were more consistent across participants in performing.

Participants shared that teaching was rewarding because it was intrinsically challenging and extrinsically rewarding. For them, teaching was more about progressing in the moment and building relationships with students for the future. Teaching artists viewed themselves more as

facilitators pacing students through the openness of routine-based lesson plans. The goal of their teaching was to empower students in learning so that they were able to be self-sustained and self-motivated.

Teaching artists described that teaching in a group setting is similar to performing in an ensemble, in that there is a level of enjoyment, “connectedness” is explored, and shifting roles of leadership occurs. Group and private teaching had differences, in which some flow dimensions were more prominent in one setting than another. For example, concentration, clear goals, merging of action and awareness, and loss of self-consciousness were more prominent in group teaching. Participants who taught in group settings shared that block time is built into their experience. For instance, Yulie explained that she has a “45-minute block” internalized so that she knows when the time is up for her class. Findings showed that teaching moments were more spontaneous and collaborative in group teaching, affecting various flow dimensions, while perceived feedback was clearer and sense of control higher in the context of individual lessons.

Some relationships between the age of the participants and flow dimensions were found. In terms of age, the younger the participants, the higher merging of action and awareness in performing occurred, with the exception of Clara. The age of the participant, however, was not necessarily associated with years of experience performing. This correlation only occurred among private lesson teaching artists, who experienced higher concentration and autotelic experience relative to their amount of experience. This may be further explored in the explanation of the neurocognitive mechanism of flow experience in aging. The relationship of the age of students with any flow dimensions was not specifically explored in this study, but teaching artists shared that the younger the students are, the higher level of concentration is required because perceiving feedback and feeling a sense of control were generally more

difficult. Overall, the responses about flow state in teaching were more focused on extrinsic rewards and less vividly illustrated in terms of awareness and consciousness in teaching.

Both performing and teaching were autotelic in nature in that teaching artists enjoyed the experience of being *in the moment with* themselves and others. Teaching artists described their experiences of performing as having a high sense of control, perceived balance of challenge and skills, and distortion of temporal experience. The other six flow dimensions were presented more prominently in teaching than in performing. Participants shared that, in general, they were more driven by extrinsic rewards in teaching and by intrinsic rewards in performing.

In both performing and teaching, having realistic goals and being able to *let go* after the activity ends were of great importance. This finding gives insight into the experience of “after flow” because motivation to persist through the activity has ended. Having more past experiences and familiarity in teaching and performing also helped with teaching artists’ level of trust and risk tolerance.

The purpose of this study was to examine the artistic experience of teaching artists in two contexts: performing and teaching. Ultimately, teaching artists described themselves more as being *in tune* when teaching while more as being *in the zone* when performing. While the intention of this study was not necessarily to find a specific correlation or relationship between other characteristics and conditions outside of flow dimensions, the results highlighted some important relationships to consider. Other factors that affected the experience of flow in performing and teaching were personality traits, level of confidence, and motivation for flow.

2b. How do past experiences in performing and teaching influence individuals’ flow?

The relationship between years of experience performing and teaching and flow dimensions was only relevant to those who taught private lessons. No relationship was found

among participants who taught in a group setting. There was a positive relationship between performing experience and level of concentration and autotelic experience. Another positive relationship was found between teaching experience and merging of action and awareness, autotelic experience, and sense of control. The most interesting finding was that in both domains, the autotelic experience increased as years of experience increased. Although a small sample size ($N = 7$), the results showed that years of experience have some influence on how teaching artists who taught private lessons perceived particular flow dimensions in both teaching and performing. This finding also presented how the number of experiences in group teaching in flow experience is not linear and less predictable.

RQ3: What do flow conditions/characteristics and phenomenological descriptions tell us about the artistic experience of performing and teaching?

Artistry is defined a skill engaging in an atlas of experience in and through music. Findings showed that teaching artists do engage in multiple endeavors. While doing so, they use multiple frames of awareness borrowed from multiple temporalities of experience in music in their teaching. Teaching artists expressed that they feel like they can embrace challenges, merge action and awareness, and work through negotiations and collaborations between themselves and others. Participants' descriptions of their performing state confirmed complex neurocognitive mechanisms that function in both performing and teaching (Kenny, 2011). However, the level of awareness of this cognitive function differed between teaching and performing because they are in a continuous flux in and out of states.

Findings from this study showed that teaching artists engage in artistic experience in both teaching and performing by becoming creative agents who adapt, react, and create a quality musical experience. Clifton (1983) defined an artistic experience in music as an experience in

which the artist becomes an active participator in listening and making. This type of experience was evident when teaching artists described balancing loss of self-consciousness and merging of action and awareness in both contexts. It was also evident when teaching artists spoke about their sense of control, and how emergent goals were created from the activity itself. Heck (1991) claimed that teaching artists are unique in that they utilize multiple perspectives and potentials, which involve “a series of dialogues between self and others, inner feelings and outer actions, inner feelings/cognition and outer phenomena” (p. 6). This was evident in phenomenological descriptions of how teaching artists interpreted the flow survey items in relation to themselves, others, time, and space. Participants shared that they are in a continuous transformation of states within the channel of flow, constantly evolving and transforming.

