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University music students' thinking about performance:

Cultural creativity in an educational context

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Abstract

This research seeks to explore the knowledge and beliefs of university music performance students, and to see whether any pattern(s) or framework(s) of theory can be postulated. The research also considers the impact on this framework of the educational context, especially the performance assessment element. Relatively little is known about students' views of music, including its performance, and how these views are affected by experiences of higher education (see Hallam, 2006; Mills, 1996; Pitts, 2002). The project forms a case study of second/third year music students at the University of Hull in the academic year 2007-8.

The study is situated within the field of music education, although I will be drawing on and appealing to other research paradigms in my account of the data, including ethnographic accounts of musicians in various contexts (e.g. Cohen, 1991; Finnegan, 1989), and sociological theories of cultural work (e.g. Willis, 1978; 2000). The findings will contribute to music education, to the philosophy and psychology of music within the broader field of musicology, and to sociocultural studies.

Ethnographic methodology was used to elicit accounts of students' experiences and thoughts through interviews, informal discussions, participant observations of rehearsals, and non-participant observation of lessons and classes. Specifically, the aim was to investigate the students' understandings of the phenomenon of music performance, and of their roles as performers; and to ascertain their views of the 'culture', or the 'world', of performing music, especially within the educational context of the university.

Data gathering took place early in the study; analysis of data then began formally, and preliminary findings began to emerge, while relevant literature in the field of music education, music philosophy, ethnography and ethnomusicology was examined, with a view to contextualising the study amongst investigations within and outside the musicological domain.

The findings sit within the relatively recent corpus of research known as critical musicology. Although the intention of the research is not necessarily to inform future practice, either within the institution in which the fieldwork took place, or in other music education establishments, the empirically-derived, grounded theory emerging from this study may be considered sufficiently interesting to have the potential to influence policy in such insitutions as aim to provide music education.

Acknowledgements

Table of contents

List of figures

Introduction

Claude Debussy reportedly declared that music should "procure for us immediate pleasure, and either impose or insinuate itself in us without our having to make any effort to understand it".[1] Aaron Copland claimed that we respond to music from an elemental plane of musical consciousness and that no amount of theorising or musicological knowledge can or should alter that relationship.[2] From Stravinsky ("I haven't understood a bar of music in my life, but I have felt it") to Rubenstein (who believed the word "understand" should not be applied to music: there is nothing to understand, only to feel),[3] a whole range of well-known and successful composers and performers have subscribed to a musical ideology within which music is a product of, and reaches out to, the soul or the heart rather than the brain or the head. For generations, perpetuating the Romantic myth, music was to emanate from some ethereal, heavenly spring via magical means.

Meanwhile, musicologists, inhabiting a parallel universe, spent their time analysing a great canon of works by composers who were revered like gods (Nettl, 1995). These academics, not necessarily performers themselves, revealed to the rest of us wherein lay the genius of these works. Thus, the doers and the talkers (Dunsby, 1995) sat at opposite ends of the music spectrum, each in their own way papering neatly over the business side of music performance: the long hours of practice, the development of techniques and skills, the frustration, the wrong notes, the anxiety, physical wear and tear, and isolation; in short, the reality of producing music – of, as Christopher Small put it, "musicking" (Small, 1998). So far, the contribution of the performer is absent from both the composer's and the musicologist's account of music.

A revolution in musicological thinking occurred during the last two decades of the twentieth century, with academics (e.g. Cook & Everist, 1999; Dunsby, 1995; Kerman, 1985; Kramer, 1995; Subotnik, 1991) broadening the scope of musicology into related disciplines such as sociology and psychology, and newly addressing social, psychological and relational processes and experiences of making music. The discipline of ethnomusicology had been examining these areas for decades, but not in the realms of western music. Interest now began to be shown in the meaningfulness of performing, as opposed to the meaning of music *per se*. Questions began to be asked about how and why human beings become expert musicians; about the cost:benefit ratio; about the efforts which contribute to creating an apparently effortless spectacle; and whether performers might in fact be helped by having some of the

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[1] Quoted in Cook, 1992, p.165
[2] *Ibid.*
[3] *Ibid.*, p.186

knowledge previously the province of the academic musicologist, and by thinking explicitly about the process of preparing music for performance. All manner of complexities of music, and of working with music, are now under investigation by a cross-disciplinary army of music philosophers, music psychologists, ethnomusicologists, and socio-cultural researchers. The current study reflects these angles of human interest in music research.

Christopher Small, in his thought-provoking book, *Musicking: The meanings of performing and listening* (1998), asks:

> What is this thing called music, that human beings the world over should find in it such satisfaction, should invest in it so much of their lives and resources? The question has been asked many times over the centuries, and, since at least the time of the ancient Greeks, scholars and musicians have tried to explain the nature and meaning of music and find the reason for its extraordinary power in the lives of human beings.
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> Small, 1998, p.2

For Small, music does not exist outside performance, the production of musical sounds. He even claims *music* does not exist; *musicking* does, and musicking includes any activity, including listening, in which we engage with musical sound. To use the concept 'music' is to reify the activity of 'musicking'.

With all this in mind, the present study focuses on a group of young people who have chosen to study music at university. It holds a torch up to the students' experiences of, and thoughts on, performing music, and asks what happens when they elect to pursue, in an academic context, a phenomenon which is essentially a practical activity, enjoyed by and enjoyable to any and all members of society. It is an attempt to cut away the 'magic' and reveal the realities of performing music, especially within the context of an institutionalised programme of music education.

Chapter 1: Research context

This chapter contextualises the research in several ways. First, it explores my own personal and professional situation, examining what motivated me to undertake a study with this particular focus; the general and specific educational context is addressed and the values and assumptions inherent in the research are examined. A brief survey is given of the literature which first had a bearing on the developing research perspective. Finally, with background information to hand, the focus of the research is described, together with its aims and objectives, and the research question and sub-questions are presented.

I.   Personal and professional context

In 2004, following a short career break to start a family, I enrolled on the BMus course at my local university, following something of a mid-life crisis. Should I return to primary teaching? Should I take a detour and pursue music, which had always brought me happiness and fulfilment, because I would never get the chance again? I chose the latter. A fairly talented pianist and singer at school, I had nevertheless not taken music as a degree option on leaving school, because the most likely career I could see resulting from that was music teaching, and, at that time, I wanted something (was led to believe by my school that I could achieve something) far greater. Seventeen years, one Modern Languages degree, several years in primary teaching, a Doctorate in Education and two children later, I was back in a music classroom, writing analyses, doing aural tests and preparing recitals, still thankful that I had not done this at the age of 18, but pleased and yet slightly surprised that I had come full circle.

At first, I felt the same nervousness about performing which had daunted me at school. As time passed, I became used to the pressures and schedules, and began to realise that not only was I good at performing, but that I enjoyed it. I also realised, through working with other students as an accompanist and a conductor, that I enjoyed and was good at shaping music in partnerships and ensembles. Extensive reflection on this led in my final year to a short project investigating music students' perspectives on practising for performance, as part of the Psychology of Music Performance module. Preparing music for performance, especially considering the particular requirements and peculiarities of preparing music within an educational programme, where the performance would be assessed and the outcome contribute in large part to a degree result, led to the germination of the seeds of the current study. I was curious as to what I was/we were doing, which gives us such joy and satisfaction when we achieve a successful performance, but which also causes frustration and disappointment when our performance does not go well or is poorly received. Moreover, it

seemed that, as students, our task was compounded by the necessity to plot how to construct a successful performance in the particular context of the education system, the university music department - in short, the examination recital.

I had already completed a research study in fulfilment of a DPhil in Education, submitted to the University of Oxford (Mathieson, 2002), which investigated the framework of primary teachers' knowledge about literacy teaching and how they made sense of new information during the first year of the National Literacy Strategy (1998-9). I postulated an overarching theory of knowledge about literacy teaching, and examined how new knowledge was incorporated into existing knowledge. Conceptual work on the new, 'musical' topic, which led to the choice of research focus for the present study, similarly derived from immediate personal experience. Curiosity about ourselves, and about what is going on around us, is a strong stimulus to research (Finnegan, 1989; Willis, 2000).

As my own knowledge expanded and changed over the course of my BMus degree, I was conscious of subjecting this knowledge to meta-analysis, a process which led to the formulation of a new research question, yet, simultaneously, one which related strongly to my prior concerns regarding the experience of literacy teaching in the primary classroom. The two (on first glance vastly differing) spheres of interest in two apparently disparate domains have in common an experiential subjectivity undergoing modification within a learning context; a creative dynamic, where decision-making, risk-taking and often 'thinking on your feet' are central parts of the action; a sense of hierarchical positioning whereby the subject (whether teacher or student respectively) is bound by particular constraints and requirements, which can cause political and philosophical dilemmas; and, at the centre of it all, the selective use of accumulated knowledge and beliefs to inform the preparation of a finished product: in the case of the teachers, a lesson plan and its execution, and in the case of the students, an interpretation of a piece of music and its performance.

I began the current PhD project in the autumn of 2007, immediately after graduating from my BMus. During the first year, I devoted a substantial amount of time to the project, teaching part-time to support myself and my young children. However, during the subsequent few years, I increasingly took on more performing and teaching commitments, including some A-level teaching, and remarried; my full-time PhD consequently became part-time. Five years into it, I became Director of Music in a sixth-form college (an idea which I found so difficult to countenance as a teenager), and I elected to take time out of the research project in order to

focus properly on my new and demanding job, returning to it sporadically when time has permitted.

On the one hand, the duration (seven years) of the project seems lengthy, and some might contend that the data are becoming dat*ed*. It has also been impossible to refer back to the participants with the findings of the study, since I no longer have any contact with any of them; sadly, one of them had actually passed away since leaving Hull, and the others had all moved on and moved away. Furthermore, their own memories of the situation during the year in question would not necessarily be reliable, especially since, in addition to the passing of time, these former students will have moved on in terms of life stage. If we cannot assume that respondents have access to the 'truth', even at the time of fieldwork (Delamont, 1992), this becomes even more problematic at a distance of seven years.

I would argue, in fact, that circumstances have generated many benefits. The time elapsed has put distance between me and the research participants, many of whom had become personal friends over the time I worked with them. Reflexivity, the researcher's acknowledgement and awareness of her presence within the fieldwork setting and its possible effect, is of central concern in a study such as this, during fieldwork itself, and during data analysis and the drawing up of findings. Objectivity and anonymity are more likely, from this distance, to be present in this account. There is now also distance between me and the research context, the music department which seven years ago was my second home, which again can only serve to objectify my findings.

I believe that the question I wanted to ask at the start of the project is the same as it is now, being a fundamental question about our ideas and thinking about music and its performance; this unwavering focus has followed me through all the work and reading I have done during these seven years. Also, I have prepared many pieces of music during this time, as a pianist, singer, conductor, cellist, and teacher; my professional life, both within and outside my paid employment, is spent shaping and guiding others towards shaping musical performances, and both formally and informally assessing my own and others' performances. All this has fed into my theorising. Finally, my increasing responsibility as a music educator has forced me to scrutinise my musical, psychological, philosophical and ideological approaches to music and to teaching music, and I have been able to spiral around via my theorising, based largely in my thinking on this topic, journeying back and forth between the project, with its data and its literature, and my current experiences in the classroom and the rehearsal/practice room. Essentially, my work is the same, wherever I turn*:* to discover how we as performers think

about and construct a musical performance, taking into account, in many cases, an awareness that the performance is going to be assessed. Bowman (2009) considers it important that educators themselves conduct research into their practice, and that evidence-based practice is desirable amongst music educators. The study about which this report is an account has been more than an academic exercise: it has informed, and will continue to inform, my own practice.

The years that have elapsed mean that I must be careful to reflect only the findings which can be derived from the data, rather than thoughts which have developed outside of that domain. The accounts of methodology and data analysis presented in this report outline how this has been achieved.

II. Educational context

This study examines music performance within an educational institution, and involves performances which are assessed as part of the standardised and regulated UK higher education system. Students are preparing performances for which a mark is allocated, contributing towards a final degree classification. However, this project does not aim to examine the students' performance in terms of their 'result' (mark/degree class). The significance of the educational context goes further. Custodero (1996) underlines the role of music education in encouraging self-knowledge, self-growth and enjoyment, which are achieved through active music-making.

The educational context of the study demands that attention be brought to what is known as the hidden curriculum (Pitts, 2003). Education is a social and cultural enterprise, and should not focus solely on assessment criteria. The traditional concentration on outcomes amongst practitioners and researchers has neglected students' experiential conditions. Recent music education and philosophy research has outlined a need to consider the perspective of the learner's experience (e.g. Criss, 2011; Hargreaves, Marshall and North, 2003; McClellan, 2014; Reimer, 2012). Music-making as an experience is important in these students' lives; for particular reasons, they have chosen performance modules above many other possibilities in their degree programme. However, they are not all going to become professional musicians. Something in the experience of making music attracts these students, and it is important to try and understand what this something is, and how it matters to them as individuals. Karlsen (2011) identifies the significant risk that music students may reject music education, and music altogether, because of their experiences, and demonstrates that facilitating the processes rather than the products of learning, and being attentive to potential non-musical outcomes of music education, may help to create a more positive experiential outcome for students. Juuti and Littleton (2010, p.482) also emphasise the "fundamentally social processes" involved in becoming a musician, and highlight the "pressing need" for research in this area.

Researchers are now promoting the importance of understanding music in preparing music performance. Parncutt (2007) states that, in higher education, the ability to perform is currently the most important prerequisite for good music tuition at the highest level, due to (arguably) the prevailing centrality of performance within music education; at the same time, Parncutt advocates the importance of academic knowledge, which can broaden students' horizons, encourage self-reflection, improve self-efficacy and creativity and enhance general

musicianship. Parncutt states that "academic training may be considered as a central and integral part of the training of all-round, intelligent musicians" (2007, p.5).

Research should also address the perspectives of those in positions of responsibility within the educational establishment, who devise local and national courses and assessment criteria, and influence the students' learning experiences. Teaching brings with it a moral imperative. It should be praxial, serving the needs of individuals, and embracing plurality. Teaching involves people, not things, and implies ethical criteria of care. Regelski (2009) writes that music education practices are too often unhealthy, ill-considered and ripe for change. He writes of "action ideals" (2009, Preface, p. xi), stemming from dynamic, creative, reflective practices provoking the practitioner into change where it will help advance students' musical choices and capabilities. A question for the present study is whether in this context music education is a force for creativity and empowerment, or a force for compliance with positivistic standards and measurable behaviours.

The specific educational context of this research project is the music department[4] of Hull University, in the north of England, with seven full time music lecturers and a total student body of 124. At the time of fieldwork, most students came from the western classical tradition, although the department was beginning to expand to include jazz and pop musicians, studying on the same[5] BMus or BA Music course[6]. Modules were offered in solo and ensemble performance, as well as a variety of other modules (listed in Appendix I). It was possible to take a joint degree in drama and music, or music plus another subject such as Spanish, but the majority of students took music alone. Music performances, in the form of public concerts, recitals, masterclasses, musical theatre and chamber concerts, were a prominent part of the work of the department, and performance was a popular option; a Music Society offered some popular ensembles and events run by the students, in addition to those organised and led by staff. Performance was compulsory in first year, but subsequently it was possible to complete one's degree without selecting any performance options. Within the broad remit of the degree programme, this study targets only music performance, and students taking that option.

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[4] At the time of fieldwork, music was part of the Department of Drama and Music, now restructured as the School of Drama, Music and Screen.
[5] Students can now opt to follow a different, separate, degree route in jazz and pop.
[6] BMus students took modules solely in music; BA students could incorporate a free elective into their programme of study.

III. Values and assumptions

Inherent in the focus of the study are values which must be acknowledged. The first is the prominence of music performance, especially within music education. Performance is only one aspect of a complex net of relationships around music. It is only one way of learning about music and demonstrating an understanding about music, the other two main aspects being composing, and listening and appraising; this division into three is now widely advocated and used throughout the education system.[7] The importance of other means of learning and talking about music and its plurality of associated topics is not disputed here. On the contrary, an awareness of the expanding and multiplying fields of musicological interests has fed into this study, and part of this project examines the breadth of knowledge which music students possess about music.

Following from this, it should also be acknowledged that the students in this study were taking performance as part of a wider degree programme. Had this study been conducted in a conservatoire, performance would have been the primary focus of their programme of study; in a university context, the students were also taking a variety of other modules.[8] It could well have been the case that performance was not the priority for these students, as it would have been in a conservatoire. Indeed, some of the participants, if asked, would have described themselves as composers, rather than performers. Nevertheless, the study's sole focus on music performance means that gathering data about any other aspects of the students' university 'world' was not within its remit. Boundaries must be drawn somewhere.

Reimer said in 2012 that in America performance takes the lion's share of attention, the other aspects remaining well in the shade, at least within the education system. In the UK, alongside music in schools, the increasing numbers of examination entries to the ABRSM and other exam boards demonstrate a thriving enthusiasm for music performance, as does the work done by local authority music services, and programmes like Music for Youth.[9] Worldwide, the continued existence of numerous specialist music conservatoires which focus predominantly

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[7] For example, reference is made to the three areas of "performing, composing and listening" in the curriculum document, entitled *Music Programmes of Study*, https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-curriculum-in-england-music-programmes-of-study/national-curriculum-in-england-music-programmes-of-study, published 11/09/13, accessed online 25/08/14. The document *The Importance of Music: A national plan for music education*, DFE, 2011, describes these as the "three traditional areas of teaching" (p.37).

[8] For a full list of module options open to students in the year of fieldwork, see Appendix I.

[9] See the ABRSM report *Making Music*, published in September 2014, for an account, in which a wide range of organisations collaborated, of the current "musical landscape" in the UK. Accessed online 31/10/14 at http://gb.abrsm.org/en/making-music

on performance, and the expansion of performance courses at universities, are testament to the same phenomenon.

The present research places a value on music students' thinking and on the expression of their perceptions about performance. The writer Paul Willis sees the salience of giving a voice to members of society whose views are generally either unheard or ignored; he mentions 'classrooms', as if speaking about schools, but the principle is the same. Substitute the word 'lecture room' and the picture is recognisable:

> With personal histories and contemporary realities involving a variety of lived cultural practices, many students feel that their own experiences are unrecognised in curricular, teaching and learning practices. Their cultures seem to be invisible, or, like coats in winter, to be dumped at the classroom door. Ethnographic accounts, scripts, texts and stories could have a role to play here, meeting the experiences of students, releasing a recognition of their own symbolic work and developing a recognition and respect for other kinds of symbolic work in other forms of life… Cultural practices are, in effect, learning practices and can be connected and mobilized as such.
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> Willis, 2000, p.125

The assumption here is that music students' voices are worth hearing. Taking time to allow them, to encourage them, to speak, implies that the subjects of this research have something to say, and should be listened to; whether, once listened to, there will be a response, is beyond the remit of this report.

The research focus also incorporates an assumption that students do think about musical performance and their preparation for performances, and that it is possible to access those thoughts; however, there is no presupposition as to what their habitual thoughts might be. Nor does the study purport to judge the usefulness of students' theories or the success of their practices. The emphasis is firmly on the *students' experiences* of performance, and on the knowledge and theory which either implicitly or explicitly supports their work. This is the first time that such a lengthy and in-depth study has been undertaken amongst students within a university music department, which in itself makes the project worthy of attention.

Value is also placed on quality of performance, and indeed quality of music itself. Human beings evaluate, assess and judge musical performance, and attribute worth to some and not other musics. Subjectivity within this sphere is, some say, impossible to put aside (Wrigley and Emmerson, 2011). Yet in our education system, in which assessment leads to numerical

marking, categorising and ranking of students, claims are made that it is possible to judge the standard of a performance. This factor is of great import when investigating students' experiences of music performance at university.

Equally to be acknowledged is the value placed on music education in helping extend students' knowledge and improve their ability. The election of (indeed, the provision of) a performance module as part of the BMus implies an assumption that students can and will improve their music performance skills and therefore achieve better results, both in terms of giving a better quality performance, and of achieving higher marks in their assessment. The study hopes to discover what skills, knowledge or attitudes the students believe they have, or may have developed as a result of teaching as part of their degree programme. It aims to pinpoint any helpful thoughts or concepts about the process of preparing for performance, and any knowledge that students are learning or discovering which enables them to develop as performers, and which might enhance their performance experiences.

It should be made clear that, in this study, it is the performance of notated music, primarily but not exclusively from the classical tradition, which is being investigated. This does not imply that any superiority is awarded to this music. It happened that the students in this study were generally preparing such music, from scores.

Finally, the notion of 'cultural creativity' in the title of this report encapsulates two meanings: the culture of the students, i.e. their cultural 'world'; and 'culture' in the sense in which music (particularly classical music) is dubbed 'high culture'. The 'creativity' of the title is active within both of these locations. These notions will be investigated further in relevant portions of this report.

IV. Philosophical context

The epistemological stance of this research proceeds from a postmodern approach to music, based in pluralism, individualism and contextualisation, which is overtaking the long-established notion that music should (could, even) be separated from its contexts, and be evaluated or enjoyed purely formally. Regelski (2009) claims that the approach by which students are taught to revere a score, and perhaps also a particular interpretation of it, is outmoded.

From musicology (and music reception more generally) as a reverential and silent contemplation of musical works (Clarke, 2005), there is now an acceptance that music is process as well as (perhaps, going back to Small, even *rather than*) product. Music is more than the transformation of a set of notated symbols into sounds. Music is linked to being human (Georgii-Hemming, 2007), and evokes images, bodily experiences, associations with reflection and self-understanding; it involves interpersonal relations, the individual's interaction with others, and can create a sense of belonging. Music (i.e. musical works) is no longer to be considered as an object to be studied for its own sake; investigation is now underway into its powers of influence, and social and personal transformation. The present study is an example of the current interest in this relational aspect of music.

Music, when attended to seriously, is an 'intentional object': people see things differently depending on what they know about them. The more one knows about music, the more one can appreciate and enjoy it. Music is accessible to all; yet enjoyment of it is enhanced by theoretical knowledge. Our understanding of anything is increased by the amount of knowledge we bring to it. Philosophers have argued that meaning is a public, not a private, matter (Kivy, 1993). Interpretation of music is negotiable. Rehearsal is not simply about getting the notes right: it involves making choices about the meaning of the music. One aspect of the current study explores students' approach(es) to whether there is one interpretation, which the performer is meant to discover from the score, or whether the performer is presenting one of a variety of ways of interpreting the music.

Preparation of music for performance is enhanced by the performer's contribution of thought and knowledge. Suspense, tension, resolution, story and emotions are aspects of music dependent on contributions of thought and perception from the performer, first and foremost, and from a creative listener. Furthermore, the performer of music is its first audience, its first listener. The effect on a listener is crucial to the success of a performance. For Stock (2003), music can be understood as a field of thought where feelings are experienced and reflected

upon. The implication of this is that performers need to be emotionally connected to a performance, and perhaps touched or altered, as listening members of an audience would be. The notion of being interested in how music is received, by performer and audience alike, is relatively new, but is taken seriously within the current study.

V. Research orientation

My research orientation at the start of the project was partly established by the personal and professional context described at length earlier in this chapter; the influence of real life experience is not to be trivialised as an inspiration to researchers (Willis, 2000). Central to our lives as educators are the ways that our own life histories and social positioning affect our beliefs, purposes, strengths and assumptions; practitioner research takes a particular stance of inquiry, whose purpose is to enrich student learning and contribute new knowledge and the transformation of teaching and learning (Stewart Rose and Countryman, 2013). Kingsbury (1988) writes of the role that personal change can play in the constituting of ethnographic research. An ethnographic approach certainly presented itself as best suited to this study.[10]

The work of ethnomusicologists investigates what people do when they make music. People's explanations allow a picture to be built up which is based on the concepts and categories of the music-makers themselves (Stock, 2003). The practical activity of music-making, and the concepts of the music-makers, are very much at the heart of this research.

Whilst prior theorising had directed my attention to a particular topic before entering the field, the processes of formulating the research question and defining a research problem via a literature search prior to fieldwork were not part of this project, as this type of 'top-down' approach would have been inappropriate, and actually detrimental, to the study. Given the influence of an inductive approach to data analysis and theorising, a 'bottom-upwards' approach was most appropriate, where themes emerging from the fieldwork itself, and from data analysis, would be explored in the literature. As topics revealed their importance during data analysis, they were also investigated in the literature. This became part of the data gathering process itself (Glaser, 1998). The outcome of these investigations into the literature is presented alongside the relevant findings and discussed later in this report.

However, the research orientation was certainly influenced by theoretical perspectives from literature I found which resonated with my research topic. Most importantly, the reading of ethnographic studies, of both musical and non-musical groups, confirmed my choice of methodology and would also influence the eventual interpretation of the data. I was also interested in the changes in musicology which had taken place in the last two decades of the twentieth century, feeling that this had a bearing on the topic in question because of the growing interest in the socio-cultural aspects of music; I was particularly struck by Christopher Small's book, 'Musicking' (1998). It says much about my own musical education, including the

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[10] Full consideration of methodology is presented in a subsequent chapter.

BMus degree programme from which I had just graduated, that my own longstanding preconceptions and thinking about music were now being challenged significantly. The impact of this reading on the theoretical perspectives of the current research is outlined below.

1. Influential studies from the literature

The naturalistic setting of my previous research project, and the propulsion towards the use of a similar methodology for this study, together pointed the way to an exploration of previous ethnographic studies of musicians, including music students. Reference to the literature began with seminal work by Kingsbury (1988) and Nettl (1995), along with studies by Cohen (1991), Finnegan (1989) and MacKinnon (1993). Ethnographic studies of other communities not related to music (Willis's studies of working class lads (1977) and hippy and biker cultures (1978), and Patrick's (1973) study of a Glasgow gang) also contributed to the research perspective. Finally, a more recent study by Viljoen (2014) recalls themes from Kingsbury and Nettl.

To ethnomusicologists, in the early days of this sub-discipline, the music in question was usually of a particular (foreign) tribe or culture. Nowadays, ethnomusicologists are interested in how people relate to and interact with music, anywhere in the world, and, increasingly, much closer to home. Landmark studies by Kingsbury (1988) and Nettl (1995) applied ethnomusicological principles to the study of western music. Nettl (1995) refers to an ethnomusicologists' conference in 1993, where one of the principal topics was the notion of doing ethnomusicology at home; Kingsbury's and Nettl's studies were innovative and significant in contemplating their own societies. They attempted deliberately to make the familiar unfamiliar, to examine their own cultures as if they were foreign. Ethnomusicology had entered western musicology, and it was the polar opposite of the work-centred, insider perspective typical of musicology.

A third, more recent, study of tertiary or higher music education establishments is that of Viljoen (2014), who examines the music school as a locus of musical production which is rarely subjected to critique. She investigates South African institutions of music education, although she says her topic is relevant to the international body of research, and consistently indicates that she includes not only conservatoires but all tertiary music departments in her purview.

While Kingsbury's work is based on an actual music school, Nettl's (1995) is the musings of a scholar creating an imaginary setting as what he considers a representative amalgam of the various establishments of music education in which he has worked. The book is not a true ethnography; nevertheless, its content is thought-provoking. Nettl is critical of music schools,

to the point where he believes what happens there is not good either for the young people passing through or for teaching staff who pass on its values.

These studies were some of the first to express, and to express concern about, the view that music education espouses almost a religious attitude towards the great composers, treating them like deities who bestow sacred works, along with musical and behavioural principles to guide us. The institution becomes like a seminary, with its inhabitants demonstrating the devotion and submission of monks. Emphasis on a central repertoire ensures that other musics are suppressed; if any music outside the western canon is allowed in, it becomes academicised and standardised, for the purposes of assessment, and because teachers want to retain control of students' music making and learning. Departmental power relationships ensure the continuation of the fundamental values of the establishment; the institution thrives on its symbolic capital and the acquisition of prestige. To this is tied a view of music as autonomous, referencing nothing outside itself, apparently resisting social analysis, and entirely ignoring music's social contingency.

Claims of purity and disinterested ness conceal not only the interests behind the music but the interests behind the music school. Kingsbury, Nettl and Viljoen all outline the awkward positionality of music departments/schools in relation to the wider educational and institutional context. They are relatively small and expensive, run the risk of being considered irrelevant by other disciplines which earn their way by virtue of their greater 'relevance', and rely on being supported and subsidised by their larger, more economically worthy neighbours. This has two consequences (amongst possible others). Politically, music schools and departments are vulnerable, and need to conjure status and prestige to survive.

Students are learning more than what they are explicitly being taught. As Pitts (2003) suggests, the music school or tertiary music institution has a hidden curriculum, a set of formally unstated values, attitudes and norms, running parallel to the more formal teaching processes and content, which plays an all-important role in shaping students as future professional musicians. Such values, even in more liberated music educational contexts, still reinforce traditional conceptions of what is considered to be a successful musician. Supposedly progressive practices are embedded within institutionalised contexts which are, in fact, invested in the autonomy principle, and this is most especially the case in the country's leading institutions (Viljoen, 2014). Students are still being instructed in unspoken ways as to the value of autonomous music. Kingsbury (1988) ventures that the politics are corrupt yet the music remains pure.

Nettl, Kingsbury and Viljoen remark upon the self-perpetuating systems rewarding those who support the assumptions under which the establishment labours, be they student, teacher or administrator. Viljoen claims that, although musical pluralism is now purportedly an important aspect of tertiary education, the autonomy principle continues to reinforce the legitimacy (supremacy, even) of autonomous music. This principle is constructed so subtly that implicit supremacy is promoted effectively through unspoken practices such as concert requirements and other markers of musical prestige. Viljoen believes that the narrative of the great masters still forms the prestigious core of most tertiary music institutions.

Nettl (1995) highlights the persistence of a whole series of oppositions between different groups: between performers and academics; teachers, students and administrators; singers and players; conductors and the conducted. This is not a community whose only concern is art. There is hierarchy, and politics; there are ladders to climb. There is class consciousness, and role models from a prestigious heritage (Viljoen, 2014). The philosophical location of musical text in notation leads to the privileging of music represented by this medium, as opposed to, for example, pop and jazz, which have no score (or rarely); this can result in serious divisions between members of staff, and between staff and students.

Kingsbury (1988) is interested in the distinction between teaching music and nurturing musicality. He examines the social and cultural nature of musical talent, long taken for granted within the western musical establishment but here understood within an anthropological framework. Talent, for Kingsbury, is a western notion; to him, musicality is different depending on the contexts in which music is produced. He also writes that music is a metaphor of the society in which it takes place. Music is shifting and indeterminate in meaning. This concept has important implications for interpreters of culture, and for artists themselves.

The three studies mentioned so far all focus on higher music education institutions: Nettl (1995) and Kingsbury (1988) focus on the conservatoire; Viljoen (2014) includes all tertiary music education institutions. The relevance of these studies is that they highlight the tensions between modernist and postmodernist thought, of autonomous music versus the contingency of the social, the promulgation of a set of establishment values as against plurality and variety. These particular notions rang true in the context of my research interest, and I hoped to explore further during data gathering and analysis.

Small (1998) says music does not exist but musicking does. Outside education, the emphasis on music-making is displayed in ethnomusicological studies by Finnegan (1989), Cohen (1991) and Mackinnon (1993). The central foci of these three studies reflect the swing at that time

towards music's social and cultural associations. Far from taking as their starting point the typical musicological objects (genius composers, performers or works) of western classical music, they instead shine a light on ordinary people in their everyday music making.

Finnegan speaks about how unusual it was at the time to focus on what is happening on the ground, the priority having previously been on the asocial and continuing existence of musical works, independent of human performances or social processes. She expresses a hope of enhancing, through her study of the 'hidden musicians' of Milton Keynes, an understanding of British cultural institutions, affording importance to the artistic expression and enactment of ordinary people. Cohen's study of pop musicians in Liverpool focused on two things she felt had been neglected in studies of pop music at that point: the bands themselves (the "grass roots" (p.6) of the industry) and the process of music making by rock bands. Cohen mentions in her introduction the relative novelty (at that time) of Nettl's concept of anthropology at home, and seeks to focus on music-making processes and the complexity of social relationships. She attempts to analyse the way in which music not only reflects but affects the social environment. She also seeks to highlight the underlying conceptions of music which determine the musical terminology and categories used and the evaluation of music, musicians, musical knowledge and skills. Mackinnon's study of the British folk scene focuses on the interpretation of musical performance as social action, a shift of focus away from understanding music as sound, towards thinking of it as behaviour. He believed, in 1993, that music as behaviour had so far been sidelined in the social sciences, but that ethnomusicology was beginning to reveal the ethnocentrism implicit in terminology such as 'art music', and placing the study of music in the context of the social systems within which the music is articulated. He expresses a desire to start unravelling a sociological understanding by finding order, pattern and consistency within the behaviour of people in a musical genre, which seemed similar to the desire I felt in pursuing my research.

A third set of influential studies were ethnographies of other types of group by Patrick (1973) and Willis (1977, 1978). Patrick's interest in Glasgow gangs, and Willis's studies of working class lads (1977) and hippies and bikers (1978), struck a chord, both in terms of the methodology I hoped to use, infiltrating and being part of a group for a substantial length of time, and in relation to the ways in which the participants in the studies made sense of their respective contexts, and the narratives which the researchers in their turn developed about their participants. These studies, then, also informed my thinking around my investigations into the world of university students' music performance.

2. Themes emerging from the literature

The literature was revealing several themes around the tensions between high art and profane creativity, which were relevant to the current study. These are presented here in order to set the scene for the reader.

a) *High art, and art in life*

In the twentieth century, art was generally taken to mean high art (Willis, 2000). Connotations of the word 'art' are often narrow and negative. If it is not 'high' then it is not art. Institutions contain art; if it is in a museum or gallery it does not belong to normal people. The formal existence of arts seems to deny anything else a cultural or artistic content.

According to socio-cultural theory, in 'high culture', objects such as portraits, statues and music can be regarded as 'auratic': they are surrounded by an aura (Taruskin, 1995; Willis, 2000). In the case of such objects, the aesthetic is located within the original form. Aesthetic distance is required for reverence and an aesthetic disposition is necessary for appreciation of the form. In order to value objects with in a tradition (art, music, sculpture), training is essential (Willis, 1990). This prevents profane use and imposes socially delimited consumption and decoding, privileging certain groups of people due to their specialist knowledge (Willis, 2000). Notation itself, as an analytic system of representing the basic elements of music, shaped the perception of 'high culture' music (Mackinnon, 1993), becoming an ideological tool, reducing all musical possibilities to a finite number of tightly controlled elements, and shaping a perception of music as serious, autonomous, absolute music. Mackinnon writes of the perceived superiority of classical music, in which field the journey to becoming an expert (whether as performer, composer or knowledgeable listener) is so lengthy that few ever achieve it.

Commercial commodities are useful, and money from their sale can be reinvested into further production; auratic commodities are essentially useless. They cannot be touched, or used. Both types of commodity are fetishised; that is, they exist as if with no reference to their history or origin, or the social context surrounding their production. The musical score, in this view, is cut off from human process, its meaning being located firmly and entirely in the text.

Traditional, received ways of thinking about classical music have focused on the musical work. The 'text' of the work, the composer's score, has been considered to be the work of art, almost a 'sacred object' (Small, 1998):

The presumed autonomous "thingness" of works of music is, of course, only part of the prevailing modern philosophy of art in general. What is valued is not the action of art, not the act of creating, and even less that of perceiving and responding, but the created art object itself. Whatever meaning art may have is thought to reside in the object, persisting independently of what the perceiver may bring to it. It is simply there, floating through history untouched by time and change, waiting for the ideal perceiver to draw it out.

Small, 1998, pp.4-5

Reification was exacerbated by the potential of recorded sound to create an ideal version of a work, again treating music as a 'thing'. A series of recording media, including wax cylinders, vinyl records, CDs, and also the widespread distribution of sheet music, all contributed to creating definitive and tangible paper and sound versions of musical works. Related to this is the reification of music in conservatoires, colleges and schools where the main focus is on composition and performance, i.e. the making of the 'thing' (the work), rather than any other music-related activity (Cavicchi, 2009), alongside the studying of 'set works' (a further selection of sacred 'things').

According to this view, since 'the work' is reified, the composer's creation must be recreated as faithfully as possible to what the composer intended, by skilled musicians trained to capture the essence of the composer's intentions (Davidson and Correia, 2001). By this reasoning, performers are 'simply' realising the composer's notations in sound, and have little to contribute as creators of musical meaning, the meaning being determined by the composer and communicated through the score. Composers themselves have subscribed to this attitude: Stravinsky demanded the rigidly objective 'execution' of works, and many composers took up electronic composition specifically in order to dispense with performers (Small, 1998). When performance was discussed at all, in traditional musicological literature, it would be considered as nothing more than an approximate and imperfect presentation of the music being performed, with rarely any acknowledgement that a musical performance could even possess, let alone create, any meaning in itself (Small, 1998). According to Small, Brahms once said that he did not want to go to a performance of *Don Giovanni*. Why should he, when he had the score at home to read? This is a prime example of the attitude that the music is in the score, and the most perfect reading of it can be made without any mediation (performers).

Respondents in Finnegan's (1989) study criticised classical musicians for being music readers dependent on written forms, even in performance and certainly in repertoire, rather than

originators or creators. Informants spoke of the constraints of written music as against their own creative mode within jazz or rock. In classical music, the player was seen as essentially a mouthpiece for the written compositions of others. Classical music was regarded as a transmission of works rather than a medium for musical performance, and informants expressed an attitude that classical music is a heritage handed down from the past, the responsibility of the perpetuation of this heritage falling onto the shoulders of a privileged few, rather than being constructed in the present (Finnegan, 1989).

Part of this perspective is the flourishing interest in historical performance practice, the notion of being faithful to the music, or rather, to the composer. In this view, the focus is on the composer's intentions, as expressed in the score or as a part of what would be expected in the context of the prevailing social and cultural conventions. The musicologist has come into his own here, studying and pronouncing on historical issues such as what is 'authentic' (in the sense of historically accurate or likely), and what the original text meant; the score provides important historical evidence (Small, 1998). A fascination has developed around 'correct' instrumentation, according to practices contemporaneous with a work's composition. This movement steered the focus of performance towards the composer, and carried the ideological assumption that composers know best (Kivy, 1995).

Music has been afforded a type of existence within the score which is independent of the configuration of sounds made during performance (Mackinnon, 1993). However, this is an isolationist position (Pitts, 2005) which is becoming increasingly antiquated in musicology. Music's profane meaning has been placed firmly on the musical map (Viljoen, 2014). In the last few decades, the dominant position, that musical performance plays no part in the creative process, being the medium through which the isolated, self-contained work has to pass in order to reach its goal, the listener, has been challenged. Classical music is a performed art (Finnegan, 1989). The music does not actually exist until it is created in the moment of performance (Small, 1998). The act of performance, in which a musical work receives its full realisation, has been acknowledged to be a creative act in its own right:

> …*performance does not exist in order to present musical works, but rather, musical works exist in order to give performers something to perform.*
>
> Small, 1998, p.9 (italics original)

A score merely provides instructions for performance:

…without performance there is no music. A score… is not music.

Small, 1998, p.164

Prior to the nineteenth century, the composer was not precious about his score. In Baroque practice, it was normal (expected, even) for performers to embellish the score. In eighteenth- and nineteenth-century opera, it was commonplace for performers to make changes, cuts and interpolations. The composer simply provided something to sing. Nothing about the text was sacred. Even in the early years of the twentieth century, conductors would reorchestrate major works as they wished.

In popular music and jazz there is no score (McClary and Walser, 1988). Furthermore, in pop, folk and jazz, there is an expectation that the performer will make the music their own (Mackinnon, 1993). Often what makes a song special (the nuances, microtonal inflections, rhythmic deviances, the 'unmeasurables') cannot be transcribed. Not all the elements necessary for performance are notatable: balance, timbre, enunciation and intensity all need to be carefully considered, yet do not widely feature in notated music (Finnegan, 1989). Finnegan also remarks observantly that these are not aspects of music around which a wide vocabulary has been developed in classical musicology.

Human use and personal relevance makes art. This is part of everyday and ordinary cultural experience (Willis, 2000). As an individual, and within whatever groups one identifies with, one is engaged in the creation of culture. The creativities of the everyday are linked to the wider social picture; so cultural practices make active sense of the structural conditions of existence. Cultural positioning is important for our sense of self. This shift in focus from high art to art in life reflects an interest in people and the social, as opposed to music in abstract. It is a shift from a focus on the autonomous work, to an approach embracing the socio-cultural relativity and plurality of music(s) or musicking (Small, 1998). It emphasises the gap between the formal and the informal, the hierarchical and the equal, the product and the process. Cultural, psychological, social and contextual questions are now meaningful and necessary, where once they were irrelevant and ignored.

b) *Profane creativity*

Art in life needs sensuous expressive forms involving the body, not with external and objectified knowledge, but with somatic forms of knowing at their centre. Profane creativity is about establishing one's presence, one's cultural significance; it is about allowing an expression of the authentic self, encouraging the self to grow, and, through these, experiencing fulfilment. Elements include motivation, self-direction, empowerment, and thus

the expression of one's personal aesthetic vision. Creativity comprises uniqueness, not conformity; creativity features originality, not reproduction.

Finnegan (1989) reports that people in rock bands feel they can make their individual mark. They can express their personal aesthetic vision, and, through music, achieve a sense of controlling their own values, destiny and self-identity. Autonomy and independence are accepted features of this special 'world', in which people find a unique opportunity for personal expression; experiences of creativity and a sense of individual achievement are especially strong in this sphere. In rock, elaboration (creativity) comes from inflections, notably of rhythm and of the manner of approaching and articulating notes, and from the importance placed on the highly personal timbres used by individual singers and instrumentalists. A band's originality arose from their development of such inflections first in joint practice and then in performance of their own material. Jazz, where there may be only a plan, outline or structure for the performance, also reportedly allows for more creativity for the individual (Finnegan, 1989). Finnegan contrasts this with classical performances: "the wearisome series of note after note characteristic of classical music" (*op. cit.*, p.169). However, those features of autonomy, independence, and opportunities of personal expression and creativity, do not need to be absent in performance of classical music: it is possible to personalise classical music. Not all of its elements can be notated. They are interpreted according to contemporary performance traditions. The score does not tell the whole story and performers have to make decisions during the rehearsal process. Even a notated work receives its full realisation in actual performance rather than in abstract non-performed script. In fact, the informants recognised this even in Finnegan's study, in which they considered classical music as being formulated in the notated score, existing independently of its performances.

Cohen (1991) reports the quest for originality within her study as being the band members' goal. They want to appear unique, and to make music that was different, not derivative. Their quest for originality can be placed within a general cult of originality that has influenced all the arts. The ideology of authenticity in rock is embodied in their lyrics and musical sounds and through attitudes to marketing. For the bands, music has hidden distinctions between purity and impurity, honesty and deceit, reality and artifice, expressing contradictions and tensions constructed by our culture between art and entertainment, creativity and commerce: culture as a collective, creative expression, and culture as a commodity. Cultural activity shows a creative response to modern conditions (Cohen, 1991).