Findings showed that the context of teaching and performing helps to shape how we tune attention, awareness, and consciousness through engagement with students and others. The element of “play” is present in both contexts, in which an exchange of leading and following continues in a cyclic motion. All teaching artists claimed that there is a cyclic connection between being a performer and a teacher. Clay described this connection and the relationship as a “full circle,” in which teaching extends to the act of performing and performing expands the act of teaching.

All my participants shared that in both endeavors, they give their full effort—emotionally, cognitively, and physically. They are fully invested and involved in what they do and what they feel, and it is also autotelic for them. Findings supported that extrinsic rewards were present in both teaching and performing. In conclusion, Groenewald (2004) asserted that artists are phenomenologists by nature in that they understand their task of sharing their insights with others, by labor of artfulness. The experience of being an artist informs their consciousness of space,

time, play, and feeling during teaching. Essentially, they become the facilitator of their own experiences. Artistry in this study was thus defined as knowing how to prepare to enter and sustain a flow state.

Word Clouds from the Focus Group Meetings

At the beginning of the focus group meetings, I asked my participants to write in the Zoom chat any words that came to mind when they thought of teaching artists. About halfway through the focus group, I asked them again to share any words that came to mind when thinking about flow. Figure 7.1 presents words that were goal-oriented and purpose-driven. Figure 7.2 presents words that are diverse, in-action, and descriptive of the state of flow. While the two figures may first appear different, one is related to identity and the other is related to an experiential state—their similarities lie in the connotation of the words.

Figure 7.1

Word Cloud on Teaching Artist



multidimensional measurement of flow among athletes. Because the participants for this study were required to complete multiple questionnaires, I selected one item per flow dimension that best fit the design and the setting of this study. I also modified the words by including performing/teaching, as shown in Figure 3.2.

Martin and Jackson (2008) later modified their original 36-item scale into a 9-item Short Flow Scale (5 Likert points) to help reduce the administrative strain of reporting and a 10-item core scale (7 Likert points) to capture the core experiential characteristics of the flow experience. While the reliability was .82 for the short scale and .92 for the core scale, I did not use either of these scales because they did not seem a good fit for the setting of this study. The rationale for this decision was that the short flow scale utilized present tense and the core scale did not ask any questions regarding the conditions of the flow such as challenges, goals, and feedback (see Figure 3.2).

The original scale (Jackson & Marsh, 1996) was validated by using factor analysis, and the results supported the construct validity of the original scale. Internal consistency estimates for the *current* teaching questionnaire (alpha $M = 0.704$) and performing questionnaire (alpha $M = 0.708$) were reasonable for the administration of the scale to seven teaching artists. However, the reliability test may be underpowered due to the sample size.

Previous flow studies were divided between the usage of the Dispositional State Scale to measure the frequency of flow within a particular activity and the Flow State Scale to capture the state of being in flow. The modified FSS adopted from Jackson and Marsh's (1996) original scale helped to capture the experience of performing and teaching using nine dimensions of flow. However, the careful qualitative analysis showed that each of the nine survey items was interpreted in its own way.

The current study found a critical flaw in the scale, which was that the survey items were not phrased to reflect the categories of flow fully, as described by Csikszentmihalyi (1975). The vocabulary used in the survey items influenced the teaching artists to interpret flow dimensions individually as either characteristics or pre-planned conditions. Survey items were also interpreted relative to self, subject, and others. They were also interpreted as either responsibility, condition, emotional state, attention, or action. With the exception of the balance of challenge and skills in performing, every other survey item was interpreted as either a pre-condition or experiential. The following lists the flaws in the usage of vocabulary in the survey items:

1. The survey item about concentration was phrased, “I was completely focused on the task at hand.” Dash interpreted this to mean, “I am always in the zone,” and shared that since he is always intentionally focusing, concentration is pre-planned within his goals, intentions, and desires. This led to some ambiguity as to whether concentration should be considered a characteristic, a condition, or both. Orion, on the other hand, explained how he was focusing in the moment of teaching to explain his ideas simply and effectively. In this case, participants interpreted one flow dimension as either before flow or in flow.
2. The survey question about autotelic experience also created discrepancy as participants were asked about whether they found their performing or teaching to be “extremely” rewarding. The key concept of autotelic experience is that it occurs within an activity that is intrinsically, not extrinsically, rewarding. Use of polarizing terms like “extremely” also caused participants to not report “strongly agree” on the Likert scale.

3. The survey item about action-awareness merging asks if participants did things “spontaneously and automatically without having to think” when they explained that being spontaneous and automatic is two different states.
4. For sense of self control, the survey question asked whether participants felt “total in control.” Dash found error with this because he explained how “total control” is not possible in a true state of flow. The dimension is rather about having a sense that control is possible.
5. The survey item for loss of self-consciousness asked if the teaching artists were worried about their performing/ teaching, but the flow dimension, at its core, is about whether one feels self-separated or merged when in flow. While a sense of worry is part of the feeling of the loss of self-consciousness, it does not fully capture the dimension.
6. Because the transformation of time item asked if the way time passed was different from normal, most participants reported disagreeing because the passage of time in the performing and teaching contexts was normal and familiar to them. Therefore, the vocabulary used as “normal” was problematic. Administering a lower number for that survey did not necessarily reflect that participants did not experience time passing differently. Rather, any number inputted showed either a low or high state of flow in reference to time passing. If this study had more participants with sufficient G-power, and if this misinterpretation had not been considered when compiling the cumulative results across different levels and in other statistical analyses, the scale would not have been valid in terms of reflecting the actual experience of the teaching artists.