The same contradictions and tensions have been revealed and explored in the music and culture of groups like hippies and bikers (Willis, 1978). The hippies want to express themselves directly, speaking of being a 'real character', meaning a unique self. Their music has to have an authenticity about it. A profound distinction exists for the hippies between authentic and non-authentic music. Their view is that originality and creativity in music started with The Beatles, who, through songs like 'Eleanor Rigby' and 'Strawberry Fields', showed imaginative scope and technique, directly expressing something of themselves and their artistic feelings, breaking the cycle of commercial determination of the early 1960s. The bikers too display an exact and searching selection of music: it must suit them and say something about them.

c) *Performance as sociocultural creativity*

The notion of inherent meaning in music, flowing from performer to audience, derives from specifically western aesthetics; the separation of composer, performer and listener leads to the mistaken assumption that these can be equated with communicator, mediator, recipient of meaning (Mackinnon, 1993). Consumption itself is creative, as listeners engage actively, creatively, meaningfully in the meaning making process; listeners exercise critical choice, and consumption is a form of cultural empowerment (Willis, 1990). Meaning is not inherent in certain sound structures (Mackinnon, 1993).

Performance is a sharing of occasion, involving feelings of intensity and communication. The experience of participating in performance draws performers together, engendering a sense of belonging and of community, a reflection of the nature of relationships, which adds to the intensity and enjoyment for performers, and consequently for the audience (Cohen, 1991). Social relationships help to create joint accounts of shared subjective experiences, forging a mythology (Finnegan, 1989) of shared background, meaningful in its own right.

For Cohen, the expressive power and excitement of live performance comes from the theatricality of the performance, including both those on stage and those off. A performance is a sensual whole because of the interrelationships of components: the combination of visual, aural, physical, intellectual and emotional elements, and the ambiguity of symbols and concepts constructed by human interaction, makes for construction of meaning in the event. The sensuality of this normally suppresses critical, rational logical thought.

Cohen also writes of the simultaneous process of production and consumption in live performance, and the idea that each performance is unique and thrilling due to its unpredictability. A disposition to interpret the performance collectively with the audience heightens the sense of community and identity, and this is especially true if the performers

and audience share same or similar socio-cultural experiences (Cohen, 1991). This collective experience "symbolises, activates, redefines, and reaffirms values, meaning, concepts, identities or myths that they might share" (*ibid*., p.40).

Staged musical events include many facets other than the musical text (Finnegan, 1989). Mackinnon (1993) describes how the social scene around folk music is part of its appeal, and that, in some ways, the structure of the event is more important than the music itself. The folk audience listens in a particular way: it is not just the sound form that matters, but the associated modes of behaviour, such as how much talk is acceptable and when it is polite to go to the bar. Rapt attention is not demanded, so when it occurs, it is special.

Cohen's (1991) view is that descriptions, definitions and categorisations of music are culturally conditioned, as is the way in which music is valued, appreciated and responded to. Music may be valued as an art and a source of aesthetic pleasure, for spiritual, symbolic or philosophical qualities, or for its possibilities for social interaction. Different societies and cultures hold their own particular criteria of musicianship and excellence, concepts about music, music making, musicians and relationships between performers and audience. The same piece of music can encourage completely different kinds of physical responses within different cultures (Cohen, 1991). Music is invested with meaning (not necessarily the same meaning) by the various people present (Cohen, 1991). To grasp the nature of musical meaning we must go beyond the notion of intentionality in musical expression, to a view of music as quintessentially social (Mackinnon, 1993).

Two overarching perspectives, derived from Cohen (1991) but encapsulated in the notion of cultural creativity, are useful in summarising the relevant themes from the literature:
a) music both *reflects* and *affects* the social environment;
b) there are different underlying conceptions of music, which determine both the musical categories and constructions utilised by members of a culture, and their evaluation of music, musicians, musical knowledge and skills.

These perspectives will be re-examined in the discussion, once the findings of the study have been presented.

VI. Research focus

This study seeks to explore university music students' perspectives on performance. It aims to investigate students' knowledge and beliefs about music performance; to establish whether music students share any particular set or framework of knowledge; and to attempt to discover how students make sense of the phenomena of musical productivity and creativity, a sense-making which may be tinged with special connotations within the context of the university environment.

Research into students' perspectives on music is comparatively rare, and there is virtually no evidence from music students in the UK or elsewhere which attempts to paint a broad picture of students' ways of thinking about their own musical experiences and perspectives, or of how those experiences and perspectives are developed – are nurtured, or else challenged – by a course of higher education at a university. There is certainly no study which has enabled a researcher to gain an insight into the world of the music student in any kind of depth.

The research question at the heart of this study is:

How does the institutional recital context, as part of the university degree course, affect music students' ways of thinking about performance?

This research question encapsulates the two aspects of the research focus: it permits an exploration of the existing ways in which students think about music performance, and also promotes an awareness of the second dimension of the research problem, which is that the students' ways of thinking may be affected by the context of a particular university music degree programme. In fact, being in this particular situation with boundaries and requirements may throw into relief certain aspects of students' thinking.

Dunsby, part of the wave of musicologists who support the idea that "musicians think hard" (1995, p.9), proposes that all performers need a frame of reference for how they think about music. These frames of reference are not identical, but dependent on the individual and the context. Performance practice, and the study thereof, demonstrate fluidity across time and contexts, which illustrates that there is no single, received body of knowledge about performing; however, knowledge does exist, as do attitudes and orientations towards performing. This study aims to explore what the frame(s) of reference might be for university music students in the early twenty-first century in a northern English university.

This study focuses on performers' perspectives on the preparation and production of musical performance, music as it is present, with sound being constructed and communicated to an

audience. The research focus is driven by an interest in the process of translating musical instructions into meaningful sound, into a performance which is worthy of affecting listeners.

Sub-questions which relate to the various facets of the study's focus include:

- What do students believe they are doing when they perform, and prepare to perform, music (when 'musicking'), and how much explicit knowledge do they possess about this?
- Where does that knowledge originate?
- What do students believe is successful performance?
- How does performance make performers feel?
- What does it mean to engage in musicking for its own pleasure, and is there something more to performance than the performer's own experience?
- How do performers relate to an audience?
- How does all this relate to the experience of being examined in musical performance at university?

Particularly interesting here is that, although the focus is on music performance, the participants are university students, not conservatoire students. The spotlight on students in a university environment could tip the balance towards students who are potentially (though not necessarily) more aware of or interested in the traditionally more academic or theoretical aspects of music education than students in a conservatoire.

VII.   Research objectives

This study is tentative and exploratory, focusing on a topic which appears so far to have attracted little research. The modest aim of this study is to begin to fill those gaps in the empirical evidence gathered from music students about their experiences of performance, and how those experiences are shaped by the context of university teaching and learning. Information gained through this investigation will add to the store of information accrued through other studies focusing on music performance from various domains of musicology, and also to educational literature relating to university students' experiences of degree courses.

The study aims to investigate and describe what students know about music performance and how they use that knowledge practically. There is an attempt at explanation, using a particular strand of socio-cultural theory (Willis, 2000), which is explored in the discussion insofar as it relates directly to the details of this study. Plausible explanations are better than none (Patrick, 1973).

It seems presumptuous to assume or even hope that the findings of the project might have any kind of reaching effect beyond potentially providing an illuminating and perhaps provocative read. However, this research may indeed reveal something hitherto unknown about university music students' ways of thinking. A kind of diagnosis may even be made (for that diagnosis to be accepted would be a step further) about a problematic area. It is not incumbent upon this study, though, to suggest any kind of 'cure' (Patrick, 1973).

The material outcome of this study, whilst making reference to a well-established body of research, is based entirely in the words and behaviours of the participants. The study gives voice to people who are worth listening to, and what they have to say has value. Ethnographic research such as this is a vital key to unlocking the voices of groups who usually are not heard due to their social positioning. Critical theory is advocated by, amongst others, Colwell (2009), in the belief that music education practitioners in schools and universities should be developing a pedagogy of critique, articulating the values of dominated groups and telling stories of subordinated experience.

Pitts (2005) positively advocates the investigation of students' perspectives, declaring that:

> Understanding students' perceptions of music in higher education is a
> fundamental step in developing their learning and attitudes, but in practice this is
> often neglected amongst more 'strategic' striving for research excellence and the

funding associated with that. Empirical evidence to inform university teaching and learning is therefore patchy and often carried out at a local level, with all the ethical and methodological limitations which that implies. There remains a substantial need for careful definition of the purposes of university music education in order that the transition from school, through higher education, and into music-related professions can be a stimulating and rewarding experience.

Pitts, 2005, pp.130-1

Bowman (2009) advocates a praxial account of music and music education, rejecting technical-rational models of music teaching and learning which came to dominate the study of music in the early to mid-twentieth century. Elliott (2009) believes the whole concept of music education needs re-evaluating:

What teachers need first and foremost is a critically reasoned concept of the nature and value of music and music education, including a concept of what musical understanding is.

Elliott, 2009, p.168

Elliott describes musical understanding as a form of working understanding, a rich, multi-layered knowing, situated culturally, historically and contextually (*ibid.*, p.170). The emphasis on understanding is relatively new in music education theory: the importance of examining learners' understandings, as opposed to merely assessing outcomes, is, to those of us familiar with (and frustrated by) the current outcomes-based preoccupations in education, refreshing.

VIII. Summary

Personal and professional motives provided the original impetus behind this research, to investigate what students do and think about when preparing a musical performance: what directs their choice of repertoire; what motivates them to practise; what incentives ensure their perseverance; what buoys them up through difficult times; what makes them feel good or bad about their performance; what is the end result they hope to achieve; what they feel are potential obstacles to success. Concomitantly, and buoyed up by my dual interest as both music student and teacher, the study approaches, from personal and professional angles, the question of how students incorporate into their thinking the necessary requirements of summative academic assessment.

The aim of the research is to discover and describe in detail the ways in which music students think about preparing music, and about performance itself, and to reveal any patterns which may emerge within the knowledge possessed and utilised by students, bearing in mind the added dimension of the university assessment context. An attempt will be made to provide explanations for some aspects of what is described, although there is no claim that these explanations are anything other than tentative.

This study did not set out deliberately to criticise any aspect of the department in which the research was conducted. Where participants articulated dissatisfaction about certain situations and people, those comments were treated as an integral part of the data and have been accounted for as part of the study's findings. However, it is not an objective of this report to provide any kind of prescription for change. Any decisions related to future actions would be the responsibility of the reader, not the writer, of this report.

In order to investigate the questions implicated in the research focus, fieldwork was designed to take place over a whole academic year, September 2007 to June 2008, with second- and third-year performance students as participants. The research design is described in Chapter 2, and the data analysis procedures in Chapter 3. The findings are reported in Chapter 4, with Chapters 5 and 6 presenting a discussion and conclusions.

Chapter 2: Methodology

I. Introduction

This chapter examines the methodological aspects of the study. An outline of the study is presented, restating the research focus and question, and situating the research in a number of ways, justifying the research stance. Methodological issues involved in planning and executing the study are examined; and an account is given of the empirical work, relating this to relevant methodological literature.

II. Methodological considerations

This opening section revisits the research question proposed earlier, and examines the study's research stance.

1. Research question

The research question encapsulating the essence of this study highlights the dual nature of the research focus: the students' existing and/or developing thinking and knowledge, and any influences on this within the university context:

> **How does the institutional recital context, as part of the university degree course, affect music students' ways of thinking about performance?**

The research focus and question lead the way for theory building, data collection and data reduction, since they set the boundaries for the research. Although a theory may not exist as such, something is known conceptually about the phenomenon in question. Theoretical orientation is a strong driving force, a considerable influence on data collection and analysis, directing attention to what will be examined, defining the purpose of the study, providing ideas about what the research is looking for; more specific propositions lead to more feasible limits (Foster, 1996; Yin, 1994) and help avoid data overload and wasted time (Miles and Huberman, 1984). The conceptual framework also leads to notions about how to operationalise the question in terms of sampling and instrumentation (Miles and Huberman, 1984). In the case of this research, much preordinate thinking took place prior to the commencement of fieldwork. As a musician *and* a researcher, I hoped to bring my own prior, expert knowledge to my study (Yin, 1994). My own experiences and preliminary exploration of the literature provoked a desire to investigate the particular issues addressed in this research, rather than any other; the focus of my thinking moulded the data collection.

My experiences as a student performer during my undergraduate degree had influenced my curiosity about how I had been conceptualising my own practices, yet my instinct told me the

issues in my research focus were of broader interest than simply my own, and the rationale for conducting a research study into those issues was to explore them further and more explicitly, in myself and in others, with a view to understanding them better, without knowing exactly what I would discover. The nature of my question called for a readiness and an openness to recognise variables emerging empirically from the field. Willis (2000), p.113) declares that as a researcher one must give oneself the chance to be surprised, to have one's prior knowledge or theories overturned, or diverted, or "fulfilled in unexpectedly elegant ways". Therefore, both preordinate thinking *and* an open mind, a combination of deductive and inductive approaches, which are not necessarily incompatible, are possible and even advisable in a study such as this. Perhaps the essence of this relationship lies in not knowing what one is seeking, but recognising when one finds it.

Finnegan (1989) writes of an experience similar to mine:

> This book began from my own unquestioning participation in local music,
> which only later turned into active curiosity.
>
> Finnegan, 1989, p.xi

An academic anthropologist, concentrating on oral literature and performance outside Britain, she realised "rather late in the day" that "what was going on around me was an equally interesting subject, linking with many of the traditional scholarly questions about the social contexts and processes of artistic activity and human relationships" (*ibid.*, p.xi) and began research into this very area, using similar methodology to that used by the present study.

2. Methodological stance

> "…accuracy is partly a matter of milieu. 'If a group of academics tells you they're in favour of some social goal, let's say non-discriminatory housing, you can assume they think this is so, and maybe even that they might act in support of their views. When you go after most other groups with a questionnaire, what you get half the time is a significant sample, laboriously coded and programmed and analysed, of the answers your subjects felt it was appropriate to give to a polite young man from the city. Damn it, if you want to know what people feel, and what they're willing to do about it, you've got to go and spend some time with them.' "
>
> Lurie, 1967, p.24-5 (words spoken first by the narrator, then by the character who is a Professor of Sociology)

a) Interpretive perspective

My focus is on the thinking which informs university performance students' work and practice in their preparation for, and experiences of, performance. The emphasis is firmly on their experiences and reflections, their perspectives on the phenomenon of performing and their roles as musicians and performers, their views of the 'culture', the 'world' of performing music, especially within the university context.

Due to the study's exploratory nature, ethnographic methodology was most appropriate. Indeed, here was an opportunity to promote the use in musicological research of qualitative methodology, which is gathering momentum and now achieving a respected status within this domain. Qualitative approaches enable exploration, description and interpretation of the personal and social experiences of participants, using participants' own frames of reference.

The project was structured accordingly. I elected to use interview and participant observation as my main data gathering strategies. A qualitative approach is well suited to a study investigating a little-researched area, where the topic is new or has not been addressed in a particular context, or where existing theories do not apply in the case of the group under study (Creswell, 2003). An exploratory enquiry is ideal where the important variables are not yet known. In qualitative research generally, preconceived theories are minimised. Stenhouse advocates "comparatively little preordinate planning and plenty of responsive thinking" (1984, p.214). "Look for a seam and then dig!" is his advice. The continuous, cumulative processes of knowledge development, which are a theme of this research, would not be penetrated by quantitative methods such as systematic observation or interaction analysis, which are dependent on the *a priori* adequacy of a categorisation scheme (Mercer, 1991).

This research is not looking to present facts about 'reality', but the human capacity for sense-making (Willis, 2000); it is not seeking causal explanations or universal laws but social and psychological meanings, subjective understandings, albeit with varied and multiple perspectives. The methodology should address this complexity, not attempt to narrow it down, and take a panoramic, holistic view of the phenomena in question. The ethnographic method facilitates the widest possible number of valid channels for examining a social group and the levels of its expression, and especially to give access to its language and behaviour over time (Willis, 1978). There is also a phenomenological slant to the study, since it aims to identify the "essence" of human experiences concerning a phenomenon (here, being a music performance student at Hull University), as described by the participants, by means of a

prolonged and extensive engagement in the field with a view to developing patterns and relationships of meaning (Creswell, 2003).

This research is situated in a social constructivist paradigm (Berger and Luckmann, 1967), which allows that individuals have interpretative understandings of the world, and subjective meanings, often negotiated socially and/or historically and formed through interaction with others. Constructivists often address the process of interaction between individuals and focus on specific contexts in which people live and work in order to understand the historical/ cultural settings of participants (Creswell, 2003). Participants are allowed or enabled to express their views, and any theory is inductively developed or generated from these open-ended data. The researcher's own background influences her interpretation, and she positions herself in the research so as to acknowledge how her interpretation stems from personal and cultural experiences. These factors are all at play in the present study.

The research falls comfortably under the umbrella of ethnography, an immersion in the field (Colwell, 2009), the "long, social process", where fieldwork consists in "coming to terms with a culture" (Van Maanen, 1988, p.117). Ethnographic methods are most appropriate in a study located in a natural setting over a prolonged period of time, collecting primarily observational data (Creswell, 2003). In *The Ethnographic Imagination* (2000), Willis describes ethnography as the pursuit of an expressive curiosity about our own formation, an inevitable part of our sense of self. The making of the self, human meaning making, is the 'there-ness' that is there to be studied and is its own justification for study. Again, all of this applies in the current project.

Prior theory is not necessary in 'pure' ethnography, and true ethnography begins with a blank canvas, so that the researcher remains open to whatever captures her interest in the field (Yin, 1994). The present research carries with it assumptions, values, curiosities, interests. It is, therefore, not an ethnography, but it is ethnographic.

Willis (1977), in *Learning to Labour*, one of the best known of all ethnographic sociological studies, describes eloquently how "the ethnographic account, without always knowing how, can allow a degree of the activity, creativity and human agency within the object of study to come through into the analysis and the reader's experience" (p.3). Patrick (1973), in his ethnographic account, *A Glasgow gang observed*, writes almost contemptuously of the bare bones of statistics, compared with the flesh, blood and spirit of recognisable humanity. Ethnography is the only way to capture the sensuous world, and human involvement in meaning making using contextual resources (Willis, 2000). The writing-up of this report also owes a great deal to the more literary style advocated and employed by ethnographers (e.g.

Creswell, 2003; Willis, 2000) as they attempt to convey as vividly as possible the particular selection of human experiences which they have investigated at length.

Within the interpretive framework of this study, and its ethnographic approach, mention must also be made of the grounded theory method (Glaser and Strauss, 1967), which influenced the data-gathering and theory-building processes. Grounded theory is an inductive approach: according to its principles, sociological theories should be grounded in data, and are generated by the act of research; subsequent data gradually confirm or contradict the emerging theory. Although it is certainly acknowledged in the present study that some theorising did occur prior to fieldwork, which gave rise to the research focus and focused the data gathering, the purpose of grounded theory research is to discover a theory, not to verify an existing theory. The key to this is that theory should follow from research, not precede it.

Fieldwork was to move forward in a progressive focusing style, with time for withdrawal and reflection built in. Hammersley and Atkinson (1995) and Measor and Woods (1991) confirm that research design and theory making in ethnographic projects are, by intention and definition, open-ended and ongoing. Decision points force or enable a sharper focus; some aims turn out to be impractical or unattainable; ethnography is an "intensely personal experience" (Measor and Woods, 1991, p.61) and no-one knows quite what will happen in the event. Burgess (1984) also highlights that change may ensue from the constant negotiation and renegotiation taking place between researcher and informant throughout a project. Indeed, over the course of the fieldwork period, the reflection and conceptual development which qualitative fieldwork promotes enabled me to sharpen my sights and to clarify my focus (Foster, 1996). The grounded theory approach supports this progressive focusing style of data gathering and analysis.

Data analysis is addressed in a subsequent chapter; however, it should not be assumed that data analysis is a totally separate process occurring only after fieldwork is finished. Miles and Huberman (1984) offer a useful notion of three elements of analysis spanning the whole research period: data reduction, data displays and conclusion drawing/verification, as in following diagram (Figure 2.1).

	Data collection period		
	DATA REDUCTION		
Anticipatory	During	Post	
	DATA DISPLAYS		ANALYSIS
	During	Post	
	CONCLUSION DRAWING/VERIFICATION		
	During	Post	
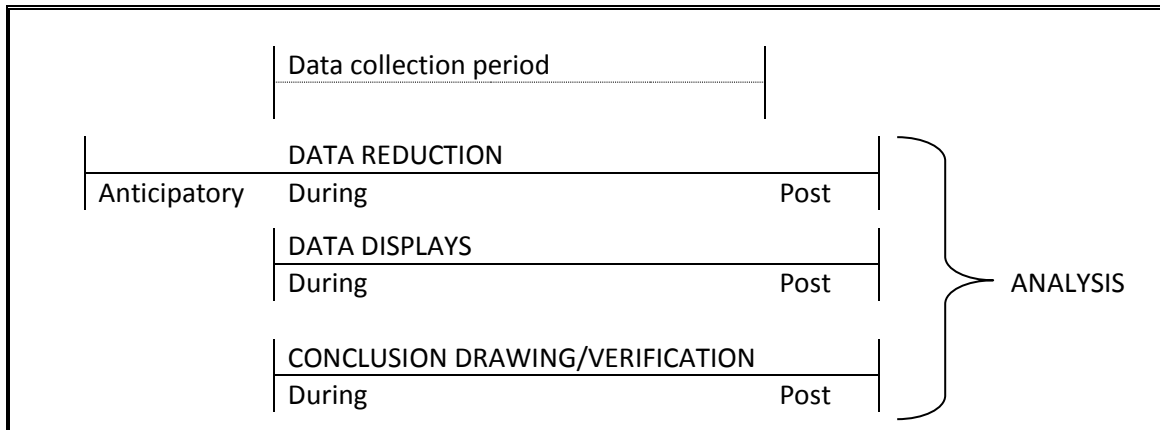
Figure 2.1: Components of data analysis. Flow model from Miles and Huberman, 1984, p.22

In all research, some data reduction takes place in the conceptual thinking prior to fieldwork, which bounds the sampling of data (the 'anticipatory' period shown in the diagram). In a *quantitative* study, variables, factors and dimensions are predetermined, data collection takes place in the form of measuring or counting, and analysis of this data begins when fieldwork is complete. The nature of *qualitative* research, on the other hand, provides the potential for development of the study, for admitting new perspectives. One of the strengths particular to qualitative research is precisely its emerging design, whereby the researcher is permitted, even encouraged, to spiral between data gathering and analysis; it allows for frequent or continuous reconceptualisation of the research focus and question (Heffernan, 2000), as well as refocusing of instrumentation and sampling; it promotes conceptual thinking during fieldwork and encourages a reciprocal relationship between data and theory: data generate propositions in a dialectical manner that permits use of *a priori* theory, but the data are not made to fit into any particular framework, and theory is continually modified (Creswell, 2003). Data gathering, though propelled by a particular force in a definite direction, evolves in response to the lived realities of the situation.

Although some prior theorising occurred, it was considered inappropriate to conduct a conventional literature search prior to the commencement of fieldwork. Literature, in the grounded theory approach, is treated as data, and previous research findings are compared with those of the current study. To have been influenced, during data collection, by concepts and preoccupations identified within existing literature would have prejudiced the fundamental concept of the research: namely, to bear witness to the concepts and concerns of the students themselves. Theoretical material from existing literature must earn its way into an emerging theory. Related literature was therefore explored after the fieldwork period, interacting with, rather than preceding, data analysis, and only pursuing each topic insofar as it

illuminated the data. For this reason, in this report, relevant literature is presented alongside the findings and as part of the discussion.

b) *The nature of truth and reality, and the issues of validity and reliability in qualitative research*

The qualitative research tradition has suffered a battery of assaults on its reliability and validity, particularly compared with the 'rigorous', 'scientific' nature of its 'opponent', the quantitative tradition. Miles and Huberman (1984) suggest that some sociologists have neglected to support the validity of conclusions drawn from qualitative studies precisely because they are not intended to represent one truth, one reality, but rather one interpretation of 'reality'.

The idea that there is a reality, whose nature can be known, independent of the observer, is attractive but problematic. Multiple 'true' descriptions of a scene could be produced, depending on what is deemed relevant on a particular occasion by a particular researcher. The concept of truth is, of course, especially problematic in music, since music and its associated manifestations are the products of individual minds operating in particular sociocultural contexts (Welch, 2009).

A postmodern position will question the notion that there might be a non-negotiable, solid truth or reality about which it is possible to attain ever more accurate knowledge; qualitative research should not pretend to reveal progressively true, universal human nature. Experience cannot be directly described; there has to be interpretation, a construction of meaning. Hammersley (1992) urges us to recognise that thinking we can access a true reality through ethnography, by getting closer to it, by spending time in a situation, is naïve realism at best, and that we should adopt a more subtle form of realism, where knowledge consists of beliefs about whose validity we may not be absolutely sure but are reasonably confident.

There is no such thing as total objectivity: though one may try to be objective, one can never set aside existing knowledge; what the researcher chooses to observe and record is inevitably a product of pre-existing theories; interpretations will always be influenced by existing conceptual schemata. We all make sense of the world using our existing cultural resources (Foster, 1996). But without this, research would have no focus. In addition, for social science to be *of value*, it must be *value-laden*. In view of this, Hammersley (1992) suggests, we should not be concerned solely with truth but with *relevance*, and that the relevances structuring a description must reflect a commitment to values other than truth. Values and assumptions inherent in the research focus must be acknowledged: in this case, for example, value is being

placed on students' knowledge and perceptions, especially within the context of the university music degree programme; the assumption is that there is something (perhaps something systematic) to be discovered about this knowledge and how that might reflect or inform department teaching objectives, as well as being of interest *per se*.

As Willis argues:

> It is necessary above all to approach the real *now* in one way or another – one-sidedly, elliptically or not. The ethnographic account, for all its faults, records a crucial level of experience and through its very biases insists upon a level of human agency which is persistently overlooked or denied but which increases in importance all the time for other levels of the social whole. Although the world is never directly 'knowable', and cannot empirically present itself in the way that the ethnographic account seems sometimes to suggest, it must nevertheless be specifically registered somewhere in theory if theory pretends to any relevance at all. Theories must be judged ultimately for the adequacy they display to the understanding of the phenomenon they purport to explain – not to themselves.
>
> Willis, 1977, p.194

An account should therefore attempt to take advantages offered by a qualitative method to respond descriptively and theoretically to a real level of social existence whilst resisting tendencies towards empiricism, naturalism and objectification of the subject.

"Research today seeks illumination more than certainty" (Regelski, 2009, p.137) especially in the social sciences. This is the opposite of what professionals in many fields have been looking for from research: science pursues certainty, but education deals with the variables which characterise human beings. A hermeneutic approach sees the researcher interpreting the research participants' constructions of their world (Ashworth, 2003). As Hammersley highlights the practical implications of relativism for ethnography, questioning the value of an ethnographic account which represents only one version of the world, George Mead's (1934) symbolic interactionism is brought to mind, which emphasises that the individual is first and foremost a member of society and only later an individual. It is important to examine the symbolic systems of society, both linguistic and those embedded in the forms of activity, the practices of the culture, in order to derive information about meanings available within that culture. In addition, George Kelly's (1955) theory of personal constructs states that we must have, included in our concepts of the world, concepts of other people's concepts, in order to

communicate with them. The researcher must strive towards a shared account of the participants' concepts, to capture the subjective world of the participant via an intersubjective or objective stance (Giorgi and Giorgi, 2003). Reliability of these studies occurs through recognising similar patterns of thought and behaviour, rather than through repeating the study (Colwell, 2009).

Narrative is interesting to qualitative researchers in their attempt to comprehend the fullness of human existence. Narrative is the primary way in which humans grant meaning to, and extract meaning from, experiences. Through stories, people make sense of situations, lives, feelings and understandings. Narrative enquiry values the experiential nature of phenomena, and its construction and representation through story. Narrative inquirers must find ways to derive meaning from participants' experiences, their own experiences and the constructed experiences arising from the research process (Clandinin, 2006). However, the researcher is never neutral or absent from the process of meaning making, which is always a social construction (Griffin, 2009), as is the research report itself, no matter how scientific or objective one aspires to be. Ethnographic writers tend to acknowledge the social, relative positions of their narrative, and, rather than making any attempt to distance themselves from their accounts in order to render them more objective, are content to live within them, as they have lived within the world they have been researching. As researchers, we must pay attention to revelations to and about ourselves (Blair, 2009); since ethnographic research is driven by personal curiosity, this can be a positive outcome of research, rather than necessarily something to be avoided on the grounds of objectivity.

Geertz (1973) highlights the duty of qualitative research to provide rich or "thick" description. A detailed description of a phenomenon can transport readers to the setting, and help build up a thorough picture of the experiences being studied. It also reveals all, keeps nothing hidden, enabling critical reading and even facilitating replication of the study (Creswell, 2003). Creswell also urges the researcher to spare nothing in her writing up:

> The more complex, interactive and encompassing the narrative, the better
> the qualitative study.
>
> Creswell, 2003, p.182

However, it is misleading to consider ethnographic description as reproducing in some way the phenomena described. A write-up is only ever imperfect, producing a selective and transformative representation of the scene (Willis, 2000). Description always takes a point of view which highlights some features and ignores others, so the values and concerns which play

a part in producing descriptions need to be made explicit. Hammersley maintains that the distinctiveness of theoretical descriptions produced by ethnographers lies in the explicitness and coherence of models employed and in the rigour of the data collection and analysis on which they are based; otherwise, he argues (1992, p.22), they are little different from descriptions and explanations employed by us all in everyday life. Willis (1978) believes that proof and replication are impossible, saying that a scientific concern with technique can never conceal the proper working through of participant observation. Research done in the natural situation of the actors will never be quite the same in another context.

Nor can a researcher assume that *informants* have access to the truth. Their accounts may be more valid than the researcher's, but they are not superior (Delamont, 1992). Yet in our use of informant accounts, we must ignore our judgements about their validity or rationality, which is not relevant to understanding them; researchers must also suspend any conflicting beliefs of their own to avoid misunderstanding. Hammersley (1992) claims that one of ethnography's most valuable features is its commitment to seeking to understand the perspectives of others, rather than judging them true or false.

The possibility of error or deceit on the participant's part is a vulnerability of any qualitative research dependent on participant accounts. Error must somehow be factored into the research findings, since the research is necessarily about how the participant experiences the phenomenon. Deceit is usually discernible over a period of time: the fact that a participant is trying to control a description usually comes through (Giorgi and Giorgi, 2003) and can be controlled by cross-checks (see below).

Evidence from educational research shows overwhelmingly that teachers are enthusiastic about discussing their professional life; some researchers believe this enhances the validity and reliability of their response to the research. Cooper and McIntyre (1996) found teachers valued opportunities to discuss what they call their 'professional craft knowledge', which teachers possess but rarely articulate. They also suggest that the process of articulation enables teachers to obtain deeper understandings of their own practice than would be possible without such articulation, and that talking about their work "helps to combat the debilitating professional isolation that teachers often suffer" (*ibid.*, p.159). Similarly, Nias (1991) describes teachers' "almost insatiable hunger" to talk at length about their professional lives, which taught her about the loneliness of many teachers' working lives. She believes having someone taking an interest in what they had to say provided a kind of release. Stenhouse believed that by reflecting about themselves and their work, interviewees would recognise that they (and their ideas) were more important than they previously thought. My

previous doctoral research (Mathieson, 2002) taught me that teachers valued talking to someone who was interested in their experiences. As I predicted, students in the current study responded similarly: they were invariably keen to talk and ready to share their ideas with no apparent reticence, either towards me or towards other participating students. Sharing and articulating their knowledge was a positive experience for them, as they were able to recognise the value and cogency of their own knowledge:

> John   … So that's why I said, that's the point I'm making, oh I've done a really good
>   point here! is that…
>
> *John, interview, 10/10/07*

Several participants actively sought to talk to me regularly about their work. My fieldnotes record the following observation after one of the students telephoned me during the Christmas vacation. This is representative of the general attitude towards the study:

> He [Dave] has just been to see [tutor] about a couple of pieces he's been working on
>   and wondered if I'd like to hear them.
>
> Dave   I wondered if I could talk to you about them; it's enjoyable talking to you anyway
>
> *Telephone conversation with Dave 2.15 p.m., 20/12/07*

This type of study gives a voice to what Griffin (2009) calls the "underdog". She reports (*ibid*., p.162) that "Attending to children's voices has become a topic of increased discussion in education literature", explaining that there have been few studies exploring children's experiences of music, though ethnographic studies have been done with adults. Though Griffin's focus is on children, the students in the present research are, like them, in an educational setting, and the relevance of their being "underdogs" remains. Griffin chose to work within an ethnographic framework, formulating meaning and building understanding over time. Such narrative tales vividly capture the rich time spent in the field (Van Maanen, 1988). What the students say (or indeed anyone else) has a value, simply because they say it. Nobody can say it is not true, or dismiss it. Their stories might be treated with caution, but they have value, because the participants tell them (Patrick, 1973).

The rich description possible in qualitative research is one of its strengths; but a convincing, thrilling, persuasive research report may well be simply wrong. As human beings, we have an instinct to search for meaning; every day, we attribute meaning and organisation to the world in order to understand it. We are not, however, always right, and the qualitative researcher must try wherever possible to ensure that she has avoided bias, confirmed her interpretation and assured the quality of her conclusions. Reliability of data and of interpretation can be compromised by many factors, such as the complexity of the topic, constraints within the

research setting, adequacy of resources, the relative expertise of the researcher, researcher bias, errors in recording, in analysis, in perception, in making decisions about what to observe (Foster, 1996).

Alternatively, an inevitable bias can be acknowledged. Reflexivity allows the researcher to outline her position, the lens through which she sees and interprets the data. No matter how much grounded theory aims to bracket bias so that theory emerges from 'objective' data, it is the researcher's decisions which generate theory. The 'problems' of participant observation determine its practices. Interpretation occurs at the intersection of the respondents' and the researcher's social paradigms (Willis, 2000). The validity of the method is in the collision of meanings and subjective constructions. A hunch of the researcher may be substantiated by evidence appearing autonomously from the data.

The ethnographic method affords the establishment of a variety of channels for researching the social group: its various expressions, cultural activities and associated behaviours can collectively demonstrate the group's main structures of feeling and attitude. This methodology can minimise the distorting effects of any one particular stream of data, incorporating complexity and grounding an analysis in multiple sources (Willis, 1978). Certain research techniques can protect the validity and reliability of the findings: for example, cross-participant, cross-time and cross-location checks ensure that findings can be triangulated for consistency. In the present study, the fieldwork period extended over the whole academic year, and incorporated data from different settings, allowing comparison of data; and even a small number of participants allows a variety of possible perspectives to be expressed. Reliability is also increased by maintaining a chain of evidence, allowing the reader to follow the initial research question through the evidence to the conclusions derived. An ethnographer with total knowledge of the data can put a modicum of faith in intuition, but it is not acceptable to maintain the existence of some magical, mystical, artistic approach to deriving findings from qualitative research; the process of data gathering and analysis and conclusion drawing must be documented explicitly and thoroughly, both to protect its validity and reliability, and to allow others to replicate or re-examine the study. Hammersley (1992) advises researchers always to provide sufficient evidence to convince their reader, and to be prepared to supply further evidence to those who have doubts or make all the data available for others to examine. The means by which I attempted to ensure validity and reliability within this study are presented briefly below in the section on data gathering and will be further addressed in the account of data analysis (*q.v.*).

As with informants' original accounts during interviews or observations, Hammersley (1992) advises caution with regard to respondent validation, which may help the researcher to avoid bias in interpretation, but does not necessarily give a sound indication of 'truth'. There may be reasons why the informants will not accept or admit to certain facts or findings. Equally they may not be aware of key features of what has happened to them. Problems may arise in trying to find agreement between different parties in order to establish validity. It may not be in the interests of the participants to arrive at consensus: there may be vested interests, competing ideologies, even within a department, making agreement virtually impossible (Ball, 1984). During fieldwork, I gave the students transcriptions of our interviews and rehearsal conversations to review, for their information and so they could check my factual accuracy.

Ball describes how, on presenting the findings of his study to his respondents, they felt criticised, deflated, disappointed; they perhaps had not understood the implications of what his research might uncover. King (1984), however, relates that his findings were generally well received. He feels he was seen as a "sympathetic, non-judgemental, interested person with no authority over them [the participants]". I offered to present the findings of this research to those participants who indicated an interest in reading them, though this would not be essential to the research process. In the event, the findings emerging from this study were not offered automatically to the participants. Six years had gone by since the end of fieldwork; I had had no contact with any of the participants since the end of data collection, all the students having moved away from Hull. I had little idea of how to contact any of them; one of the students, indeed, had sadly passed away shortly after leaving Hull. The picture I had drawn of the students' world during the fieldwork period was so far removed from their contemporary experience that I felt it was inappropriate to attempt to obtain any kind of opinion or approval from any of the remaining students, who, even if prepared to read what I had written, would be unlikely to remember details with sufficient accuracy to make it a worthwhile exercise.

c) *Generalisability*

Generalisation can be seen as a problem in ethnographic research, particularly case studies. However, generalisability plays a minor role in qualitative inquiry (Creswell, 2003; Heffernan, 2000). In one of the most distinctive characteristics of ethnography lies a paradox: ethnography describes specifics, representing concrete situations in their complexity, and its findings are extremely well grounded in context; yet this very strength militates against the production of universal theory. Therefore, the development of probabilistic or deterministic theory is not an appropriate goal for ethnography.

I do not claim that the setting of this study is representative of all university music departments, but follow instead a well-established tradition in social and historical research: that of using specific case studies to lead to the kind of illumination in depth not provided by more thinly spread and generalized accounts (Finnegan, 1989). The case study provides more detail than a broader survey, but neither statistical nor logical inference can provide a basis for extrapolation from the case studied to all cases relevant to a theory (Hammersley, 1992). In any case, research is always situated in a context; Hammersley also points out not only that *reactivity* (*q.v.*) makes a setting unrepresentative of those about which the research wishes to generalise, but that the setting could by chance differ in important ways from most other cases in the same category. In addition, explanation is dependent on who needs to know and what purpose it serves (Hammersley, 1992).

Yet, Hammersley points out, situations studied by ethnography rarely have intrinsic relevance; any findings have to be made relevant by appeal to empirical generalisation or theoretical inference. Generalisability is not necessarily synonymous with use of statistical sampling; empirical generalisation from a single case to a larger population is a legitimate means of making ethnographic findings generally relevant (Hammersley, 1992). Even where there is intensive study of one case, one can make a brief investigation of one or more other cases to assess whether the primary case is or is not representative of a larger population. Other researchers may want to carry out further research to establish whether the theory produced by this study is applicable in other cases. Through the use of aggregate data, clear reflection on the time period and population to which the generalisation is to be made, and systematic co-ordination of ethnographic studies to sample across populations and over time, confidence in a generalising theory can be maximised. The collection of data from a number of students in this research will lend weight to any commonality in my developing descriptions; how much of the students' common theories and concerns are due to their working together or being taught in the same classes or by the same lecturers will never be fathomable, although it may be possible for other researchers to compare these with theories and concerns of students in other universities.

In studies like this, generalisations are made not in the writer's mind but in the reader's. The reader recognising a truth in the findings makes generalisations for herself. Nias (1991), reflecting on research for her book *Primary Teachers Talking* (1989), believes the value of her work lies in the generation of insights and the uses that other educationalists make of them. The value of any research could be considered to lie in such an outcome, and I hope the findings of this study lead on to future work, by me or by others.

3. Summary

In this first part of the chapter, the research question and research stance have been explicated, and background information has been given to illustrate the suitability of the particular choice of methodology for this study. In the following section, data gathering and fieldwork are addressed, as they were planned and executed.

III. Data gathering and fieldwork

The first year of the project was taken up principally with conducting fieldwork. Strauss and Corbin's principles of grounded theory (1990), namely the dependency of theory on collecting data, were helpful in conceptualising how the fieldwork would be carried out. As Ball (1984) states, theory is no substitute for getting on and *doing* fieldwork. On the grounds that I deliberately modelled the new study on, and took the methodological lead from, my previous doctoral research (Mathieson, 2002), I considered that the extensive reading and preparation in methodology *per se* undertaken at the time of the 2002 study, alongside supporting knowledge and confidence resulting from a previously successful fieldwork experience, were sufficient foundation to enable me to enter the field immediately. I took stock of relevant work published since my previous search of methodological literature, incorporating new ideas into the account of methodological issues presented here.

This section first describes the study's instrumentation, with particular attention given to reflexivity; sampling procedures, both prior to and during fieldwork, are then explained; finally, an account of the fieldwork itself is given.

1. Instrumentation

The conceptual framework of a research question gives the researcher direction prior to fieldwork by clarifying what she wants to find out, from whom, and why, but it is equally important to maintain an open mind about other ways of addressing the research issues, which may emerge during fieldwork. In an exploratory study, it is inappropriate to enter the field with structured instrumentation, since the variables and dimensions of the research are not yet identified. Towards the end of fieldwork, or if there are issues the researcher wishes to explore further, a more structured approach may be introduced; this became the case here, when particular themes were emerging and I elected to pose questions deliberately to a number of participants in order to compare responses. To begin with, though, some orienting questions and areas for observation suffice. The researcher should preserve the particularities of the context, not strip them away through standardised instruments such as questionnaires or observation schedules. Universality and comparability, enhanced by strict pre-instrumentation, are not goals of the exploratory qualitative study, whereas construct and contextual validity, emphasised by minimal prior instrumentation design, are very important.

A research focus and research question illuminate where to probe for suitable data in the field. This research aims to investigate students' thinking about performance, their knowledge, their beliefs, their planning for and responses to performance opportunities in reflection and in

practice, and their reactions to learning contexts such as seminars, instrumental lessons and tutorials. Data needed to be gathered in interviews with students prior to and after performance situations; in observation (participant and non-participant) of students during rehearsals where planning and preparation for performance takes place; in discussion with students during the preparation process; with individuals, small ensembles and larger groups; in documentation available to students about assessment criteria and about the aims and objectives of the relevant modules.

Fieldwork was planned for the academic year September 2007 to June 2008. A pilot study, in the shape of a psychology project undertaken in the third year of my undergraduate degree (Mathieson, 2007), facilitated a preliminary foray into the issues which interested me and which would develop into the research focus for this study. More importantly, I drew heavily on the methodology I used in my previous doctoral research, which minimised the amount of deliberation otherwise required before entering the field.

a) *Researcher's role and influence; reactivity*

In qualitative studies, the researcher is the main research instrument. All data is filtered through the researcher's conceptual framework. She cannot pretend to be invisible, as in the positivist tradition, but must acknowledge her visibility and its effects on the research, which, in qualitative enquiry, can be a strength. There are positive opportunities for active participation and combinations of interactive and humanistic approaches; a large part of the present study clearly rests on such integration. Ecological validity and impact (Welch, 2009) are two key challenges for music education research: if research is to have professional impact, it must be ecologically valid; if it has such validity, it will be better placed to have impact. Where data derive from actual experiences, ecological validity can be enormously enhanced (Creswell, 2003). Patrick (1973) and Willis (1978) underline the benefits of conducting research in the participants' own environment.

An account of my personal and professional background, which propelled me towards the particular focus and design of this research study, was given in the introduction to this report. I began this project immediately after my own undergraduate degree, meaning that I had been in the same position as the student participants only the year before. This fact could be considered to have several possible effects on the data.

The single most important factor in the success of qualitative fieldwork is the relationship between the researcher and the participants. Establishing and maintaining relationships of trust largely determines the quality of the data collected (Mac an Ghaill, 1991; Delamont,

1992; Blair, 2009) and is fundamental to the research outcomes. Positive rapport and a sense of caring are essential; however, stepping aside is also necessary for the researcher to maintain rigour and the integrity of the research goal.

Having previously invested extensive time and effort working with students and staff as an undergraduate, participating (Foster, 1996) widely in the musical life of the department, I felt I had developed an 'identity' which positioned me positively in relation to the participants in the study. I believe that the reliability of my data is increased by the genuine and honest relationships I enjoyed within the department, enhancing the chances of obtaining genuine and honest accounts of the students' thoughts and feelings. Being accepted is important, though I did not need to go as far as Patrick (1973), who allowed himself to become involved in an incident which meant that he was picked up, alongside other members of the gang, by the police!

The researcher's 'personal' self is inseparable from her 'researcher' self, and, besides being participatory, she must be self-reflecting (Creswell, 2003). The researcher must therefore monitor and assess her own influence as researcher, treating her effect on the informants as part of the data (Foster, 1996). Reflexivity involves the acknowledgement of any biases, values and interests, which there will be, since all research is laden with values. Such reflexivity assists others in assessing the reliability of one's interpretation and analysis. It is also useful for readers to reflect on other researchers' experiences when conducting their own research.

Porter (1984) states that it is traditionally forbidden for a researcher to alter the course of events in the area being studied. Whatever efforts a researcher might make, she cannot avoid having an impact on the social phenomena or setting under study: it is not possible to escape the social world in order to study it (Foster, 1996; Hammersley and Atkinson, 1995). Simply by being there, the observer has an effect on the situation (Patrick, 1973). The manipulation of events can (only) happen through participant observation, to produce a greater variety of situations for data collection purposes (Yin, 1994). The relationship between participants and researcher is, therefore, perhaps the most important ethical issue in fieldwork. The research should not adversely affect the participants in any way. Relationships, which are at the heart of data collection, need careful monitoring and documenting with regard to their impact on the situation (Measor and Woods, 1991).

As the pianist in the partnerships at the centre of this study, I took a large share in shaping the data collection opportunities, and in data analysis it was necessary to consider very carefully if and how my words and actions influenced those of the students. However, as interaction

between musicians is an integral part of performance, interaction with me should not be viewed differently from interaction with other musicians in other ensembles, and as such forms an integral part of the data. There were occasions when I deliberately asked questions in order to provoke a response from the other musicians, but this is no different from asking questions in an interview situation with the same people, and, since the rehearsals were taped, the participants were fully aware of their dual role as musician and research subject. They never avoided answering my deliberate questions, if they spotted them, and accepted this as an ordinary part of rehearsals.

I continually had to consider how my actions or words might affect the situation. For example, in observation it was important not to tell the students what I was investigating on a particular occasion so they did not alter their behaviour accordingly. During transcription, I made a habit of entering, within square brackets, any observations I might have about researcher effect, so that I could keep track of them through into data analysis.

The arena in which it is legitimate to make notes is a related area of ethical concern. Generally, it seems if people know the researcher is a researcher then whatever they say within earshot is considered fair game. Hammersley (1984) describes jotting notes on a newspaper while pretending to read it. King (1984) waited and scribbled notes in the toilets later. During rehearsals and interviews where I was an active participant, the tape recorder was on and I did not take notes; as an observer, I took notes during seminars and lessons. Neither staff nor students appeared at all reticent in their discussions in my presence; my role and purpose were always overt. I knew those involved well enough to feel that they were not altering their behaviour, perhaps with the exception of one girl who was very quiet when the tape was running.[11]

I anticipated that reactivity, the difference in participants' behaviour which might occur through knowing they are being watched, would diminish as the students became used to my presence. If trust can be built up, reactivity may be reduced. The notion of spending a considerable period of time in the field so that informants become accustomed to the researcher's presence is backed by many (Foster, 1996). By retaining the dates and contexts of all transcriptions through the stages of the data analysis process which handled the raw data, it was possible to trace any changes in the response and general behaviour of the students over the course of fieldwork.

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[11] See **Data gathering instruments:** *Participant observation*

Measures must be taken to avoid possible problems with data reliability and validity caused by researcher bias (Blair, 2009). Overfamiliarity with the setting can be an impediment to good fieldwork. A tongue-in-cheek remark from Stenhouse (his classic advice to fieldworkers) is fundamentally serious: "Never accept hospitality and always take your own marmalade" (1984, p.222). Hammersley (1992) believes the validity of the findings can generally be enhanced by "a judicious combination of involvement and estrangement" (p.145). While the researcher needs to be immersed in the new setting (Delamont, 1992), she also needs to stand apart to unpack what is happening, simultaneously knowing a setting and making it strange (Measor and Woods, 1991). A change of scene helps, or even sitting in a different place in the room ("a fresh seat can give a fresh insight", Delamont, 1992). Opie (1993) describes how, after time away from the field, one's perspective is refreshed:

> I felt quite strange in the playground after a fortnight's absence… I noticed,
> all the more, the busy environment the children create for themselves, flying
> in all directions…
>
> Opie, 1993, p.97

Nias (1991) stresses the importance of allowing oneself time to think. She urges researchers not to feel guilty if not working directly on the task: ideas can form while left to "compost" (p.162). Analytical work is done in the space created by social and intellectual distance (Hammersley and Atkinson, 1995; Lurie, 1967); therefore, one should remain distant and avoid feeling 'at home'. This was an issue for me, having gone straight from my own degree into my PhD project in the same department. Balancing the advantages of my being able to capitalise on an existing relationship with a department, I must conversely acknowledge a risk of bias or over-familiarity, or of finding myself in an awkward position (uncovering something unfavourable, for example, or being subject to attempts by staff or students who knew me well to influence the research).

However, I believe that the benefits of conducting the research in this setting outweighed any potential difficulties. Combining time at the university with two days a week teaching in school enabled me to maintain a distance which I might not have had, had I been in the department every day; vacations provided opportunities to step away and reflect. I also included withdrawal periods throughout the fieldwork, and worked with a range of students within and outside the 'official' research context. While the first semester was very much immersed in the field, the second included long periods of withdrawal when I felt I was becoming too close to the setting. Finnegan (1989) describes her attempts to avoid feeling like an insider, moving

between different environments and, where she was in danger of feeling too much at home, deliberately looking for comparisons where she could be more detached due to lack of familiarity. I was able to take a similar approach, cultivating a theoretical openness, being alert to contradictions, and always checking across a variety of participants, situations and times, seeking, as far as possible, additional and alternative contexts in which to gather data.

My experiences as both researcher and musician during the year, and reflections on the progress of the research and the data being gathered, were recorded in transcripts and fieldnotes, indicating by square brackets that they were not part of the collected data. These reflections contributed to the gradual formation of my perspectives on the data during analysis. Most importantly, formal data analysis began several months after fieldwork, and continued for some months, lending the whole process a sense of perspective. As Patrick (1973) deliberately waited several years before writing up his ethnography, the eventual writing up of the current project has spanned several years, resulting in complete detachment from the scene.

b) Data gathering instruments

My main data sources throughout the year were interviews with performance students, and rehearsals, most of which were with performance students, but these also included rehearsals of composition students' works being readied for assessment. Supplementary data came from non-participant observation in lessons and seminars.

Interviews

In the first few weeks, I chatted informally to students, in order both to recruit interested participants and to help pave the way for more focused and more formal conversations. I felt it important to get the students talking right from the beginning of the year, to establish a pattern of conversation. With the students' knowledge, I recorded some of these informal conversations, because they were promising to be interesting in their subject matter and directly relevant to my research focus. Following this initial groundwork, interviews were more formal in terms of being prearranged, sit-down, tape-recorded conversations.

Interviews usually occurred in practice rooms, where the students spent much of their time, and where I was also a familiar presence. Talking in interview was simply an extension of talking generally. The environment was private enough to ensure that tape recordings could be made successfully, but was familiar enough to be non-threatening. Interviews and rehearsals were often interrupted by visitors, again illustrating that everyone felt at ease to behave normally. I explained that recordings enabled me to be free to listen during the interview

rather than taking notes, and to remind me later about our discussion. Lurie's (1967) sociology professors noted the benefits of tape recordings, since any researcher's perceptions can be distorted, and records written up after an event can be incorrect. The students were informed that the tapes would be heard only by me and would be erased after transcription

The interviews were unstructured and conversational. I was genuinely seeking information which the students themselves might not find easy to articulate or even realise they possess, and any attempts to structure the interview might have precluded the discovery of new information. Although there is an erudite literature on performance, written by academics, practising musicians, psychologists and philosophers, there is currently no established *student* language with which to discuss the issues, whatever they are, involved in the research; at this stage it is a case of mapping out the ground. As time passed, the conceptual framework of the research led to notions about what I was trying to uncover, and I was able to ask certain more focused questions, but generally still unsure what answers might be given, alongside more open-ended prompts for student-initiated talk. Throughout the year the emphasis was on depth, richness and expansiveness, allowing students to talk at length about their feelings and thoughts. Unstructured interviews can have the disadvantage of being unspecific, and of providing unrepresentative and blinkered information; this problem may apply less when participants are interviewed many times over a long time span, and with ongoing thought being applied to the data gathering. I was able to follow up comments made during rehearsals, or to look in subsequent rehearsals for examples of something students speak about in an interview, for example. In addition, the researcher's caution that participants are expressing their perceptions, rather than a 'truth', is less important here, since this study is attempting to uncover those very perceptions. Nevertheless, the more common these perceptions (and wherever more than one student expresses the same 'perception' independently), the more we may be heading towards a 'truth' or 'reality' of the situation. This is the sort of theoretical progress which can be continued by others' replication or continuation of this type of research.

There was no interview schedule, save a general plan to encourage the students to talk about issues which they felt relevant to their preparations for, and experiences of, performance. I did not 'practise' my interviews, as they were dependent on the concerns of the moment. I had had extensive interviewing experience, and felt confident that I could both improvise successfully during interviews, and pursue particular trains of thought where appropriate. In order to ensure as far as possible that I obtained reliable and valid data, I always attempted to maintain several principles of good interview practice, gleaned from research training in

academia and from working in research, and summarised by Cooper and McIntyre (1996) and Stenhouse (1984):

- interviews were a mixture of my questions, eliciting data on particular areas and enabling comparable data to be obtained over time and across participants, and informants' talk, which enabled them to expound on what was currently important to them. This balance addressed the double aim of sticking to the research focus while allowing the students to be expansive;

- in initial interviews, I invited participants to talk generally about a particular topic, in order to elicit their first, most salient thoughts. I then followed this up in the direction in which they had embarked;

- in subsequent meetings, following Cooper and McIntyre (1996), I often focused on specific events, to provide a starting point, and then allowed the direction of the interview to be dictated by the unfolding pattern of the interviewee's perspective, pursuing trains of thought from the apparently trivial until deeper, richer data was reached. Asking about particular events rather than generalisations produces more concentrated data. The interviewee's accounts are thus grounded in their own perceptions of actual events, which is believed to free informants to explore their own concerns and to facilitate confidence;

- interviews were held as soon as possible after a rehearsal/seminar/recital to help the student remember details;

- where the interviewee made generalisations, exemplification was asked for, and clarification requested if initially the interviewee's meaning was not quite clear;

- I always expressed my appreciation for the students' giving up their time and allowing me an insight into their thoughts, and gave praise where possible for their work, in order to help them feel positive about the interview situation and to encourage them to discuss their work more freely. I was also supportive if they felt something had not gone well, showing empathy with the problems involved so as to dismiss any feelings of inadequacy they might experience in front of an observer. The students knew me as a former undergraduate performer myself and could therefore view me as someone who had been in their shoes;

- I believe my relationship with the participants (*q.v.*) enhanced the reliability and validity of the data greatly, with the interviews themselves viewed as non-threatening conversations;

- Stenhouse (1984) believed that a relaxed interviewer helped the interviewee, and this ease of interaction was helped by the relationship between the participants and me. Stenhouse also found that the rapport between interviewer and interviewee was

enhanced by not using notes; I generally did not take notes during interviews, tape-recording them instead in order to pay full attention to the interviewee;

- Stenhouse would post transcripts back to interviewees inviting them to correct errors of fact and to strike out anything that must be off the record because it is confidential or sensitive information. I did present the students with copies of their transcribed interviews; certain details were corrected (e.g. the spelling of a German song title or French organ maker, or the name of a rock band which I had never heard of), but no information was ever struck out.

Juuti and Littleton (2010) describe a similar approach to interviewing. Interviews opened with general questions, designed to get the interviewee talking; thereafter, the interview was participant-centred, the talk unique to each participant, the topics discussed being contingent upon and emerging from the context. Meanings were negotiated between participant and interviewer, which is an advantage in a study where the interviewer also analyses the data.

Participant observation

I also recorded rehearsals, of my focal ensembles (the trio and my two duo partnerships) and others. For the first two weeks, when rehearsing with my subject ensembles, the tape recorder hovered on top of the piano, switched off, to get the other players used to the idea that rehearsals would be recorded. In the early stages of fieldwork, it is important to make the participants feel comfortable, and I intended to switch the tape recorder on only when I was confident it would not have an inhibiting effect on them. Participants reacted to the idea of being tape-recorded in different ways: one student did not flinch at the rolling of the tape-recorder; I guessed this would be the case, and felt confident enough to start recording early. One student was reluctant to talk during rehearsals which I recorded, but she is generally quiet, and a little nervous of performing, and it took several rehearsals for her to begin opening up while the tape was running. Another student exclaimed "Oh no!" when I first switched on the tape as we were about to rehearse, since he was concerned that his lack of practice, which we had just been discussing, would be recorded. As the use of the tape recorder was at first a novelty, and slightly erratic, for the reasons discussed, I bore this in mind when analysing this initial data, in case it was affected.

Non-participant observation

An amount of supporting non-participant observation was carried out in seminars and lessons. I generally made notes in these circumstances, rather than taping the sessions, since I was not directly involved in the 'action' and could therefore reflect and be more selective about what I

noted down. Also, acutely aware of the practical burden of transcription accumulating from interviews and rehearsals, I felt the non-participant sessions were a chance to direct attention more specifically whilst on the spot, rather than attempting to capture everything. I had previously had extensive observation experience in classrooms, and issues that I had faced in the past were also relevant here: what do I observe within the context? Where do I sit, whom do I watch, how much of what is said or done do I write down, how much do I interact? How am I not to worry constantly that something more interesting is happening elsewhere? When I type up my notes, how much am I simply copying what I have already jotted down? How much use is this repetition and should I annotate my notes? Is it relevant that most of what I write down is utterances, not actions? How will I treat the data once transcribed/written up? I had gradually learned to address, or at least come to terms with, these issues during previous experiences of fieldwork, and dealt with similar challenges here.

Documents and artefacts

I provided participants with diaries in which to jot down thoughts about their work as they occurred, so that data would be collected between interviews and in my absence, and also possibly to form a prompt for interviews. Having previously used a diary method for data collection, I suspected that some students would rarely write anything; indeed, some students might never have looked at the diary sheets and may have lost them completely. I therefore provided a second diary sheet at the beginning of the assessment period in May, at the most intensive practice period of the year. In the event, only one student returned a completed diary. I had not held much hope for the usefulness of this form of data collection, knowing the students' habits, and I had no intention of pursuing them for the diaries since the students were under enough pressure with exams and other assignments. Despite the fact that more written evidence would have been useful, I knew that the students were, after all, under no obligation to give any thought to my research project in my absence. They were much happier talking than writing.

Although I had originally planned to examine data from module assessments, including the commentaries and reports written by tutors and assessors at the time of marking, I elected not to, partly because of ethical issues of access and confidentiality, but also because the picture I was building up was one based on *students'* perspectives, not those of the tutors. Similarly, though I had ensured that I had in my possession the departmental Performance Module handbooks which clarify learning outcomes, my analysis of the data does not go so far as to compare these with what the students said themselves about expectations, except where there appears to be a straightforward anomaly between a student's statements, and what is

actually written in the handbook. My task is not to judge whether students have correctly understood or applied what is given them to read.

Group discussion

Usually spontaneous, resulting from the natural gathering of students together, several group discussions were observed and/or recorded, from three students in a practice room, to an extended conversation over a meal between a rehearsal and a concert in a local town. Group discussions are important in ethnography, especially where the conversation wanders into areas unsolicited by the researcher. They are a good control on the reliability and validity of the data, since anyone can be corrected by other group members. They also encourage people to express what is common to all, rather than personal matters (Willis, 1978).

"Just being around"

Willis (1978) cites this as an official data collection strategy, and accordingly I include it in my list. Being around the department, and around the students generally, brought an infinite amount of data to my attention.

2. Sampling

Choices must be made about what to focus on during fieldwork. This applies to people and to settings, events and processes. These choices are part of data reduction, since choices for inclusion necessarily imply exclusions (Hammersley, 1992; Heffernan, 2000). Decisions are made on the basis of the research focus and research question, and the study's conceptual framework.

a) Parameters of the case

In order to identify the 'case' (the unit of analysis), time, space and person boundaries need to be defined.

Year group

This study focused on students at Levels 5 and 6 (years 2 and 3) of their undergraduate music degree. At Level 5, students elect particular pathways and begin to specialise, and the students here had all chosen performance modules. The research focus had evolved during my experiences as a performance student over the second and third years of my degree. Any perceptible differences between second- and third-year students were left to emerge from data analysis. Equally, it is unknown whether first years or postgraduates would have provided supporting or disparate data; boundaries must be drawn somewhere.

Time span

Fieldwork for this research was executed between September 2007 and June 2008.[12] The particular students present at this time will paint the study with a particular shade. Each cohort has its own idiosyncrasies.

Other significant matters may also have affected the research and should be outlined. The tutor who had overseen the performance modules for six years previously, and who was largely responsible for performance teaching, was taking maternity leave during the fieldwork year; another tutor heavily involved in performance teaching had just retired. Students for whom these two tutors had previously been the 'faces' of the performance modules were now being taught by a range of different tutors, some new to the department as well as to the modules. It is impossible to guess how these altered circumstances may have affected the students, or to surmise how data collected with the same students being guided by the former tutors might have been different.

Location

Location parameters are set by the local context of the research. Fieldwork took place in the Department of Drama and Music[13] at the University of Hull, by virtue of accessibility: my time as an undergraduate there allowed me access to the student body. Had the data been gathered in another university, or even in the same department had I not been a familiar face, the findings might have been different.

Case study

I am interested in music students' ways of thinking about performance. This necessarily includes consideration of, *inter alia*, their creative thought processes, their ambitions, their insights, their views on musicological issues, their reasoning and decision-making, their thoughts before, during and after rehearsals, their changes of plan, their feelings of anxiety, disappointment and success, the social relationships affecting ensembles, their reactions to advice and new knowledge offered by tutors and teachers, the sources of motivation and inspiration which influence ideas and their execution. It would be difficult to penetrate a number of such 'worlds' with any depth of understanding, and in any case, a multiple case study is beyond the bounds of a single researcher (Yin, 1994). In the compromise between breadth and depth of investigation (Hammersley and Atkinson, 1995) I have chosen depth.

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[12] For an overview of how Hull University's academic year was structured in 2007-8, see Appendix I.
[13] Now the School of Drama, Music and Screen.

My study is limited to one university department, two year groups, a handful of students; a study of another department with different students may reveal a different story. This single case study is a possible prelude to further study, an exploratory device. In Yin's terms, since it is not a critical, revelatory or unique case, nor a true ethnography, it is not complete in its own right; nevertheless, as Yin (1994) believes, the case study has a distinctive role as the most appropriate research method for a project which aims to investigate and understand complex organisational phenomena and social behaviour. As Yin states, case studies are generally the preferred strategy when 'how' or 'why' questions are being posed, when the investigator has little control over events, and when the focus is on a contemporary phenomenon within some real-life context, all conditions which apply in this study.

<u>Performance</u>

The research focuses on performance, rather than any other aspects of the vast music spectrum. Performance is where music actually exists, where music comes alive and is experienced. It is a productive, 'practical' facet of music and therefore may require a different application of knowledge from that required for the historical/analytical aspects of the music curriculum. However, exploratory work carried out during a music psychology project in my final undergraduate year (Mathieson, 2007) suggested that the scope of the research may extend beyond factors one would immediately associate with performance: for example, into philosophical and social psychological realms, further underlining the necessity for open-mindedness in data collection.

The definition of performance here is not restricted to performance within the modules of the university music degree course, and covers the students' perspectives on music performance in general. This includes, for example, what they know and believe about music performance in the professional world, in the leisure time of adults, and in their own futures as well as in their past experiences.

All the participants were involved in what might be called 'extra-curricular' performances, be they solo or ensemble, opera, orchestra, music theatre, jazz or pop. However, they were all working towards assessed recitals, adding a particular perspective to the study.

b) *The sample*

The overarching research design was to spend an academic year observing, interviewing and working with performance students. The execution of fieldwork within the department in which I had been an undergraduate illustrates the considerable importance of pragmatic considerations, which are not to be underestimated in gaining access to fieldwork settings

(Hammersley and Atkinson, 1995) and in fact are usually paramount (Foster, 1996). What and whom a researcher selects to observe depends largely on opportunities which arise, on relationships with key gatekeepers, or on where she can gain access (Hammersley and Atkinson, 1995). In view of these factors, I considered myself fortunate to find myself in what I would call a comfortable position within a student body, which allowed me to relate to the student participants in a way that encouraged their trust and co-operation. In addition, my relationship with gatekeepers in this setting was generally positive, enhancing the chances of methodological success.

Performance students were easy to enlist in the project, because of my contact with them as an accompanist, and because of the high profile of performance and performance students within the music department. Performing is visible (and audible!), with performance students practising in allocated rooms within the departmental building and regularly working together in ensembles.

In order to secure participants, I emailed staff and students at the beginning of the academic year, with a general communication[14] about my research. I then ensured that I was present on the music practice corridor (this being the main area where students congregated and socialised, as well as where they rehearsed) as much as possible during the first weeks of the semester, talking to students about my project. I explained that students could give as much or as little of their time as they felt appropriate, and that they would be free to dip in and out of the study, or cease participating altogether. As far as the students were concerned, the research was something interesting and non-intrusive and I felt completely confident about their general acceptance of the project.

Two students in particular had already agreed, before the start of the year, to participate. These were students with whom I had worked closely throughout their second year, acting as their accompanist in both examination recitals and public performances, and with whom I had an excellent working relationship. They were good musicians with whom I shared a mutual respect. They were enthusiastic about committing to the study, not only because they were supportive of my work, but also because I had agreed to be their accompanist during the year without charging them a fee as I would other students. I knew that I needed to gather data from other sources too, partly for comparison, but also as a contingency in case of problems with these central relationships.

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[14] A copy of this is presented in Appendix III.

Research guidelines urge researchers to obtain informed consent from the participants in their research. I was open about my intentions in my initial approach to students (see Appendix III), and those who participated did so with their full consent and an understanding of the implications for them of participating. Each student read and signed an individual consent form. General ethical consent was sought from and granted by the University Ethics Committee.

Nevertheless, following other researchers' advice (e.g. Ball, 1984; Burgess, 1984; Delamont, 1984), the participants' identities have been protected by the use of pseudonyms in this report. Delamont believes individuals should be protected "whether they like it or not" (1984, p.31); Ball (1984) even said he fully intended to mislead readers as to the location and identification of the settings of his ethnographic work, because of difficulties he once experienced. My fieldwork was overt, staff and students fully aware of my work, so the results of the study may be traceable by those in the know. However, the involvement of a number of students will perhaps (and this is part of the intention) make it less likely for particular individuals to be identified; similarly, any concerns from staff about comments students may express about the teaching of performance are lessened by the fact that the teaching of performance was shared by six tutors and numerous instrumental teachers, by virtue of which it should be difficult for individuals to become identifiable. At the time of writing this report, the student participants have long since left the department.

Table 2.1 below gives information about the participants, including details of the contexts in which they provided data. In total, twelve performance students were involved (six third-years and six second-years). The principle data set was gathered in the context of a violin-clarinet-piano trio of which I was the pianist member, and from the two duo pairings formed between the two instrumentalists and me. Supporting data were gathered in a range of other settings and from other students, for several reasons: to provide a contingency in case anything happened which might cause the trio no longer to be available for study; to lessen the pressure on the two students in primary focus; and also to prevent my becoming saturated with what I experienced in this primary setting, or coming to see that as the only reality. In this supporting role, I collected data from a piano duet partnership in which I was involved, and two other partnerships formed with singers. In addition, over the course of the year I took the opportunity to record rehearsals with and to interview other students in order to acquire further data. In fact, the trio did not run in the second semester, because the violinist was committed in too many other areas; fortunately, the data gathered in the first semester are extensive, running from initial exploration of repertoire through to a concert performance.

Table 2.1: Information about participants

NAME[ϕ]	YEAR	INSTRUMENT	TYPE OF DATA GATHERED
Dave	3	Voice	Interview, Rehearsal, Group Discussion, Seminar, Instrumental/singing lesson
Tom	3	Clarinet	Interview, Rehearsal, Seminar, Instrumental/singing lesson
John	3	Voice	Interview, Rehearsal, Seminar, Instrumental/singing lesson,
Sue	3	Voice	Interview, Seminar, Instrumental/singing lesson,
Emma	3	Clarinet	Interview, Rehearsal, Seminar, Instrumental/singing lesson,
Will	3	Organ	Interview, Rehearsal, Group Discussion, Seminar
Mark	2	Violin	Interview, Rehearsal, Instrumental/singing lesson, Group Discussion, Seminar
Nick	2	Tenor horn	Interview, Rehearsal
Liz	2	Baritone horn	Interview, Rehearsal, Group Discussion, Instrumental/ singing lesson
Ben	2	Voice	Interview, Rehearsal, Instrumental/singing lesson
Ann	2	Piano	Rehearsal
Joe	2	Violin	Interview, Group Discussion
Student A*	2	Organ	Group Discussion
Student B*	3	Voice	Group Discussion
Student C*	3	Voice	Group Discussion

[ϕ] These names are pseudonyms.

* These three students took part in one group discussion or other by virtue of happening to be there at the time. They have not been included in the description of the main sample but their comments have been incorporated into data analysis.

Non-participant observation of rehearsals and performances by other instrumentalists/singers and ensembles was carried out throughout the year, though to a lesser extent than participant observation.[15] Three instrumental/singing teachers were also happy for me to observe lessons; two of the performance tutors allowed me access to seminars. These contexts facilitated further comparisons.

c) Sampling during fieldwork

Data collection involves continually making choices regarding where to be, what to observe, what to write down, what to ignore… The investigative nature of qualitative research allows for a gradual making sense of a phenomenon through judicious sampling, and this includes settings, events and processes as well as people. Continual refocusing is possible, even advisable, in qualitative research. One may choose to observe repeated examples of the same type of phenomenon in order to build up a bank of data, rather like a quantitative survey, which can lend weight to claims of consistency over time or across settings; alternatively, one could examine different types of phenomenon in order to compare and contrast behaviour or outcomes. Both of these strategies were used in this study.

Sampling may be influenced by practicalities. In this study, interviews with students were dependent on their availability, and on their willingness to give up their time generally or at particular times. Rehearsals with performers did not always take place regularly, even in the core ensembles, since in some weeks extra commitments made it impossible; in the case of the supporting data, the most fertile period for data collection was when performances were approaching. My differing relationships with participants also influenced, for example, my interactions with individuals, or even my positioning within a room, so that what I heard or saw might have been affected.

Formal arrangements for data collection were minimal. Practicalities within the department, namely an uncertainty regarding who would be teaching performance that year,[16] meant that final staffing decisions were made only shortly before the start of the semester, and I was not able in advance to determine a solid timetable. However, flexibility is in the nature of ethnography and is a strength, not a weakness. Whilst arrangements with some ensembles and students lasted the duration of the year, the nature of the study meant that throughout the fieldwork period a number of other students were invited to take part. I was able to capture opportunities when they arose, rather than being bound by a preordained plan.

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[15] See later in this chapter: *Fieldwork – Early days*
[16] See *Parameters of the case: Time span*

In addition, the researcher should stop frequently and take stock of how sampling is being done. It is unwise always to talk to the most prominent people or those with most to say, for example: one must deliberately seek out other people whose outlook may differ; one must "dig at the peripheries" (Miles and Huberman, 1984) and find a variety of scenarios to permit comparisons. My knowledge about the students in the department enabled me to ensure a range of personalities were involved in data gathering (e.g. making sure I involved the quieter students as well as the more vociferous); moreover, talking to students generally, and at times when they were not 'officially' being interviewed, allowed me to make useful assessments about the likely reliability of the data they supplied.

3. Fieldwork

I sometimes (though not often) hear social scientists talk about the effects of participant observation on the group studied – but never about the effects on the participant observer himself. Field procedure is based on the premise that you can do something over and over again without really doing it, without its really counting because you are 'just pretending' to be a member of the group under investigation. Apparently, in spite of all those books and articles on role-playing, we consider ourselves immune from our own laws. We think we're exempt from ordinary moral laws too: when we mess around with peoples' lives, either we aren't really doing it, or it somehow doesn't count.

Lurie, 1967, p.276 (the words are spoken by the narrator)

d) Early days

The main reason for conducting the research at Hull was the relationship I believed I already had with the students and staff there. It would have been extremely time-consuming, and undoubtedly less satisfactory, had I had to gain the trust of a department elsewhere. I felt I could begin my fieldwork, knowing I had the participants' trust and respect, and that, equally, the staff would be confident in allowing me access to whatever lessons, seminars or classes I felt would benefit the project.

The first week of Semester 1 marked, for me, the first week of my fieldwork. Delamont (1976) confirms that it is useful to be at initial encounters because the investigator is in the same knowledge state as the participants. I also wanted to establish that my fieldwork was part of the fabric of the department, since I believed this would help reduce reactivity: as the students had many changes to adapt to in the new academic year, my research would be merely part of

those new circumstances.[17] I began working with my two main participants straight away, and gathered further participants during the first few weeks.

Conversely, there were some problems in respect of access, because of staffing changes. New introductory lectures on performance were being given, which I would have liked to observe. They would have given me the opportunity, firstly, of gathering data about the module itself, information that the students were being given and therefore which would directly influence their concepts of the module, and, secondly, of establishing my presence as a non-participant observer, which would have paved the way for my attendance at subsequent lectures and seminars. I was told, however, that certain members of staff felt uncomfortable about my being there. This setback taught me to be more careful about my assumptions of easy access. Perhaps I had been spoilt by the easy attitudes of schoolteachers who are used to other adults being in their classrooms: one lecturer confirmed that in universities it is not common practice to be observed in teaching situations, and suggested that my observing teaching and lecturing sessions might seem more intrusive or problematic to tutors than it did to me.

Being unable to establish a routine of non-participant observation in performance seminars and classes, I concluded that to achieve any substantial spread of observation across the spectrum of possibilities in the *teaching* of performance would be impossible. I decided to lower my sights regarding the variety and breadth of contexts I could reasonably expect to access, realising that it would be more straightforward, and less stressful to all concerned, to focus my data gathering on *student*-orientated contexts. In any case, I was interested in *their* perceptions, and a narrower field of focus for data collection was not necessarily problematic.

Since I considered that as much participation as possible initially would be beneficial to the development of relationships with participants, rehearsals and interviews began in earnest. As time passed and fieldwork was well underway, I found I was doing so much participating that there was little time or opportunity for non-participant observation. I also found that, once I began tape-recording, I had to restrict the amount of data I was gathering, simply because I struggled to find time for transcribing. I elected to concentrate on interviews and rehearsals with my core participants, supplemented by other interviews and rehearsals which arose largely due to my role as accompanist.

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[17] See Sampling parameters: *Time span*

e) Preliminary data collection: Exploration of the setting and of the conceptual framework

> The most striking feature of my experience of research… is that it was a voyage of discovery and much of the time was spent at sea.
>
> Hammersley, 1984, p.62.

The difficulties I experienced in my relationships with key gatekeepers led to low morale at the beginning of fieldwork. As an experienced researcher, however, I was not deterred. During my DPhil, I had found consolation in other researchers' confessions, recalling their PhD experiences or more 'grown-up' projects, describing feelings of bewilderment and chaos in the early stages of research. Ball (1984) describes fieldwork as "a personal confrontation with the unknown" (p.71); Atkinson (1984) remembers the first few weeks in the field being "formless" (p.171) and sympathises: "It is hard to keep going during the first days and weeks" (p.172). Nias (1991) reassuringly believes (p.163) that "an acutely uncomfortable period of ambiguity and confusion seems to be a necessary condition for the birth of a new idea." I knew, therefore, that a 'settling-in' period was necessary.

Where to be and what to focus on at any one time was something which, during my previous fieldwork experiences, left me feeling uncomfortable. Here, it was less worrying to me personally because of my greater confidence in my methodology, but it must still be addressed. Sampling is not usually associated with ethnography; yet a single-handed researcher cannot be everywhere, and must, of necessity, sample; she cannot collect all available data. Hammersley and Atkinson (1995) agree: the researcher must resist the temptation to try and see, hear and participate in everything that is happening; more selective data gathering allows for periods of productive reflection. Ball (1984, p.78) expresses well the researcher's sense of resignation in the realisation that "For everything that is noticed a multitude of other things go unseen, for everything that is written down a multitude of other things are forgotten". Hammersley (1984) suggests trying random sampling in order to avoid doing whatever is most convenient or attractive; I understand what he means, but in fact I find that what appears to be most interesting is generally what turns out to be of greatest relevance.

c) Relationships with participants

<u>Professional role</u>

One of the most important decisions facing the researcher on beginning fieldwork is what role to assume in the field. A survey of the ethnographies which influenced this work reveals some

variety. Cohen (1991) went into the field as an overt researcher, putting straight anyone who thought she was anything else. Finnegan (1989), carrying out research in her own community, experienced some ambiguity, fulfilling different roles (researcher and amateur musician, as well as carrying other academic and personal/family roles) at different times, but she was open about the fact that she was conducting research. It is not clear how Willis (1978) defined his role to participants, other than telling them he was interested in their lifestyle, culture and music, which they accepted, since he was not asking them to do anything they would not have been doing anyway, but following them and chatting with them during everyday activities. Patrick (1973) encountered difficulties because of role confusion: he was a covert researcher and was eventually unmasked by someone who recognised him as a teacher.

I entered the setting very much as a *researcher* (following Cooper and McIntyre, 1996; Fuller, 1984) and was, from the start, open about wanting to use rehearsals and organise interviews in order to collect data. I was also a *musician*. All the participants knew me at least to some extent, some of them very well, and were familiar with me as a musician. Then I wore a third mantle: that of *music student*. Not only did the participants know me as a competent musician with whom they would be happy to work, but they also knew I had been through the same experiences as them during the last two years, having taken the undergraduate performance modules myself. This role was possibly the most important in making the participants feel secure, enabling them to see that I was 'one of them', which I thought would help them feel comfortable enough to talk honestly about their experiences. I did and do believe that this 'sharing' of what it is like to be a music student at Hull was essential in building relationships of trust with the participants and in facilitating open and honest discussions about the student experience.

When collecting and analysing data, I knew it was advisable to distance myself from the role of expert or critic (Hammersley and Atkinson, 1995). The researcher's role is not a judgmental one. Opie (1993) reprimands herself for forgetting this:

> "Oh," I said, "doesn't it spoil them?" and remembered too late that it is not
> for me to be censorious.
> Opie, 1993, p.30

On another occasion she is conscious to maintain her specific role:

> I edged towards the group, trying to approach obliquely, not like a teacher
> about to sort out some trouble.
> Opie, 1993, p.130

I endeavoured never to assume superiority of knowledge or status, and hope I achieved this. I think if I had behaved in a superior manner I would not have enjoyed such amicable relations with the participants.

In addition, I had negotiated with my trio colleagues, in advance of the academic year, as to how I might pay them back for participating in the research: I would be their accompanist in recitals without charging them an accompanist's fee. The adoption of participant roles by researchers can facilitate open and productive relationships, in which researchers compensate participants for the time and energy they contribute to the research, whilst at the same time gaining valuable insights into their world (Foster, 1996).

My 'professional' experience would also help in the analytic aspects of the research. As Finnegan (1989) felt in her study, I could, in my interpretative theorising, draw on my own experience as a student within the department. I could also draw on my experience in qualitative research, confident in my methodology and my suitedness to the project. I knew the approach would enable me to be innovative and creative, and, in the writing up of findings, to employ the more literary style of writing advocated by Creswell in relation to qualitative research (2003, p.22).

Personal role

It is methodologically essential to give details about the researcher in an account of a project; the significance of the researcher's personal and autobiographical characteristics is reflected in the informants' reactions (Mac an Ghaill, 1991; Measor and Woods, 1991). The researcher's image is crucial. How to present oneself to the people taking part, how much to say, what not to say, what to wear, how friendly to be, when to arrive, when to make oneself scarce: these (and other) issues may all influence the data. As a mature student, I was older than the participants, which might have caused problems of authority or status, had it not been for the fact that they knew me and were familiar, to varying degrees, with my character and background. Knowing many of the students socially was an advantage in this ethnographic study. They were happy to chat to me because they were used to chatting to me. They trusted me because they knew from experience that I was trustworthy. They shared their experiences with me because they knew I would appreciate what they said. They knew I got on with people, took a genuine interest in people, and helped out where possible, giving freely of my time to activities and events within the department. A successful qualitative researcher shows sensitivity to her participants, shares a good rapport with them and enjoys credibility amongst

them (Creswell, 2003; Lurie, 1967); I believe all these applied in my study and I am confident in the resulting quality of my data.

<u>Development of relationships</u>

My relationships with the participants were good, but different, because I was sensitive to the differences between their personalities. I was aware that the interests of participants and researcher should be balanced; this affected decisions such as whether to ask for interviews during busy or difficult periods.

The second semester, for example, was stressful for one of the participants (Dave) who had prominent roles in a string of performances over the course of a few weeks, in addition to wanting to complete a composition to a deadline. For this reason, and because of the Easter break, we did not meet for over two months. Another participant (Tom), with whom I rehearsed regularly, was reluctant to be interviewed, claiming he did not like having to think seriously. To preserve our good working relationship I never pushed this, but consequently did not obtain as much interview data from him as I would have liked, though in compensation I encouraged him to talk a little more in rehearsals.

Another example is one student who yielded interesting data but with whom I had to exercise great patience. Knowing I would listen to him in interview, he began to seek me out socially. During one period, I had extensive contact with him outside the research context, because of commitments in which we were both involved, and during this time, for my own sanity, I kept out of his way as much as possible. Opie (1993) describes a similar experience where a relationship with a participant (a child in the playground) becomes strained:

> I longed to tell [Lisa] she is a bore. She seems to have been born without any idea of what is interesting or not.

> My relationship with the pestiferous Lisa has worn thin. This morning I found myself refusing a potato crisp and the offer of one of her creative game demonstrations.
>
> Opie, 1993, p.177; p.188

On the positive side, I had an excellent response from and developed a highly fruitful relationship with Dave. When I first suggested he might participate in the study, he asked how long it would take. I said I would not take up more of his time than he was happy with, but half an hour in the first instance would be very useful. An hour-and-a-half later, my tape ran out, and he asked, "When can we do this again?" Subsequently, he approached me frequently to

ask if I was available or wanted to chat. My last interview of the fieldwork period was with him, twelve days after the academic year ended, when we still had much to discuss. The following extract from that 90-minute interview illustrates the extent of his engagement in the research process which had spanned the whole academic year and beyond:

RP	hah! Right, now come on I had another question then and what was it? Erm,
Dave	it's, it's your last interview you see
RP	I know, see I've gotta get out all my questions now, and it's not even as if I can write them down because things pop into my head as we're talking
Dave	it's really interesting though I think this has been the most interesting interview, because, I've raised a lot of concepts and ideas
RP	mm
Dave	that you could spend,
RP	days,
Dave	centuries, studying
RP	yeah
Dave	and maybe in some centuries' time, some people are gonna have, some kind of answers
Dave, interview, 18/06/08	

d) Direction of fieldwork over the year

By the end of December, I had gathered a vast quantity of data and needed time to retreat, firstly to have the time to transcribe it, and then to reflect on what I was gathering and discovering. The Christmas vacation was a useful break, but the January assessment period was a busy time, ripe as it was for talking to the students about preparations for performance, and because rehearsals were intense for recitals. Consequently, between the end of January and the Easter vacation at the beginning of March, I deliberately restricted the amount of data I collected. My regular rehearsals continued and were taped, as well as some instrumental lessons, but I did not conduct many interviews, to give myself some space. It was also a busy period in terms of the students' commitments to departmental performances, as I knew, being also involved to some extent, so I was reluctant to request any more of their time. I did, however, capitalise on a break between a rehearsal and a concert when a group of us went for a meal: with everyone's consent, I taped the conversation, which was steered partly by the students, partly by me. Again, the fact that the students were happy to do this shows not only that they felt comfortable with the idea, but that they found it stimulating to have such discussions in their leisure time. The transcript of this conversation illustrates the depth and breadth of the conversations I had with students, the ease with which they talked, at length,

and their willingness to give their sometimes differing points of view, even in front of one another.[18]

After the Easter vacation, the pace of data collection quickened again, as the final assessment period drew nearer. I ensured I was taping a variety of rehearsals, as well as my core partnerships; similarly, during the assessment period I sought out different students to interview, specifically to balance the interviews with the students with whom I had been spending most time. For example, I realised that, during interviews, students often referred to previous years, and that it would be prudent and interesting to interview a student who was spending one year taking music at Hull during a year out of his medical degree elsewhere, and had no comparisons to make with previous years.

My final interview took place on 18th June, with Dave, who had always been keen to talk to me about his work. He later sent me this message:

> It has been good to talk to you and I wish you luck on analysing the insane amount of research you have obtained. Heh.
>
> *Text received 20/06/08*

Transcription of recordings from the last two months of fieldwork continued into the summer, since transcribing during term-time and the assessment period was difficult with the pressures of my commitments. Data analysis then began in earnest.

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[18] This, and other transcripts, can be made available to an interested reader.

Chapter 3: Data analysis

I. Introduction

This chapter considers how data analysis proceeded, first during fieldwork, then afterwards through coding, theory-building and verification. I drew on tried and tested methods from my previous research, not only for the sake of comparability, but because these methods work for me, and suit how the growing body of data and emerging themes began to organise and categorise itself over the course of the study.

Data analysis can be thought to be the most difficult stage of the qualitative research project. Ball (1991) writes that trying to fit pieces of analysis into an analytical whole is the most intellectually challenging and yet frustrating stage in most ethnographic work; Atkinson (1984) describes it as an arduous adventure. Hammersley (1984) says that finding an overall theory, model or argument which organises data in a coherent and forceful way, allowing the line between the relevant and the irrelevant to become clear, is a key problem in ethnographic analysis, and adds that "how ethnographers acquire such models is shrouded in mystery" (p.60). Yin (1994, p.125) is rather pessimistic, believing that "novice investigators are especially likely to have a troublesome experience"; Elbaz (1983) gives a paradoxical reassurance:

> It is an occupational hazard of phenomenological research that a considerable mass of data must be assembled and grappled with before central themes will deign to emerge.
>
> Elbaz, 1983, p.129.