Consideration for revising these survey items specifically for the contexts of musicians is highly recommended.

Lastly, repeating the same scale for the same group of participants may raise a concern about how participants might familiarize themselves with the questionnaire as it is being measured repeatedly. However, it was also helpful to collect data close to the event that occurred to increase validity. The benefit of the quantitative data is that it comprises real-time reports of the activity. All questionnaires were completed between immediately after the end of an event and 48 hours after its conclusion.

It is important to acknowledge that this study was conducted during the COVID-19 pandemic, when several teaching artists were teaching online. All the interviews and focus groups were held online as well. The effects of the pandemic were an influencing factor on some responses. For example, Dash relayed how the masking protocol implemented during the time of the data collection influenced his responses to some of the flow dimensions, such as unambiguous feedback.

Recommendations for Further Research

Since the conceptualization of flow in 1975, the flow model has continued to evolve but still lacks clarity and consistency in how flow is being measured. This is in part due to the diverse ways in which researchers are conceptualizing flow, such as being autotelic or non-autotelic, and discrete or continuous (Abuhamdeh, 2020). Currently, literature on flow is divided between qualitative in earlier studies and quantitative in recent studies. My study integrated both quantitative and qualitative designs to take in the full consciousness experience of flow. I am curious to know how phenomenology as a method could be more integrated into quantitative studies to shed some light on the current questions associated with flow.

Qualitative studies have shown that flow is comprised of multiple conceptualizations and suggested combining other related frameworks to understand how and why (Wright et al., 2012). Flow is a complex subjective state that needs more explanation from other theoretical frameworks such as reversal theory (Wright et al., 2012), motivational theory (Rheinberg et al., 2003), traits and personality (Brunstein & Heckhausen, 2008), a neurocognitive mechanism (Dietrich, 2004), and peak performance (Kenny, 2012). Future studies should consider connecting what we already know about the informational process, memory, and attention to what we know about flow. Deeper knowledge of these related fields will help to understand the flow channel more precisely. It would be critical to understand where the state of flow is in relation to other psychological states. Future studies should consider learning more about the frequency and the intensity of flow, motivation in flow, autotelic personality in flow, and cognitive and performance-related consequences with regard to a top-down or bottom-up approach to flow.

Findings from the current study demonstrated that flow is both context-specific and activity-specific. The development of a new scale for the context of music and activities of performing and teaching is highly encouraged. In addition, studies should consider an increasing population of people who work multiple occupations or have changed their careers. It would be interesting to see more studies on these populations. While difficult to achieve, any longitudinal studies on flow would be very helpful.

Through this study, I was able to gain valuable insights into the artistic experiences of teaching and performing using flow as an operational tool and phenomenology as an analytical lens. More questions arose from this study, including:

- **Flow and memory**
 - How are memory and flow related?
 - What is the relationship between flow and age?
 - What is the neurocognitive mechanism of flow?
- **Autotelic personality**
 - How does autotelic personality appear in flow experience?
 - How can other theories such as reversal and motivational theory help to understand the multiple states of flow?
- **Peak performance and flow**
 - What is the relationship between peak performance and flow among musicians?
- **Multiple roles**
 - How is flow experienced in the lives of those who have multiple careers?
- **Other contexts of teaching and performing**
 - How does flow appear in another context of teaching?
 - What is the relationship between flow and various types of music in the context of music performing?
 - How does flow experience differ with and without an audience?

While this study ends here, I look forward to exploring these topics myself and invite future researchers to explore more in this fascinating and rewarding field.

Implications for Music Education

Booth (2009) shared that teaching artistry is an artful, engaging, joyful, transformative way to guide people through the experience of music. Csikszentmihalyi (1997b) asserted that quality of life improves when students are involved in music, more specifically, the artistic

experience of music making. In education, Holzer (2009) suggested that imaginative learning through the arts can be a “powerful catalyst for teaching and learning” (p. 387). This research has contributed to an understanding of the artistic experiences of teaching artists within the context of performing and teaching that have not been commonly addressed in the current music education literature. While recent flow studies have primarily relied on statistical data, the current study attempted to combine both quantitative and qualitative data to discover something new and different.

Rabkin et al. (2011) found that, generally, teaching artists experienced a high satisfaction in what they do, even if they do not necessarily have external rewards. While not a large sample size ($N = 7$), the teaching artists in this study who teach and perform

1. do both because it validates what they do,
2. feel a calling for it,
3. are excited about music,
4. enjoy creative freedom,
5. bring their full selves utilizing all senses and perspectives,
6. seek opportunities for self-discovery and self-growth,
7. enjoy constant negotiation and collaboration,
8. adjust quickly to changes and convert changes into opportunities, and
9. find connections between teaching and performing.