Data analysis starts in the very origins of a project, in the first elements of conceptual thinking. In qualitative research, the researcher cycles back and forth between thinking about existing data and generating strategies for gathering new data. Data analysis is therefore an ongoing enterprise, an interactive process, not a separate part of the project. At this point, the reader is referred back to Figure 2.1, Miles and Huberman's (1984) diagrammatic elucidation of the incorporation of data analysis into the various stages of the research process.

II. Data analysis during fieldwork

Thinking during fieldwork is an essential part of analysis. As Miles and Huberman (1984, p.64) state concisely: "the ultimate power of field research lies in the researcher's emerging map of what is happening". The act of data collection provoked my thinking continually; I did not need to set aside times to 'think'. Throughout the fieldwork, I remembered Nias's comment (1991, p.164), that "Methodological simplicity freed me to think about the interpretation rather than the collection of my evidence." The grounded theory approach also promotes a spiralling between data collection, data analysis and on to further data collection (Corbin and Strauss, 2008). The mere presence of the researcher in among the data itself, the hours spent transcribing and living with the data, and the instinctive "ethnographic impulse" (Willis, 2000), provoke the researcher's thinking, and yet are as good as inaccessible to anyone else. Analysing data which someone else has collected is notoriously problematic.

The first semester helped shape the conceptual framework of the research. As I had anticipated, the first few weeks allowed a settling down, an organisation period for my thoughts about the setting, and a bonding time with the participants. These weeks also sharpened my awareness of what I wanted, and what it would be possible, to find out. There were short periods where I was uncertain what I was looking at or looking for; when this occurred I returned to the research focus and reminded myself what had initially sparked the research, an indispensable strategy throughout the study.

By the end of the first semester, I was surer of myself, in terms both of being comfortable in the setting, and of the conceptualisation of my focus. From the beginning of the second semester, I was able to think more systematically about the data. The grounded theory approach promotes the vital procedure of making memos on theory emerging from coding and the relationships between codes (Glaser, 1998). As I gathered recordings and notes, I transcribed them onto computer using *Word*, making memos about thoughts which occurred to me, links with other data I had, further points I could investigate. I maintained the convention of using square brackets for comments on the notes. On computer, these memos and notes could be woven into the transcripts, and accessed separately. I also suspected that the most important thoughts which occurred to me during transcription would do so again on rereading the notes later, and this proved to be true.

Due to the nature of the academic year, there were two busy assessment periods, in January and June 2008. These periods were ripe with opportunities for recording, but also fraught with difficulty in terms of the time available for transcribing, since I was accompanying many

recitals myself. It was important, as far as possible, not to leave data untreated, for two reasons: firstly, aware of the perishing effect of time on memory, I wanted to transcribe recordings as soon as possible so as to avoid problems such as forgetting what a student was referring to elliptically, or gesturing about, or not understanding a muffled part of the recording (it was also good to be able to return to the students soon after the event, before *they* forgot, to ask them about something not quite decipherable on tape); secondly, I wanted to be able to follow up in subsequent interviews ideas I had during my reflections. I dealt with my data as strictly as I could within the time constraints of my commitments. I knew if I simply kept tapes I would build up so many that I would probably never listen to them again; also, it is impossible to find something quickly on a tape; I had a set of ten ninety-minute tapes, mostly recording over them again after transcription had been completed. I kept the last set of recordings in case others wish to hear them.

During fieldwork, I attempted to balance field time with withdrawal time. Vacations also permitted reflection. I returned regularly to the literature, which enhanced my views on my existing data, and helped me identify further data I could seek, and see ways of gathering it. The idea of incorporating existing research into the data gathering process, treating this theory as if it were further data, is promoted by the grounded theory approach. Perhaps most importantly, I persistently returned to my original reasons for pursuing the research, to maintain a focus in what became increasingly complex. Periodically, I made a display of what I felt I was dealing with in the field and attempted to link it with the conceptual framework of the research. These data displays served as an accumulation of ideas thus far, not intended to be an end point, but working models of theorising about the emerging findings (Glaser, 1998). Formal opportunities for consideration of the data and emerging findings arose when I made presentations at seminars and conferences.

III. Emerging findings

Prior to the commencement of 'official' data analysis, and during data collection and reflection, I believed the following overarching topics (Figure 3.1) were becoming salient:

Figure 3.1: Major topics emerging from informal theorising during data collection

- musicological perspectives (traditional musicology/post-modern approaches)
    - students' awareness of different approaches
    - musicologically relational context of students' perspectives on performance
- music as text
- preparation for performance
    - 'authentic' performance
    - issues of autonomy/creativity
    - technical issues of performance/preparation
    - analysis of individual pieces/ knowledge of composers
    - nerves/psychological issues
    - the importance of affective state for performance
    - communicative/ emotional/expressive elements
- learning/knowledge acquisition
    - binary of novice-expert
    - perceived 'hierarchy' of valid/valued knowledge
    - individuality within system of requirements
- change management
    - impact of change on 'self'
    - impact on confidence/importance of stability
- education policy
    - A-level curriculum; how this prepares students for degree
    - origins of/basis for departmental learning objectives/module requirements
    - assessment
    - relationship between departmental requirements/students' perception of them

This organisation of topics was only temporary. Such interim modelling is part of the grounded theory approach (Glaser, 1998). However, the concretisation and partitioning of issues even during fieldwork, and certainly immediately afterwards, indicated that I was beginning to

develop definite notions of what I was encountering in the field, as well as pointing the way to further reading and clarification in particular spheres of interest. These topics, as they formed in my mind, also suggested codes which would be used in the next stage of the process.

IV. Data coding

1. Principles of coding

Miles and Huberman (1984) suggest that data coding should begin as soon as possible into fieldwork. This approach fits with the principles of 'pure' grounded theory (Glaser, 1998). However, departing from those principles somewhat, I did not begin coding my data 'officially' until fieldwork and transcription were over, although my conceptualisation of the issues began to form into categories even during the early stages of fieldwork (see Figure 3.1 above), and as I transcribed tapes and wrote up notes I was certainly starting the process mentally and within my commentaries. There were two reasons why I saved 'official' coding until later. Firstly, I felt that throughout the fieldwork period my conceptual framework frequently underwent slight but important shifts, preventing me from feeling ready to commit to coding during this process. Secondly, I did not want to remove chunks of data from their context, believing that this would compromise later interpretation. The beauty of qualitative data is richness of meaning, deriving from the context in which the data were gathered, and I endeavoured to preserve this wholeness as far into analysis as possible.

There is limited usefulness in coding the data numerically according to tallies such as 'frequency of mentions' or 'number of minutes'; on the contrary, I kept the original text, which for the most part consists of the students' own words, through the first few stages of data analysis. The importance of context in qualitative research cannot be overemphasised. However, if a theory is emerging independently of the immediate context in which the data were gathered (e.g. if a participant restates the same opinion at different times, or if the same opinion is stated separately by different students) it may surely also be *used* independently of that context, and begin to form (part of) a potential theory. I found the most persuasive elements emerging from the data to be those which seemed to apply across contexts. Other factors were more difficult to divorce from their context: one participant, for example, appeared to express himself differently, when in a group and when he was just with me, which meant the context of his remarks needed closer examination. Context, of course, includes the power relationships of a field situation (indeed, of any social situation) and I feel this was true in my study.

I trialled the software package *NVivo* for coding my data. However, I found that, whilst *NVivo* was useful for coding the data on the screen, it did not help me reconceptualise the organisation of the data, which is necessary for analytical progress. Subsequently I returned to the method of coding which I satisfactorily devised in my previous doctoral research

(Mathieson, 2002), using the 'Outlining' facility within *Word*. 'Outlining' very simply allows the hierarchical organisation of codes and sub-codes, and facilitates access to any level of coding at any time, including or excluding the data itself. It is a simple, 'no frills' way of working through the data and keeping it to hand, and I was perfectly satisfied with its efficacy.

Following the principles of grounded theory, my approach to theorising is to work 'up' from the data not 'down' from grand theory (Delamont, 1992) to try and create a model or structure. King (1984) speaks of structure as repeated patterns of purposeful behaviour of the participants in a defined social situation. Ball (1991) compares Hammersley's version of the purpose of theory, focusing on explanation and prediction, with that of Woods (1990; 1995), focusing on understanding and insight; Woods's conception of theoretical development is based on the generation of theoretical ideas and concepts, which is as far as I am attempting to go, stopping short of hypothesis testing. It is not an aim of this study to produce generalising principles extending outside the study; my only theory-generation relates to the students (and situations) involved. Any further generalisation may be made by the reader, or by future researchers carrying this work forward.

Of course, a mixture of inductive and deductive analysis took place dialectically, both throughout the fieldwork and afterwards as I proceeded through the coding process and into writing. Induction, favoured by constructivists, is nevertheless informed by the researcher's conceptual framework; equally, the *a priori* frameworks used by a deductive conceptualist do contain much empirical data. I was acutely aware that with a 'top-down' approach, such as examining data for evidence of a particular theme, I would risk imposing my own biased opinions on the conclusions I would be drawing, having spent time, over the course of the research and previously as a music student myself, immersed in (even obsessed by) ideas about my topic. By choosing to work 'upwards', letting the data speak for themselves as far as possible, the coding is grounded firmly in the data, constructing a detailed picture of issues which emerge from, rather than issues which I might pre-impose on, the data. For the same reason, it was counterproductive to produce a focused literature review prior to data analysis. A reverse process, typical of grounded theory (Corbin and Strauss, 2008), of allowing issues to emerge from the data, and then following them up in the literature, was more objective.

The coding process is inevitably influenced by the conceptual framework which guides the study. 'Coder bias' is unavoidable, since no-one but I know exactly what I am looking for, and no other researcher was present at data collection. Anyone else would code slightly differently, not necessarily through a conscious agenda, but because of their particular knowledge base and interest. Indeed, one of qualitative research's strengths is precisely that

the researcher becomes so familiar with the participants' language and meanings, and with the subsequently gathered data, that coding is an integral part of this process. Nevertheless, I was able to ask an individual external to the research to examine a sample of the data, and to check whether he felt my perception of the emerging picture seemed valid and comprehensible. He could confirm that he felt codes and categories were consistent across the sample of data, and seemed to supply sufficient angles of description that were relevant to the research focus.

I expected that issues which during fieldwork had become important elements of the conceptual framework would emerge from the data repeatedly, which indeed showed itself to be the case, but working upwards from the data also enables other issues to become visible which might not have been so obvious during fieldwork, perhaps because participants were less aware of them or simply talked about them less. Consequently, coding is a time-consuming but fascinating process, which makes the researcher think in almost unimaginable detail about the inherent meaning of every piece of data, not just seeking the most interesting or salient evidence with the mundane slipping into the background, but including everything, until one can be sure it is not relevant in answering the research question.

2.   The coding process

At the point of departure, it was evident that the data which had been gathered during fieldwork was far too extensive to be analysed in detail in full. In sum, the data comprised transcriptions of:

- 37 interviews
- 43 rehearsals
- 8 trio rehearsals
- 13 instrumental/vocal lessons
- 3 group discussions
- 4 seminars (written up from notes)

In comparison with other studies identified in the literature which have sought to investigate music students' perspectives on music and music education (e.g. Pitts, 2003, based on 11 returned student questionnaires), the amount of data collected from so many students over such a long period of time in this research is substantial. Yet decisions had to be made about how to prioritise the data. I elected to begin with my original group of participants: the two instrumentalists with whom I played in a trio and in duos, and four other students who, I considered, had afforded both rich and extensive data. The eleven interviews and twenty-four

rehearsals with these students were subjected to detailed coding and formed the baseline for analysis. The remaining transcriptions and write-ups served as confirmatory/contradictory material as theory energed from the initial substantial sets of codes and conceptualisations.

The different contexts of data gathering were preserved separately: new codeframes were developed for each participant and each situation (rehearsal/lesson/interview etc.) in which data were collected. Some of the codes overlapped the categories; some did not. Some codes were used for multiple participants; some were not. The overlaps and individualities are of themselves pertinent. Triangulation across contexts helps support emerging threads, but particularities are admitted. Vertical and horizontal coherence and consistency were sought, to allow amalgams of theoretical constructs to emerge.

Initial coding was, predictably, fraught with complexity. During interviews and rehearsals alike, the dialogue flits from one topic to another. The students' network of thoughts comprises many separate but related tracks, which inevitably become interwoven and tangled, and the act of reflection is complex, with trains of thought swerving down one branch line after another. In discussing the present, they mention future plans or previous events; one thing reminds them of another; tricky conceptual predicaments are related to concrete situations; general questions are associated with personal experiences. Careful consideration has to be given to the context in which remarks are made; I believe it was invaluable that I was familiar with the processes and people to which participants referred, having lived the same experiences, either by virtue of having just gone through the degree and the departmental system myself, or by working with them as their accompanist.

a) *Initial coding of data from the main participants*

Following grounded theory principles, coding addressed every word, every element, of data. The process of coding considers what is happening at every point of the transcription, and to allocate to extracts of text, ranging from a clause to a long passage, a descriptor or 'code' encapsulating the essence of its content. The code 'names' are generally not 'mysterious' or 'technical' but are matter-of-fact 'labels', and as far as possible I try to use language which would be comprehensible to the participants themselves.

Glaser (1998) states that coding must lean towards theory, since the goal of grounded theory is not description, but the generation of concepts which may explain behaviour. However, at this stage, my approach at this initial stage is *not* to theorise, or to connect the codes to any 'theory' from the literature, since to do so may skew the analysis process. At this point, I prefer to leave the code open for subsequent interpretation, and, therefore, a description is often

adequate. Of course, this process is all effected in the light of my conceptual framework and can never be independent of my particular slant on the data, which itself is a natural part of data reduction.

In some cases, two or more codes might be relevant to the same passage, in which case the extract is duplicated; some extracts overlap or are contained within others. I exhaust every phrase of the text before moving on, allocating an extract to as many descriptors as possible: it is easier to merge codes eventually if they seem to overlap or duplicate, rather than having to split them. It is always possible both to merge and split codes, however, as long as the original text or dialogue is kept with the code, to be referred to again. The extract below (see Figure 3.2) represents just a few minutes of an hour-long interview, yet provides forty-one quotations allocated to twenty-five codes. This dense overlapping of codes is typical of the first stage of data analysis.

> ### *Figure 3.2: Examples of how codes are allocated. Passage taken from interview with Tom, 12/02/08*

N.B. Colour-coding is not consistent through the passage, due to the number of codes needed. Colours correspond with the brackets opposite each written code.

Codes (top to bottom):

- knowledge of technique
- knowledge of self/ability
- articulation
- difficulty
- Practice/preparation
- making sense
- knowing how a piece sounds
- practice/preparation
- recordings
- putting oneself into the music
- dynamics   flow state
- enjoyment
- self-criticism
- knowledge of self/tendency
- Practice/preparation
- ratio of effort to reward
- marking/assessment considerations
- formulating interpretation
- description of piece
- knowledge of structure

Tom	one of the things I find difficult, when you're tonguing quite quickly, is to co-ordinate your tongue with when you're pressing the, note, otherwise it can go, keke, keke, keke, and like, not quite in time
RP	mhm
Tom	I find that quite difficult if you're tonguing fast, to get them exactly at the right point
RP	right
Tom	and if you don't get them at the right point it sounds really scrappy
RP	mhm, so how do you practise that?
Tom	just, practise tonguing. It's a tonguing issue rather than a fingering issue. Cos I found that my tongue wouldn't quite work as fast as my fingers work, and my tongue was slightly behind
RP	mhm, that makes sense. Go on, what else?
Tom	er, (thinks) I dunno, I didn't really, I didn't find it that difficult, once I'd got to know the piece
RP	and how do you get to know the piece?
Tom	just playing through it, familiarising myself with it
RP	mhm
Tom	cos like, it didn't really make that much sense to me at first but, playing through it, I kind of got to know it and, know how it was supposed to sound and,
RP	yeah and you listened to it didn't you
Tom	yeah
RP	how many times do you reckon you listened to it?
Tom	three, four. I didn't listen to it that much, I needed to listen to it so I could hear how it goes, how it went, but I didn't wanna listen to it that much cos I, I'd end up, trying to copy, what I'd heard, rather than putting myself into it
RP	mhm. So what of yourself did you put in it?
Tom	I exaggerated a lot of the dynamics, more than on the recordings I'd heard. Erm, I dunno, it's just, when you, sometimes when you like a piece you just, you let yourself kind of, go with it
...	
Tom	it, I don't know, cos I'm one of those people that, if I'm practising and I know I can do it, if I do it wrong it really bugs me. So
RP	well because some people would practise and think sod it, it was wrong, but,
Tom	no I don't do that. But I was hoping for a high mark so, I knew that I had to kind of nail things, to achieve that
RP	mhm, right. So what do you think about the interpretation of the piece? We've talked about kind of technical things haven't we, we've talked about, scales and runs and fingering and tonguing and articulation, and, things. What's the process by which you arrive at an interpretation of a piece?
Tom	I think I just play through it and, like, try and associate, a mood or, something with that, piece, or with that section in the piece
RP	ok, can you give me an example of something like that, in the Malcolm Arnold
Tom	well, the middle section, almost sounds like, kind of, a jokey fairground thing
RP	right
Tom	I don't know, it's just, one of those strange things that it puts an image in my head of
...	

81

knowledge of self/tendency

recordings
knowing how it sounds
tempo

making sense, being right
formulating interpretation

audience reaction to performance
description of piece
knowledge of form/structure
metaknowledge

metaknowledge
description of piece
relationship between me /participants
knowledge of self/tendency
knowledge of instrument

feelings in performance

nerves/confidence
enjoyment
practice/preparation

Tom	well I think it's, it's a case of, once you, once you know how something's supposed to sound, it will generally sound as close to that as humanly possible, if you start a piece a bit slow, but you know, you know how it goes and you know it's normally a little bit faster, chances are it will probably speed up
RP	mm, so didn't listen to the recording help with that? I don't think I ever listened to that middle movement, I think I only ever listened to the first one. Do you remember listening to the,
Tom	I think I only listened to the first one as well
RP	yeah, isn't that funny. Cos we never went to the recording and thought ooh how did they do it, did we. So sometimes things have to be a bit of a struggle with yourself about, you have to like, have a struggle with yourself about, something like speed,
Tom	mm
RP	cos it's not always, how it feels, easiest to play or right, to play, cos that bit has turned out to be, you have to be determined
Tom	well I think, we wanted to speed up initially because that's how we, we'd become comfortable playing it
RP	mm
Tom	because it felt uncomfortable to play, slow, but I don't know whether that's kind of part of it, that it is, a bit of an un, it's, uncomfortable to listen to
RP	yeah, yeah now then
Tom	compared to like the very diatonic first and last sections
RP	yeah
Tom	it's very, like,
RP	it's a bit shocking isn't it
...	
Tom	I think the last movement's quite showy offy, it's,
RP	I love the aggressiveness now, I really really like that
Tom	mm, well it's written *furioso* isn't it
RP	yeah. So how did you think the performance went? I mean I know you've told me all this but just say it for the tape
Tom	I think it went really well
RP	why?
Tom	I think, I was ready for the performance, I felt ready, to play, erm, I felt like my clarinet was working quite well, I don't know, I, I felt, for, probably the first time, I felt quite comfortable in a performance situation
RP	mhm
Tom	and, I think it was due to preparation, I think because we'd prepared well, I felt a lot more, steady, and, ok let's just do this
RP	did you feel more comfortable than you did in May?
Tom	yeah, a lot more, well, in May I had,
RP	although you loved that piece
Tom	yeah, but I think that was part of why I was uncomfortable because I loved the piece so much, I didn't want, I wanted to do the piece justice
RP	aww, which you did!
Tom	so, well, fortunately yeah, but, I was nervous because it knew there were bits that I struggled with,
RP	mm
Tom	and I knew that I'd be gutted if I got them wrong
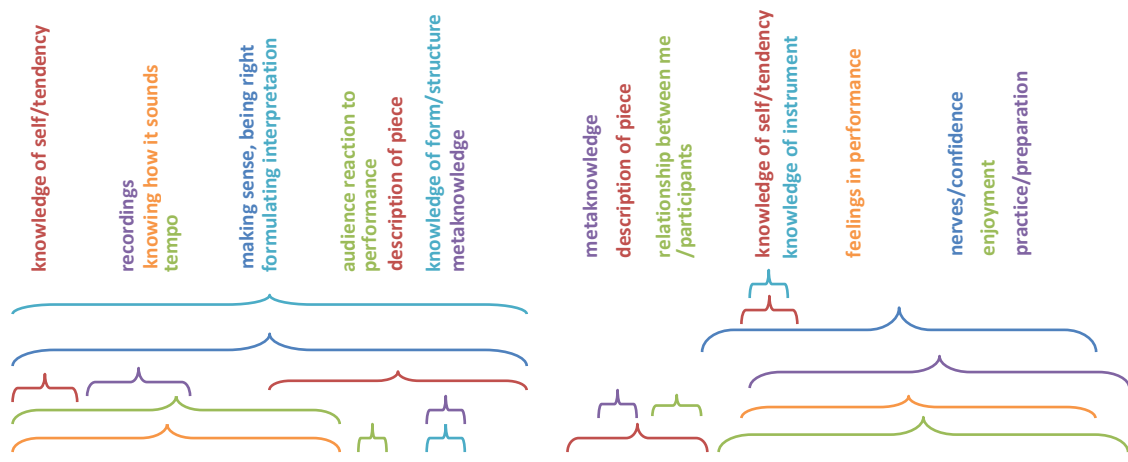
Before developing firm ideas about how codes link together, during this first orienting phase of coding they are simply organised alphabetically. Once a set of data has been analysed, it is possible to order the codes in different, more meaningful ways. For purely practical reasons (keeping track of existing codes and allocating new quotations to them) and to begin thinking about developing overarching relationships between the codes, codes are grouped according to 'macro' concepts such as *Musical elements* or *Relationships.* The exact 'definitions' of the codes are flexible in these early stages, as they are defined and redefined, with the addition of new quotations or their division into subtly different sub-codes, until the end of the set of interview/rehearsal coding. The kinds of memo-making and data display encouraged by grounded theory (Glaser 1998) are useful in deciding how to organise related codes into concepts. For example, codes such as tone, tempo and articulation might be included in an umbrella code addressing the elements to consider in preparing music. Clearly, the conceptualisation of these relationships is entirely dependent on the researcher's theoretical orientation; another researcher might add more codes to the same content, or organise the codes differently.

Table A in Appendix II shows the four initial codeframes constructed from the first analysed data, the interviews and rehearsals with the two main participants (Mark and Tom). Codes are shown organised by numbers of occurrences of each code, and alphabetically thereafter.

As Hammersley (1992) points out, the conventional distinctive stance of qualitative versus quantitative is not a simple dichotomy. One may select a combination of positions based along more than one dimension, depending on the purposes and circumstances of the research, rather than one's methodological or philosophical commitments. So, although the data collection methods in this study reflect the qualitative tradition, it was possible to produce some simple frequency tables, using very crude quantitative measures. These tables were not intended to provide rigorous statistical data; they served more to show where any striking difference occurred between one situation and another. It is possible to see immediately, for example, that some topics arise frequently, whereas others do not. Tempo is mentioned thirty-seven times across two rehearsals with Tom, whereas he only ever mentions scales or other patterns once. Meanwhile, in interviews, he only mentions tempo four times across three interviews. This may show that tempo is a contextual factor when rehearsing, rather than a topic which naturally merits discussion.

Another set of tables (Table B, Appendix II) was generated to explore transcripts of interviews and rehearsals for anything salient about the number of times a particular theme occurs, and the percentage of the interview or rehearsal taken up with each theme, the calculation based

on word count as a percentage of the total number of words. It emerges that almost two-fifths of the interview with Ben (see Table B3) concerned matters relating to audience, mentioned eight times during the interview; eleven mentions were made of enjoyment, totalling nearly 16% of talk. Conversely, Will was very concerned with how performances are assessed: almost a quarter of talk during his two interviews related to this topic (see Table B2). The most frequently mentioned code for Will's interviews is teacher/tutor involvement/input; Ben, however, never mentions tutors, and mentions his teacher three times. These facts may, of course, be entirely down to chance, and on another occasion the situation may have been different. However, knowing the two students, I could suggest that these numbers do roughly reflect their attitudes: Ben was very confident in his own ability and sure about the purpose of his performance, which was to enjoy himself and provide enjoyment for his audience, whereas Will had a much greater determination to discover how to do well in the assessment with reference to the agents who would be assessing him.

b) Coding subsequent data

Following coding of the four primary data sets (from rehearsals and interviews with the two main participants), the trio rehearsal data, and data from the three other main participants were analysed. I devised new codeframes for each student and each context; many of the same codes were needed, along with new ones. (Further codeframes are available to an interested reader.) The same principles applied: I examined the dialogue and text allocating extracts to descriptors. As with the primary data sets, these concepts encapsulated my interpretation of the meaning of each segment of data, but in the context of a conceptual framework now so influenced by my time in the field, and by my preliminary analysis, that I was confident in their validity. In total, ten interviews and twenty-four rehearsals with these students were subjected to the detailed coding process described above, forming an extensive library of codes.

Since analysis of the first data set included raw data with each instance of each code, it was always possible, even further on in the process, to return to earlier coding, and to cross reference the exact content of a code. This enabled me to check that I was using the same working definition of a particular code, or the same reasoning for including a code in a particular group or family of codes. If I introduced a new code, I always revisited previously analysed data to see if that code could be used elsewhere.

c) *Second stage coding*

Once this preliminary coding was completed, a second stage of analysis began, searching for links between the alphabetically-organised codeframes and organising them into larger 'families'. Here, the 'Outlining' facility became invaluable. One signpost of a relationship between codes is where two codes are frequently linked by common extracts, since this indicates some connection between the descriptors. In other instances, my conceptual framework assisted in forming code clusters, as I considered how I had grown to associate the different issues in my thoughts over the fieldwork period.

3. Amalgamating codeframes

The following diagram (Figure 3.3) shows the code families formed from an amalgamation of all the sets and subsets of codes derived from the interviews and rehearsals with Mark, Tom, Will, Ben, Liz and the trio.[19] To me, with my knowledge of the field and of the background to this study, this was the most useful way of disposing the topics and subtopics which I was identifying. Another analyst may look at these sets and subsets and arrange them slightly, or substantially, differently. Another researcher would be at liberty to examine the data from a different angle and to theorise in a different way. However, such potential insights from other analysts would turn this into a different study altogether.

It was interesting to rediscover, on rereading my notes, a comment I wrote when amalgamating the codeframes from these different students:

N.B. Interestingly, I combined Liz's, Will's, Ben's and Tom's codeframes; by the time I got to Mark's, most of them were there already; the only ones I added are asterisked.

Of 102 codes, only three were new when Mark's codes were added. This shows the consistency of topics as they appeared across students.

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[19] Subcodes are shown in full later in this chapter, in Figure 3.4.

Figure 3.3: Code families derived from interview/rehearsal data. First attempt at data reduction, December 2011

Methodological
Reasons for selecting particular respondents
Awareness of tape recorder
Interruptions to interview/rehearsal
Me talking about my research
Relationship with me
Me rewording/checking my understandings

Enjoyment

Music as social activity
Makes rehearsals fun when other people are nice
Chamber groups
Contrast between solo and ensemble work
Relationship with pianist/accompanist
Contrast with other academic subjects
Difficulties when too many people or divided opinions
Orchestras
Ensemble itself; parts fitting within whole
Less chance to 'wing it' in ensemble; got to be better prepared as unit

Departmental/university/student-specific issues
Modules
Time/work commitments
Department politics
Assessment/marking issues
Difficulties with practical setups
Teaching methods
University choir/orchestra
'Higher' authorities/influences
Drama vs music students

Aspects of self
Knowledge of self   Background   Aspirations

Audience
Audience enjoyment
Visual aspects of performance; body language
Audience feeling 'comfortable'
'Live' music – why go to concerts?

Areas of knowledge
Student world   University world
Composers   Genres
Professional performers   Different elements of music
Repertoire   Research
The 'ingredients' of music   Associations/quasi-topics
(dynamics, tempo etc.)   Practical vs theoretical aspects
Instruction books for   Techniques/issues relating to one's
particular instruments   own instrument
Professional musical   'Gears' of performance; functional
world/conservatoires –   adequacy vs performance
other musical   Musical development/progress
environments   including importance of singing
Music theory including

Elements of music(al production) that require consideration when preparing a piece
Tone   Intonation   Phrasing   Balance
Tempo   Breathing   Colours   Rhythm
Articulation Dynamics   Ornamentation   Ensemble
Acoustics   Timbre (Will– stops)

Performance itself
Performance aspects   Practising aspects   Interpretation

Philosophy
What is a 'piece of music'?   What is music for?
What is the composer-performer   What is performance?
relationship?   Composing for own
Musicianship? What is it? (my question)   pleasure
Music vs other arts e.g. literature

V. Reducing the coded data

After coding and amalgamating the different sets of data, the process began of reducing the coded raw data to an account of the data. At this stage, the different data sets were explored separately and together for patterns, trends or themes, examining each code and code family, still trying to avoid interpretation, simply attempting to summarise what it was telling me. When departing from the original dialogue or text for the first time, I made sure every piece of the coded data was accounted for. This is the point at which the qualitative researcher begins to subsume the particular into the general (Miles and Huberman, 1984), looking for where specific events might be instances of general phenomena. This process is really the first step in drawing conclusions from the data, the first narrowing down of the data since its collection. Frequent referral to the research focus and research question were necessary, bearing in mind that my conceptual framework, and the assumptions and values inherent within that, would be driving towards the study's conclusion.

VI. Confirming analysis

The researcher's theorising involves exploring relationships between concepts, rather than merely producing descriptions about people and phenomena. The potentially different and disparate elements of the findings (themselves clustered up from even more scattered fragments of data) need to be scoured for links and contrasts, using factors to establish relations between general themes. At this point it becomes necessary to impose some controls on the interpretation of the data in order to promote its reliability and validity. Miles and Huberman (1984) suggest several 'tactics' for confirming research findings. I related these to my data analysis as follows.

1. Check for representativeness

Miles and Huberman describe the danger of becoming a prisoner of one's own emerging comprehension system, in that one's understanding of a phenomenon accumulates gradually from within, rather than being an 'objective' view from without. Safeguards need to be built against self-delusion. To counteract this, all data were used, not just dramatic data, or data which suited a particular pre-existing theory of mine (this is a compelling reason why the literature review is written up at such a late stage in this type of project). I did not rely merely on data from accessible and elite informants, but sought out a variety of students, and can compare the sort of information that I gleaned from my primary participants with that which I gathered from the supporting participants. The transcriptions and write-ups which were not coded in minute detail served as confirmatory/contradictory material as theory was emerging from the initial substantial sets of codes and conceptualisations.

2. Check for researcher effects

Miles and Huberman describe a two-way bias: that of the researcher on the setting and that of the setting on the researcher. This bias cannot be avoided, and should be taken into account. A long stay in the field, which in my case was the whole academic year, helps (somewhat paradoxically) reduce the researcher's effect on the site. I explained openly and honestly my purposes in carrying out the study, giving no-one any reason to feel uncomfortable with my presence, and, because of my previous associations, I felt that any effect I might have on the participants would give no cause for concern in terms of generating either ethical or methodological problems. As for the effects on the setting on me, I did everything possible to avoid taking for granted what I was seeing: I spent time away from the setting, both at home and in other environments; throughout the year, I made fieldnotes and memos to keep track

of my perceptions of the situation, either within transcripts and accounts (always using square brackets for these commentaries) or as separate documents.

3. Make contrasts/comparisons

I did not assume that I would find agreement, such that when it appears through the data I am confident it is not due to my own bias. Involving a variety of students threw different lights on the issues at stake, and when accord is found in the data it makes the findings both more interesting and more valid. It is equally interesting to look at data from different sources, or from different points in the year, and to discover agreement. Where differences exist, they are preserved in the account of findings, not ignored.

4. Triangulation

The major strength of case study data collection is the opportunity to triangulate different sources of evidence (Yin, 1994). Cross-checking materials is vital, particularly in the case of observation where there is a potential risk of inferring meaning from a supposedly 'closer' understanding of the context gained through participation or proximity. This classic verification technique was applied in the current study as far as possible, comparing data from a multitude of sources as described above to establish a more accurate and complete account of social processes (Foster, 1996; Mac an Ghaill, 1991; Yin, 1994). For example:

- *Cross-student checks:* interviews with the students separately would reveal similarities in their theorising as well as important differences;

- *Cross-time checks:* interviews, rehearsals, observations and documentary evidence over the course of a whole academic year allowed tracking of whether theories and knowledge maintain their power over time, or whether changes occur in the students' thinking over that same period;

- *Cross-location checks:* data from rehearsals, interviews, observations and documents could be used alongside each other and against the background of the whole departmental context, of which I was aware through general interaction with students and others, and against any scenarios reported in the literature.

5. Reliability and validity

The strongest support for the authenticity of respondents' behaviour and speech is ubiquitous in evidence from the transcriptions. Interview data frequently underline that the participants were fully aware of the interview situation, and of the tape recorder which I used, but that this did not generally impede the freedom with which they expressed themselves. Most students

were totally uninhibited during interviews and rehearsals, behaving and speaking completely as they would in any situation. I knew this because I spent time with them outside the research context. My relationship with them was relaxed, due, I believe, to their knowing me as a student myself, and knowing that I had been in their shoes very recently, and there was a mutual trust which secured their openness and honesty. I played the piano for them and with them, sang in the same ensembles, conversed with them at length over a multitude of subjects, and they were fully at ease with me. Full transcriptions of interviews and rehearsals can be made available to the reader; however, the extracts included within this report do provide extensive illustration of this.

The situation which developed within our trio rehearsals was especially interesting, because the two students at first were very conscious of the presence of the tape recorder, drawing attention to it, displaying curiosity about what I was going to do with the recordings, unsure about what they were 'allowed' to say. This extract is from our first rehearsal:

Mark	you think sudden? I personally don't. But that's cos it's a bitch of a part to do sudden.
Tom	don't swear! (gesturing to the tape)
RP	well, the thing is Mark we can… it's fine! (laughing) We can just, in 3 weeks, 4 weeks, when we've played it loads of times it'll feel different anyway, and we'll kind of know how it works best. Let's do that once more.

Trio rehearsal, 22/10/07

Very quickly the tape recorder and the recording process became part of the furniture, and conversations within rehearsals showed that they were paying no attention whatsoever to the fact that their words were being recorded, or, if they were aware of it, they did not mind. There was even some sending up of the recording and transcription process by all of us, which also illustrates how relaxed everyone was in each other's company, and the sort of banter and horseplay which the rehearsals contained.

There were just a few instances of self-control due to the tape being on. Sometimes I did not have to guess or judge when this happened, as the participants themselves flagged up their awareness of the tape:

[student's name], is a total, I won't say anything rude cos you're on tape

Liz, interview, 20/11/07

One student, a second-year pianist with whom I played piano duets, began the experience of being a research participant very quietly. My fieldnotes record that:

I put the tape on for the first time with Ann and she is a bit shy. She is quiet and nods rather

> than speaking! …[a little later] I notice Ann is being quiet and say "you are allowed to talk!" and she shakes her head. I laugh.
>
> *Ann, rehearsal, 16/10/07*

Again, even a month later (though this was only the second time I had produced the tape recorder during a rehearsal, because I knew she was not keen), my notes record:

> Ann is still not saying much in front of the tape player
>
> *Ann, rehearsal, 14/11/07*

However, a later transcript, of a rehearsal which took place on the evening before we participated in a masterclass with professional duettists, is full of vibrant conversation, and detailed and careful work, and reveals a much more accurate and typical picture of the student's character and musical ideas. This is a perfect example of how a student who had been a little wary of the tape-recording aspect of the study put aside all concerns on that score when it was time for the business of working out together the musical detail of our performance, about which we were very excited, of a piece of music which we played with enormous pleasure (Poulenc's Sonata for Two Pianos):

Ann	… you know that chord, when I start off (she plays her first line) it goes really quiet
RP	on the first bit?
Ann	yeah. It goes really quiet, when we play the chord together
RP	on the 3 4 ? I wonder if we should do that?
Ann	let's try it. Cos it sort of fades out, but then it's like a pause sort of thing, well it plays that and then you come back with your (plays my next chord)
RP	yeah. I think it's worth tailing off at the end of the phrase in order to be fortissimo again
Ann	it makes, it makes your bar better, cos it's like fading off like it's ending and then you just go plonk again and it's like, got it!
I laugh	
Ann	well it's like an idea isn't it
RP	yes
Ann	but the way,
RP	yes, it is, it's like, oh yes! There we are! OK well, it's entirely up to you isn't it, what you do with that phrase, and I'll just try and match what you do within your phrase. See you've got an accent actually and I haven't, so I tend not to play my, what I've got, as loud as what you've got anyway.
Ann	I mean I think it should be like marked with, *mf*.
RP	mmm
Ann	the way it sounded anyway, and it sounded pretty good. …and another thing I think we should do a bit more, is, you probably already do it, it's a real pain because now we'll be really frustrated cos of this piano being useless, we're never actually gonna get to do it

RP	which bit?
Ann	erm, (singing) der der der,
RP	we can try it, weren't we doing it before?
Ann	erm, I dunno, I've been thinking about desperately trying to do it today, but I just couldn't. You know the bits where the other person's got the tune?
RP	after 8 are you looking at now?
Ann	mm …you have that (she plays my line, the A tune over the staccato quavers) and I have
RP	oh I see that yes
Ann	no, I have, you don't have that, you have that but I've got (she plays her part)
RP	well I think there are two tunes actually, I think it's like a counterpointy thing. Don't you?
Ann	mmm
RP	my tune is (I play it) [?]
Ann	I think it's a very tired piece
RP	a very tired piece? Well you might be right. Well it's just come after that (I play the first bit of the second movement)
Ann	so he's having a rest for God's sake. And then it's followed by that crazy thing (the fourth movement)
RP	yeah you're right, it is, OK. Well let's play it in a tired way then
Ann	well I am
Rehearsal with Ann, 21/11/07	

The participants were, without exception, willing and helpful, to the point of offering me pieces of evidence without my asking for them:

Liz	and that was the bit which spelt 'organ', which I have notated on the score. Would you like to see the score?
RP	yes I would
She gets it out	
Liz, interview, after composition performance, January 2008	

The next extract shows how Will knows me well enough to be able to judge the sort of music I would know about, and illustrates his willingness to explain his influences and demonstrate the techniques within a piece he had composed for choir and organ, and which the Chapel Choir (of which I was a member) had performed, knowing that I would understand his references to particular composers and techniques:

Will	…I don't know if you, even, if you actually looked at it but all the kind of, chromatic inversions within those chords
RP	no I didn't look at it that carefully
(we had performed it a couple of weeks earlier)	
Will	every, the second line of every verse, it started off with a triad didn't it, and then, all the other harmonies were generated from the chromatic inversions from the,

	starting from the middle note of the triad
RP	right, show me, because I happen to have it in my bag
Will	oh right
I get it out	
RP	I think
Will	I'll show you. So, this, this is a Pärt-y sort of (plays an ascending scale over a fifth) generate those notes, from those (playing descending scale over a fifth)
RP	yes, yeah
Will	so this is this, (plays the inversion) so this is this (plays) [?] with a kind of Howells-esque, (plays a pair of descending thirds) you know that moment in Coll Reg where it goes, (plays)
RP	yep
Will	you know, just like that, but anyway, this bit that I was gonna show you, (flicking through) these bits, (plays) from that C, up a tone, (plays) down a semitone (plays), then just a chromatic inversion of that
Will, interview, 3/06/08	

There were also instances of my explicitly checking that I had understood what respondents were saying by rewording their comments, and answering questions about my research:

RP	…a lot of what of you've said actually is to do with what the composer was intending wasn't it in terms of timbre and,
Will	yeah
RP	erm, and you've talked about Buxtehude being improvisatory and, what you get in the score isn't necessarily, or he intended it to be improvisatory,
Will	mm
RP	but that Messiaen was very strict with what he wanted
Will	yeah, certainly registration-wise
Will, interview, 6/06/08	

Dave often had an agenda of his own to pursue, as well as what I had in mind, and the interviews with him were fully two-way conversations, with him asking me as many questions, about musical and non-musical issues alike, as I was asking him. Here, Dave is asking for my advice and feedback on a rehearsal of his piece in which I was taking part:

RP	you said you wanted to pick my brains about something
Dave	I wanted you to give me some help with rehearsals
RP	right, well, in what way?
Dave	structure, how, how I should go through sections,
RP	well it was very useful actually going through, you know, when you said, oh we're gonna go through such and such a section, cos it's quite a big piece, and it would be quite daunting just to be presented with the whole piece in one go
Dave	yeah
RP	so it was quite good when you said oh look, let's go through, but then also sometimes

	it is useful to go through the whole thing just to see how bits fit together
Dave	mmm
RP	but it would have been a bit much to try and get that,
Dave	I think that piece would have collapsed if we'd,
RP	yeah, it would have collapsed wouldn't it, we'd have had to keep picking it up again, here there and everywhere
Dave	I can erm, are you recording this conversation?
RP	yeah, is that alright?
Dave	yeah, that's fine, erm,
RP	I also want to talk to you about that concert, by the way, the concert that we did a couple of weeks ago, and how you felt about the performance
Dave	oh yeah, we can talk about all of that. Do you want to, yeah, how can you help me then, with rehearsals?

Dave, interview, 28/11/07

This selection of extracts illustrates the different natures of the participants, and yet the commonality is their absolute acceptance of the process of research going on whilst we converse about a multitude of topics on a supremely equal basis. There is no sense of mistrust or unease; rather, the students are supportive of the research, helpful in my quest for data, interested in exploring the topics which I introduce, patient in giving their time, and, in the final extract, eager to share experiences in an interpretation of the research as a two-way process.

VII.　　First attempts at accounting for the data

As I was attempting to make sense of the data, and to work out the relationships between the different codes and code families, they seemed to fall naturally into one, or a combination, of three areas: 'Music', 'Self' and 'Agency', which I defined as below. I went through my coding lists and allocated one or more of 'M', 'S' and 'A' to each code and subcode (see Figure 3.4 below).

1. Music

Into this category come all the topics which relate purely to music, and which exist without the influence or involvement of either of the other two categories. For example, topics relating to the philosophy and psychology of music and historical and analytical musicology come into this category, as does music theory, and elements of the subset of musical 'ingredients' which are considered when analysing music: tone, intonation, tempo, articulation, breathing, dynamics, phrasing, colours, timbre and ornamentation.

One topic about which I asked specifically was "What is music?" or "What is a piece of music? Where does it exist?" This was something I began to think about myself as the research and my reading spiralled forward, and I began to ask students for their opinions on it a few months into the fieldwork.

2. Self

Here we consider elements relating to the students personally, and which exist outside their relationship with music or with other agents: their ability, their personality and nature, their background and education, and the influences and experiences they carry with them (so excluding those which are currently active), their preferred ways of learning and their typical reactions to situations.

3. Agents

This third category encapsulates any agency which can exist independently of the students' selves and of music but which has an impact or an influence on the students. There are several subsets of agents: departmental tutors, teachers, examiners and other factors linked to the university or the department, including situations and contexts such as seminars, module requirements, assessment criteria, examinations, student handbooks; fellow students and other peers; audiences; and, finally, professional musicians and the professional musical world.

Figure 3.4: First attempt at data reduction, December 2011

Methodological

Awareness of tape recorder	Me explaining my research
Relationship with me	Reasons for selecting particular respondents
Interruptions to interview/rehearsal	Me rewording/checking my understandings

Enjoyment: is this a thread running through lots of other themes?

Music as social activity

Orchestras **MSA**

Chamber groups **MSA**

Rehearsals fun when people are nice **MSA**

Difficulties when too many people or
    divided opinions **MSA**

Contrast with other academic subjects **MA**

Less chance to 'wing it' in ensemble; must be
    better prepared as unit **MSA**

Contrast between solo and ensemble work
    MSA

Ensemble itself; parts fitting within whole
    MSA

Relationship with pianist/accompanist **SA**

Departmental/university/student-specific issues

Time/work commitments **SA**

Teaching methods **SA**

   Seminars/tutorials/video sessions **SA**

   Lectures **SA**

Assessment/marking issues

   Heads in score **MSA**

     "The external had no score and
      appeared to be enjoying himself!"

   *Negativity perceived in marking
    methods* **MSA**

   Apparent inconsistencies **MSA**

    Of experiences of marks

    Of placement of examiners at
     recitals

    Of venues themselves

    (Perceived) differences between
     singers/instrumentalists

   *Examiners' knowledge/experience of
    different instruments/voice* **MA**

   Marking criteria **MSA**

Department politics **SA**

Difficulties with practicalities **MSA**

Drama vs music students **MSA**

University choir/orchestra

   Experience of **MSA**

   Sectionals **MSA**

   *Singing: good for development as a
    musician* **MS**

'Higher' authorities/influences

   Teachers

    Influence/advice **MSA**

   Tutors **MSA**

   Masterclasses **MSA**

   Assessors/examiners **MSA**

   Peers as instructors **MSA**

Modules

   Course content **MA**

    Preparation for career **MSA**

   Different elements of music **MSA**

    First year obligation to do
     performance even for those who
     blatantly dislike performing **MSA**

   Criticisms/suggestions for improvement
    MSA

Audience

Visual aspects of performance; body language **M(S)A**	Audience enjoyment **MSA**
Audience feeling 'comfortable' **MSA**	'Live' music: why go to concerts? **MSA**

Aspects of self

Knowledge of self
  Involvement/commitment/time investment MS
  Learning
    Self-criticism **S**
    Knowing how we learn best **S**
    Knowing how we like to practise **MS**
    Learning from peers informally, sometimes
      more than in formal settings **SA**
    Coping with/learning from mistakes **MSA**
  Musicianship (what is this?)
    Adam inadvertently defines as putting
      yourself into it **MS**
  Ability/strengths **MS/S**
  *Suitedness to types of music/
    pieces/instrument/singing* **MS**
  What you enjoy **(M)S**
  Difficulty = challenge
    Showing what you can do **MSA**
  What you find difficult/need to practise most **MS**
  *Own interpretation versus others' – how strong is
    your own version?* **MSA**
  Reaction to being assessed **MSA**
  *Singing/voice as extension of self (but to Tom so
    is clarinet)* **MSA**
  Progress/development or lack of **MSA**
  *Awareness of experiences that have made you
    what you are*
    Drama modules **MSA**
    Experiences with orchestras **MSA**
  Comparisons with other students **MSA**

Personal characteristics
    Concentration span/distraction
      potential **S**
    Habits/tendencies **MS/S**
    Laziness/hard working potential **MS/S**
      Influences choice of repertoire **MSA**
    Nerves/confidence **MSA**
    Needs
      Outlet for creativity **MS**
    Worries
      *Not feeling comfortable when
        underprepared* **(M)SA**
    Stress
      Situations **(M)SA**
      Fellow students **(M)SA**
      Tutors **(M)SA**
    Life stage
  Composing as a performer **MS**
Background
  GCSE/A-level experiences **MS**
  AB exams **MS**
  Experiences **MS**
  Influences **MS**
Aspirations
  Career/future professional plans/hopes
    MSA
  Short-term goals
    Getting good marks/aiming for a first
      MSA
    Being spotted and booked to sing/play
      MSA

Elements of music(al production) that require consideration when preparing a piece

  Tone **M**
  Intonation **M**
  Articulation **M**
  Balance **MA**
  Ensemble **MA**
  Rhythm **M**
  Breathing **M**
  Dynamics **M**
  Phrasing **M**
  Colours **M**
  Acoustics **MA**

Timbre (Will – stops) **M**
Ornamentation **M**
Tempo **M**
  *Tom's theory of tempo: there is a natural
    tempo for all music which it will find
    by itself. Is tempo at the heart of
    music? but then what of Will's
    organs? Mechanical action goes at
    different speeds; buildings resound to
    influence chosen speed.*

Areas of knowledge

Student world
  Other students' behaviour **(M)SA**
  Other students' ability/knowledge **MSA**
  Other students' opinions/support which are valued **MSA**
University world
  Modules **MA**
  Tutors **MA**
  Marking **MSA**
  Differences perceived between instrumentalists/singers **M(S)A**
Different elements of music
  Performance **MS**
  Historical/analytical **MS**
  Backstage/scenery etc. **MS**
  Music tech **MS**
  Functional (church) **MSA**
Composers **MS**
Professional performers **MSA**
Professional musical world/conservatoires/ other musical environments **MSA**
Repertoire
  What is well-known **MSA**
  What is difficult **MS**
  Audience expectations **MSA**

'Gears' of performance; functional adequacy vs performance **MSA**
The 'ingredients' of music (dynamics, tempo etc.) **MS**
Instruction books for particular instruments **MSA**
Techniques/issues relating to own instrument **MS**
  Diaphragm control **MS**
  Breathing **MS**
  Bowing **MS**
  Tonguing **MS**
  Fingering **MS**
  Range (voice) **MS**
  Organ stops/action **MS**
  Acoustics of particular buildings **MSA**
  Scales/patterns **MS**
  Idiosyncrasies: clarinet never in tune on that note; tone on throat notes **MS**
Research **MS**
Music theory including harmony **MS**
Musical development/progress including importance of singing **MS**
Practical vs theoretical aspects **MS**
Associations/quasi-topics **MS**
Genres **MS**

Philosophy

What is a 'piece of music'? **M**
What is the composer-performer relationship? **MS**
  Ben says performer more important – more than 50% is performer **MS**
  Tom believes some composers leave more than others to the performer **MS**
What is performance?
  It's "about me" (Ben) **MS**
Musicianship? What is it? (my question)
  Putting yourself into it **MS**
Composing for own pleasure (Dave) **MS**
Music vs other arts e.g. literature **MSA**

What is music for?
  Beauty/pleasure **MSA**
  Entertainment **MSA**
  Expression/outlet **MS**
    Memories **MS**
    Emotion (or inner expression e.g. suffering – blues – jazz) **MSA**
    Message/story **MSA**
  Spirituality
    To please God **MSA**
  Functional/practical; but even this is underlining <u>pleasing God and being beautiful</u> **MSA**

Performance itself

Performance aspects

Performance vs assessment; psychological effect of being assessed vs concerts **MSA**

Feelings of elation when it goes well/ feeling bad when it goes wrong **MS**

Ability to cope when it goes wrong/ unexpected problems

Improvising/Hiding errors **MSA**

Learning from it **MS**

Communication (of what?) **MSA**

'Flow'

Being "into" music/"going with it" **MS**

Being gripped by music **MS**

Relaxation/Ease **MS**

Being ready, comfortable/knowing you know what you're doing/ "knowing" the music **MS**

Balance between instruments **MSA**

Drama **MSA**

Movement/co-ordination of players **MSA**

Putting oneself into it **MS**

Being oneself (even more than reflecting composer) **MS**

Pulling it off/getting it right/being convincing **MSA**

Nerves/confidence

Functional music = no nerves/ performance = scary! **MSA**

Team things are less scary **MSA**

Trust, comfort **MSA**

Physical symptoms **MS**

Emotion - Can be reflected in body language, even in breathing **MSA**

Character

Reflecting character of music in one's person/stage manner **MSA**

Interpretation

Faithfulness to the score; composers; markings vary - some scores highly/ precisely marked e.g. Poulenc **MS**

Degrees of freedom or artistic licence/ different attitudes towards freedom of performer depending on period/ composer of particular piece – what is not in the score **MS**

Authenticity: scholarly ideas of what is authentic change over time **MS**

Being oneself; putting oneself into music; comfortable with how you're playing it **MS**

Interpretation, continued

Pandering to tutor's/assessor's taste/ opinions **MSA**

Historical/ stylistic concerns **MS**

Characterisation (or is this subordinate to a different thing?) Deciding character **MS**

Planning aspects

Planning recital programme

Avoiding well-known pieces **MSA**

Knowing tutors' opinions **MSA**

Pacing oneself **MSA**

Knowing what is up your sleeve **MSA**

Practising aspects

Attitudes towards practising

Boring/fun aspects **MS**

Effort : reward ratio **MS**

Feeling of making progress **MS**

Singers vs instrumentalists **MS**

Self-criticism/self-awareness **S**

Preparation: feeling of being prepared, not leaving it to chance **MSA**

Listening to recordings **MSA**

Knowing how it goes; getting used to how it's supposed to sound; familiarisation **MS**

Knowing how solo/piano part fit **MS**

Making sure things won't go wrong **MS**

Preparing in case things go wrong **MS**

Playing vs practising

Different contexts: band/orchestra **MSA**

Aspects of practising

Slow practice **MS**

Practising tricky passages specifically **MS**

Special circumstances – organ – camera/conductor **MSA**

Runs **MS**

Mechanical practice **MS**

Spatial awareness **MS**

Muscle training/fitting under fingers/kinaesthetic memory/ tonguing/articulation **MS**

Auditory memory **MS**

Words: limericks/other memory aids **MS**

Visual learning (piano/violin) **MS**

Technique/technical development **MS**

Transposition **MS**

Counting/rhythm **MS**

Faith -It will come/It makes sense **MS**

Knowing from memory/committing to memory aren't the same **MS**

4. Interfaces between the areas

a) The interface between Music and Self

Put simply, this interface represents the students' interaction with music, be it playing music, composing music or even just thinking about music. Given a piece of music, a student might learn to play or sing it; or, a student composes a piece of music. This is the essence of what the student performers and/or composers *do*. During interviews, students mentioned the amount of musicking they do, and their engagement with as much music as possible. This area is a rich mine for potential theorising and will be examined in the *Findings* chapter.

b) The interface between Self and Agents

At this junction, the focus is on the ways in which students interact with the many people and contexts which surround them. This interaction does not necessarily involve music in any way, and the data contributing to this area of interest are therefore comparatively few. Much more data link Self, Agents and Music. However, data from this intersection must be included in the report, not ignored, as they are still part of the student experience of studying music at university.

- The main interaction between Self and Agents relates to interpersonal relationships, whether these involve music or not. One such relationship is that between instrumentalist/singer and accompanist. This relationship, which participants say they consider to be particularly important, needs to be one of trust and ease. In fact, I was accompanist to seven of the respondents in the study, and the other students knew me primarily in this role; I believe that my occupying this role was one of the reasons the students felt they could trust and be relaxed with me in the interview situation as well.

- There is also an interaction between self and teaching context, which can exist independently of any musical connection. The system of seminars, lectures and tutorials exists across university departments and is not particular to music, and its effect on the students therefore falls into this category. Teaching methods within the music department were often discussed in interviews, and belong in this section where they relate to non-musical aspects of teaching.

- Thirdly, interpersonal relationships between tutors and students come into this area, if each party is considered simply a person rather than a specifically *music* student or tutor/teacher. Departmental politics, where they exist, also belong here.

- Lastly there is the relationship between students and their peers. There are references to how students learn from their peers, sometimes more than from designated others (i.e. tutors and teachers). A substantial portion of interesting data also reveals how the respondents perceive other students, in terms of their behaviour, attitudes and ability. Knowledge about other students' ability in their musical pursuits comes into the intersection of the interlocking frameworks (see below), but in this segment of the data is knowledge about behaviour and attitudes that can be totally unrelated to music.

- Any stress felt by students can be put into this area if it is not related to music. Stress is caused by situations in which students find themselves, and by fellow students or tutors.

- The amount of time a student has is dependent on her commitments and choices within the context of the course she is on and therefore belongs in this section.

c) *The interface between Music and Agents*

Again, this section of the data yields but small amounts of information, since the students, when discussing how people and contexts interact with music, will usually make comments about how that interaction affects them, and therefore the subject enters the intersection of the interlocking frameworks (see below).

The main topics in this segment of the data are:

- modules, and the substance of the course content, set up by the tutors irrespective of the students;

- the lecturers themselves and their specialisms in relation to music in general and music at the university in particular;

- the perceived knowledge (or lack of it) which tutors and examiners have of different instruments or the voice, or of performance itself, and therefore the perceived qualifications of tutors to claim authority about a particular musical topic.

d) *The central interface between Music, Self and Agents*

At the central junction, all three areas intersect. This is where the music students, in their experience of musicking, are influenced and affected by situations, people and contexts. The richest portion of the data falls into this segment and will be considered in detail in the next chapter.

The categorisation of the code families into Music, Self and Agents was not an end in itself, but a step towards formulating an account of the findings. The next stage was to move away from the codes and text to begin a series of descriptions of what was being found.

VIII. Second stage accounting

The first writing about the findings now took place. Paragraphs were written about each topic and sub-topic, and examples sought from the transcriptions. At this stage, no attempt was yet being made to explain or theorise about the data; only an account of the topic was being made.

The next task was to examine this very detailed and specific spread of information, comprehensive as it was about the minutiae of the data, and try and make sense of what was emerging by way of themes or messages which could begin to respond to the research question. The following table (Figure 3.5) shows the new categorisation of ideas which seemed to be forming as the analysis proceeded.

Figure 3.5: Concepts used in second stage of analysis

Self		
The affective	**The intellectual**	**The interpretative**
• Enjoyment? Is this part of Self? Or separate? • Fairness, equality, consistency, in music as in life • Nerves: do these fit in here? Nerves stemming from fear of criticism or fear of loss of control *Instrument is extension of Self* *Piece of music is extension of Self (suiting)* *Performance is extension of Self, or extension of a communicating Self*	• Musical elements, history, theory etc. • Rep, instrument, including acoustics, physical space • Knowledge of self/ability. Own personal history/ability; how that impacts on current state • Practising • Knowledge of own future/aspirations	• Self and composer – composer + performer – NOT relational • Authenticity: in relation to one's Self, not to the composer or period of composition • Performer is all the more important if the visual is present, obviously (?)

Social, relational aspects of music		
Getting to know a piece in all aspects, just like getting to know a person. Could get to know a piece without knowing anything about composer • Getting it right • Tempo • Character	**Physical and spatial aspects of performance** • Spatial things– like in real life with relationships and body language which is meaningful as well as functional– distance between performers etc., camera/conductor (for organists) • Choreographing physical side of performance, singly or collectively • The case of organists	**Ensembles** • Relationships and dynamics in groups and partnerships. This extends to seminars too • Nerves not as bad
Composition: what composer wants to say/ convey through sound. Sound is vital concept here		**Audience and body language** • And when things go wrong… **Is a pleasing sound something social? Is it like saying something nice to someone? And ugly-sounding music (subjectively-defined) is like hearing something unpleasant?**

How this is all altered when in exam context?	
Not enjoying when head is in copy. How can you?	**Negative spin from this**– checking for mistakes rather than going into it expecting to be entertained and to enjoy it
Causes more nerves. Lack of control compared to essay writing	**Compare functional music** –no nerves

IX. First attempts at theory

In order to move forward from the identification of overarching topics toward the development of a theory, I returned to the two notions inherent in the research question, which interrogates the students' thinking about music performance, and how that thinking is influenced or affected by the particular institutional context of the assessed recital within the degree programme. It was necessary to create a structure with which to begin to account for the findings emerging in the topics identified through coding.

1. Students' thinking about performance

Within the students' thinking, as articulated (and thereby traceable) through the verbal expression of thoughts, a complex network of knowledge and theories was identified, which together drive and support the students' preparation for music performance, and performance itself. It was also possible to divide these notions into those which could be termed 'knowledge', and those which might be described rather as 'beliefs'. 'Knowledge' could be defined as factual items, which have been identified, codified, established and set out widely in literature and practice, and such as could be acquired by any person. 'Beliefs', on the other hand, may be more personal, deriving from individual experience and influenced by factors such as each student's own personality, background and context. Beliefs can include individual students' versions of seemingly objective knowledge. These sets of knowledge or belief are individual, personal and contextual, often imbued with emotional resonance and strong feelings, and inform the mechanisms by which students cope with complexity. I visualised a set of foundation knowledge, at ground level, on top of which there would be a set of more individually-related knowledge. The foundation knowledge is seen as broader than individualised knowledge, because it consists of potentially any knowledge relating to performance; for individual students, the set of knowledge, or beliefs, will be more restricted.

Using the concept of a framework, or scaffold, which had so helpfully supported theory development in my previous doctoral research, I developed a conceptualisation of the findings which allowed performance, and the interpretation which drives that performance, to stand centrally, whilst visualising the various areas of knowledge and belief feeding into interpretation and performance. It then became possible to construct an account of the study's findings. Figure 3.6 (below) illustrates in pictorial format this central pillar of activity, the preparation for performance, topped with the performance event itself, the whole process supported and nourished by the two sets of knowledge: foundation knowledge, and individualised knowledge or belief.

Figure 3.6: Visualisation of performance students' scaffolding knowledge frameworks
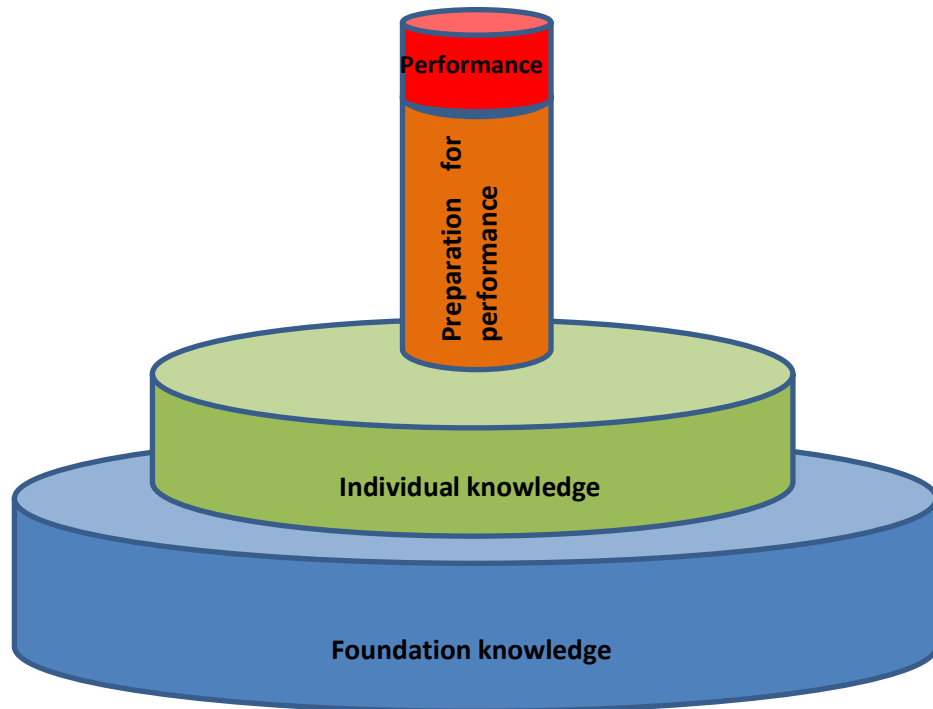
2. The impact of the institutional context on students' thinking about performance

From my prior theorising, resulting from my own experience, I knew that the institutional context of the music degree performance course would have an impact on the students' ways of thinking about performance. The research question itself acknowledges that the context does affect the students' thinking; there is no speculation as to whether it does or not. Nevertheless, it was not easy to go beyond the codes constructed from the transcriptions to a precisely articulated theory of what form that impact took, how it interacted with the frameworks of knowledge and belief which I had identified through the data, and how to begin to suggest an explanation of the situation.

This persistent reoccurrence of a theme, the embodiment, for me, of "the nagging issues which drive a curiosity within an overall theoretical sensibility of a particular kind" (Willis, 2000, p.114), was at the heart of the research question in this study. Common ground was identifiable throughout the data in what the students considered (though they might not express it in quite such explicit terms) to be the negative impact on their performance of the institutional context of the music degree course. The data showed some comments and opinions on teaching, on particular personalities amongst the staff, and on various aspects of the music degree course itself and its requirements. However, the data did not highlight anything as being as impactful as the matter of assessment.

It had emerged clearly through the data that tension existed between two performance arenas: performance when assessed, and performance when not assessed. There had to be something inherent in the difference between these two scenarios which would explain this. The salience of the institutional context, then, was distilled down to assessment. No account of the students' ways of thinking could stop short of addressing the widespread and consistent impact of issues relating to assessment, which the participants so often and so vehemently expressed. Though it was not readily fathomable, I felt sure that something deep-rooted, which went beyond individual students' preoccupations, was responsible for this tension.

Whilst grounded theory has it that a research report will be constructed almost automatically via the data coding process, with its various stages, the theorising through memo-writing, the collection of further data to support emerging theory, and the eventual amalgamation of theorising memos into a write-up, it was apparent to me that simply *reporting* the findings in this study would not provide an *explanation* for the findings emerging from the data. Yet another aspect of grounded theory – that of using one's reading of the literature as further

data – encouraged me to stand back, to regard the study's data holistically and in the light of research done by others.

Reading musicological texts throughout the study had revealed the dramatic and far-reaching changes which accompanied the advent of the 'new' musicology in the last years of the twentieth century, and of the fresh breezes of post-modernist thought which have blown through every branch of music research. Reading ethnographic studies had taught me additionally to look outside musicology for some kinds of explanation. Thirdly, I referred to the theorising in my previous doctoral research, which had also required a different approach to explanation, once the first theorising had been executed and the frameworks developed. In that study, I identified 'third variables', which came *through* the data rather than *from* the data. These variables were present in behaviour more than in words; in feelings rather than in facts; in the strength of belief, over and above belief itself. Transferring this approach to the current study, I was able to move from the data, the coding, the specifics of the findings about students' ways of thinking about performance, and towards a theory related to expectations and understandings, which owes much to philosophical, social and psychological aspects of education, of music and of creativity more broadly. The 'third variables' in the present study relate mainly to ideas of *self* and *enjoyment*, which consistently revealed themselves through the data to be crucial factors in the students' feelings and experiences of success or otherwise in performance. Furthermore, it is precisely the constraints of the context itself (being assessed within the performance module) which force the significance of these elements to be revealed.

Combining these supporting influences, I was then able to formulate a theory which might explain the tension felt by students between assessed and non-assessed performances. This tension had to involve musicological elements, because it related to music performance, but the students' social and affective responses to the phenomenon invited a potential sociological explanation related to changes in culture more widely. Further details of the findings, and a discussion of the findings and these possible explanations, are presented in subsequent chapters of this report.

X. Summary

This chapter has addressed the sequence of steps in the process of data analysis in this study. It has examined 'informal' analysis during fieldwork; the coding process; the amalgamation of codeframes and the reduction of coded data; ways of confirming analysis; descriptions of emerging topics; and initial theorising about the data in order to answer the research question.

This study was intended as a preliminary investigation into students' ways of thinking about music performance, with no prior expectations or predictions of what might be found, or of the complex inter-relationships which might be revealed. A network of knowledge and beliefs, providing a framework for the students' thinking, was discovered through data analysis, and a way of addressing the impact of the institutional context on students' thinking emerged.

The picture which has emerged from the study will be presented in the next chapter, and then discussed in relation to findings from other research. Another researcher might, of course, account for the data differently; the chapter which follows carries the distinction of being the best fit, of making the most sense, and of explicating the data with the greatest consistency at the present time to the present researcher.

Chapter 4: Findings

I.   Introduction

This chapter is intended to address the research question:

> **How does the institutional recital context, as part of the university degree course, affect music students' ways of thinking about performance?**

The process of data analysis, described at length in the previous chapter, led to a conceptualisation which envisages interpretation and preparation for music performance to be at the centre of students' thinking, with various areas of knowledge and belief feeding in either imperceptibly or explicitly. The visualisation encapsulated in Figure 3.7 above, which showed the structure of these relationships, is reproduced here in cross-section (see Figure 4.1 below), showing the central pillar of planning, preparation and performing activity, supported by the two frameworks of knowledge and belief. The arrows further suggest each area is in a dialogic relationship with the others, and indicate the dynamic and reciprocal influences of the different areas, the two supporting areas of knowledge and belief in their turn being modified, sometimes deeply and even dramatically, by each performing experience, whether public or private.

Figure 4.1: Cross-section of Figure 3.6
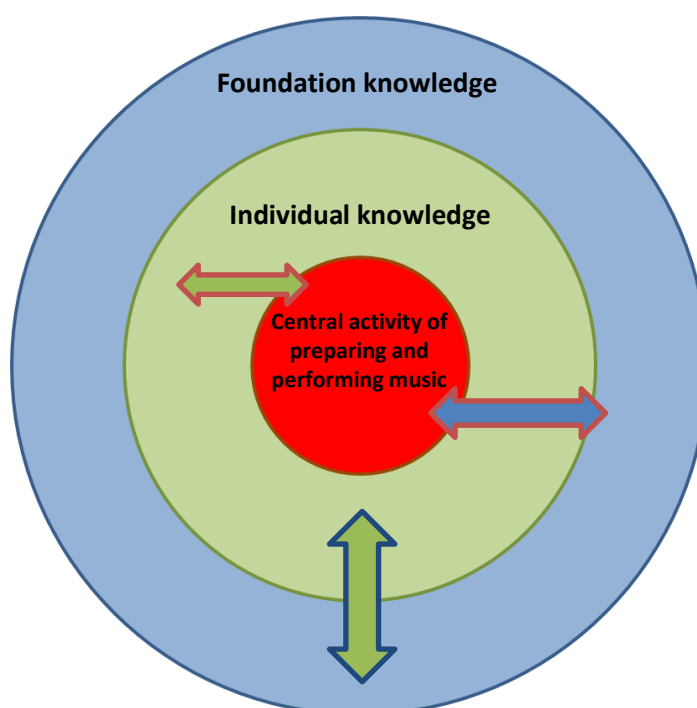
This chapter provides details of the findings of the project, cross-relating and inter-relating them in accordance with the organisational map suggested in the pictorial representations. The findings are also, where relevant, linked with previous research. Whilst the research orientation and theorising prior to fieldwork was bound to influence data collection and analysis, a thorough literature search was not undertaken until coding was complete, in line with the elements of grounded theory approach adopted in this study, whereby treatment of the qualitative data was influenced by an inductive approach, in order to avoid tying categories and themes to previous theory. Information from the literature was treated as further data, and is presented here as it relates to the current findings.

II.   An account of the students' networks of thinking

1. Overview

As described in the previous chapter, a preliminary naturalistic settling of data into the three elements of Music, Self and Agents evolved into a more sophisticated organisational scheme which was able to account fully for the findings of the study. The students' ways of thinking about performance, which comprise a network of thinking and belief systems, are not simple or easy to pin down; they are interwoven and complex. The students have at their disposal a series (or rather an amalgam, since they are non-linear) of different sets of knowledge or belief, all of which are necessary contributors to the purpose of preparing and delivering a music performance. The representations shown above in figures 3.7 and 4.1 are intended to illustrate the idea of a scaffold comprising these sets of knowledge and belief which support, frame and hold together the students' thinking as they traverse the path through their performance modules, and in performance more widely. The interrelationships also demonstrate reciprocal influence, flowing 'upwards' as knowledge and belief feed into practice and performance, and back as each experience of music performance, whether it be in rehearsal or recital, enables or requires that knowledge and belief to be modified as a result.

Through data analysis, three major areas were identified which correspond to relatively straightforward domains of thought or interest. Music, Self and Agents can be seen to have a rudimentary link to each set of knowledge. These can be called:

> **context knowledge:** students' knowledge of their situation, that is, of their particular university, the department, and their degree course, its requirements and deadlines, its teachers and opportunities (linked with Agents);

role knowledge: knowledge of how to be a student; how to learn, study, practise (in the case of music students) and progress; what to expect, as a student, from an educational establishment (linked with Self);

subject knowledge: knowledge about music theory, historical/analytical knowledge, knowledge about repertoire, composers, genres and so on (the largest of these three areas, and linked with Music).

All of these domains contain knowledge which can be objectified, and which has been widely documented. Students have been able to acquire this knowledge via 'public' means (e.g. school, university, individual study, books and journals/magazines, internet, radio/TV, conversations with others). The first part of this account of the findings addresses these three areas, examining links with existing literature where appropriate.

The second addresses a further set of knowledge domains, less easy to codify, and which are entirely dependent on each individual student's thinking and beliefs. These are the elements of a student's ways of thinking which have been built up via individual experiences, over time and through reflection. These knowledge sets nestle within the three 'public' knowledge sets mentioned above, in that the student is at a point where subject knowledge, context knowledge and role knowledge have served over time to form a foundation, on which they now build theories about themselves, music, and the relationship between the two. Music, Self and Agents are more integrated at this stage. These additional sets of knowledge and belief can be named as:

task and resources, in which the students construct a picture of what they aim to achieve, and gauge the particular abilities, attributes and other assets they need to achieve that end;

self-reflection and assessment of progress, which consists of monitoring the process and progress of practice and preparation for performance;

philosophical stance towards music, the students' beliefs about what music is, what it is for, and why they engage with it.

The second section of this chapter will tackle these areas as they relate to the students' preparation for music performances. Again, reference will be made to relevant literature.

A third section examines the central spine of all these intersecting sets of knowledge and belief, which reflects the essential part of a performance student's work: preparing a piece, or a programme, of music, for performance. As part of this, the importance of the concepts of

self and **enjoyment** will be considered, as they permeate throughout the data. The section concludes with an exploration of the particular performance context for which the students are preparing: the examination recital.

2. The three areas of foundation knowledge

Figure 4.2: The three sets of foundation knowledge
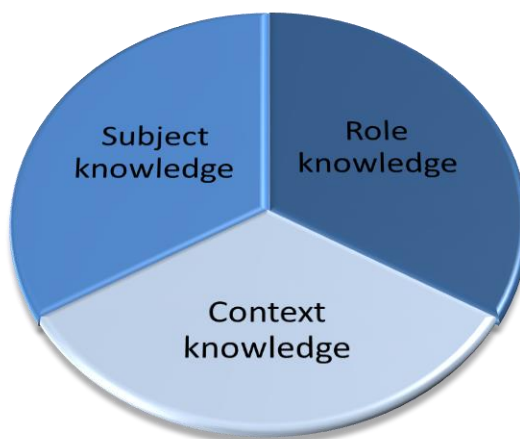
Figure 4.2 above serves as a reminder that the foundation of music students' knowledge about performance consists of three main areas: context knowledge, role knowledge and subject knowledge.[20] These areas are independent of the student, and have been acquired via public means. Each will now be examined further.

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[20] The pie chart is not intended to represent exact proportions, but to illustrate that the foundation 'stone' of the students' knowledge is divided into different parts. It is colour-coded in shades of blue to match its equivalent layer in the original diagram (Figure 3.7).

a) *Context knowledge as part of foundation knowledge*

This area of knowledge emerges in a relatively small amount of data, but its ramifications are significant. The participants are in a particular context, which they have chosen: they are university music students following a performance option within a degree course.[21] For students taking the solo performance module, performance represents 40% of their year's work, in terms of marks available. Ensemble performance is worth 20%. Many students take both options, giving a potential total of a 60% weighting of performance options within the degree programme, in both second and third year.

Data relating to this category of knowledge rarely materialise in the abstract, but usually because something about the context is bothering or affecting the students. Therefore, elements of this knowledge set will be revisited later in this chapter in relation to other contexts.

A large part of the students' thinking is focused on the end-of-semester performance assessments that are part of their degree (see also Kingscott and Durrant, 2010; Elliott, 2009; Pitts, 2003). As an example of their context knowledge, the following conversation during a trio rehearsal centres on timing the pieces for Tom's ensemble recital:

Tom	10 minutes it's not much to fill, I bet the Milhaud'll be nearly that
RP	we timed it didn't we?
Tom	1 45 for the first movement, 3 20 for the second,
RP	it's over 10 minutes if we did the whole thing

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[21] Information about the Music degree course at Hull University and how the year was organised appears in Appendix I.

Mark	not by much though
Tom	yeah, the whole of the Milhaud would work
RP	we're not gonna get the whole of the Milhaud ready though are we, to be realistic?

Trio rehearsal, 14/11/07

The students know their performance exams are going to occur during two assessment periods at the end of the two semesters; they know the arrangements for these recitals, and they know who their examiners will be, or, if they have not been told, they know how to find out. This causes quite some discussion in this particular academic year, since the two tutors who have regularly been the examiners are not there this year,[22] and debate is rife about the incomers. One student picks the brains of the lecturer who will be examining him, and even persuades him to come and listen to his recital in advance of the examination, to give advice on potential improvements.

Module handbooks given to students at the start of the year provide standard information about the nature of the content, teaching methods and assessment procedures of the relevant module.[23] Assessment criteria are also presented, along with advice and guidance to students. Data from this project suggest, however, that students do not always know what is in these handbooks, or how to interpret the content.

Since the students are in an academic institution to gain a qualification, they must demonstrate that they have acquired certain knowledge and skills, and have reached a certain standard. They must, therefore, be assessed and marked on their output. The fact that music performances are, in this study, being prepared for assessment is like the elephant in the room: it can never be ignored, and, in fact, becomes a shadowy spectre hovering over the students throughout the year. However, this tension also causes much interesting data to be generated. Knowing they are going to be assessed, as well as being a rather ominous fact, can be seen as a factor which sharpens the students' focus and causes them to make particular considerations about certain aspects of their performance.

Rehearsals were usually geared towards performances which would be assessed. Quantitative evidence from this study is only intended to make a descriptive, additional contribution to the picture being constructed from the qualitative data, since there was no standardised instrumentation. However, it is possible to see from the data tables that a relatively high proportion of time was spent talking about assessment, marking and examination, and related

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[22] See *Methodology - Sampling - Parameters of the case*
[23] Performance I and II (25027/25028), 2007-8; Advanced Performance I and II (25048/25049), 2007-8

factors, including students' own reactions to being assessed.[24] One of the most striking facts to emerge from the data tables can be seen in Appendix II, in Tables B4 to B7 which present Tom's interview data: assessment and marking were not discussed in the first of three interviews spread across the year; in the second and third, which took place around the time of the two assessment periods in the university year, 30.8% and 40.8% respectively of interview talk was on the topic of examinations. Here, the reader may interject that this would be an obvious topic to arise at such a time, or that I, as the interviewer, may have asked specifically about it at that time; however, the sheer amount of talk on the subject speaks for itself. No other topic comes close. Similarly, in Will's two interviews (see Table B2, Appendix II), 23% of talk was on the subject of marking and assessing performances, which comprised two lengthy conversations; the next most voluminous topic was 'input from teachers and tutors', which attracted 15.54% of the talk, but this was formed from fifteen separate, much shorter mentions. This demonstrates the extent and depth of students' desire to talk and ponder the matter of assessment and marking. At the very least, it illustrates how deeply the students' thinking is entrenched in their context.

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[24] See Appendix II for more details

b) *Role knowledge as part of foundation knowledge*
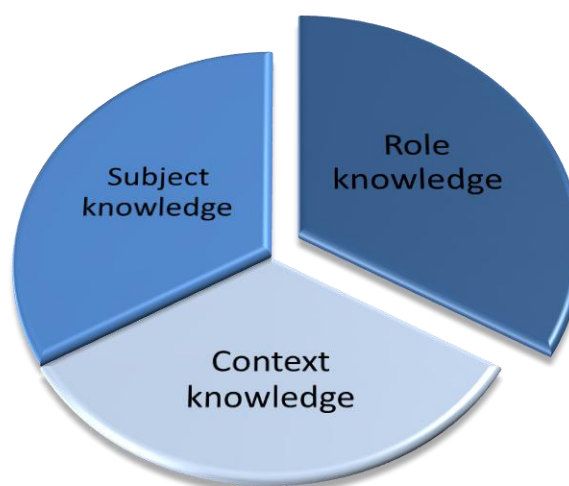
A substantial amount of data falls into this area, which relates to the participants' 'official' role as students and learners. Certain behaviours are exhibited by virtue of the participants' being students, and specifically music students. Educational theory appears briefly, along with various methods of learning, such as repetition, rehearsal and deliberate practice. Also into this area falls the social nature of learning. Three of these areas merit further explanation: relationships; fairness and equality and consistency; and practising.

1. *Relationships*

The formation of good relationships is at the heart of successful teaching and learning (Cooper and McIntyre, 1996; Dibben, 2006; Dolloff, 2006; MacIntyre, Potter and Burns, 2012; Stewart Rose and Countryman, 2013; Talbot, 2013). It is no surprise that relationships, both between students and staff, and between students and their peers, emerge as an important aspect of the data, and that good relationships are found to be of high importance. The students in this project are influenced by a number of different people during the academic year: lecturers or tutors from the Department of Drama and Music; an instrumental/singing teacher; specially invited visitors, be they teachers from music colleges or professional performers and composers, in workshops and masterclasses; and their peers.

Music departments are notorious for being close-knit communities, where staff, students and administrators are constrained to work closely together (e.g. Kingsbury, 1988, Nettl, 1995, Viljoen, 2014). They can also suffer from a sense of alienation (Viljoen, 2014), and thus form

unhealthily isolated communities (Nettl, 1995). The social nature of music as a subject and an activity puts a special emphasis on relationships within ensembles and within a university department (Burland and Pitts, 2002; Pitts, 2003; Dibben, 2006; Lamont, 2012). Music students' particular sense of identity and belonging mean their academic and social personae are intertwined (Hess, 2010; Pitts, 2005). This can work to their advantage or disadvantage depending on the relationships and the social positioning they enjoy within the group and the department. Successful integration is dependent on positive experiences of performing in ensembles: performance activities are seen as synonymous with social integration, which in turn has benefits for students' academic and emotional well-being (Dibben, 2006).

Relationships with staff are possibly particularly important for music students, because they have to encounter their tutors as fellow musicians and as their assessors. Dibben's (2006) study highlights the negative effects, as well as the positive, of relationships with university staff: she mentions a student who left the music department and the university in her study because of feeling that her relationship with a member of staff had become uncomfortable. The students in Dibben's study placed great store by being known individually by staff in the music department, and by getting along with them. Music students may well find they feel they need to be in favour with those who are going to assess them.

The following extract from an interview with Mark shows the importance of emotional and personal relationships, as he expresses what he believes a university lecturer's role is, and illustrates how he feels a particular tutor is departing from that expectation:

Mark	[Lecturer]'s just the kind of character and, personality, to start with that doesn't put me at ease at all, because he never has, you have to push for a good word, you really do, and that, that's not the way it should be and that's not what they're there for, they're not there to destroy people, they're there to help us improve, and they need, I think, personally I don't think he knows how to do that. I think he knows how to push you and push you, but I think he needs to be careful of the character that he's dealing with and I don't think, he's the same for everyone
Mark, interview, 4/6/2007	

Dave also brings up the matter of the relationship between teacher and student. Even though Dave's implication is that this teacher's style is apparently fairly prescriptive, he believes the student in question is actually happy with the relationship:

Dave	occasionally she'd come, yeah, I think I'm gonna play this this way, but [piano teacher] wants me to play it this way, cos the thing is, her, relationship with her teacher, her teacher very much says, do it this way
RP	oh ok

Dave   this is how you play this, this is how you do this
RP   is [student pianist] not happy with that?
Dave   I think, I think overall she's really happy with her relationship with [piano teacher]
Dave, interview, 18/6/2008

The participants testify with clarity to the significance of the character, charisma and interpersonal skills, as well as the subject knowledge and professional qualifications, of each tutor in the department. A tutor who does not encourage students to voice their own opinions, who, in fact, positively discourages them from speaking out through laughing at them and ridiculing their suggestions or efforts, is widely disliked as a teacher; another tutor seems to be a bit of an academic 'boffin', aloof from the students, unable to engage with them at their level, and conversation does not thrive in his sessions; a third tutor is described as more "wacky" and the students immediately feel more at home making their individual contributions to his sessions; a fourth seems not to have much that is useful to say, and the students dislike this situation, not making the effort to contribute in their turn.[25] A good bond, a respectful attitude, and trust, between students, and between them and the tutor, seems to be very important in practical sessions if student learning is to take place (Myers and White, 2012).

Participants appear overwhelmingly to prefer and to learn more from sessions in which, rather than being lectured, they are allowed and encouraged to discuss, debate and share ideas. It is possible that this sharing of words and ideas resembles sharing music in an ensemble, a joint effort, more satisfying for being negotiated and worked at, rather than presented to them as a *fait accompli* to which they may make no contribution. They work at their learning in the same way as they would work on a piece of music, demonstrating a preference for constructivist learning, a preference which permeates the findings.

The creation of an appropriately supportive learning environment is paramount (Lamont, 2012) in formal teaching and learning situations, but also informal contexts, and in supporting opportunities for finding a 'third environment'. Much has been written about the 'third environment' (see McPhail, 2013a, for an excellent account of this), the place where teachers, with their 'specialist' knowledge, do not interfere. Learning from friends and peers has been shown to be a major part of music learning (Burland and Pitts, 2003), and this would include

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[25] The detail of opinion about the differences between individual tutors, their personalities and their respective abilities to teach, as perceived by the students, differs from the findings of Pitts (2003), where students considered university staff worked as a team.

learning in the practice room from fellow students. Peers, in fact, are found in this study often to be a useful source of advice or support, sometimes more so than any of the 'official' teachers.

The idea of 'communities of practice' is becoming a common topic in the literature, and would seem potentially to include music students who learn from each other. Here, the familiar teacher-learner dynamic is not at the heart of the learning experience, but instead, peers learn through interaction with each other. Communities of practice emerge from the desire of participants to improve their own practices. They reflect and inquire on a collaborative basis, creating common tools and materials, and developing a shared view of the world. Opportunities arise to create and sustain an interactive learning environment and spaces are opened up for questioning, debate and negotiation (see Regelski, 2013).

Research is increasingly underlining the importance of informal learning in a positive, supportive context (e.g. Walters, 2004). Authenticity for learners has been shown to be highly dependent on the contexts of music making, and particularly the apparent conflict between 'formal' and 'informal' learning contexts, which has been explored at length in the last ten to fifteen years (e.g. see Green,. 2001; Hargreaves *et al.*, 2003).

2. *Fairness, equality and consistency*

These three human values are revealed to be of great importance as both educational and institutional principles, necessary not only to keep the students on an even keel emotionally, but in order to build effective learning and progression. The participants are keen to express their frustration at any occurrence of inequality, inconsistency or unfairness which they experience. Such occurrences are made all the more salient in the context of performances which are being assessed, since a level playing field surely should be a prerequisite when all students are being assessed against the same criteria.