This study highlighted the ways in which teaching artists engage themselves in all senses, investing their full selves in both domains of teaching and performing. Teaching artists are found to possess multiple high-level skills and are able to embrace cognitive, physical, and emotional challenges in the spectrum of sustaining flow in teaching and performing.

This study brings a critical perspective by illuminating the role of a teaching artist and sharing artistic experiences as a positive and transformative tool for learning. Similar to Sawyer (2003, 2013, 2015, 2017) in group flow, the following table highlights many implications and suggestions resulting from this study.

Table 7.1

Conditions and Characteristics of Flow

Categories	Responsibility	Conditions	Emotional State	Attention	Action
1	Having a clear sense of goals was important, but it was more important to set intentional and realistic goals with authentic teaching materials.	Warm-up time is necessary.	Staying positive and confident is important.	Being always in tune or “at play” with their students, following their attention spans, and reading their cues, as if they were playing with other musicians, is necessary.	Pacing, shifting roles, and giving students a sense of empowerment are important.
2	Building a <i>unique</i> relationship, or what teaching artists call a <i>partnership</i> , is key.	Openness in the physical space and in instruction is necessary for students to engage with and involve themselves in their learning.	Staying curious and creative is the key.	Perceiving feedback and acknowledging others in teaching were reflective of how musicians perceived aural, visual, and physical feedback from others while performing.	Embracing cognitive, physical, and emotional challenges in the spectrum of sustaining flow is necessary.
3	Finding connections in teaching and performing is important.	Familiarity with the room, space, and students was key to gaining a level of confidence and trust.	Trusting oneself is critical.		Taking risks when the opportunity arises is the key.
4		Both extrinsic and intrinsic rewards are critical.			Collaboration and team building through the sense of “connectedness” is valuable.

Mielke and Rush (2016) described flow as being beneficial in addressing “the complex educational problem of how to construct meaningful experiences in school” (p. 90). Because all teachers have a desire to teach well and create a meaningful experience of teaching and learning, the experiences of seven teaching artists in this study illuminated some of the ways in which an artistic experience can be practiced effectively in teaching.

Epilogue

Throughout the steps of data collection, I noticed that my participants were constantly reflecting on what they had said. During the interview, I received endless comments of “I had not thought about that before!” or “That is a really good question!” I found this to be quite unexpected yet rewarding in its own way.

Due to the nature of their occupation, teaching artists balance extremely busy schedules. They participated in this study to give themselves a sense of pause to reflect on and find connections in what they do. While I tried to contain myself as a researcher throughout this dissertation, I speak now for a moment as just another teaching artist.

In some ways, this study gave participants a moment of pause, and in other ways, it gave me a time to pause as well. During this dissertation writing process, I had very limited time to play the piano. But when I do sit down now to play, it is different, not in a physical sense but in the sense that my mind is very clear. I know what I want to do, why I want to do it, and how I want to achieve it. This is something I have been struggling with for a long time because playing the piano and teaching music have always been fairly intuitive for me, but I did not know how to improve after a certain point.

To some of my colleagues in the field of performance, the endeavor that I took as a researcher seemed like a new direction in my career. Some even called it a life-changing

modulation. I also felt this way, as research seemed like territory that was so new and daunting but also gravitational. At the end of completing this dissertation, I realized that what I really accomplished could not be merely defined as a new direction or summarized as a life-changing modulation. What I did was, simply, I paused. I paused in my life to explore what was so essential at the moment. This process of research was a continuous emotional mixture of happiness, struggle, and enrichment. As this work comes to an end, I feel bittersweetness mixed with a new feeling of deep gratitude. I am especially grateful to my participants who were as excited as I was to share their experiences and to find new connections. My hope for those who read this is that they look within themselves and find a time to reflect and connect meaningfully with themselves, with others, and with the space all around.

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Appendix A – Flow State Scale (Jackson & Marsh, 1996)

Flow State Scale

Please answer the following questions in relation to your experience in the event you have just completed. These questions relate to the thoughts and feelings you may have experienced during the event. There are no right or wrong answers. Think about how you felt during the event and answer the questions using the rating scale below. Circle the number that best matches your experience from the options to the right of each question.

Rating Scale:

Strongly disagree 1	Disagree 2	Neither agree nor disagree 3	Agree 4	Strongly agree 5	
			Strongly disagree	Strongly agree	
1. I was challenged, but I believed my skills would allow me to meet the challenge.	1	2	3	4	5
2. I made the correct movements without thinking about trying to do so.	1	2	3	4	5
3. I knew clearly what I wanted to do.	1	2	3	4	5
4. It was really clear to me that I was doing well.	1	2	3	4	5
5. My attention was focused entirely on what I was doing.	1	2	3	4	5
6. I felt in total control of what I was doing.	1	2	3	4	5
7. I was not concerned with what others may have been thinking of me.	1	2	3	4	5
8. Time seemed to alter (either slowed down or speeded up).	1	2	3	4	5
9. I really enjoyed the experience.	1	2	3	4	5
10. My abilities matched the high challenge of the situation.	1	2	3	4	5
11. Things just seemed to be happening automatically.	1	2	3	4	5
12. I had a strong sense of what I wanted to do.	1	2	3	4	5
13. I was aware of how well I was performing.	1	2	3	4	5
14. It was no effort to keep my mind on what was happening.	1	2	3	4	5
15. I felt like I could control what I was doing.	1	2	3	4	5
16. I was not worried about my performance during the event.	1	2	3	4	5