Problems occur on various occasions. Participants voice their discontent when particular students have the opportunity to perform their examination recitals in an alternative (considered superior) venue; two students are granted permission to perform with, respectively, a choir, and a twelve-piece swing band plus dancers, in a 'solo' recital; one student, as a result of performing in a different venue, is not faced with the examiners (plus video camera and laptop computer) directly in front of her, as everyone else is – she performs with them at one stage sitting behind her, and then dispersed amongst the audience, because of the physical restrictions of the venue.

A further example of variation in treatment of different groups is the sudden requirement, introduced near the end of November, for singers to perform a varied programme, in the manner of an ABRSM exam, for the mid-January assessment, and to sing in three languages during the year. No instrumentalists were given any kind of parallel instruction. The pronouncement was also mistimed, occurring well after programmes had been planned by teachers and students, and much hard work had been invested; students had already presented pieces in seminars for critical comment. In some circumstances, it was too late for any changes to be made. One student was granted 'dispensation' because she was preparing a song cycle by a local composer whom the teacher and pupil were going to visit for first-hand comments on the music. Meg, a singing teacher, also vociferously protested that "Dave was going to do a group of Schubert you see and all of my students have got single composer groups for this January one… people got firsts doing that last year, you know, single composer [programmes]" (Meg, interruption during interview with Dave, 28/11/07). She also disliked the new rule because it seemed very "hotch potch" ("personally I don't like the juxtaposition of, hah! (laughs) Mozart Italian opera and the 'Earl King' next to each other and then a Britten, a Britten piece as well").

Furthermore, in 2007-8, for the first time, singers were separated from instrumentalists in being allocated a separate weekly seminar. Previously, singing and playing an instrument were not treated any differently in terms of provision or teaching; in fact, this worked well, because instrumentalists were introduced to the idea of line, and encouraged to think about phrasing and line in their playing. Breathing is another common factor between singing and playing, again forming a link between apparently dissimilar activities. Instrumentalists can benefit greatly from experience and knowledge of singing (Wallace, 2014).

However, Coimbra, Davidson and Kokotsaki (2001), and Stanley, Brooker, R. and Gilbert *et al*. (2002) argue that the physical aspects of singing – body movement and physical image – necessitate a unique assessment approach for singers. Wrigley and Emmerson (2011) also found in their study that voice teachers regarded communication to be an extra dimension for singers, inappropriate within the assessment of other instrumental performers, and the researchers themselves state that this is no surprise, considering the presence of words within the performance, which convey meaning.

There is also a perceived difference between singers and instrumentalists regarding the way the two groups' performances are assessed. I had previously been aware of comments about the respective marking of singers and instrumentalists, which continued in the fieldwork year.

Will (interview, 6/06/08) asks "why is it any harder for a singer to get a first than a pianist or a flute player or whatever?" while Emma has the opposite opinion:

Emma   it doesn't always seem to make sense, I think singers seem to get marked a lot higher than everybody else… when people are discussing their marks you know after like Christmas and that, the singers always seem to have really high marks and everyone else seems to have… comparatively low marks
Emma, interview, 30/05/08

The point remains: a difference is perceived between singers and others. This threatens the three fundamental principles of fairness, equality and consistency.

3. Practising

An important aspect of the job or role of the musician, and hence of the music student taking a performance module - probably the one which springs to mind most readily - is practice. This is particularly acknowledged in the development of western classical musicians, who need great technical competence and an ability to interpret the work of other composers.

The concept of deliberate practice springs from the idea that ability is not entirely dependent on hereditary or innate ability. It designates an activity particularly designed to improve a particular skill, as opposed to the learning and development which occur as an unintended outcome of an activity. It can be equated to other types of rote or repetitious learning, both in the 'academic' (non-practical) side of music and other subjects, and also within realms such as art or sport where physical skills need to be honed (Hallam, 1997a; Lehmann and Ericsson, 1997; McPherson and Zimmerman, 2002).

The theory of deliberate practice sits within different theoretical models.[26] For example, Hallam (1997a), McPherson and Zimmerman (2002), and Lehmann and Ericsson (1997) regard music practice as part of a larger psycho-social music learning model, which includes motivation, self-reflection, social factors and organisational/self-regulatory factors. Related research has been done with young children and right through learners of differing ages and amounts of experience (McPherson and Renwick, 2001; Pitts, Davidson and McPherson, 2000). In contrast, Lehmann and Ericsson (1997) approach the topic of practising music as part of a wider concept of the acquisition of expertise in any field, comparing it with sports and medicine, for example. They propose that deliberate practice is the most important element of a person's approach to developing skill and expertise in any domain.

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[26] Miksza (2011) has a useful account of research into deliberate practice; other studies include Jorgensen (2002) and Sloboda, Davidson, Howe and Moore (1996).

121

Students describe various practice methods, including: slow practice, practising tricky passages more than others (including passages with rhythmic challenges), "mechanical" practice, e.g. repeating particular fingering patterns, tonguing sequences, or a sequence of organ stop changes whilst playing. They are aware of many aids to learning a new piece, such as muscle memory, auditory memory, the use of visual and spatial cues, and limericks or other *aides-memoire* for learning words. Learning a piece off by heart – committing it to memory – and knowing it are not the same. Participants know they can be totally familiar with a piece, but not be at the point of playing it off by heart. The score is then used as an *aide-memoire*.

Singers differed from instrumentalists in their methods of practising. For them, technique, and the physical rehearsal and repetition of many notes, is less of a focus: their task *is* slanted towards memorising melody and words, since their examination requires it. There is a common acknowledgement that singers are relatively fortunate ("essentially I really just don't think it's as much work!" Dave, interview, 28/11/07).

Instrumentalists are sometimes disparaging about singers. In making a distinction between singers and others, they echo other research which has revealed a tendency for subcultures or subgroups to be present within musical communities and music education establishments (e.g. Nettl, 1995) and the observations by Coimbra *et al*. (2001) that singers may experience differences in performance from their instrumental counterparts. Dave certainly appears to view singing as relatively easy compared with playing other instruments:

Dave	as a singer, I can, I just don't have to put as many hours into learning… and erm, so if I was, if I was a pianist it'd be different because I'd have to put more time into my performance otherwise my recital would suck!...you can just blag singing more than you can, being a pianist… I don't envy you pianists, let's put it that way.

Dave, interview, 28/11/07

This distinction clearly offends the principles of fairness, equality and consistency outlined above.

c) *Subject knowledge as part of foundation knowledge*
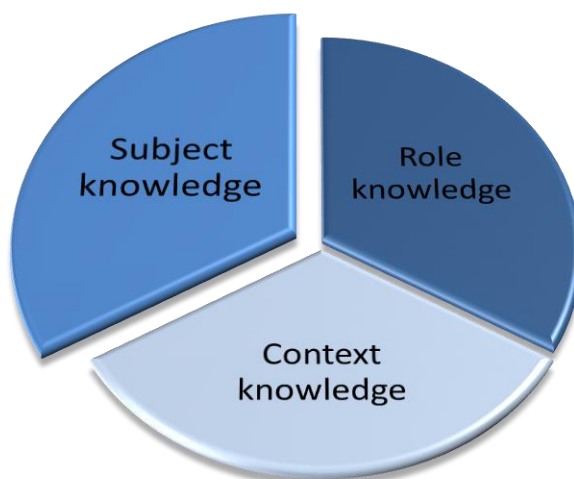
Of the three 'objective' sets of knowledge – about context, role and subject – this latter area supplies by far the greatest amount of data, which is hardly surprising, since the amount of subject knowledge within the realm of music is considerable, and each student possesses a slightly different portion of it. Musicians of all kinds have a bank of knowledge relating to their subject (Hallam, 2001; 2010).

Since data gathering focused on performance, music content knowledge is usually mentioned in relation to specific elements of that topic, but students are also more than happy to discuss music and musical issues more widely and more abstractly. The group discussion held in an Indian restaurant between rehearsal and concert is testament to this. Knowledge about music itself is plentiful and covers a range of topics. Subject knowledge is widely employed in the context of rehearsal and preparation, and the students demonstrably approach their work intelligently and thoughtfully. Students appear to be reflective practitioners (Hallam, 2001; Nielsen, 1999; 2010; Regelski, 2009), the value of reflection being in the gradual construction of personal knowledge and meanings. Higher music education courses do need to produce thinking, critical, informed, analytical and articulate students, and provide opportunities for intellectual development, exploring how practice articulates with knowledge and understanding (Duffy, 2013). Johansson (2013) believes more research is necessary into how explicit music teachers and learners can be about what they know.

Cook (1992) describes musical culture as essentially a cognitive entity: what one must know in order to perform, create and relate to music within that culture. Some parts of this knowledge are more explicit than others. For example, knowledge of the 'ingredients' of music (dynamics, tempo etc.), essential objects of the music curriculum (Stewart Rose and Countryman, 2013) is fundamental to preparation of music performance. When discussing what needs to be considered when practising, students mention the following elements of musical 'recipes': tone, intonation, tempo, articulation, breathing, dynamics, phrasing, colours, timbre (including organ stops), rhythm and ornamentation. The transmission of knowledge through written instructions (in this case, musical notation), allows musicians from any time or place to access a piece of music from any time or place. However, it does not provide precise instructions, only a framework of information, the interpretation of which is dependent on a second set of largely implicit, shared, tradition-based conventions. In western classical music, this set represents the cultural conventions of expression, which are largely taken for granted. The printed score needs careful examination, facilitating the identification of difficulties, an assessment of tempo (which has technical and musical implications) and a consideration of the work's structure and thematically important material. Decisions must be made as to the conventions of expression and how they should be followed, or broken, to produce a new interpretation (Hallam, 2001; Hultberg, 2008).

Students know a great deal about music. This may seem obvious, but the extent of their knowledge is often overlooked or taken for granted. In order to become university music students, they have undergone years of formal training and education, possibly more than students studying any other subject, since instrumental tuition often begins in early childhood, running alongside the 'academic' learning essential for pupils electing to study other subjects at a higher level after leaving school (DfE, 2011; Hargreaves *et al.*, 2003).

Not only have students learnt through formal training - music lessons, GCSE and A-level courses, and their instrumental/vocal lessons - but also from and through the music which is around us all the time (Davis, 2010; Folkestad, 2006; Green, 2001; McPhail, 2013a). Music so permeates our lives that much learning is subconscious and subliminal, from the music we hear on the car radio and on film soundtracks, to the live musicians, both classical and pop, we hear in concert, and these non-academic experiences can have as much effect as what we learn through the 'official' channels. Participants frequently speak of thoughts formed when watching live music, and cite influences of great magnitude outside the realm of formal learning:

Ben … if you listen to somebody like Robbie Williams, and then you go and see them live, it's just a completely different experience, and you don't expect to see what you see, because, it's like an incredible atmosphere, and the atmosphere's just because he's there, the guy who made this amazing music, I mean I'm not a big fan of his but, the person who made this amazing music is there, and he's singing, and it feels like it's [*sic*] singing to you

Ben, interview, 29/01/08

Ben here conveys the awe he has felt when watching live performance, which has made such an impression on him. The potent experiences of being at live music events can feed into one's own performance (Cohen, 1991; Vines, Krumhansl, Wanderley and Levitin, 2006).

Participants recognise many aspects to music, ranging from active performance, through the study of historical or analytical musicology, to the elements of music which relate to working backstage in theatre or working with music technology. Some music is considered functional, such as organ music used in church services. There are different 'gears' of performance: functional adequacy, and more advanced levels of performance towards which one aspires and practises. Students talk apparently knowledgeably about the professional musical world and about conservatoires and other musical environments. They have extensive knowledge about composers, historical periods and genres. A three-word comment, spontaneously and almost subconsciously made by a student whilst he was reading idly to pass the time, struck me, even at the time, as extremely telling:

In practice room, just me practising the Arnold Clarinet Sonatina. John sitting on window sill reading a magazine while I play. I get to the jazzy bit in the middle of the first movement.

John   random jazz moment

Fieldwork notes, 30/10/07

This reveals knowledge of several things: the typical sound of jazz; the acceptance of another genre's sound in the piece being played; and the apparently surprising juxtaposition of the sounds of different genres, which provokes a comment relating to the unexpected and "random" appearance of the jazz sounds.

Now they are at university, students can quote what they have learned in a seminar or lecture. Tom talks about kinaesthetic memory, and cites the lecturer who has talked about it. Students have explicit knowledge about music theory, harmony as a discipline, musicological research (particularly in the psychology of music, since this is a third-year module), and the associations of music with extra-musical concepts (akin to Kofi Agawu's 'topics'). They, like the students in Wallace (2014), are aware that singing supports general musical development.

125

There is also a significant awareness that thinking about music and music theory supports practical music-making:

Mark	… when it comes to performance and theory. I mean they're so utterly different and yet the same… we love music, well we love the practical side of it but there's a whole theory side that a lot of us don't. And I try and do it but unfortunately, I try and get as interested in that or spend as much time on it, but with all the will in the world you get sidetracked to the more enjoyable side. But at the same time I think the other side is really important… I did absolutely no harmony before I came here. It was completely new to me. But it, alright, I still don't really understand some of the chord progressions and stuff and I certainly find it very hard but, just learning a little bit about it and, gaining a bit more aptitude with it, changed my musicianship a hell of a lot. And that's why I try and give as much time to the other stuff as possible, because in the end it does, it is gonna help it.

Mark, interview, 30/10/07

Students recognise that the character of music is governed by the detailed elements of music which contribute to it:

Emma	just I think the music just speaks for itself, I mean, well no I suppose other music speaks for itself … because it's so upbeat and lively, it'd be pretty hard to play it any other way… I mean it's really, sort of, just jokey the way it's written, and the rhythm in it and, the notes and it's all got like little, sort of, slides up, well not really slides but you know just really fast notes up to, other notes and
RP	what, like sort of grace notes kind of thing?
Emma	yeah! Yeah that's what I mean!

Emma, interview, 30/05/08

This student's reasoning about musical character, and her ways of identifying with mood and emotion in the music she was learning, were typical of the students:

Emma	it's the chords and the movement, it's all very slow and still, and, there's so much expression that you add, I mean the notes are, themselves, are fairly easy to play, but it's not easy to, play the piece, because, well to play it really well… every single note you can do something to it, you can, make it more expressive
RP	how?
Emma	erm, with the dynamics, and, I think, just the shaping of it…but, the Malcolm Arnold… it's just a fun piece, you enjoy playing it so I think it comes across like that

Emma, interview, 30/05/08

Students are familiar with an array of repertoire for their instrument, and are aware of what is difficult and what is popular. They are extremely knowledgeable about quirks and techniques relating to their instrument, and can cite books about particular instruments and techniques. The interviews contain multiple references to diaphragm control, breathing, bowing, tonguing,

fingering, (vocal) range, organ stops and action, scales, and other patterns associated with particular instruments. They mention matters peculiar to their own instrument, such as particular notes which are generally slightly awkward to play with a good tone or which are slightly out of tune. Here, Dave explains how he listens carefully while practising, trying out different resonances in order to achieve particular effects, and demonstrating his knowledge of the workings of his own voice:

Dave	well you know, at some registers, er the ee sound can start sounding a bit more nasal. It's really easy to pick up on that so you have to try working on that sound, it's really easy to tell if you're using a bit too much head voice and not enough chest voice, er, for a heavier tone, it's really easy to er, tell if you're using enough of the resonances back here with what you can sound out there, it's really easy to get into a habit of using too much of this resonance at the back here and then, the back of the face, erm, when you want a thinner sound, avoid using so much of that, and direct the sound more up, through the skull, hah! And out of your eyes, like lasers
RP	yeah
Dave	erm, so I mean I can tell, obviously it's better if you can hear yourself because how it sounds ten metres away can be different to how it sounds inside
Dave, interview, 18/12/07	

Nick reveals that he has experimented with making different kinds of timbres with his tenor horn, though his hesitations and struggles with words perhaps indicate that he has not thought as explicitly about this as has Dave. It is interesting that this fairly technical paragraph comes at the very start of my interview with Nick, and in order to tell me what he thinks performance is about, and then how to communicate, he embarks upon this very specific explanation:

RP	so, the first question is, what does it mean to you to be a performer? What's performance all about? What are you doing when you're performing?
Nick	I guess it er, it's to do with, communicating, feelings and emotions, same thing but, just, trying to convey a message.
RP	and how do you do that?
Nick	erm, I guess, with a mixture of phrasing and dynamics, and I guess timbre to an extent. Well, on brass. Can't really control the timbre so much on a piano, but,
RP	so how do you control it with brass? I don't know anything about brass instruments.
Nick	well, erm, I think what you do, I dunno! I don't really think about it when I'm doing it! it's just, you actually create a sweeter sound by putting more pressure on the mouthpiece, which gives a very smooth, soft, lyrical sound. You can create a more aggressive sound by moving it away just a tiny bit, erm, because it means you require more air, so it comes out louder… and, the er, the fidelity of the note is not quite so good because you don't have a decent contact between the embouchure and the mouthpiece.
RP	ok. So by 'fidelity' you mean the intonation?

Nick	no, er, the, the almost erm, the contact point, without the mouthpiece pressed right up to your mouth you can't, you can't control a nice, smooth note, it's going to sound a bit, angry, maybe a touch distorted.
RP	ok.
Nick	it's a struggle to turn it into words!
Nick, interview, 27/10/07	

Tom explains the breathing technique employed by clarinettists. He shows awareness not only of the technique, but of the practicality which results from this when playing:

Tom	…for some reason you don't expel any air when you play the clarinet, it's really weird so you have, when you breathe you have to breathe out and then breathe in, and when you've, only got, a quaver, rest it's really difficult
Tom, interview, 3/06/08	

Knowledge about physical and spatial elements of music performance also emerges from the data. Whereas most instrumentalists, and singers, carry their instrument around with them, pianists have to get used to different pianos wherever they happen to be, modifying touch and pedalling to accommodate different instruments. A different building or room necessitates consideration of the distance between performers, or between performers and conductor. Organists accompanying a choir may also have to deal with a camera trained on a conductor, due to spatial separation.

Will displays a broad knowledge of organs in general, which he needs: like pianists, as an organist he does not take his instrument with him, but must accommodate to whatever instrument he finds in any location. Every organ is different in terms of how many manuals it has, what stops it has and where they are to be found. An organist selects stops and manuals appropriate to the timbres he wishes to create, and Will demonstrates his awareness of how particular composers (here, Messiaen) indicate what sounds they want to achieve:

Will	so he's [Messiaen] very specific about what you need to do, so you can be fairly certain that, if I could go to, a Cavaillé-Coll organ in Paris and I could set up this Messiaen piece then I could be pretty certain it would be… it's kind of the, the benchmark in French Romantic organs, so all the, certainly all the French Romantic stuff, well it's kind of, it's the Father Willis of France so, and a lot of the big organs in Paris are Cavaillé-Coll instruments, so you can go, you can sit down at an instrument and, cos organs, more than anything else are very, specific to, not only the period but also the country like, a modern, a Romantic English organ sounds way different to a Romantic French organ
RP	right
Will	so, if you're trying to play French music, in Beverley Minster it's very hard because even the French stuff, has that kind of Snetzler, Baroque ting to it … it's got, [?] flutes and

	things like that, and the upper work especially it's very bright, kind of, Baroque in your face, type of sound
RP	ok
Will	where, and the, the principals, the 8s and the 4s, are fairly thin, whereas in France it would be completely the opposite way round, you'd have an organ from the same period, even with early [?] pipework, you have really fat, meaty juicy principals, that kind of just go, urgh, and the same with the pedals, so you just can't get the same sound, on an English instrument

Will, interview, 6/06/08

The data show a recognition that singers and instrumentalists alike must consider the acoustics in particular buildings. Acoustics affect, for example, the volume at which one must sing or play, and the speed at which one can take a piece. In a large church or cathedral, the delay means that music might have to be played more slowly than it would in a drier concert hall, and again a pianist must consider how much or how little pedalling to employ.

Students highlight the differences between ensemble and solo performance. A "comfort zone" is offered by the ensemble because "it's always more nerve-wracking doing a solo performance, it really is down to you then, you can't point to the guy on your left and say, 'he did it!' " (Nick, 27/10/07). Conversely, as a unit, an ensemble has particular factors to consider. The way one's own line fits within the whole, one's individual contribution to a larger picture, is of more concern in an ensemble such as a quartet or a jazz group. In addition, "there's less you can wing if you're in an ensemble than if you're doing solo performance" (Tom, 7/11/07).

Balance between instruments and/or singers is another factor needing careful consideration and which can depend on the physical surroundings of the performance. Often in rehearsal it is difficult to tell what the balance will be like in the space in which a recital will take place, and students recognise the importance of checking this. Furthermore, in the main hall where examination recitals normally take place, the gap between performers and audience is perceived to be large. Dave talks about having to get the balance right within the dual "bond": that between the performer and the audience, and the "bond" on stage with the accompanist. The students sometimes feel, however, that the sound in the hall where they are required (for the most part) to perform comes as a shock to them, and describe their often frustrating attempts to book the hall in order to practise in there, which can be a major task in itself. Students speak of their frustration when performance seminars are held in rooms other than the hall in which they are going to perform their examination recital. They want to test the space where they will be examined. The hall in which performances take place is not part of the department but is a shared university space. There may not, therefore, be any way of

successfully addressing the frustrations experienced by the students on this account. However, it is important to note that the students do feel strongly about needing frequent opportunities and plenty of time to perform in the examination space, in order to do their best in their recital. It is not trivial when a session in the hall has to be cancelled or moved to a smaller room with different acoustics; this does have an impact on the students.

4. *Musicianship/musicality*

Words which might be assumed to fall into this 'objective' category of knowledge, these concepts are actually rather nebulous. Cantwell and Jeanneret (2004) admit the absence of a common definition of 'musicianship' or 'musicality', and wonder whether the meanings are actually subjective, depending on what each individual perceives as 'musical', and whether an objective account of these terms is even possible. Lamb (2004) dislikes narrow and rigid definitions of what constitutes musicality, musicianship and music, and does not venture any suggestions. There is a lack of agreement about what skills or attributes are most important to a musician (Hallam, 2010). It is not surprising if teachers differ in their understandings of constructs such as talent, ability, musicality and aptitude, since there is a long-standing lack of agreement amongst music psychologists about definitions for those constructs (Reynolds and Hyun, 2004; Viljoen, 2014). Notions of musicianship are, in any case, culturally dependent (MacDonald, Hargreaves and Miell, 2002); fundamental to western thinking about musicality are notions of talent and power (Kingsbury, 1988; Viljoen, 2014).

The findings of this study would concur with those views. Throughout the year and across all contexts, the word 'musicianship' is, perhaps surprisingly, only mentioned three times, with rather differing meanings; the word 'musicality' did not occur at all. It may even be deduced from this study that students do not find the words particularly necessary or helpful in discussing music and music performance.

Mark speaks about musicianship as a quality which, he feels in his case, has been improved by singing in the choir (see Wallace, 2014, on this subject). Tom seems to equate it with the expressive side of performing music, which he considers to involve putting himself into the music as far as is possible, again concurring with Wallace's (2014) interpretation of musicianship as the approach to creating a personal vision in interpretation:

Tom	…I guess I try and put as much of myself into what I'm playing as I possibly can. I find that helps.
RP	so do you think that's more important than technical prowess?
Tom	I think musicianship is on a par with the technical side.

> *Tom, Interview, 7/11/07*

Meanwhile, Dave seems to share Kingsbury's (1988) understanding of musicianship as an underlying concept: he speaks of musicianship as being a general talent or ability, which goes beyond any specific skill, and encompasses various aspects of musical ability.

RP	what is it that you think you have, that they [potential pupils] could benefit from most?
Dave	erm, overall kind of musicianship, cos I wouldn't go from just a performance angle, I'd kind of make sure the, theory and, not just performance…

Dave, Interview, 11/06/08

d) Summary

It has been seen that data relating to 'objective' knowledge (knowledge which could be codified independently of this study) can be organised into three areas, which are helpful in conceptualising their nature. These areas related to: the context of the university music course; the role of being a student and learner; and content knowledge regarding music.

Students' 'context knowledge' is knowledge of prescribed requirements and boundaries within which to work. 'Role knowledge' is the awareness of what it means to be a student; the means by which one lives out that role; the behaviours and identities inherent in the mantle of 'student'. Finally, 'content knowledge' consists of the factual information at participants' disposal regarding music.

This foundation layer of knowledge, the bottom part of the scaffold in the theoretical model, actually affords relatively little data. In fact, most data in the study relate to further areas of knowledge and belief, in which participants articulate their own ways of thinking about and relating to these issues. These areas will be discussed in the next section.

3. **Personal issues for music students' preparation for music performance**

This inner set of knowledge and beliefs about music performance comprises ways of thinking which are not necessarily objectified or documented. This knowledge is 'knowledge in action', emerging from the individual student's 'self', and can become largely a belief system, a network of perceptions resulting from a filtering of 'objective' knowledge, such as is described above in section 2, through personal experiences, and students' reactions to these.

However individualised these sets of knowledge are, they fall nevertheless into a number of categories; at least, it is helpful to envisage these categories in order to account for the data succinctly. Participants in their individualism are actually reacting to the same issues, often in the same ways. The conceptualisations, which roughly align with the concepts of Self, Music and Agents, are: task and resources (which can be connected with Agents, although also with Self, since each student is her own resource); self-reflection and assessment of progress (Self, but often in relation to Agents); and philosophical outlook on music (Music, again linked with Self, since the outlook 'belongs to' the student). These areas can be visualised as an inner framework, shown pictorially in Figures 3.7 and 4.1, and are presented again here in Figure 4.4, before being addressed in detail in the rest of this section.[27]

Figure 4.3: The three sets of individualised knowledge or belief

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[27] Again, the pie chart is not intended to be divided up into accurate proportions, but relates to the three facets of the inner circle, as shown in Figures 3.7 and 4.1, and is colour-coded accordingly in shades of green here.

a) *Tasks and resources as part of individualised knowledge of belief*

It may be assumed that the choice of music as a subject to study at university was a positive one for participants, with the potential for them to do well, or to do their best, in this subject rather than any other. Furthermore, each student has elected to follow the performance module within their degree, knowing what it entails.

<u>The task</u>

The task falls into two parts: specific short-term goals, and more general long-term goals.

1. *Short-term*

Participants all appreciate the specific requirement to prepare and produce a music performance, fulfilling certain criteria (e.g. length of programme), in an examination context, twice during the year. This fundamental task and its surrounding 'rules' are stated in module handbooks, and students are reminded of the task repeatedly during seminars and lessons. They are surrounded by people (other students, teachers, tutors) also preparing, or helping to prepare, for this task, which is the central focus of their performance work during the year.

There are other performance opportunities for soloists, such as the Friday lunchtime 'Student Showcase' concerts roughly once a semester, and masterclasses for particular instrumentalists/singers, but not everyone is invited to participate in these. For small ensembles, jazz nights and Music Society concerts, once or twice a semester, provide opportunities to play. Aside from these, students have to invent their own opportunities to

gain performing experience. Some students actively seek to be 'spotted' at public recitals and possibly booked for future engagements.

Students vary in terms of how much time they devote to non-assessed performance. For some, the variety is stimulating: they have come to university to play music, and find as much as possible to join in with. Others prefer to put their time and energy into their recital preparation.

Most students take part in larger-scale concerts each semester, involving choirs and orchestras, sometimes music theatre productions, or occasionally opera. Some are active members of the Gilbert and Sullivan Society, or sing/play in local choirs and orchestras not associated with the university.

Other fairly high profile performances are mounted by the composition students, for whom 10% of their module marks are allocated to a performance of their work. It tends to be the same core group of students who are asked, or volunteer, to take part in these performances.

As with any degree course, at certain points in the year pressure comes from other modules with looming deadlines. However, data do not show that any other work particularly interferes with students' preparation for performances. This may indicate that their time management skills are sufficient. It may, however, indicate that performance is their priority.[28] In fact, Mark alone expresses concern about the time he has for individual practice, and the cause is somewhat unexpected:

Mark	… I think the other problem with being a soloist is, I'm more at home playing in ensembles, and because of that I get involved with loads of ensembles which means that I don't like doing the practice in between. Because I play the violin enough because I'm in all these ensembles and all that rehearsal time, and it means it's a vicious circle because it makes me not want to practise, and then, not practising means that I'm not getting round technical difficulties that I have to be to be a soloist, er, which means I don't, I get frustrated in practice more which means I don't wanna practise and it's just a vicious circle.
Mark, interview, 30/10/07	

The amount of time he spends playing in ensembles reduces his individual practice time; furthermore, the contrast in enjoyment between the two activities reduces his inclination to practise individually.

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[28] Anecdotally, a number of these students auditioned for post-graduate courses at conservatoires and some were accepted. This may support the theory that performance can certainly be a student's priority, even at university.

2. Longer-term

Data relating to students' ambitions and thoughts about their future show a difference in attitude between those with designs on going into the world as professional musicians, and those who see their future as including music but not as their source of income. The transition between adolescent and adult is a significant period of change (Burland and Pitts, 2002; Campbell, Connell and Beagle, 2007; Lonie, 2009) where crucial decisions are made relating to the future. Life stage also has an effect on the students' ways of thinking, in this particular regard. In most respects, data collected from the three mature students in the sample were comparable to data collected from the 19- to 21-year-olds. However, in respect of ambitions for the world beyond the degree course, the mature students have a slightly different attitude from the others: they are more likely to think pragmatically about their employment prospects, and about how their choices and experiences during their time at university will affect their lives afterwards.

Linking the short to the longer term, achieving the best possible mark in the performance assessment remains the paramount consideration of all the students: in its own right, as a contribution to gaining the highest degree class of which they are capable; and for a solid springboard into the future beyond their degree.

The resources

The resources available to tackle the task are (pieces of) music, self and agents, corresponding exactly with the three areas (Music, Self, Agents) identified in the first attempts at accounting for data.

1. Repertoire (Music)

Choosing repertoire for an assessed performance is a serious business. Students use their extensive knowledge of repertoire carefully; they are aware of which pieces are known to be difficult, or which are well-known. Students tend to avoid the latter, because they believe they will result in comparisons or not living up to expectations:

Emma	I've always been told not to play the Mozart clarinet concerto, it's a really nice piece, but, because it's so famous… everybody knows it, it's been on so many different TV programmes, films…everybody just knows how they like to play it and if you can't play it in that way…

Emma, interview, 30/05/08

Difficult pieces provoke two alternative responses. Some students will rise to the challenge, knowing it will motivate them. They believe that if they can pull off something tricky, or even if

they are seen to be attempting, with a degree of success, something known to be challenging, it will be impressive and go in their favour. Other students will tend to avoid such pieces, preferring to remain on 'safe' ground.

Controversy may dissuade students from selecting particular pieces. Playing Bach on the piano with pedal, or performing Baroque string music on modern instruments, are examples of controversial factors known to have affected examination results, when particular tutors have been examining. Finding out, or even suspecting, that they will be examined by those tutors can lead students (or their teachers) to select or avoid certain composers or pieces.

Mark	I mean, here, [tutor]'s all for this authentic Bach-playing bollocks, well, my answer to it is I don't play Bach, cos I can't, I can't play Bach as he wants it, in a way that would get me a good mark because, it has to move me as well and it doesn't in that way, so I avoid it

Mark and Joe, interview, 4/06/08

Preserving the best chance of attaining a high mark is the paramount consideration.

The following extract includes references to a previous recital for which Ben had received a lower mark than he had expected, because of criticisms of his choice of a particular music theatre song. The student adored singing the song, and thought it suited him, but the tutor marking the recitals had a different opinion. This time, the student was not going to take any chances:

RP	flippin heck Ben, you've set yourself a challenge here
Ben	hah! I want a good mark
We laugh	
Ben	I refuse to get a crap mark again cos I chose the wrong things to sing
RP	rrrright
Ben	you think this is the wrong thing to sing?
RP	no I don't think it's the wrong thing to sing, I think it's, it's very hard,
Ben	but if I pull it off
RP	if you pull it off it'll be amazing. Not it'll be amazing that you pull it off; if you pull it off, it'll be an amazing performance
Ben	yeah yeah I know. Ok.

Ben, rehearsal, 14/05/08

Knowing who the examiner is going to be has a significant influence on choice of programme, and even the instrumental/singing teachers consider this when making selections. As Meg, the singing teacher, explains (interruption during interview with Dave, 28/11/07), "I think it's a bit hotch potch, but if he believes in that and he is going to be examining it, then, he's gonna be giving the good marks".

2. Agents

The importance of external factors, including people such as teachers and parents, is reported widely in the literature (e.g. Burland and Davidson, 2002; Mills, 2002; Parncutt, 2007). Indeed, data in this study show that departmental tutors, instrumental/singing teachers and other specialists, and the lessons, classes and seminars they put on, are important resources.

The following extract, in which Ben speaks about an experience in an ABRSM singing exam, demonstrates how vital a teacher's input can be. A mistake made by a teacher can be costly:

Ben   …my singing teacher hadn't told me that I had to do a folk song. So I was put on the spot, because I had no idea what to do

Ben, interview, 29/1/2007

There are many examples of teachers being helpful and encouraging, such as this extract from a lesson:

[Clarinet Teacher] is showing Tom how to do the bends at the beginning of Rhapsody in Blue

Tom   …are you sliding them off?

C.T.   yeah, it's that stroking sort of feeling.

Tom is having a go

C.T.   that's it, go on. Keep going

Tom   it [?] has to be quite jerky though

C.T.   yeah, you have to do it faster, more positive

She does it. They're both doing it

C.T.   yeah, I think I've got my hands more of an angle than you, you're trying to pull off two at the same time, and I've got [?] that's it. Make sure the bottom one's [?]

Tom   I'll get it eventually

C.T.   yeah, yeah, so you've got, you know, that's it, make sure

She shows him again

C.T.   see it's getting there isn't it! Yeah, yeah!

Tom   slowly! It's still a bit der der der der!

C.T.   make sure the one comes off, don't try and do two at once. I'm going sideways like that, not your hand going like that, it's, you're twisting round, yeah, and just be a bit more positive

He's still having a go

C.T.   the next stage is adding that one on (plays the lower note) you know, joining that up to there, which is the harder bit

Tom   (squeaking) aarrgghh!

C.T.   it will come, if you work at it like that

Tom, clarinet lesson, 4/12/2007

Students frequently mention what aspects of their course or particular modules are helpful or not in supporting their work and equipping them for future musical careers. There are

criticisms of current practice, and suggestions for improvement. Mark is vociferous with his opinions in the following extract; as well as criticising, he has a suggestion for improving what he feels is a weakness in the system:

Mark	and to be honest in, some cases I've been close to tears after dealing with [tutor]… from my point of view I think, you know as a tutor you're there to, help improve people
RP	so what about the seminars generally, have you found them useful?
Mark	not really no, erm…
RP	what was wrong with them, what would you have wanted,
Mark	the tutor. No I have serious issues with, erm, (he hesitates)… qualifications, for the job. Yes, she knows about [another aspect of musicology], brilliant, it's different from, knowing about performance, it's a completely different kettle of fish, but this, this is, erm, to be fair this isn't just singling her out, I think the whole system within universities is a bit dodgy because, I think personally, the people teaching performing, performance, on, university courses, should be, performers, cos, you cannot, teach something like performance, so practical, as performance, from what you've learnt in a book… it's also about personality as well, if you're a teacher and in something practical you have to get them, energised, and the only way to do that is to have energy yourself and actually be bothered about what's happening, and enthusiastic, and, she's not, at all! She sits there and goes, er, try this, try this, and it doesn't work, if you're the performer you're just like, oh whatever, it doesn't do anything to make you play better whatsoever

Mark, interview, 4/6/2008

This extract also illustrates the importance of personality and of interpersonal relationships, which have had a real effect on Mark, as is clear from the way he speaks of his experiences.

A sudden attempt is made by particular tutors to 'change the goal posts' for first-study singers, two months into the academic year, by altering the rules of the task in hand.[29] This is met with great consternation from the students and their teachers, who have invested a good deal of time, thought and effort in programming and preparation. The situation causes some conflict with agents (lecturers) whom the students consider ought to be supportive.

3. Self

The most important resource for tackling the task is the self. 'Self' in this portion of the findings refers to the students' self-concepts or self-images, including aspects of their personality, and their experiences, which contribute to the students' self-identities (Hargreaves *et al.*, 2002; Talbot, 2013). On the basis of their self-image, by comparing their known and acknowledged personal qualities to the requirements of the task, the students can

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[29] See earlier section, *Fairness, equality and consistency*

predict the likely consequences of particular choices. This reflects Hewitt's (2009) view of self and task theory, meaning how the performer rates herself and the task at hand.

Music students adapt their behaviour, and attitude towards practice and other work, in the light of their epistemic beliefs about the nature of the knowledge they think they need to acquire, and how it may be acquired (Nielsen, 2010). Personal epistemology, the system of personal beliefs used by an individual about the nature of knowledge and knowledge acquisition, is a relatively new approach to investigating why some students are more likely than others to become self-regulated learners. Students may believe teachers should tell them what to do (transmission); they may favour discussion about how to improve (collaboration); or they may believe a teacher's role is to teach them how to learn how to be a musician (induction). Specifically, there may be tensions surrounding whether the student believes there is a 'right' or accepted way of playing a particular piece, or whether an individual interpretation, which may or may not incorporate influences from other players or teachers, is preferable. This view may well be influenced by what students think their tutors/assessors expect from them (Nielsen, 2010). Their actual teachers may or may not fit into this role (Mills, 2002; Nielsen, 2010).

Students' differing views of themselves can be an important determinant of their success; they have varying beliefs regarding what is important about themselves as performers, and what performing is all about (Hewitt, 2009). Students in the present study seem to display a greater unanimity regarding what performing is all about than did those in Hewitt's. However, if teachers/assessors' views differ from students' views on what are the goals, methods and knowledge involved in the pursuit of an activity, tension may arise, which affects how well students learn, and the level of their success. Institutions may find it useful to address what are the prevailing conceptions about music and its constituent teaching units, and to attempt to convey the most appropriate conceptions for optimal technical and musical development (Nielsen, 2010).

In the current study, students know whether their current skill can match up to the requirements of particular pieces, and can track their progress in relation to the ease with which they can manage these (*q.v. Self-reflection* below). They consider how much time they have available, in relation to the time they judge necessary for them to prepare a piece adequately, which in turn depends on its difficulty. They judge whether a piece suits them[30]

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[30] This will be discussed in a later section, *Philosophical stance*

and will show them off to their best advantage, which, depending on the student, could mean staying on the safe side, or choosing music which allows them to show off:

RP	why did you want something very complicated?!
Ben	to show off, my skill, in a way, just to sort of say, look I can do the Vaughan Williams emotional stuff but I can also do crazy oratorios

Ben, rehearsal, 14/05/08

This is closely linked to the notion of 'liking' a piece, which is extremely important ("I only sing songs that I like", Dave, interview, 22/01/08).

Practising is almost taken for granted by students in this study, but a variety of different practice strategies are described, depending on the task and the individual, continuing the findings from studies which have investigated practice strategies and task orientations (e.g. Nielsen, 1999; 2001; Smeltz, 2012; Williamon and Valentine, 2000). Students may be task-goal, or ability-goal, orientated (Nielsen, 2008). Students with a task orientation are likely to engage in more effective practice, monitoring their progress, working on troublesome areas, and using a variety of practice strategies (Nielsen, 2008). Previous research confirms that the number of practice strategies, and quality of practice, better predict musical achievement than the amount of time spent practising (Bartolome, 2009; Hallam, 1997b; McPherson and Renwick, 2001; Pitts *et al.*, 2000; Smeltz, 2012; Williamon and Valentine, 2000). Also important are the sort of strategies used, what resources are available, and how musicians organise themselves and are motivated to dedicate the required time and energy (Ericsson, Krampe and Tesch-Römer, 1993; Sloboda, Davidson, Howe and Moore, 1996). Reflecting Nielsen (1999; 2001), students in the current study describe how their habits or tendencies affect their work and their decisions. They know how committed they are to practising; they know how they prefer to practise, whether it be at home, or in a practice room, whether it is in regular, short bursts, or in longer stretches, whether they like practising on their own or with their pianist. They know their potential for concentration or distraction, and how that affects their practice habits. They know whether they get nervous or not, and how that affects them. They know they need to be well prepared for a performance in order to minimise their nerves.

Students may know they are capable of hard work, or they may confess to being lazy. They know the sort of music they enjoy and the sort they would rather not engage with.

Ben	…I hate serialism, I really do, erm
Ben	…I think exercises, I think scales and things, erm, and technique, things, I mean, I'm useless …for pieces, I just think, they can be learnt without any of the exercises, I mean

> that may be just me being lazy, to be fair, erm, because I just don't want to do anything that's boring, if possible
>
> *Ben, interview, 29/01/08*

The physical demands of a programme need consideration, and the longer the programme, the more this becomes a concern. The final recital, which is between thirty and forty minutes, is particularly physically demanding. Students know stamina is important, and that practising the recital in its entirety is necessary. In the extract below, John acknowledges that he needs to work hard in order to achieve the desired outcome in his final recital. However, according to his self-image, he knows he has the dedication to do this:

> John says he did a first complete run through of his final recital programme yesterday and says he was knackered at the end of it… He knows this is just the first time and he will build his stamina up over the year, but it has given him a bit of a shock.
>
> *Fieldnotes, following telephone call from John, 28/10/07*

A distinction should be made here between the students' beliefs, and actuality; Tom provides an excellent example of the inner set of knowledge being entirely dependent on the students' thinking and not necessarily on fact or reality. Knowledge of one's capabilities and potential in relation to pieces of music supports planning for music performance; in practice, that potential may not be realised. Tom was determined all year that he was aiming for a first-class mark in performance, though he was not in the habit of practising enough to ensure that this would actually happen. His self-image (his possible future self – Schnare, MacIntyre and Doucette, 2011) outstripped his actual application to hard work. Still, the intention seemed to be enough to please him.

b) Assessment of progress, and self-reflection, as part of individualised knowledge or belief

The participants are all aware that, in relation to their musical development, they are undergoing a process, both in terms of their general development in music performance, and specifically, as they work towards their end-of-semester/end-of-year recital. They speak about how they monitor their own progress on each of these two paths, without necessarily acknowledging that this is what they are doing.

As a starting point, the participants have a picture of themselves in terms of their abilities and skills in music and in general. They recognise that their current ability and knowledge are the result of their background, in the shape of their school music education (GCSE and A-level), their progress along the Associated Board examination paths, and their experiences and influences outside school, for example, in schools music service ensembles locally to their homes and schools. Students commonly complain about lacking particular knowledge or experience, and blame this lack on something which has been missing from their education or training.

Comparing themselves with others gives students an idea of their relative standard of ability. Looking about them, assessing the work of other students, they either feel confident that they either match up to or surpass them, or concede that they are less able or likely to achieve a lesser mark. Peer support is very important in the learning context, sometimes more so than input from tutors, and the students measure their progress and success partly by the reactions to them from their peers. The students even make judgements of professional musicians who

visit the university to give recitals or masterclasses. They admire some, and mock others. They judge particular aspects of performers' technique or style and comment on how their own compares.

Comparing themselves with their own previous performances involves the ability to be objective and self-critical, which is vital in making progress. In rehearsal or in the practice room, the player and the singer are the first audience of any music which is being prepared, and the ability to be critical about one's current performance is essential as the music develops into something which is going to be set before a wider audience in a recital. The students recognise their strengths, and conversely acknowledge what they need to practise most. This is usually the more technical aspects of playing: scalic or fast passages, or what are commonly known as "runs". The interviews contain a general identification of 'technique' as something which needs practice.

Ben	… just the two horrible runs it has in here, the rest is quite easy
Ben, rehearsal, 14/05/08	

Tone production also receives attention:

Dave	… just basic exercises like (plays) etc. (sings the same thing) er, and erm, then, then after ten minutes of that or so, twenty minutes, depending how lazy I'm feeling, I go onto practising the pieces, erm, going over little sections over and over again with certain tone colours that I'm not quite reaching, and, tuning
Dave, interview, 18/12/07	

Emma's comment shows how her teacher advises her to practise but also how she is keen to listen for improvement in her technique leading to a better sound:

Emma	[teacher]'ll say stuff to me like, oh try and do this bit, in, in a certain way or think about something like this and now try it, in practice and then I'll just sort of learn, how I make, the sound
Emma, interview, 30/05/08	

Every student likes to feel progress is being made, which engenders a sense of satisfaction, and feeds back into the effort they are prepared to make. They know if they are working to full capacity or whether they need to give more to make progress or keep up.

Each student has developed favourite ways of practising, which show their awareness of their needs and their progress:

Emma	erm, well, before, I would just play a piece through over and over again, and now, I'll pick out, (laughing) the bits I'm struggling with

RP	right
Emma	and, you sort of get more done in a lot less time
RP	so when did that change happen?
Emma	erm, probably, in my second year, [?] lot of, focusing on little things, I'd just want to play it over and over again cos that's what I'd enjoy more
RP	right
Emma	but I've learnt it's a lot more effective and, a lot less stressful if you do it that way (laughing) and then you get it right

Emma, interview, 30/05/08

Reactions and comments from staff, both off the cuff and in formal teaching situations, provide a further guide for the students as to how they are progressing. There is actually little data on the support given by staff in students' progression, which could indicate that, even if students take on board comments from their teachers, they then take responsibility for their progression. They tend not to say "X [my teacher] says I need to work on Y", but "I need to work on Y".

Assessment of progress includes the monitoring of performance itself. Performers form self-monitoring representations during performance (Davidson, 2005). There is much talk about learning from mistakes, and learning how to cope with problems and conceal mistakes in the moment. Technical hitches, like reed problems, or unexpected floodlights on stage causing an unusual degree of sweating, were the sorts of problems encountered during the fieldwork year. The students' on-the-spot responses reveal that some have contingency measures in case things do go wrong. One student is thankful for the drama training he has had in improvisation, which he feels is vital training in coping when things do not quite go as planned.

Students feel there are not enough opportunities for students to learn from formal performance situations. Here, Mark complains that assessment is summative rather than formative, which is less helpful:

Mark	…we …don't have any contact with [tutor], and [tutor]'s the one that you need to please, cos he's the personality that will be like, this is the mark they're getting
RP	mm
Mark	so, we need some form of sheet from [tutor], or, him just to come in and go, this is what I'm looking for from you,
RP	right
Mark	this is your weak points, this is what I don't like about it, this is what I do like, give us something to work with, don't just expect us to go into that exam and play it how you would like it, that's not fair… it's not fair for us to go into that exam, and then, come out, two days later with a mark and few comments, and that's all we have to work on, all year

RP   mm
Mark   well, how're we meant to improve if we don't know what we've done badly until after the exam?
Mark, interview, 4/06/08

For students to value the experience of being assessed, they need to feel it can be beneficial, rather than being judgemental, or, as Mark says, simply coming too late. Assessment should not be reserved for giving a grade at the end of a period of time; assessment should be used formatively to provide useful feedback on students' progress (Blom and Poole, 2004; Daniel, 2004). It is possible that the same criteria may not be relevant to both types of assessment (Burt and Mills, 2006; Stanley *et al.*, 2002). Students must also feel their particular genre is being assessed sympathetically (Daniel, 2004), which is becoming increasingly complex with the widening scope of 'performance' on educational courses.

In the extract above, Mark clearly needs to know what the specific examiner is looking for in a performance, and how to play in a manner which is going to impress that particular person. He talks about pleasing a "personality". Reflecting retrospectively on marks awarded for performances, data relates largely to students' attempts to come to terms with the assessment criteria and to account for particular marks or comments made. In the 2007-8 Department of Drama and Music module handbooks, three-and-a-half pages are devoted to setting out assessment guidelines and marking criteria. Nevertheless, participants persistently claim not to understand how performances are marked. Perhaps it is in the application of the criteria that the students are confused or unsure. Again, this is a very good example of how supposedly objective knowledge (the assessment criteria as specified in the handbook) is, once filtered through the students' thoughts, reactions and perceptions, refracted, becoming part of a new system of relational, contextual beliefs.

These findings accord with previous research which shows self-concept is formed through experiences with the environment and the results of our actions, and is influenced especially by environmental reinforcements and significant others (e.g. Burland and Pitts, 2002; Dolloff, 2006; McLellan, 2014; Talbot, 2013). The process of constructive and critical reflection on one's musical performance, as well as one's understandings and working methods, is closely linked to the process of identity formation, and this is enhanced by observing and listening to other students performing, which provides important feedback into students' own practice, and is a crucial process in students' relational identity development (Blake, 2004; Blom and Poole, 2004; Hallam, 2010; Juuti and Littleton, 2010; Nielsen, 2001).

Pitts (2005) describes the potential problems for music students' in forging an identity at university, because of the potential threat of so many others of equal or greater talent; their experiences of performance, hitherto a defining part of their lives, can now become problematic, threatening their very sense of self, if participation in performance turns out to be less rewarding than anticipated. Success is closely tied to general confidence and sense of purpose, and can be damaged by insecurities about performance. Where formerly they may have been top of the class, they now find themselves one of many, possibly with more advanced students among the group. Fear of inadequacy within a community of students and student musicians and the competitive nature of music courses highlight the need for a secure self-identity (Burt and Mills, 2006; Juuti and Littleton, 2010; Kingsbury, 1988). Kingsbury's (1988) study of conservatoires reveals a discourse of possessing or lacking 'talent' that makes the problem even more acute for students in that environment, relating their musicality to their fundamental sense of self and identity. Continued successful experiences are vital to ward off doubts about musical identity (Pitts, 2005). Relationships involving this central aspect of students' lives are likely to be particularly sensitive (Dibben, 2006).

Burland (2005) found that many students in the university context underwent a transition from a self-identity as an aspirant 'performer' to that of an amateur musician. Further to this, Parkes and Jones (2012) found that, during the course of a university music degree, students reported a loss of self-identity as performers, whilst their colleagues in music education were developing a greater sense of identity as music educators. The researchers ask whether this could be a result of their differing experiences during the course, particularly their experiences of success. Expectancy of success is very important, especially early on, if students are to develop a positive image of a successful self.

Hargreaves *et al*. (2003) go further, and state that the individual and self-identity are at the centre of music education. The issue of independence and of developing one's individuality is addressed time and again in recent research. Coimbra *et al.* (2001) note the close connection between personal and musical growth, and write of the potential for individual responses to music (particularly in the case of the voice, they believe) both as a performer and a listener. They actively promote the notion that individuality and personal distinctiveness as a singer can result in a richer variety of performances. This is a far cry from mimicking a teacher, a recording or even a style.

Hunter and Russ (1996) note that music performance is perceived by many music students entering further education as "the most powerful image-forming activity" (p.67; see also Hunter, 2004). In higher education, taking part in musical performance has been found to have

a significant impact on music students' feelings of belonging and self-identity during their undergraduate studies (Burland, 2005; Dibben, 2006; Hess, 2010; Pitts, 2005). The centrality of the performer identity to music students' sense of integration and belonging, along with a need for personal confidence and for establishing individuality within the group, has been identified by Burland (2005) and Pitts (2005). Blom and Poole (2004) and Coimbra *et al.* (2001) also found that music students were more sensitive to criticism of their performance than of any other aspect of their skills. Hewitt (2009) asks whether the musical identity of student musicians is particularly 'musical', or whether it is a function of more general psychological traits. According to Dibben (2006), music students identify with their subject of study more than other students, implying that academic success or otherwise is closely related to students' sense of self-identity and well-being.

These reports, highlighting the importance of developing a lasting concept of self and identity linked to music, have serious implications for the emotional well-being and academic success of music students. This very personal process, a process of accommodation, transition and transformation, can be highly emotionally charged (Juuti and Littleton, 2010). It is a process of changing one's self (Mathieson, 2002). Careful consideration needs to be given to the creation of a suitable environment of trust and mutual respect such that risk-taking is made possible, for it is in risk-taking that learning takes place, without compromising self-confidence. Many studies highlight the relevance of this for education and training: educators need to realise the importance of presence of positive factors (Davidson and Burland, 2006; Lamont, 2012; O'Neill, 1999; Ryan, Huta and Deci, 2008; Sloboda, 1991).

c) *Philosophical stance as part of individualised knowledge or belief*

The final set of beliefs which have a bearing on students' ways of thinking about performing music, in the network proposed here, comprises the students' attitudes towards, opinions about, and outlook on, music. In short, this is the philosophical stance adopted vis-à-vis music performance, which is a vital component of the thinking which influences action. An examination of this set of beliefs probes what performance is, according to this study's participants. Although, in this part of the network, knowledge has been filtered through personal experiences, it is possible to draw from every participant and still construct a common picture.

1. *Performance is visual*

The participants recognise the importance of the visual aspect of music performance. The audience's response to *watching* a music performance cannot be ignored, even though what the students are principally working on is sound. This resonates absolutely with perspectives in the literature (e.g. Davidson and Correira, 2001; Bowman, 2009). Davidson's extensive work on body movement in performance has highlighted the crucial role of the visual. She describes it as "well documented" (2001, p.76) that audiences use visual information about expression and intention from performers' movements, as well as the sounds they make, and that often the movements are a greater indicator of a performer's intention than the sounds themselves. Indeed, Davidson's findings (e.g. 1993) suggest that singers consider expressivity to be conveyed largely through facial expression, physical posture, and body (i.e. the non-aural

aspects of performance), and Woody's (2000) finding that vocal majors engaged in significantly less critical listening than their instrumentalist colleagues, could be related. Although critical listening to recordings was used by other music students in Woody's study, he wonders whether singers consider the effectiveness of critical listening to be less useful to them.

Data from this project suggest body language plays a huge part in performance. One respondent, a joint Drama and music student, describes how his acting training has been immensely helpful in teaching him how to 'be' on stage, how to get himself in character for performance. He feels there is a distinct difference between Drama and music students, that Drama students are considerably more at home on the stage, and that their performances, even if not quite up to the musical standard of those given by music students, are very much more enjoyable for an audience, simply because Drama students generally look more comfortable on the stage, therefore the audience feels more comfortable in their turn.

Even in an ensemble, the visual is important. Participants believe ensemble members need to be seen by the audience to be interacting with and relating to one another without tension. In addition, body language of orchestra or band members can help communication of the musical ideas. This quotation from John shows great insight:

> John   …I move my body when I play things. If there's, say, a semitone slide, cause I play the bass instrument, from one note to another which my semitone change will change that chord into a minor chord from a major, and that's a crucial part, I will, as I'm sliding that note down from, say, an A to an A flat, I'll move my body with it, to show, you know, that I'm aware of what I'm doing, and that this is an important part, you know, and so, you know, and say if, on other instruments like a flute, if they're doing a big run up the instrument and doing a scalic run up, some performers on that instrument will move their heads up to the rhythm, you know, just like a little bit just to show that they're just either enjoying it or that they're aware of what they're doing. I think you need to show an awareness of what you're playing, to the audience. And to an audience that's, whether it's musical or not it's human beings. We need it given to us on a plate as human beings. We're lazy, we don't like looking for it ourselves. If someone is moving up with their head, you know, and, at the same time as the music is, the audience is happy because that's all they want to see, if that makes sense, it's a clear physical sign that you're aware of what you're playing and, and the tone of it.
>
> *John, interview, 10/10/07*

2. *Performance is about emotional nourishment*

Participants speak about their need to compose or to perform music, possibly purely for their own pleasure, or within modules they have selected. This may relate to a desire to express themselves, and/or provide an outlet for their creativity. Increasing numbers of studies are

addressing the psychological effects and social benefits of music. It has also been acknowledged that learning achieved and brought about through music in turn has a positive influence on academic success and further personal development (DfE, 2011). It is not through the solitary contemplation of musical scores that people become motivated to perform, but by engaging in the active, collective practice of performing (Finnegan, 1989; Willis, 2000).

Ben describes himself as "a bit of an ego person, and I love the, the feeling you get when you've done something well, and people applaud you for it", which makes him feel good. He also, significantly, says he learns from performance each time (interview, 29/01/08). Lamont (2012) states that research is so far scarce which examines the emotional impact of performance on the performer herself. She asked music students to give free reports of their strongest, most intense experiences of performing music. Results revealed that performing music can be a very positive emotional experience: students described experiences of both listening and performing, in terms of feeling joy and happiness, rapture and euphoria, calm and peace. The experience of excitement and intense pleasure from performance is indeed linked to adrenalin and other chemical changes in the brain and body, and is described by performers as a 'buzz'. Other researchers (e.g. Bartolome, 2013; Campbell *et al.*, 2007; Smeltz, 2012) have found that the emotional reward derived from performance can result in pleasure and emotional engagement (Holmes, 2011), or even "hedonism" (Persson, 2001).

3. *Performance is about communication*

Participants believe communication is central to performance. Nick, in interview (27/10/07), states that "performance is about, conveying the message". Performers have an expressive or meaningful intention when they perform music; that is, they intend to communicate a mood, emotion or feeling through the music. Cohen's band members frequently referred to the fact that they wanted their music to 'say' something. They invested their music with intention, constructing it deliberately to evoke and communicate meanings and sentiments, through their lyrics, the complexities of the music, or a combination of visual and aural elements (Cohen, 1991).

In Thompson (2007), music is said to be about entertaining and feeding the emotions of the audience. Engagement with the audience is important: the audience are more likely to rate a performance highly if they have engaged with it rather than if they think it is of high quality. Myers and White (2012) believe a relationship of trust enhances performance quality.

Performer-audience relationships are described at length in the data. Participants talk about interaction with the audience; engaging with them, making eye contact, not shifting one's

focus too quickly as that makes an audience uncomfortable; John mentions the importance of having mirrors in the practice room, "so you can see, what the audience would see, and you can know whether that looks good or whether it doesn't look good" (interview, 10/10/07). Playing or singing from memory will enhance the performance ("any performer, if they're doing it from memory will be able to communicate with the audience more. They just will." Dave, 28/11/07).

There is much careful thought about the differences between instrumentalists and their positioning, and possibilities for communication. One particular interview with Dave contains an extended passage that was especially interesting in this regard, partly because of its content but also because it reveals a remarkable detail of thought on this topic. He draws a contrast between the pianist and her intimate "sphere", as Dave calls it, and soloists such as flautists and singers who "should reach out" to the audience. This difference is caused, Dave thinks, by the nature of the piano as an instrument:

Dave	there's something very intimate about the sound of the piano, that lends itself, erm, to the pianist being in their world at the piano and drawing, just letting, just drawing the audience into you, and your sphere
RP	mmm, yeah
Dave	whereas, a singer, and a violinist, you know, flautist, should think more about reaching out for their audience, sometimes, as well as sometimes just letting, just going into your world, reaching out, I don't think a pianist needs to do that and don't think they can
RP	mm
Dave	because, because of where they are, and the nature, but I don't think it's a problem because I just think the nature of being a pianist, erm, dictates that, you just draw them into your sphere

The conversation moves on to a discussion of particular performers, where Dave demonstrates knowledge of different styles amongst people who nevertheless play the same instrument:

RP	somebody said, when I was doing an interview with them, about Jacqueline du Pré being a cellist, you know, but the fact that she seems to be in her own little world, and that, it seemed, they, watching, they were watching a video of her, and it seemed almost rude to be interrupting her with what she was doing because she was so, so engrossed, and involved in her, her bonding almost with this cello, they felt like they were interrupting
Dave	mm, what as in in a negative way?
RP	no no no no, in a, well, in a,
Dave	or in a, this is amazing
RP	yeah, in a, this is an amazing performance, kind of way
Dave	yeah, it was her style wasn't it, she had erm, she was an extremely expressive player, you know, quite different in style to, erm, Pablo Casals and, Rostropovich

RP	yeah, yeah
Dave	yeah, but just as good, maybe better. Just a shame about, you know, what was to be her fate

Dave specifically mentions interacting with the audience, and the choice which he feels certain performers have, by virtue of where they stand and what their instrument is, of reaching out, or drawing the audience in:

RP	…do you think there is a difference then between different instruments or do you think there's a difference between different performers?
Dave	erm, yeah, there's a difference between performers, but cello, cello, like I say, stuff like the cello, stuff like the violin, stuff like singing, you can do it both ways
RP	right
Dave	but I do genuinely think the pianist is limited to the one way, in general. Unless it's a show piece, or a joke piece, then you can kind of, interact more, with the audience

I suggest to him there is a difference between a pianist playing solo and playing in an ensemble, but Dave still feels the pianist is in her own "sphere", and the other player(s)/singer have the choice of entering that sphere or reaching towards the audience:

RP	yeah, it is, it is a bit different, cos also there's a difference between when you're playing piano solo and when you're playing in an ensemble because then you have to interact with the ensemble, and you become more, out there, if you see what I mean, you're not so much, stuck in your own little sphere, you have to be more out there
Dave	mm, yeah
RP	erm, but I don't know whether that necessarily means being out there with the audience more
Dave	yeah. Well. I've gotta say, I mean, usually the piano is at the back, they're behind everything. Even then, you're kind of, you are working as an ensemble but it still feels like a sphere to me
RP	mm
Dave	it feels like a sphere within a sphere.
RP	right
Dave	but the front of the sphere and the soloists, in the sphere get their chance to speak out to the audience
RP	mhm, so how do you feel then when you're being accompanied by someone, how do feel when you're singing? Do you feel like you're kind of, in the middle or, something that's going on behind you and something's going on in front of you, or, how, how do you get this, erm, how can you get involvement of, what's in front of you, with the audience, and the sound that's coming from behind you? How do feel standing there?
Dave	well, I like to stand quite close to the piano. Erm, so I feel as though I'm in the sphere of the piano
RP	yeah
Dave	erm, yeah, you know, I mean, I, I'm feeling very intimate with the sound of the piano
RP	mhm

> Dave   and the accompanist and the ensemble, but, I, I still have the option of just bringing them into this sphere
>
> RP   right
>
> Dave   or reaching out to them
>
> *Dave, interview 28/11/07*

In that lengthy passage, Dave is revealed as having firm ideas, based in his experience of being on stage, of the possibilities for communication between him as a solo singer and his pianist and the audience, speaking of intimacy, reaching out, drawing in, being "out there" – all expressions derived from the vocabulary of relationships, with bodily and emotional associations.

If performance communicates something, then the performer may be seeking to put across an effect intended by the composer. Dave, in one of his own compositions, knows what "imagery" attends his music:

> Dave   …to me, the sound, feels like some sort of creation, it feels like a celebration of something celestial, that's the imagery that it brings to my head
>
> *Dave, interview, 28/11/07*

Performers should consider how their movements can be used to grab attention, enhance communication, guide the observer through their interpretation of affective and structural content, manipulate the aesthetic experience of the audience and influence an audience's perception and judgement of the performance they hear (Parncutt, 2007). This has to be movement which is congruent with the expressive features in the score (Broughton and Stevens, 2009; Coimbra *et al.*, 2001; Davidson, 1993); the visual aspect of performance must support the 'message', as John explains:

> John   …I mean the music can do it to a certain extent but you can emphasise it and add to that by committing yourself to whatever you're gonna get across at that point.
>
> *John, interview, 10/10/07*

John suggests that the message is a story, with its mood and characterisation:

> John   …If I'm singing the song such as *Days of plenty* where my daughter has supposedly just died, I'm not gonna be prancing around all over the stage making myself known that I'm happy and enjoying it. I've got to, I've got to have emotion and be sad in that song, and I've got to almost cry in it. But there's a difference between the audience knowing that that's because I'm the character doing that as opposed to because I'm so nervous that I'm up there that I'm crying.
>
> *John, interview, 10/10/07*

Platz and Kopiez (2012) argue not just for the importance of communication, but for musical persuasion, persuasion being defined as the successful change from the audience's initial mental status into another. In this setting of strategic communication, the musician acts as an orator to gain the audience's favour.

4. Performance is about being yourself

The concept of the self-image was met earlier in this chapter in relation to the resources on which the students know they can draw in preparing for performance, and in connection with the self-monitoring which students undertake as they see how they progress in relation to the task in hand. Much more will be said about the centrality of the self in a later section of this chapter. As an important element of the students' philosophical stance, however, a slightly different notion of the self is also crucial, and this is the 'authentic' self, the expression of one's individuality.

The students believe it is essential to be able to convey one's individuality through performance:

> RP   what do you think they're looking for then in a performance?
> Emma   maybe they're more looking for like, less about the notes but more about the way you, like convey yourself
>
> *Emma, interview, 30/05/08*

In this context, "convey yourself" means 'convey your *self*'. Emma feels strongly that she should be able to express herself through her performance, as opposed to being told how to interpret a piece of music:

> Emma   …surely we shouldn't be like, put into clones we should be allowed to, explore everything to express ourselves, and, well express *ourselves* not express what they want us to express [original emphasis]
>
> *Emma, interview, 30/05/08*

Ben is adamant about the importance of the performer in the act of musicking, stating that performing is "about me":

> Ben …other people may see it as a way to, you know, praise the composer, and, show to an audience how brilliant it is, but for me I'm a lot more selfish in that way, I think performing is about me
>
> *Ben, interview, 29/01/08*

Earlier in this chapter, it was said that the notion of musicianship, which, rather than being well-defined and objective, is actually found in this study to be a nebulous and ill-defined concept. The current data seem to suggest musicianship is actually defined by the extent to which, and the success with which, self equates with music in a performance; or, to put it another way, putting oneself into the music is a definition of musicianship.

Showing how the self is inherent in the performance, Dave declares he has a deliberate strategy, "a general, life, psychology and philosophy, that's kind of resulted in, this kind of thinking, an approach", which is that, "seeing as my performance is going to be better if I have less nerves, I'm gonna have less nerves!" (Dave, interview, 18/06/08).

Expressing oneself is now a common topic within music research (e.g. Cohen, 1991; Davidson and Correia, 2001; Hultberg, 2008; Schnare *et al.*, 2011). Stewart Rose and Countryman (2013) write of being authentically present; Wang (1999) describes an existential authenticity, denoting a special state of being in which one is true to oneself, and which can counteract the loss of self in public roles and public spheres in modern western society. Bogdan (2003) echoes the existential nature of this state: in feeling an existence and identity within something outside ourselves, music provides a break from reality and serves to help process the self and reality at the same time, enabling people to transform their world.

'Authenticity' is a complex and ambiguous term, developed conceptually by philosophers in terms of autonomy and freedom from external pressures (Parkinson and Smith, 2015). In the context of the performing arts, Radbourne, Johanson, Glow and White (2009) suggest that it refers to the experience of truth, reliability and believability within the performing arts event, and can relate to two different factors: faithfulness to the original, and emotional perception. Faithfulness to the original is the extent to which an audience member can be certain that the performance is indeed that of the work in question (be it play, ballet or musical work). Emotional perception relates to whether the audience member considers an experience authentic in terms of reality, truth and believability, and depends on each person's perception. The greater the authenticity perceived by an audience member within a performance, the greater her enjoyment (Wang, 1999). Wang also reports that a performance which experts or intellectuals might judge inauthentic, or staged authenticity, may be experienced as authentic and real from an audience perspective.

156

Different understandings of what is authentic persist across different genres of music. It seems that 'authentic', in jazz or rock, means being 'original', 'different', 'true to yourself'; in classical, 'authentic' has come to mean 'as close as possible to the original.

An authentic performance for Davidson and Correia (2001) is one where the performers manage to reach bodily patterns of physical experience which connect with the listeners. Authentic performance can be historically informed, but it must never lose sight of the performer's own feelings and experiences. Each performance of the music constitutes the real and highly individualised musical work, and the authenticity of the work lies within the performer's control (Davidson and Correia, 2001). Pellegrino (2014) found a respondent saying that the definition of a musician was someone who could express themselves at the highest level, and one participant used the interesting concept of giving something *to* himself through music making, which would seem to link to the idea of enjoyment and fulfilment being attainable through music making. Myers and White (2012) liken the giving of oneself in performance to telling one's story in therapy; it is cathartic and healing but leaves one vulnerable. Kingscott and Durrant (2010) and Bartolome (2013) believe the act of self-expression is a benefit and indeed a goal of musical endeavour.

These reports fit with the findings of the current study. Students do look at historical and stylistic information about a piece, but in fact have little regard for the notion of 'authenticity' in the 'historical performance practice' sense:

Mark	bollocks, it's bollocks. Erm, what it comes down to is people being obsessed, with authenticity, and obsessed with the original times. I mean yeah if you really really want to hear a Bach sonata as Bach would've heard it, go ahead. Me as an audience member or as a performer, just want to be excited by what's going on …I mean, I, I just want to be moved. Then the problem is that you, you can't move everyone because some people will want authentic performances, some people won't, some people do like Mozart in the Classical style, some people don't. You can't please everyone, that's why you have to go with what your heart says cos there's no point performing a piece in a way that you don't want to play it
Mark, interview, 4/06/08	

Will points out that scholarly ideas regarding what is 'authentic' change over time anyway according to the way the academic wind blows. The most profound and authentic meanings of music are not to be found in works themselves; indeed, the belief in one sole authentic meaning of a work, that can somehow be transferred from composer to modern audience by way of a 'correct' or definitive performance, promotes a philosophy of reproductive, not inventive, music making (Silverman, 2013), which these students are deeply against.

Being comfortable with one's own playing of a piece is paramount, says Tom, and the prevailing opinion is that putting oneself into the music and being oneself is far more important than any notion of historical authenticity *or indeed any other consideration* when formulating an interpretation of a piece. The students do not want to take a role (Finnegan, 1989) which they feel they do not fit; nor do they accept that they should reduce their personality (Willis, 1978) in order to perform in a particular way to please others. They wish to be unique, rather than to conform; they wish to demonstrate originality, not reproduction. Therein lies authenticity, and also creativity. Creativity is to do with finding meaning in something. The search for the authentic expression of self is a process of creativity. Creativity embodies the understanding of processes, rather than the copying of behaviours (Duffy, 2013; Garnett, 2013). Risk-taking is commonly associated with creativity (Leong, 2010). Students' confidence in their creative ability influences their decisions to behave creatively. They do not wish (or need) to be trained; they do not adhere to conservative values or the hierarchy of the master-apprentice model; they want their own knowledge and understandings to inform their practice (Duffy, 2013).

Authenticity is revealed through this study to mean being true to oneself, not to a composer or to a style. The manifestation of self through the body, through interpretation and through enjoyment is about establishing one's presence and one's cultural significance. Each performer's individual response to, and interpretation of, music enables her to express her personal aesthetic vision. This is about expressing the authentic self, a unique self; it is about encouraging the self to grow, and, through this, experiencing enjoyment and fulfilment.

5.   *Performance is about pleasant sounds*

Data in this project tell of a desire, through music, to produce something pleasing to the ear. This means producing a "nice sound" with one's instrument…:

Nick   erm, whereas before, it would be, ok, play the note, it's flat, not a very nice sound, but I wasn't even aware of it, erm after that, I started thinking about, is that a nice sound, and if it's not, what can I do to fix that. So I took it to my teacher and, erm, some nice techniques about getting a good sound straight off, that I still use.

Nick, interview 27/10/07

…and performing music which sounds pleasing:

Ben	(sighs) Vaughan Williams
RP	it is gorgeous isn't it, gorgeous stuff
Ben	I love his work
RP	why, why is it so nice?
Ben	why is it so nice?
RP	mm
Ben	things like the chord changes, like 'still as the hour glass', and just the simplicity, it doesn't take much, and it's just, simple and easy and, well not easy for the singer but it's, it seems easy to the listener, I think, it's just pretty and lovely

Ben, rehearsal, 14/05/08

Bullock (2010) and Young (2010) confirm that the audience – the performer herself being always the first to be audience to any music making – will experience an individual aesthetic and emotional reaction to a piece of music, or indeed any art. This counters the modernist viewpoint that the audience should put themselves in the place of the artist to appreciate what he intended by his work, and that its value resides in the intention of the artist. The audience will form their own opinion, and it does not have to be favourable, no matter how clever, complex or intellectual the piece of art.

6. *Performance is not about accuracy*

One requirement of performance modules is that performance students must hand in two photocopies of the music they will perform in their examination. Over the course of the interviews, the most common complaint from the participants is that the examiners have their heads buried in the score instead of looking at the performer. Data show this practice to be disliked by students.

Tom	…I think the whole ethos of the way they mark is wrong, I think they should, sit you down, and just, listen to you play… I don't think they should have a score in front of them

Tom, interview, 12/02/08

Dyck (2014) describes how musical ontologists have inherited the assumption that a necessary condition on the performance of a piece of classical music is that the performer must attempt to comply perfectly with the score of that work. The performer must intend to perform all of the notes[31] in the score, and not to deviate from it. An attempt thus to adhere to the score is

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[31] Dyck does not mention any other instructions beyond notes, such as dynamic and tempo markings, but presumably it can be assumed that the same obligation applies to them.

considered an essential characteristic of classical music performance, as opposed to performance in other musical genres - for example, jazz.

In the current study, for the most part, performances took place within the classical genre; music theatre songs sung with piano accompaniment departed slightly from this but a piano/vocal score was still submitted. John, for his final recital, performed a series of music theatre songs with a swing band, and still the scores were submitted to the examiners.

7. *Performance can be functional*

The literature underlines music's part in everyday rituals and special occasions in cultures far and wide. In this study, students refer, for example, to playing the organ for a church service. Music's social function in contributing to group identity and belonging in this way is widely acknowledged (Campbell *et* al., 2007; DeNora, 2000). Negus (2006) writes of a moment in history, when music, in line with its supposed lack of referentiality, became invisible, and the intrusive presence of musicians was removed: choirs, organists and chanting monks were concealed in churches; musicians in medieval mystery plays and Elizabethan masques were hidden. The relevance of this to the current study is that music which is provided as accompaniment to another medium of attention – worship, theatre, TV documentary – is considered by the students to be functional; the attention is not on the performer, therefore the usual conditions do not apply. Students remark upon it because, since there is a different emotional attachment to this sort of musicking, it does not result in any feelings of nerves. The music is, essentially, not a performance.

d) Summary

Here, in this second part of the chapter, knowledge rubs shoulders with belief, as the elements identified in the outer circle of knowledge sets are filtered through experience to formulate personal theories of the world. This practical knowledge, this knowledge in action, involves how students actually put knowledge into practice. The data examined have been divided into three areas: tasks and resources, assessment of progress and self-reflection, and philosophical stance. 'Knowledge of tasks and resources' covers students' knowledge of the task in hand and of what is available to them in order to accomplish that task. 'Assessment of progress and self-reflection' involves making professional judgements ('professional' here indicating that the music students have been trained specifically for a certain role, and have developed a particular set of knowledge and skills which are unavailable to people who have not experienced that training and development) about current situations and forward projections regarding how to proceed, taking into account parameters of time, physical resources and abilities. The third area, 'philosophical stance' relates to philosophical approaches and personal-professional epistemology.

Dividing the findings up into these categories can seem artificial, because of course the students' thinking is highly complex and does not divide neatly into isolated pockets, especially in this inner portion of the framework. It exists in its application to actual situations, in specific contexts, and involves different types of beliefs and knowledge intertwined. However, the three areas outlined above do appear to help explain this portion of the ways of thinking of the students. The division into the three areas is a useful one, if only for the purpose of giving an account of how the students made sense of their roles and responsibilities, and of their experiences.

The students' philosophical outlook on music can be the most deeply ingrained belief system in an individual, and the most difficult to change or adapt. The present study revealed that students uphold a number of beliefs about the nature of music performance:

- It is visual
- It is about emotional nourishment
- It is about communication
- It is about being yourself
- It is about pleasant sounds
- It is not about accuracy
- It can be functional

These views coincide with relatively recently articulated thoughts about the nature of music, emanating from writers and researchers who espouse post-modern, 'new musicology' standpoints (e.g. Small, 1998; Taruskin, 1995). These perspectives, which form the students' philosophical outlook on music performance, are developed in practical application during preparation and performance, the central section of the proposed model. Further examination of these topics is therefore found in the following section of this chapter, which reveals what the data say about students' thoughts on the central activity of preparing for performance and performance itself.

4. The nexus of the intersecting frameworks: The centrality of the self

The central section of this conceptualisation of the students' thinking derives from rich and extensive data showing the funnelling of all these different beliefs, theories, pieces of knowledge and ways of thinking into preparing music for performance. What is really remarkable is the strength of conviction with which the students discuss their work.

It has been seen that the inner sets of knowledge reflect individuals' beliefs, born of the processing of experience and 'knowledge in action'. The central activity relating to music performance is permeated by the role of the self and its projection into music, a key factor in successful performance being enjoyment.

In making a simple and succinct declaration, one of the most confident performers in the study precisely highlights the centrality of the self in performance. Performance is *about him*:

Ben	…other people may see it as a way to, you know, praise the composer, and, show to an audience how brilliant it is, but for me I'm a lot more selfish in that way, I think performing is about me

Ben, interview, 29/01/08

Earlier subsections of this chapter addressed aspects of self. Indeed, self permeates the data to such an extent that the whole of the second strata of the scaffold in the model (individualised or personalised knowledge and belief) is in some way related to self. This is unremarkable, since this portion of knowledge is precisely the result of individuals' processing of more general, objective knowledge, to create a person belief system. In section 3a, it was seen that the students had self-concepts which enabled them to work out how to tap their own resourcefulness alongside other resources and make decisions based on this knowledge. Section 3b showed how students monitor their progress against their goals, and how identity is shaped by experiences. Section 3c addressed the students' philosophical stance in respect of music performance, a part of which was the important ideal of being able to 'be yourself'. The

final part of this account of the study's findings now explores the various elements of the manifestation of self in performance, as they appear in the data. The definition of self, moving from previously mentioned conceptual and philosophical aspects, now enters the realms of the body, emotion, visceral response, physical sensation, the inhabiting of physical space, communication and social connections with audience. Topics to be considered in this central section include interpretation, body language and visual aspects of performance, the ways in which music itself becomes, literally, the embodiment of a confident, comfortable and contented self, and the consideration of audience response. They reflect Cook's (1998) view that it is the investment of body and mind which gives music its meaning.

a) *Personal enjoyment and fulfilment*

Enjoyment is a crucial theme of this study. It is central to the students throughout, and permeates all other strands of data, being repeatedly manifest and explicitly stated. This resonates fully with previous research (e.g. Coimbra *et al*., 2001; Davidson and Burland, 2006; Persson, 2001; Ryan *et al*., 2008).

Researchers (Parkes and Jones, 2012; Persson, 2001; Smeltz, 2012) have found that performers choose to engage repeatedly with music performance because of an intrinsic enjoyment, their strongest experiences of music being characterised by engagement and a search for meaning (Lamont, 2012). Musical experience provokes a special connection with the self (Finnegan, 1989). Successful performers derive intellectual, emotional and social pleasure from their ability to make music, meeting technical challenges with high levels of skill, and connecting with other performers and with an audience (Brand, Sloboda, Saul and Hathaway, 2012; Hallam, 2001; Holmes, 2011; Lamont, 2012). Performers also want to please their audience, to share music with people who are important in the performers' lives, as if presenting a gift (Hallam, 2001; Woody and Parker, 2012). This is desired both for the sake of the music itself, and also to show what they can do (Coimbra *et al.*, 2001).

Involvement in musical activities is consistently shown to have positive effects on mood, quality of life and engagement, and to be a rewarding leisure activity (Lamont, 2012). The experience of excitement and intense pleasure from performance is indeed linked to adrenalin and other chemical changes in the brain and body, and is described by performers as a 'buzz' (Pitts, 2005). Growing as a person, seeing the significance and beauty of music as an extension of life itself, becomes a worthwhile process. (Coimbra *et al.*, 2001).

Research has shown the importance of extrinsic and intrinsic motivation in the development of music performance, for, without these, the long journey to success is impossible (e.g.

McPherson and Davidson, 2006; Woody and McPherson, 2010). Positive experiences encourage re-engagement with music making (O'Neill, 2002; Woody and McPherson, 2010): success breeds success. The importance of enjoyment and positive experiences with music suggests true enjoyment should be cultivated as early as possible, and certainly whilst a student is in education, if the student is not to be put off performing in the future. Inspiring role models are crucial (Coimbra *et al.,* 2001). Enjoyment of participation may come to those with more experience more readily than to novices (Pitts, 2007), which highlights the need for repeated experiences of performances which can provide a 'buzz', or other moments of success.

In line with previous research findings, enjoyment and pleasure are, in the current study, most often what originally enticed the students into studying music at university, and especially into taking the performance module. Mark talks about the transition from school to university, where studying music means he can immerse himself in music, both as an academic subject and in his 'spare' time which he fills with ensembles.

Music can be a catalyst for memories, or for the outlet or expression of emotion. Students recognise the use of music to give vent to emotions and stresses. They recognise, for example, that blues music developed from the expression of inner suffering. Participants describe how they listen to or sing along to a choice of music which suits their particular moods, whether it be classical, pop or other music, and how music reminds them of people or situations. For these students, there is also the opportunity to express themselves through their playing, even in the practice room. Emma describes playing the Poulenc clarinet sonata, even on her own in the practice room, as "a real release" (interview, 30/05/08).

The importance of enjoyment for the performer is highlighted in the following extract (note the frequent occurrences of the words 'like' and 'enjoy' in a relatively short time):

RP	ok, so, what about performance, why are you doing performance, what is performing, for you?
Sue	I just like it.
RP	because?
Sue	I just really enjoy it, it's just nice to do something, that I can. It keeps people entertained for a while.
RP	right?
Sue	Calm them, soothe them, whatever, the music brings them really.
RP	so is that the main thing about performing?
Sue	yeah, and I just enjoy it, so much, I don't know why, I've just always enjoyed it.

Sue, interview, 27/10/07

The students frequently and consistently describe physical feelings, feelings of elation aroused by good experiences of music making, when it goes well, and conversely, negative feelings (feeling sick, "feeling like shit") when things go wrong. Choice of repertoire is influenced by "liking" particular music:

RP	so whose decision is it now then what you're gonna learn next? …
Dave	well it has to be mine I think. I'm kind of very belligerent, hah! And there's a lot of music I don't like so,
RP	mhm
Dave	as soon as I don't like something, I kind of, dismiss it, erm, I only sing, songs that I like
Dave, interview, 22/01/08	

Enjoyment plays a huge part, not only in performing but also in practising, reflecting Finnegan's (1989) finding that music-making is rewarding for its own sake. Rehearsing can generate the physical effects of exhilaration. Ben sings out of tune at one point during a rehearsal, because "when I'm actually singing I get excited and I smile, cos I love it" (rehearsal, 14/05/08). Students know that practising can be boring or it can be fun, and they would much rather do something which is fun. They avoid 'boring' types of practice, except where there is a sufficiently good ratio of effort to reward; that is, if they can see that investing an amount of effort into an activity which might not be very exciting for them will be worth the effort, they will do it. Ben's attitude is typical:

Ben	singing on your own? …it's bloody boring, yeah. And also you, I think you can't work off your pianist, cos they, they tell me what I'm doing wrong more than I would realise what I'm doing wrong, so I think singing on my own just singing through the thing is pointless because, I already know it, well mostly
Ben, interview, 29/01/08	

Nick has a slightly different view. He is working on a piece in order to improve his playing of it, and passes the comment that "If you enjoy it it's not practice, then it's just fun!... to me, practice means, you do what you have to do to make yourself good enough to play" (interview, 27/10/07).

Satisfaction with progress in a rehearsal during the preparation of a piece is often expressed in terms of 'liking', or describing the sounds in terms of beauty:

He sings	
RP	yeah, I liked that, you took your time over, 'from a-bove'
Ben	yeah
RP	did you realise you'd done that?
Ben	no

RP   you did, but I liked it

We laugh

RP   from 'so' again

We go. After he sings that phrase this time he speaks on the same note as '–bove'

Ben   (intoning this) I noticed it that time

And we go on to the end

RP   that's beautiful

Ben   hum!

RP   I like the way you floated the 'song' on that D flat

Ben   yeah. Me and [teacher] spent a long time doing that

RP   yeah, that's gorgeous

Ben   (trying it out again) 'song'. I'm hoping, hoping that'll sound really good

Ben, rehearsal, 14/05/08

That the same music does not suit everyone is particularly well illustrated within the context of the trio, where we prepared music by two different composers: Milhaud and Menotti. Tom and I adored the Menotti trio, whereas Mark was not keen, preferring the Milhaud. The extracts below from rehearsals in three consecutive weeks illustrate different attitudes towards the repertoire from the three members of the trio (including me). The extracts show how each of us automatically attempts to explain our differences in taste, which is an acknowledgement that each of us has a reason for our particular response. There are evocative descriptions of the music, as well as very different reactions both to the music itself and the challenge of learning a new piece.

We get to the end this time. Tom and I look at each other. He sighs.

RP   that's gorgeous!

Tom   that sounded so much nicer than when we played it before as well

RP   yeah. It did.

Tom   can I er, borrow that pencil again.

RP   yeah.

I look at Mark.

RP   don't you like it?

Mark   mmmm, yes and no. There's bits that I really like,

RP   is it too mushy for you?

Tom   I'm just a soppy guy, I guess

Mark   mm, yeah, it's just a little bit, too out there

RP   oh well there you are you see Mark

Mark   it's still nice, but, give me Brahms any day

RP   well it's very Brahms-y

Mark   nah

Trio rehearsal, 7/11/07

RP   (putting aside the Milhaud) right, I'm bored of that one

Mark   shall we play some Menotti then?

RP   yay!

Mark   you're obsessed with this piece!

RP   huh? I'm not obsessed, I just like it

Tom   (singing the first phrase) doo, doo der doo, der doo, der doo der doo.

Trio rehearsal, 14/11/07

We start at 123 and get to the end. I laugh. Tom tries his last run down again.

Mark   that is the most random piece

RP   (laughing) oh, you're just determined not to like it!

Mark   no, that movement's shit, I'm sorry

RP   oh, it's not shit, we just can't play it yet. We haven't got the hang of it yet![32]

Mark   it's pants!