17. The way time passed seemed to be different from normal.	1	2	3	4	5
18. I loved the feeling of that performance and want to capture it again.	1	2	3	4	5
19. I felt I was competent enough to meet the high demands of the situation.	1	2	3	4	5
20. I performed automatically.	1	2	3	4	5
21. I knew what I wanted to achieve.	1	2	3	4	5
22. I had a good idea while I was performing about how well I was doing.	1	2	3	4	5
23. I had total concentration.	1	2	3	4	5
24. I had a feeling of total control.	1	2	3	4	5
25. I was not concerned with how I was presenting myself.	1	2	3	4	5
26. It felt like time stopped while I was performing.	1	2	3	4	5
27. The experience left me feeling great.	1	2	3	4	5
28. The challenge and my skills were at an equally high level.	1	2	3	4	5
29. I did things spontaneously and automatically without having to think.	1	2	3	4	5
30. My goals were clearly defined.	1	2	3	4	5
31. I could tell by the way I was performing how well I was doing.	1	2	3	4	5
32. I was completely focused on the task at hand.	1	2	3	4	5
33. I felt in total control of my body.	1	2	3	4	5
34. I was not worried about what others may have been thinking of me.	1	2	3	4	5
35. At times, it almost seemed like things were happening in slow motion.	1	2	3	4	5
36. I found the experience extremely rewarding.	1	2	3	4	5

Appendix B – Flow State Scale (Engeser & Rheinberg, 2008)

Items of the Flow Short Scale by Rheinberg, Vollmeyer, and Engeser (2003; cf. Engeser & Rheinberg, 2008). Items 1–10 measure the components of flow experience. The items 11, 12, and 13 measure the perceived importance or perceived outcome importance (cf. Abuhamdeh, Chap. 6 of this volume). The flow items could be separated into two factors: (1) fluency of performance (items 2, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9) and (2) absorption by activity (items 1, 3, 6, 10). With the additional items, demand, skills, and the perceived fit of demands and skills are measured (cf. Keller and Landhäußer, Chap. 3 of this volume).

	Not at all	Partly	Very much
1. I feel just the right amount of challenge	○—○—○—○—○—○—○—○		
2. My thoughts/activities run fluidly and smoothly	○—○—○—○—○—○—○—○		
3. I do not notice time passing	○—○—○—○—○—○—○—○		
4. I have no difficulty concentrating	○—○—○—○—○—○—○—○		
5. My mind is completely clear	○—○—○—○—○—○—○—○		
6. I am totally absorbed in what I am doing	○—○—○—○—○—○—○—○		
7. The right thoughts/movements occur of their own accord	○—○—○—○—○—○—○—○		
8. I know what I have to do each step of the way	○—○—○—○—○—○—○—○		
9. I feel that I have everything under control	○—○—○—○—○—○—○—○		
10. I am completely lost in thought	○—○—○—○—○—○—○—○		
11. Something important to me is at stake here	○—○—○—○—○—○—○—○		
12. I must not make any mistakes here	○—○—○—○—○—○—○—○		
13. I am worried about failing	○—○—○—○—○—○—○—○		

• Compared to all other activities which I partake in, this one is ...	easy		difficult
	○—○—○—○—○—○—○—○		
• I think that my competence in this area is ...	low		high
	○—○—○—○—○—○—○—○		
• For me personally, the current demands are ...	too low	just right	too high
	○—○—○—○—○—○—○—○		

Appendix C – Core Flow State Items and Factor Loadings (Martin & Jackson, 2008)

Core flow items	Extra-curricular	Math	Sport	General school
I am 'totally involved'	.71	.79	.65	.72
It feels like 'everything clicks'	.72	.76	.73	.66
I am 'tuned in' to what I am doing	.75	.82	.78	.72
I am 'in the zone'	.80	.89	.85	.81
I feel 'in control'	.72	.79	.70	.82
I am 'switched on'	.77	.81	.82	.61
It feels like I am 'in the flow' of things	.79	.86	.84	.85
It feels like 'nothing else matters'	.53	.56	.59	.80
I am 'in the groove'	.74	.80	.80	.84
I am 'totally focused' on what I am doing	.62	.71	.68	.79

Appendix D – Music Performing Questionnaire (2021)
IRB ID: 22-050

Thank you for participating and taking the time to leave feedback about your experience. This questionnaire will take about 5 minutes. Please answer the following questions in relation to your experience in teaching you have just completed. The activities can include any type of performing setting. These questions relate to the thoughts and feelings you may have experienced during performing.

1. There are no right or wrong answers.
2. Click on the number that best matches your experience.
3. Read each question carefully and pick the answer you think is best.
4. Comment briefly about your selection in a few sentences, if needed
5. Ask for help if you have a technical difficulty or do not understand something.

What type of performing was this?

- Rehearsal or practice
- Public performance
- Other _____

Were you playing alone or with others?

- Alone
- With others

What was the date and time of the activity?

How long did you perform?

- 10 minutes
 - 30 minutes
 - 60 minutes
 - Others _____
-

What music were you playing?

Question 1

	1	2	3	4	5
I was completely focused on the task at hand	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Comments:

Question 2

	1	2	3	4	5
I did things spontaneously and automatically without having to think	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Comments:

Question 3

	1	2	3	4	5
I was not worried about my performing during the event	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Comments:

Question 4

	1	2	3	4	5
I felt total control of what I was doing	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Comments:

Question 5

	1	2	3	4	5
The way time passed seemed to be different from normal	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Comments:

Question 6

	1	2	3	4	5
I found the experience extremely rewarding	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Comments:

Question 7

	1	2	3	4	5
I was challenged but I believe my skills allowed me to meet the challenge	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Comments:

Question 8

	1	2	3	4	5
I had a good idea while I was performing about how well I was performing	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Comments:

Question 9

	1	2	3	4	5
I had a strong sense of what I wanted to do	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Comments:

What is your name?

When are you completing this report?

- Right after the activity ended
- Within 24 hours
- Others _____

Anything you would like to add?

Appendix E – Music Teaching Questionnaire (2021)
IRB ID: 22-050

Thank you for participating and taking the time to leave feedback about your experience. This questionnaire will take about 5 minutes. Please answer the following questions in relation to your experience in teaching you have just completed. The activities can include any type of teaching setting. These questions relate to the thoughts and feelings you may have experienced during the activity.

1. There are no right or wrong answers.
2. Click on the number that best matches your experience.
3. Read each question carefully and pick the answer you think is best.
4. Comment briefly about your selection in a few sentences, if needed
5. Ask for help if you have a technical difficulty or do not understand something.

What type of teaching was this?

- Private Lesson
- Lecture
- Ensemble
- Classroom
- Other _____

What was the activity about and who were you with?

What was the date and time of the activity?

How long was the teaching?

- 30 minutes
- 45 minutes
- 60 minutes
- 90 minutes
- Others _____

Question 1

	1	2	3	4	5
I was completely focused on the task at hand	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Comments:

Question 2

	1	2	3	4	5
I did things spontaneously and automatically without having to think	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Comments:

Question 3

	1	2	3	4	5
I was not worried about my teaching during the event	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Comments:

Question 4

	1	2	3	4	5
I felt total control of what I was doing	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Comments:

Question 5

	1	2	3	4	5
The way time passed seemed to be different from normal	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Comments:

Question 6

	1	2	3	4	5
I found the experience extremely rewarding	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Comments:

Question 7

	1	2	3	4	5
I was challenged but I believe my skills allowed me to meet the challenge	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Comments:

Question 8

	1	2	3	4	5
I had a good idea while I was teaching about how well I was teaching	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Comments:

Question 9

	1	2	3	4	5
I had a strong sense of what I wanted to do	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Comments:

End of Block: 9

What is your name?

When are you completing this questionnaire?

Right after the activity ended

Within 24 hours

Others _____

Anything you would like to add?

Appendix F – Background Survey (2021)
IRB ID: 22-050

Thank you for participating in this study. This survey is to gather your background and should not take more than 5 minutes. After completing this survey, you will shortly get an email with instruction for the music teaching and performing reports.

What pronouns do you identify with?

- she/her/hers
- he/him/his
- they/them/theirs
- others _____

What is your age?

- 20-30
- 30-40
- 40-50
- over 50

How long have you been a teaching artist?

- 3-4 years
 - 4-5 years
 - more than 5 years
 - other _____
-

In which school level are you teaching? (check all that apply)

- PreK-K
 - Elementary
 - Secondary
 - Higher Ed
 - Other _____
-

How would you describe your school environment? (check all that apply)

- Urban
- Rural
- Suburban
- Online

What is your current music teaching position?

Normally, how many hours do you teach during the week?

- less than 1 hour
- 1-2 hours
- 2-3 hours
- 3-4 hours
- more than 5 hours

What is your primary instrument?

- Piano
- Voice
- Strings
- Brass
- Woodwind
- Others _____

Appendix G – Interview Protocol (2021)
IRB ID: 22-050

Themes:	Research Questions	Interview Questions:
Intro		<p>(start recording)</p> <p>Thank you for speaking with me today. The purpose of this interview is to follow up on your responses on the flow state scale you completed.</p> <p>I would like to talk about the questionnaire you have completed last week.</p> <p>I am most interested to hear and learn about you, so there are no right or wrong answers. If difficult to answer, you made use of any creative medium to express your thoughts if that is easier.</p> <p>I will start recording this interview shortly, do you have any questions before we begin?</p>
Background		<p>IQ1: How would you describe your position as a teaching artist and what you do?</p>
A. Flow State Scale	RQ 1&2	<p>IQ2: What was it like to fill out the questionnaire after performing/teaching?</p> <p>IQ3: Were there any special moments or feelings that stood out during this performing/teaching activities?</p> <p>IQ4: Did you have anything to add, elaborate, or question about your responses on the scale?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ask any questions about anything that stood out from the response - Ask to point out specific moments from the video that reflects the responses (ask for examples)

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ask about the second video in a similar way - Frequency (flow envelop)
B. Phenomenology of the Experience	RQ 1 & 2	<p>IQ5: How does an artistic experience look like for you in teaching and performing?</p> <p>Guiding questions if necessary:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - How does it feel? - What is your mind doing? - How does your environment shape your experience?
Conclusion		<p>I don't have any more questions; do you have anything else to share about your experience before we end our interview? (ask 3 times)</p> <p>Thank you so much for speaking with me today, it was a pleasure!</p>

Appendix H – Focus Group Protocol (2021)
IRB ID: 22-050

Thank you all for taking the time to meet today to discuss about our experience as a teaching artist. The purpose of this focus group meeting is to follow up on your responses on the questionnaires and interviews as a group.

I am most interested to hear and learn about you, and what you all have to say as a collective so there are no right or wrong answers.

If difficult to answer, you made use of any creative medium to express your thoughts if that is easier.

Additionally, I would like to remind you to respect the confidentiality of the group today.

I will start recording our meeting shortly, do you have any questions before we begin?

1. What does it mean to be a teaching artist for you?
2. What words comes to mind when you think of “teaching artists”?
3. How does an artistic experience look in your teaching or performing?
4. How does it relate to flow?
5. Any similarities or differences?
6. What words come to mind when you think of “flow”?
7. Activity: Using pen and paper, could you draw your experience of flow in performing and teaching?

Appendix I – Study Recruitment Email (2021)
IRB ID: 22-050

Teachers College, Columbia University
525 West 120th Street
New York NY 10027
212 678 3000

To: Dr. Claudia Godí
Project Manager, Teaching Artist Community @ Teachers College

Dear Claudia,

Would you be able to share this information below with all cohorts so far and direct any interested participants who fit the below criteria? If yes, I really appreciate your time and thank you so much in advance.

Dear Teaching Artists,

Greetings! I hope everyone is doing well during the busy month of November. My name is Jenny Park and I am currently a doctoral candidate in the music and music education program of Teachers College, Columbia University. I am also an alumnus of the Teaching Artist Community at Teachers College (2018-2019) as well. For my dissertation research, I am conducting a research on the artistic flow experience of music performing and teaching and I am hoping to reach music teaching artists within the program and invite some of them to be part of my study.

I am inviting music teaching artists that fit the following specific criteria:

- Teaching artists who are musicians
- Teaching artist who currently teaches or have taught for three or more years

As part of my research, I will be collecting your participation consent and a background survey. Then, I will ask you to report on your teaching and performing experience through an online report form. The online report will be completed after three teachings and three performing activities over the span of two weeks in November-December. The activities can include any type of teaching (private or group) and any performing (with a formal or informal audience, i.e. students/friends/families).

Each report will take about 5-10 minutes to complete and you will be asked to complete six reports in total.

For those who have a bit more time, and are interested in talking more about this topic, I will follow up with two interviews and/or a focus group to discuss more about your experience as teaching artist and this will also be voluntary. The purpose of the reports, interviews, and a focus group meeting is to explore the artistic flow experience of your performing and teaching as

teaching artists. I wish to emphasize that there is no way I am researching your program or the educational content of your program but rather the experiences of being a music teaching artist.

I would be happy to discuss at greater length the details of the study and respond to any concerns that you might have.

If you would like to participate in this study, please reply to this email with your interest. Thank you for reading and for your consideration.

Jenny Jieun Park
Teacher College, Columbia University

Appendix J - Informed Consent and Participant's Rights (2021)

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INFORMED CONSENT

Protocol Title: Artistic Experiences in Music Performing and Teaching: A Flow Study with Teaching Artists

Protocol Number: 22-050

Principal Researcher: Jenny Jieun Park, Teachers College,
917-288-1490, jp3934@tc.columbia.edu

INTRODUCTION You are invited to participate in this research study called "Artistic Experiences in Music Performing and Teaching: A Flow Study with Teaching Artists." You qualify to take part in this research study because you are 1) a music teaching artist from the Teaching Artists Community @ Teachers College program and 2) an active music teaching artist with three or more years of teaching experiences. Your participation will include filling out an online report after six instances of teaching or performing over the course of two weeks. There will also be one interview and one focus group meeting.

WHY IS THIS STUDY BEING DONE? This study is being conducted as part of the dissertation of the primary researcher. The purpose of this study is to explore the artistic experience of music teaching artists in performing and teaching. This study hopes to learn more about the lives of teaching artists and what they do in teaching and performing.

WHAT WILL I BE ASKED TO DO IF I AGREE TO TAKE PART IN THIS STUDY?

If you decide to participate, you will be asked to complete a one-page background survey. Then, you will fill out 3 performing reports and 3 teaching reports over the course of two weeks using Qualtrics. After you finish teaching or performing over the course of two weeks, you will fill out a report as soon as possible and each report will take about 5-10 minutes to complete. The maximum amount of time for the reports to be completed are within two weeks.

One individual interview will be scheduled upon your completion of the teaching and performing reports. During the individual interview, you will be asked to discuss your experience of performing and teaching as a teaching artist and reflect on the completed reports. The interview will take approximately 30 minutes and it will be recorded on Zoom.

Teachers College, Columbia University Institutional Review Board Protocol Number: 22-050 Consent Form Approved Until: No Expiration Date

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After the individual interview, a focus group meeting will be scheduled using Doodle. You will be asked to discuss about your experience of performing and teaching with other teaching artists who are joining in the Zoom room. This focus group meeting will take approximately one hour and a half and it will be recorded on Zoom. Your identity will be known to other focus group participants and the researcher cannot guarantee that others in the group will respect the confidentiality of the group. As a researcher, I ask that you keep all comments made during the focus group confidential and not discuss what happened during the focus group outside the meeting.

For both individual interviews and focus group meetings, recordings will be transcribed. During the transcription, a pseudonym will be used in order to keep your identity confidential unless otherwise identified. After recordings have been transcribed, all recordings will be deleted.

If you do not wish to be audio/video recorded, you will not be able to participate, unfortunately.

WHAT POSSIBLE RISKS OR DISCOMFORTS CAN I EXPECT FROM TAKING PART IN THIS STUDY?

This is a minimal risk study, which means the harm or discomfort that you may experience are not greater than you would ordinarily encounter in daily life. However, there are some risks to consider. You might feel embarrassed to discuss problems that you experienced in teaching or performing. You do not have to answer any questions that feel uncomfortable or share anything you do not want to talk about. You can stop participating in the study at any time without penalty.

The primary researcher is taking precautions to keep your information anonymous and prevent anyone from discovering or guessing your identity, such as using a pseudonym instead of your name and keeping all information on a password protected computer and locked in a file drawer.

WHAT POSSIBLE BENEFITS CAN I EXPECT FROM TAKING PART IN THIS STUDY? There is no direct benefit to you for participating in this study. However, participants may have an indirect benefit from exploring and reflecting on their own experiences in performing and teaching as teaching artists.

WILL I BE PAID FOR BEING IN THIS STUDY? You will not be paid to participate and there are no costs to you for taking part in this study.

WHEN IS THE STUDY OVER? CAN I LEAVE THE STUDY BEFORE IT ENDS? The study is over when you have completed the background survey, six reports, one individual

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interview, and one focus group meeting. However, you can leave the study at any time even if you have not finished.

PROTECTION OF YOUR CONFIDENTIALITY The primary researcher will keep all written materials locked in a desk drawer in a locked office. Any electronic or digital information (including audio (and video) recordings) will be stored on a computer that is password protected. What is on the audio recording will be written down and the audio recording will then be destroyed. There will be no record matching your real name with your pseudonym.

For quality assurance, the study team, the study sponsor (grant agency), and/or members of the Teachers College Institutional Review Board (IRB) may review the data collected from you as part of this study. Otherwise, all information obtained from your participation in this study will be held strictly confidential and will be disclosed only with your permission or as required by U.S. or State law.

HOW WILL THE RESULTS BE USED? The results of this study will be used in primary researcher's dissertation. It will also be published in journals and presented at academic conferences. Your identity will be removed from any data you provide before publication or use for educational purposes. Your name or any identifying information about you will not be published.

CONSENT FOR AUDIO AND VIDEO RECORDING Audio recording and video recording are part of this research study. You can choose whether to give permission to be recorded. If you decide that you don't wish to be recorded, **you will not be able to participate** in this research study.

_____ I give my consent to be recorded _____
Signature

_____ I **do not** consent to be recorded _____
Signature

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Initial

Initial

WHO CAN ANSWER MY QUESTIONS ABOUT THIS STUDY? If you have any questions about taking part in this research study, you should contact the primary researcher, Jenny Jieun Park, at jp3934@tc.columbia.edu You can also contact the faculty advisor, Dr. Lori Custodero at lac66@tc.columbia.edu

If you have questions or concerns about your rights as a research subject, you should contact the Institutional Review Board (IRB) (the human research ethics committee) at 212-678-4105 or email IRB@tcedu or you can write to the IRB at Teachers College, Columbia University, 525 W. 120th Street, New York, NY 10027, Box 151. The IRB is the committee that oversees human research protection for Teachers College, Columbia University.

PARTICIPANT'S RIGHTS

- I have read the Informed Consent Form and have been offered the opportunity to discuss the form with the researcher.
- I have had ample opportunity to ask questions about the purposes, procedures, risks and benefits regarding this research study.
- I understand that my participation is voluntary. I may refuse to participate or withdraw participation at any time without penalty.
- The researcher may withdraw me from the research at the researcher's professional discretion and under the condition that participant cannot complete the questionnaire within one month.
- If, during the course of the study, significant new information that has been developed becomes available which may relate to my willingness to continue my participation, the researcher will provide this information to me.
- Any information derived from the research study that personally identifies me will not be voluntarily released or disclosed without my separate consent, except as specifically required by law.
- Identifiers may be removed from the data.
- I should receive a copy of the Informed Consent Form document.

My signature means that I agree to participate in this study:

Print name: _____ **Date:** _____

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Signature: _____

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