Trio rehearsal, 21/11/07

The negotiations and dialogue between us are also a good example of the social aspects of preparing music, which is the next topic under consideration.

b) *The personal within the social*

Music is a highly sociable activity, and a collective endeavour (Bartolome, 2013). Shared experiences of rehearsing and performing can lead to the development of strong bonds. Evidence suggests that the emotional and artistic aspects of music may, in fact, be uniquely

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[32] Note also the remark I make about not having yet found the right way to play it. My comment about not being able to play it yet does not refer to anything within the notation.

connected to social bonding (Woody and Parker, 2012). Bartolome (2013) notes the exhilarating and yet humbling nature of sharing musical experiences with other human beings, and believes that musical relationships and the resulting musical performances can transcend the moment and attain a spiritual quality for the participants.

Social experience is a significant influence on self-concept (Benzecry and Collins, 2014; Kaufman Shelemay, 2011); accordingly, participatory music making is highly regarded for its influence on and support in the social development of, and positive identity formation in, children and adolescents (Davidson and Burland, 2006; Woody and Parker, 2012). Indeed, the strongest experiences of musical performance are typically shared, rather than solitary, thereby generating social meaning (Dibben, 2006; Lamont, 2012). Parker (2014) also notes the emotional significance attached to our membership of social groups. The strong sense of community, personal identity and wellbeing that come with identifying with a group (Burland and Pitts, 2014) mean that an audience derives this sense of belonging and identity from being present at a live performance (Karlsen, 2014).

Much individual development takes place in a group context, offering support and encouragement, through shared enthusiasms and a sense of common purpose. Personal development and social interaction are closely connected in musical experience: participants do not make choices between these two aspects but seek a balance which allows them to satisfy their personal motivations and musical needs (Pitts, 2005). The transition between adolescent and adult is a particularly significant period of change (Burland and Pitts, 2002; Campbell *et al.*, 2007; Lonie, 2009), and the development of students' identities is likely to be influenced strongly by their involvement in music making during their time at university.

Playing in an ensemble can be akin to a performance, due to the presence of others with whom the musical experience is shared. The satisfaction of contributing to the musical whole cannot be achieved singly (Finnegan, 1989). Musicking is not necessarily about the finished product in terms of musical sound, but about the in-the-moment experiencing of music. Physical pleasure and heightened experience can be derived from the communal aspect of music making (Cohen, 1991; Pitts, 2005). Working together is a most profoundly human experience, an act of artistic expression (Finnegan, 1989).

An important finding running through the data is the fact that the students' experience of participation in musical ensembles is largely dominated by whether or not they enjoy that experience. High quality experiences lead to high quality musicking. Rehearsals are fun when the people involved are nice: this is the overwhelming sentiment. Ben explains:

Ben	… I love rehearsing, the rehearsal periods are always good fun because, most of the time, everyone is always very nice, in everything I've done so far. Erm, I've had a great time doing it, I mean even, taking an extreme example Kurt Weill's opera last year that was great fun, had such a good time…

Ben, interview, 29/01/08

When a student feels that the rest of the band includes people who are undesirable or who have differing approaches or attitudes, problems occur. The larger the ensemble, the more magnified the problem. Sometimes, working with others, whether an accompanist or members of an ensemble, can threaten one's sense of self, and students deal with this in different ways. In Emma's opinion, an accompanist is subordinate to a soloist, so, if there is any disagreement in interpretation, the soloist's idea would hold sway. Dave says he has "been in the driving seat" for the two-year period in which he has worked with his accompanist. Mark, as a soloist, appears to want to attribute variable value to an accompanist according to the difficulty or 'importance' of the part they have:

Mark	…you're completely on your own unfortunately.
RP	even if you've got a pianist?
Mark	even if you've got a pianist. For me. And I think that's where it does differ in repertoire, completely, erm, some sonatas that are blatantly sonatas for violin and piano, or even you could swap the instruments round and it wouldn't make a difference, you could say, sonata for piano and violin, it's blatantly the two of them.
RP	mmm
Mark	I think it's not, you have to interact with your pianist a lot more, and you have to feel less alone because you're not just by yourself, you're not just playing your own line with somebody else in the background, but then in other works it's completely different, you've blatantly got the tune all the way through, and all they're doing is adding harmony underneath basically.

Mark, interview 30/10/07

This is a (for me, disappointingly) dismissive view of the role of an accompanist, and an impoverished view of music. My ethnographic stance allows me to amalgamate data collected in 'official' contexts and data collected from observation of behaviours over time, and, as someone who knew Mark over a number of years both inside and outside the rehearsal room, I would describe Mark as being generally narrow-minded and self-centred. His relationship with music was like his relationship with people: his part in it was his sole focus.

Others, like Tom, work well in a partnership, so that the development of an interpretation evolves between the partners, and the sense of self is shared within a performance. This is a happy, equitable state where the partners, or members of a quartet etc., become of one mind, and can jointly project one *self*; or, if different selves are being projected, each is equally valid.

170

It is also evident from the data that, for the students with the strongest personalities, the less control the student feels over an ensemble, and the further away from the 'top' of the ensemble, the less they enjoy it, because their participation is subject to the decision-making and the interpretative authority of another. The data suggest that, for these students, playing in a large or relatively large ensemble is treated less seriously than playing as a soloist or in a small ensemble. Students often cite playing in Wind Band or even University Orchestra as being a good chance to practise one's technique, a good chance to think about bowing, or practise transposition. It is not seen as an opportunity to use one's expressive or interpretive powers, or have much personal input into the music. Sectionals are seen as redundant (says Tom), or at least, not beneficial to the self. These are interesting findings, because it seems the less chance there is for putting oneself into the music, the less investment there is generally, the less seriously the activity is taken, and also the less enjoyment comes from the activity.

The participants are also highly critical of those who direct and run ensembles, be they student or tutor. Only if the experience is enjoyable do the students truly value it. If the experience is tedious, if the music being created does not demand enough of the student's self, if the standard or the quality of the music is not sufficiently high or if the rehearsals are not sufficiently interesting, the student will not give of herself to it, will not share truly in the creation of the music, will keep it at arms' length. This finding adds a different shade to the notion that music making is always rewarding: it is not necessarily rewarding, as this circumstance demonstrates.

For Mark, ensemble playing is what provides the most enjoyment: he explains the impact this has on his individual practice. The contrast in enjoyment between the two activities is stressed, as it reduces Mark's inclination to practise individually:

Mark	…I'm more at home playing in ensembles, and because of that I get involved with loads of ensembles which means that I don't like doing the practice in between.

Mark, interview, 30/10/07

Transcripts of rehearsals, particularly the trio rehearsals, where Mark and Tom enjoyed a healthy rivalry both musically and socially, reveal a good deal of horseplay and fooling about. In other rehearsals and interviews too, joking and poking fun are rife, at the expense of students and lecturers alike. Incidents in lectures and classes are often recounted in interview with great hilarity.

c) *Preparation and interpretation: working out meaning and expression*

Coimbra *et al*. (2001) acknowledge the importance of preparing and knowing what one wants to say through a performance of a piece. Expressing oneself, developing an individual, meaningful interpretation, and investing music with intention, are widespread topics in the research literature (e.g. Cohen, 1991; Davidson and Correia, 2001; Hultberg, 2008).

Research findings suggest that expressivity is considered to be one of the most important aspects (perhaps *the* most important) of music performance, in terms of setting apart the best performers and their ability to move audiences (Davidson and Da Costa Coimbra, 2001; Lindström, Juslin, Bresin and Williamon, 2003; Woody, 2000). Many differing theories have been proposed to explain the expressive nature of music (e.g. Kivy, 2002; Langer, 1953; Meyer, 1994b; Reimer, 1989) but they all agree on one thing: music *is* expressive. The question remains as to what precisely music expresses, and how.

Equally important questions remain about how we learn to perform with individual expressivity, and how we make music meaningful, to ourselves or to listeners. Perhaps surprisingly, given the centuries-old speculation about the expressive power of music, 'expression' or 'expressivity' (even the word is not agreed) has not been investigated in music research until the last two decades or so. A renewed concern with and interest in emotion and expression accompanied the arrival of the 'new' musicology; previously, the structuralist approach in musicology had rendered music's expressive aspects off-limits for research (Juslin, 2003; Lindström *et al*., 2003). Equally, the largely tacit knowledge of teachers and performers about expression/expressivity is hard to explain. The emotional nature of musical expression means that music belongs to a very personal domain of the individual musician and can be difficult to verbalise (Hultberg, 2008).

Music is considered to be a "seismograph of subjectivity" (Clarke, 2005, p.175) "conveying and expressing innermost thoughts and feelings with an abstractness that guarantees its truth and purity, but also renders it untranslatable". An essentialist psychological account has displaced previous manifest conventions of an approach based on rhetoric: Agawu (e.g. 1991), Monelle (e.g. 1992) and Allanbrook (e.g. 1992) put forward ideas of relatively distinct and culturally elaborated topics, which have been displaced in much twentieth-century discourse by the idea that music is primarily concerned with the expression of emotions, and that specific emotions are conveyed or triggered by particular musical procedures. This change shows the explanatory power of psychology in the twentieth century, such that listeners in contemporary

culture assume the meaning of music is more or less synonymous with the expression of emotions (Clarke, 2005).

Several elements of the expressing of meaning in music have been identified, from the intention of the composer, through the production of a score, the intentions of the performer, the sound of the music produced, and the perception and response of the listener. However, Mackinnon (1993) believes there is confusion around the notion of musical meaning, largely born of specifically western aesthetic considerations surrounding the separation of composer, performer and listener, as if these can be easily matched to communicator, mediator and recipient of meaning. Meaning does not flow from composer to audience via performer; nor does it reside in particular sound structures as some rather literal attempts have tried to demonstrate.

The term 'interpretation' typically refers to the individualistic shaping of a piece according to the performer's musical ideas (Gabrielsson, 1999; Palmer, 1997). In this process, the goal is to make sense of, to become comfortable and confident with, a piece. This will allow the performer to inhabit the music, intellectually, emotionally, wholly. Familiarity with music that one is learning is essential, just as getting to know a person brings feelings of ease to a relationship. Preparation focuses on reaching a state where the performer feels the performance will be enjoyable, where the music can be communicated effectively to the audience. This calls for a deep involvement in the music. Blom and Poole (2004) believe liking and understanding the music are crucial when one is performing. The time and effort required to get to know the music thoroughly and effect this inner preparation (Coimbra *et al*., 2001) mean that performers must identify with the music and develop a positive attachment to it.

Findings from this study confirm that students are, through working on an interpretation during preparation, deciding what they want to communicate through the music, and how they intend to communicate it. Knowing what they want to say allows for a confident performance. Students talk about knowing how a piece goes; knowing "how it's supposed to sound". The participants know there are different interpretative possibilities for every piece of music. Students with confidence in themselves will consider their interpretation to be the correct one *for them*. In a concert (i.e. non-assessed) situation, as long as the interpretation is strong and 'right', it does not matter if it is unusual.

There seems to be almost a spiritual dimension as well to this area. Students believe there is A Right Way of performing a piece, and as well as requiring time, familiarisation and effort to find it, the oft-uttered phrase "it will come" indicates a faith, an expectation that something

out there will, as if by magic, "be" a result, a solution, a perfect outcome. The phrases "it works" and "it makes sense" are also frequently used.

This text message from Tom shows delight in the music we were rehearsing, spilling over into 'off duty' hours. It also illustrates the idea of discovery:

> It's beautiful! I love it. It really will be so nice when we have worked out what it means!
>
> *Text received from Tom, 21/11/07*

It is also acknowledged to be essential for instrumentalists or singers to get to know how the piano part fits with their line. Students say they try to do this as quickly as possible, through rehearsal with their pianist, or, just as frequently, by listening to recordings.

Possibly the most important parameter in getting a performance of a piece of music 'right' is its speed. Throughout the fieldwork period I had sensed that tempo is key to performance: 14.67% of talk during rehearsals with Tom in the first semester was related to tempo, and 22.51% in the second semester, making it the second most prevalent topic in the first semester (behind 'formulating interpretation', at 17.99%) and the most prevalent in the second. This code was also closely linked with the code 'formulating interpretation', i.e. many passages can be coded with both codes, showing how important it is in preparing music.

Tom has an interesting theory about tempo, which he expresses explicitly and frequently: he believes all music has a natural tempo, which it will find and settle into by itself. This is a very attractive theory, which fits in totally with the idea of a 'right' way of playing something, supporting the notion of having 'faith' that music will 'work'.

In fieldnotes following a band rehearsal for John's final recital, I make this very point, which I was delighted to rediscover during data analysis:

> We are doing 'Astonishing'
>
> Main issues are speed, where people come in in relation to bits of the music
>
> John picks out the main issue as the really big rall, "the half time rall" and then everybody has that same 'arc' the doo doo doo doo doo doo doo - he's written it in everybody's part because "it is that important"
>
> He also wants to get the "bounce off" between different parts who have a dialogue
>
> And slowing down to the new tempo
>
> [I'm noting here, the importance of just playing through to get the feel of how things fit together. Same with orch rehearsals. So important for everyone to hear how a piece hangs together. Not to be always stopping and starting and working on bits or your own part. Important to hear the whole, and especially how speed changes etc. work]
>
> Now 'Waiting for the music to begin'

> It's how to set the tempo which is the biggest element of the talk
>
> John says, "Rach, me and you'll set the tempo"
>
> His main comment afterwards was that it was slightly dragging. I remark that I felt people were rushing.
>
> See, tempo is the main issue in rehearsals.
>
> *Fieldnotes, band rehearsal for John's final recital, 14/05/08*

Emma describes an occasion where she found the 'right' tempo just before a performance, when it just seemed to 'work' ("It all just kind of clicked, cos before I think maybe it was dragging a tiny bit, but I didn't think my fingers were gonna go as fast as it needed to go, but then when we tried it it just, worked…" Emma, interview, 30/05/08). Interestingly, Emma asks me whether I experience the same in my piano playing.

Of course, the 'right' way is not necessarily absolute: Will talks about how organ pieces have to be played at a speed conducive to the acoustics of a particular building and the action of a particular instrument. What is the 'natural' tempo in one context is not necessarily the same as that of another. One has to find what 'works'.

The participants recognise that there are differing views on interpretation, which can come from their teachers, other ensemble members or accompanists. Dave sums this up when he says "if you're, mature enough, and, and strong willed, or kind of, you trust your ability to, weigh up arguments and come up with your own [?], it's good to have these two contrasting, views". He mentions emphases, dynamics, levels of dynamics across a piece, breathing, rubato and pauses as areas where he has negotiated with his accompanist for a decisive version. He also says his accompanist is used to being told how to interpret a piece by her piano teacher.

Tom speaks frequently about how some composers leave more to the performer than do others: for example, he says, Poulenc is very specific about his markings, even the places where he wants the music to breathe, where he inserts '. There are, says Tom, varying degrees of freedom or artistic licence and differing attitudes towards the freedom of the performer depending on the period of composition or the composer of a particular piece. Ben is also clear that what is *not* in the score is as important as what *is*:

> | Ben | I think there's always something you can do to a piece, even if it's even if there's one note, I just think there is, there's always a way, even, as a singer even breathing before a note, can count, I mean the way you breathe it can be short, it can be fast, slow, you can put emotion into simply, you know, taking in air |
> |---|---|
> | RP | mm |
> | Ben | I think no matter how small or how, ridiculously simple a piece is you can always put something into it |

RP	right
Ben	whether it's erm, the emotion in your voice, the, the look in your eyes, the, where you're looking, I mean, what your hands are doing, are they clenched, are they open, I mean, there are so many things you can change, and there are so many things that a composer didn't tell you to put in there like, yeah like your body language, they never say, I want you to be, open and bright, with your body, they never say that
RP	mm
Ben	so that, the body part is you, that's all you, and the singing, or playing, is the composer, but I don't think, I still don't think it's a fifty fifty thing, for most people, I think a lot of it *is*, the singing, I mean musicians in particular, I think they put much more focus than they should, on the, on the actual music instead of how they are singing or performing it
Ben, interview, 29/01/08	

Students also recognise that a piece of music, although the score may be a concrete, permanent object, will never be performed in exactly the same way twice. Will is very pleased with an analogy he makes between a score, which is the blueprint for a music performance, but which will never be exactly the same in two performances, and a box of matches, where the matches are standard, but the flame produced by an individual match will never be identical to any other. The notion that music is ephemeral is similar to that of a flame burning and altering as time passes:

Will	… you create something that actually exists, even if only for a split second, and it floats up to heaven
RP	go on, say a bit more about that
Will	well this was the idea wasn't it, that, that you had to create the most beautiful music you could because God would hear it and it's a sort of physical thing, you create this music (laughing) in a little bubble and float it up to God, and he said, it was very good, didn't have any augmented fourths in it, and it'd be praised!
…RP	… the other thing that you said as well was about music existing, even if it's only for a split second
Will	mm
RP	cos this goes back to the, what is music, is this (holding Will's composition), is this, kind of, what's the word, er
Will	that's not the music, that's the instructions for creating the music
RP	yeah, but, this is what's long-lasting, the performance is ephemeral
Will	yeah, so, so you can only ever create music once, but you can leave something that tells people how to create it again
RP	right
Will	it's like, erm, if you imagine, music as a flame, if you strike a match there's a flame, it goes out, but if you give someone a box of matches and the matches are all the same, then they can create it again and again, [?]
RP	mhm, I like that, I like that image. And even a flame is never gonna be quite the same is it

> Will   no. No, that's quite good!
>
> *Will, interview, 6/06/08*

d) *Presence*

The idea of 'presence', of having command of the performance, means inhabiting the performance completely. The very expression 'put oneself into the music' is a physical metaphor for what occurs when all is forgotten except the music. Participants indicate that they feel they must inhabit the music as an actor inhabits a role in a play. In this way, just as each actor plays a role slightly differently from the next actor, but the role turns into something particular, so each performer will inhabit a piece of music slightly differently from the next musician, and so produce something individual and special. Furthermore, again like an actor making a role come to life by lifting the words off the page, a musician brings a piece of music to life by putting themselves into it. Neither a role in a play, nor a piece of music, exists unless someone takes them up:

> Emma   if you went to see a play and you could really see that the actor had poured, themselves into the part and was really feeling it, you'd enjoy it a lot more than if you just saw a play of someone, acting, the part because there is like a great big difference isn't there… one seems real and one seems wooden
> RP   yeah
> Emma   so if you're putting yourself out there it seems real and people would enjoy that more and, I don't think, I don't have a problem, with, letting myself be exposed through the music
> RP   mm, do you feel that that's happened when you play?
> Emma   sometimes in some of the more, like, with the Baermann probably and, maybe not so much any of the pieces I've played this time round, erm, depends on the music
> RP   mm
> Emma   and sort of what the music's like and whether it really lends itself to, your personality and the way you play
>
> *Emma, interview, 30/05/08*

Presence is only possible if all aspects of preparation have been satisfactorily addressed. The students feel that 'knowing the music' and knowing what you are doing is vital. Relaxation and ease are also mentioned in connection with feeling prepared. If practice has done its job, the student will feel that things are not likely to go wrong; they work hard in practice to ensure that they leave as little as possible to chance. Dave speaks about losing presence when he is not well enough prepared, and losing the audience. A moment of forgetting words, or showing annoyance at a mistake, is when the gap is revealed between person and music. Nerves interfere with presence too. Dave says "some people give away too much information"

(interview, 18/06/08) meaning they show the background behind the performance, rather than the performance itself. If the performer is 'at one' with the music, presence is assured.

Dave describes how even preparing one's breathing is vital. If the breathing goes wrong, the whole physical presence of the performer, and therefore the music, breaks down:

> Dave   …if you're not so well prepared then you're always gonna have moments where you lose the presence… if you haven't prepared for long enough you can, forget a couple of breathing moments, they haven't become second nature and you have to think about them, I had to think about all the breathing, sometimes I forget, so, in other words I wasn't well enough prepared
>
> *Dave, interview, 18/06/08*

The significance of preparedness and readiness shown throughout the data echoes previous research (e.g. Wilson (2002), and Wilson and Roland (2002). Without feeling well prepared one cannot feel comfortable, and comfortableness is, it would appear, essential if a 'flow' state (or something akin to it) is to be achieved. The concept of flow (Csíkszentmihályi, 1990) is identified in the literature as being a stage one can reach during performance. "Flow" describes a highly coveted psychological state of mind, characterized by intense absorption in a challenging activity as well as by enhanced skilled performance, causing a loss of sense of time and self, together with feelings of satisfaction and well-being.[33] Regarded as "an almost automatic, effortless, yet highly focused state of consciousness" (Csíkszentmihályi, 1996, p. 110), flow is an intuitively appealing construct much discussed in relation to music performance, as well as attracting considerable interest in fields such as sport psychology (e.g. see review by Jackson and Kimiecik, 2008). Custodero (2005) notes that playing and performing music have the potential to induce a flow-like state even in infants and young children. Lamont (2012) suggests flow experiences may also generate and sustain long-term motivation, engagement and achievement in music performing. This desirable performance state is said to be elusive (Sinnamon, Moran and O'Connell, 2012); yet in Hodges's (2010) definition, 'flow' simply refers to learners being fully engaged with and absorbed in a task that is at their level and meaningful to them, which is surely achievable within a learning context such as a degree programme.

The students describe feelings of something similar to flow, although only Tom, having learnt the concept from the Psychology of Music Performance module, identified it by that name. Students talk about being "into the music", "going with it", or being "gripped by" the music.

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[33] See Sinnamon *et al.*, 2012, for a comprehensive list of references relating to flow.

One student who suffers from nerves finds that getting into the music enabled her to lose her nervousness:

Emma	yeah and I kind of got through, played the first page, I was still nervous on the first page I remember sort of turning the page, and I just got into the music and I really forgot about the nerves and that's really one of the first times that's ever happened
Emma, interview, 30/05/08	

e) *Instrument and music becoming an embodied extension of self*

To support students in having command of their performance as described above, there is a sense in which an instrument or a piece of music becomes an extension of the musician herself.

Students speak about repertoire which 'suits' them, and even about their choice of voice or instrument in the sense that it 'suits' them best. This notion seems exactly like that of a haircut, clothes or music chosen by individuals chosen because they 'suit' (Cohen, 1991; Willis, 1978). Liking something implies sensuous usage, and therefore the object or form holds personal meaning as an aspect of identity.

Music is inevitably about the body (Leppert, 1993); the body and instruments are as much part of music as the notes themselves. We experience music somatically (Davidson and Correia, 2001). Listeners identify 'person-like' qualities in music more readily than other types of attribute (Clarke, 2005). Of course, many embodied metaphors within our analytical conceptions about music are derived from bodily experiences: 'high' and 'low' pitch; being 'moved' by music; the 'movements' of a symphony; tempo markings ('andante'; 'con moto'). Moreover, musical value goes beyond sonic structure, drawing its human significance and power from how it articulates with the body, and from its cross-modal connections to other experience – what it says about the experiential world and how that world in its turn informs music (Bowman, 2009).

In the case of singers, their body is their instrument. If they are not feeling quite up to par, physically or mentally, the voice will not work properly. This has implications for their sense of identity as a performer. They are performing at the most fundamental level of human communication: through the voice. Coimbra *et al.* (2001) believe singers are faced with a special task: they have no instrument, no physical barrier between them and the audience, but also nothing into which they can project their performance. The researchers suggest that singers, therefore, may need to develop different performance styles from instrumentalists.

However, current findings may suggest that, in fact, singers are no different from other performers in this respect. In this project, the students also speak about their instruments as though they are also extensions of themselves. Dave says this quite explicitly:

Dave   … you have to look at one with your piano… Yeah I think instrumentalists have to feel as if their instrument is an extension of themselves and not, and not a separate, erm, item

Dave, interview, 18/12/07

Other students simply talk about their instrument as a part of them, working either well or below par:

Tom   I think, I was ready for the performance, I felt ready, to play, erm, I felt like my clarinet was working quite well, I don't know, I, I felt, for, probably the first time, I felt quite comfortable in a performance situation

Tom, interview, 12/02/08

Cohen (1991) reports that the personalisation of instruments is important, partly for their visual qualities, in relation to the image the musician wants to present; however, their importance also lies in the musicians' dependence on them and affection for them, which gives rise to personalisation, being seen as having their own sound and identity. Pellegrino (2014) also found participants feeling so in control of their instrument, and the music they were playing, that they had simply become their instrument.

John goes even further, saying that not only is the instrument part of the performer, but the music is too:

John   ...It's not like you're playing a piece of music on an instrument, it sounds like, really really stupid and I sound like a drama teacher but you have to be the instrument, you have to be the same, you can't be two different people.

RP   mmm.

John   and it's the same with the music. You can't be notes, and the word, c, r, e, s, c, it has to come through and you have to be the crescendo and it has to come out and you have to interpret what you're reading. And the way to do that is to be all three mediums in one thing. You have to be the written music, the artistic interpretation yourself and the sound coming in.

John, interview, 10/10/07

An interesting comment from Emma initially seems to contradict this theory:

Emma   yeah, I was really glad he [external examiner] was there, cos… he's just gonna, you know mark me on my playing not on me

Emma, interview, 30/05/08

Perhaps this particular student does think she can hide behind her playing; she feels there is a difference between going on stage and being herself, and going on stage and performing. However, the student in question is nervous and shy, and that is what comes across in her performance. Her playing *is* an extension of herself.

f) *Physical preparation*

As well as inhabiting the music mentally and emotionally, students must prepare for the physical demands of performance. Leppert (1993) remarks on the slippage, in conventional musicological attitudes, between the physical activity required to produce musical sound and the supposedly abstract nature of what is produced. Twenty years later, Stewart Rose and Countryman (2013) write that musical content knowledge is still being presented in educational institutions as atomistic, static and transmittable, yet students know that music is personal, emotional, physical, complex, and enormously diverse.

The more informal the music, the more physical engagement is perceived to be appropriate in performance (Griffiths, 2009). Yet even in the traditionally cerebral realms of classical music, an awareness of the body has to underlie music making (Parsonage, Fadnes and Taylor, 2007; Wallace, 2014), and a performer must be conscious of the personal and physical attributes necessary to perform a piece effectively (Branscome, 2014), and how to manage her body in order to make maximum impact with the music. She must know what it feels like to play the music, as if choreographing a dance. Here, Tom suggests to me a physical approach to a particularly tricky moment in the piano accompaniment to one of his clarinet pieces, making a comparison with a crafty move in football:

Tom	make more of that bottom note
I try it	
Tom	it'll sound better on a grand piano
RP	it *will* sound better on a grand piano
Tom	a lot better
RP	but you know it's so hard, because I've gotta, I know that I've gotta get back right back up here so I can't like, put all my weight behind it
Tom	no come from, below it
RP	pardon?
Tom	come from this side of it and hit it on your way up
RP	hahah! That's an interesting theory!
Tom	I dunno!
I try it	
Tom	it's like, we were playing football the other day, and [student] was saying, I can get the ball past people but I can't get past people, and I worked out why
RP	mmm

Tom	it's because, he's running, with the ball and then he'll knock the ball and try and turn. I said to him I said, no, be facing the way you wanna go first and then knock it and start running
RP	mmm
Tom	because then you can anticipate it but obviously you've gotta turn round and then start running
RP	yeah ok I see the analogy

Tom, rehearsal, 21/05/08

Here, John rehearses a costume change, literally going through the motions while we rehearse the music:

John	The four girls will come on stage, and I'll go, 'alright ladies, let's polish this gem. In life' (the song starts and I start playing. Half way through, he starts commenting on costume manoeuvres whilst I play):
John	and then I'm off. Shirt off, down. Shoes already off, trousers down. Out. New trousers on. Shirt open. Buttoning it up. Top button done up. Shoe. Tie. Finishing off shoes. Jacket…
RP	(still playing) I don't know where I am.
John	…double checking. Are you there already? So that's the amount of time I have to change costume.
RP	mm, not long.
John	and I need that [particular cue], or else I don't know where it is.

John, rehearsal, 16/10/07

Fieldnotes record that, one Sunday, John telephoned me to discuss his work, as he often did, saying that the physical demands of his final recital programme are currently very high:

John says he did a first complete run through of his final recital programme yesterday and says he was knackered at the end of it. That he is going to have to plan a break during the programme to go off and compose himself, after the song where he has to do a dance routine, which comes before 'Days of plenty', which has long notes that he won't be able to sustain if he's out of breath. So plan is to go off with backing singers, and have a drink and calm down. He knows this is just the first time and he will build his stamina up over the year, but it has given him a bit of a shock.

Fieldnotes, following telephone call from John, 28/10/07

Here, the students have been seen preparing for the impact *on them* and the implications *for them* of the physical aspects of performance. The impact *on the audience* of the physical aspects of music during performance is a separate topic.

g) *Visual aspects of performance*

Earlier in the chapter,[34] students' attitudes towards the visual aspect of music performance were mentioned in connection with their philosophical stance towards music. Participants believe the body is very important in performance.

Traditionally, musicology has chosen to ignore bodily performance elements in order to be 'objective' about music, and to concentrate on aural and intellectual aspects. However, the significance of the body in music is being acknowledged in the literature (e.g. Davidson and Correira, 2001; Bowman, 2009), and the present study absolutely confirms its significance. Experience of a musical performance, whether classical, jazz, pop, or any other, takes on board all aspects of presentation including eye contact and reception of applause. The shift in musicology has seen an increase in the amount of research into visual aspects of performance and body language.

> It seems an imperative for educationalists to take note of the significance of the body in the production and performance of music. Through bodily means the whole process of music can be enjoyed, communicated and developed.
>
> Davidson and Correira, 2001, p.81

According to Willis (2000), the body is at the centre of commodity culture. The recent proliferation of piercing and tattooing is indicative of the culturalisation of the body, the reclaiming of the body for profane and symbolic use. It should not be surprising that the body is being more widely acknowledged as relevant to performance, as the projection of self as materially desirable or meaningful to others now centres on the body itself.

The visual aspect of watching a performance can aid the listener's construction of meaning (Pitts, 2005) and influence an audience's perception and judgement of the performance they hear (Platz and Kopiez, 2012). The listener can see who is doing what, which is impossible on a recording. The performers' appearance, expressions, gestures and behaviour – dress, even – are clues to appreciating the style of the music (Cohen, 1991; Griffiths, 2009). Audience members also like to see desirable human qualities in the performers, e.g. friendliness and approachability (Pitts, 2005).

There must be congruence for the audience between what they hear and what they see (Broughton and Stevens, 2009; Coimbra *et al.*, 2001; Davidson, 1993; Vines *et al.*, 2006). There

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[34] See *Philosophical stance*.

are ramifications for the students' preparation in considering the audience's potential response:

Ben	…if you're singing something like Mozart which is lyrical and flowing and your body is, you know, like a wooden plank, they're not gonna think that you're into the music at all. I mean obviously you've got to, know your genre haven't you, I mean if you're performing, soft and lovely, then be soft and lovely, and if you're being a weirdo from the 'Witches of Eastwick', then be a weirdo from the 'Witches of Eastwick'

Ben, interview, 29/01/08

Movement is often planned in advance. Ben ponders what he ought to 'do' during 'Silent Noon':

Ben	I'm not really sure what I should do here cos it's not in the style to be like, (singing and wafting extravagantly) 'Your hands are', you know, like that
RP	no it's not
Ben	but I don't, I want to do something, maybe I should just, seem happy, because it *is* a happy song

Ben, rehearsal, 14/05/08

A conversation ensues between us about a recent performance of two of Vaughan Williams's song cycles at the university given by the baritone Roderick Williams, focusing on what he "did" and how he positioned and carried himself during his recital. A little later on in the rehearsal, Ben wonders what he should be "doing" during an instrumental interlude between verses of a song.

Ben even has concerns about how it would look if he used the copy for one of his pieces, an oratorio movement, which, in a concert performance, would be sung with the copy. As in ABRSM exams, which singers are used to taking prior to coming to university, students are required to sing from memory. Ben is torn between the conventions of the exam, and the conventions of the oratorio performance. He chooses, in the end, to sing without the copy, as that fits in better with the other parts of the recital ("It wouldn't flow", he says, if he suddenly used the copy for this one piece).

In the following extract, Dave stresses the importance of the visual aspect of his performance of Schubert's 'Der Erlkönig':

Dave	…Erm, I felt, my, my body language and facial expressions, erm, helped convey the characters more than necessarily the tone
RP	yeah
Dave	you know, kind of like to display panic, and fear
RP	well they would catch that though wouldn't they, they would catch that even though they, but it's like, divided attention

Dave	but but but but but but, they might, they might, they might not realise why
RP	yeah
Dave	whereas if they look up and see what I'm doing they could see that's it's an artistic decision

Dave, interview, 22/01/08

He uses the word "worried", and explains how his performance is "dependent on them actually looking at me". He is also concerned because his accompanist is being assessed, in the same recital, as part of the Ensemble Performance module assessment, and he is not the only participant to have raised the issue of divided attention when two students are being assessed (and, as in this instance, on slightly different criteria) at the same time:

Dave	…But erm, the one thing I was worried about afterwards, I said to her, it'll be interesting to see what you get for, for your accompanying. Because, they still only had two people watching, but one person was, that means that they would be spending more time in the copies than they might do for other performers, and I was worried about how that, because a lot of my performance would have depended on them actually looking at me
RP	yeah
Dave	to see that I was indeed blagging! Hahah!
RP	but do you,
Dave	(laughing) not looking at the inaccuracies that keep cropping up on the, hah! on the page!...because I think that's, I mean it was still weak in areas, because I wasn't on top of the music, you could see, me, actually processing the beats in the Britten, hah! And probably my facial expression becoming vague because my concentration was elsewhere but, usually, when, when I'm on top enough of a piece I, I am good with my face
RP	yeah
Dave	erm, so it's important that they see that

Dave, interview, 22/01/08

In the following extract, Will spontaneously brings up in interview that very performance, several months later, as an example of how vital it is for examiners to watch the performance as well as listen to it:

Will	… in performance, I think it's, I think some things pass them by …especially, just little moments where, if they're, if they miss like Dave's paedophile eyes at Christmas, did you see that?
RP	yes I did see that!
Will	yeah, stuff like that, if they'd have been like that (puts his head down indicating looking down at the score) at that point they'd have missed it
RP	yeah
Will	it's stuff like that that makes a performance

Will, interview, 6/06/08

Several participants voice a hope that the video recordings of recitals are watched afterwards so any examiner who has missed visual aspects of the performance can revisit them:

Dave	well they record it, so hopefully they watch the video afterwards
RP	do you think they do?
Dave	I hope so
RP	have you ever heard whether they do?
Dave	no I've not heard, but I hope they do, I really hope they do

Dave, interview, 22/01/08

Dave also highlights the importance of the relationship between musicians on stage:

RP	… I'm thinking about these moments between songs, when you're standing there, you haven't even looked down necessarily, you've just perhaps relaxed your face a bit, changed where you're looking, perhaps preparing yourself visually for the next song, did you ever talk to [student pianist] about how long to leave before she starts the next one or is there a particular cue for her to start the next song or were you leaving it all down to her, to, decide?
Dave	I, I was, it was her decision, based on her reactions upon what I was doing
RP	right
Dave	and, I quite like it like that, it's more natural
RP	did you discuss that?
Dave	well I told her that you know, I'd be holding some feelings and so just watch, and you'll know

Dave, interview, 18/06/08

Liz, who was taking the composition module as well as performance, even considered the visual effect on the audience of the performance of her own composition. She includes moments of silence, written into the composition itself. My response to Liz's concern, in the following extract, itself highlights spontaneously that the body language of the performers suggests the piece is not over:

Liz	… did you like my gaps, my bits of silence as well?
RP	yes I liked your bits of silence
Liz	I was really worried everyone was gonna start clapping so I cut them short a little bit
RP	no, because you weren't, you didn't look as if you'd finished, so we didn't clap…
Liz	… So, I thought I'd end it like that, and it sounded quite nice when I did it, just really minimalist to have the cadenza, and then, just a bit of space just for that snippet of thought for the listener and then all of a sudden it's just gone…

Liz, interview after composition performance, January 2008

That extract may be compared with Dave's remarks about how the visual signs he gives at the end of each song are vital to the audience in knowing when the performance is over. It is not

over when the sound ends, but when the performer's behaviour gives the audience the right to think it is over. The music includes the silence:

> Dave   sometimes, I look down, a little, sometimes I just literally stay in the same place but with a kind of relaxed, facial expression, sometimes I'll, I pick points, it depends on the next song, I do it on the fly, I decide there and then, I just make sure I hold the mood then, make it clear, like at the end of the recital the music finished, for, erm, about three seconds, but they hadn't started clapping, I kept the face, and then I relaxed, and they clapped
>
> *Dave, interview, 18/06/08*

One of the students was so interested in the significance of the visual aspect of performance that he chose, for a project within the Psychology of Music Performance module,[35] to do an experiment in which half his audience could only hear a performance whereas the other half could also see the performer. He found, as he suspected and as is supported by the literature (Bergeron and McIver Lopes, 2009; Davidson, 1993; Platz and Kopiez, 2012; Vines *et al*., 2006), that the same performance was rated more highly by those who could see as well as hear the performer:

> Sue   you could see, you could watch it, but that was what Will's experiment was on, for his psychology,
> RP   I wonder what he came up with
> Sue   er he came up with if it was visual, people seeing him would give him more marks
> RP   yeah
> Sue   than people who couldn't see him
> RP   yeah
> Sue   which is what he wanted to prove
>
> *Sue, Interview, 29/05/08*

What is even more exciting about this project and this opinion is that Will was an organist. Organists do not generally perform on a stage platform where they are visible to the audience, as is the case with singers or instrumentalists: they are usually tucked away high up in a loft or to the side of a church (or hall), often hidden from view, and are not necessarily expected to make eye contact or otherwise move expressively or communicate with an audience as other players or singers who face the audience are encouraged to do. Their relationship with their audience is unique. For Will to realise and promote the significance of the visual aspect of performance highlights an audience perception which does not necessarily make sense according to the usual theories of why musicians should communicate with their audience.

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[35] See Appendix 1 for details of the module options within the Music course.

Here, engagement, and therefore enjoyment, is enhanced by the visual aspect of performance being active as well as the aural (Thompson, 2007).

For Will, his special 'hidden' position works to his advantage when there is a hitch in his final recital. His assistant somehow finds the wrong computer setting during one of the pieces, such that the sounds are not at all suitable for the piece. He has to talk to her, asking questions and giving instructions until the situation is rectified, whilst all the time continuing playing. This could not happen on a stage, with the audience watching every move, hearing every command:

Will	yeah I, well she started to change it, she just about got it and then, there's like quite a lot of rests, beat rests so when there was a beat rest I just changed the computer onto that channel and changed on to the next piston and then I was away… it was a high stress moment, in the organ loft!
RP	yeah, but you see again, for somebody looking at you, seeing all that going on, and probably you talking to Sue or something and faffing about with buttons it'd be like, ooh no we're not supposed to see this!
Will	yeah, there was quite a lot of talking, in the [?] cos like, is that a 6 or a 7, there was, quite a lot of talking going on
RP	mmm
Will	which kind of makes it, less, more mechanical
RP	yeah, yeah, it,
Will	none, none of the other performers talked during their recital did they!
RP	no! well, apart from me to page turners going, no, don't, back!
Will	yeah but, but you see, there was like, "shit, Sue, it's on the wrong channel, you see that button in front of you, [?] change that until it says 121 instead of 120", there's none of that going on
RP	(laughing) yeah, no, no but is that, are you partly able to do that because you're at such a remove from the audience?
Will	yeah, it's just a spatial thing isn't it
Will, interview, 6/06/08	

Will believes his particular instrument necessitates a different approach to performance. He comments that the video sessions[36] are not "much help", but says "maybe this is back to the whole thing about whether organists should be seen or not anyway!" (Will, interview, 3/06/08). It would be worth conducting a separate study into how the aspects of performance being identified in this project as important may or may not apply to organists.

In order for the audience to enjoy a performance, they must feel comfortable with what they are seeing and hearing. An uncomfortable audience is not desirable, it is felt. If the performer

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[36] In these sessions, students are videoed performing, and then watch their performances to review the visual, as well as aural, aspects of their work.

is shy, timid or nervous, this will come across in the performance, unless the student is a good actor. Nervousness in a performer transfers to the audience, creating a tense and unsettling experience for the audience as well as the performer (Blom and Poole, 2004).

As Ben describes in the following extract, stiff and unnatural behaviour on stage can make the audience feel uncomfortable, as can the appearance of a performer who does not look as though she is enjoying her performance:

Ben	I think if you suddenly change from being very confident, very happy, to then nervous and terrified,
RP	mm
Ben	then, you're gonna make your audience feel uncomfortable
RP	right, and when would that happen, in a situation like you're describing where suddenly you thought my God I don't know this, I don't know what I'm doing?
Ben	erm, silence, is one, erm, stuttering on words, erm, as for body language, if you, if, if er, I dunno what you'd do, erm, perhaps losing focus, looking at the pianist is always a bad one, I find,
RP	mm
Ben	erm, if I get, if I've got lost I've looked at the pianist before, and it's a really stupid thing to do because, it then tells the audience that you're not confident

Ben, interview, 29/01/08

Emma makes a pertinent comment on something which happened in her recital, where she started to feel uncomfortable because of a problem with her clarinet reed, and recognises the effect this was likely to have on the audience:

Emma	… I started panicking in the Lefèvre cos my reed wasn't right, I mean, that was probably really uncomfortable to watch

Emma, interview, 30/05/08

Participants speak about the students who do not look as though they are comfortable performing on stage, and even wonder why they chose a module which was going to 'expose' them in such a way.

John	it's the body language …it almost looks like she's apologising for what she's doing …she's trying to make herself as small as possible so that people don't, notice you, which is pretty difficult when you're playing a clarinet on the stage. She puts the stand so high that people don't see her…

John, interview, 10/10/07

The students regard watching live performance as something different from listening to recordings, and explain why. The performance, and the performer(s), can surpass in significance both the piece of music and the composer, due to the visual elements as well as

the sounds of playing or singing. John cites the performer as making the difference between a recording and a live performance:

John	…it's different, because they want to see a performance. So that's what you've got to give them as a live performer, you've got to give them a sense of performance, something that is different to just hearing it …So the audience wants and needs something more from a live performance …that's the added thing that's not in the recording, is the actual live performer. So it's them that's gonna have to make the difference.

John, interview, 10/10/07

The students believe the audience has to enjoy what they hear, and what they see, since performance students are preparing for a recital with a 'live' audience. The following two extracts illustrate this point very well. The first is from John, as he explores the view that a live audience is there primarily to watch and to experience the music; an audio recording at home can never capture the full essence of a performance, because that performance includes the visual aspects, and communication of some sort as the music unfolds. Another significant element is the inclusion of classical music in his theory, because that too has a narrative for the audience, an unfolding experiential facet:

John	…you can play the instrument well, you can show off and do all the dynamics perfectly, but if you're rigid, and clearly not enjoying being on the stage, and, just not involved with the music and like thinking about what you're gonna buy for your shopping, you know, people play things from memory without the music so they don't need to look at the music, so, they don't need to look at the music, they could be thinking about anything, it could be completely ingrained in them, so it's like a zombie on stage playing it, so unless you're committed and showing the emotion of whatever piece you're playing and looking like you're enjoying it and, you know, letting the music, it's almost like, for me when I'm doing music theatre I remember what it was like to watch other people doing that performance, and the emotion that I felt watching them, which is harder for instrumentalists, because you don't, you know, it's not the same kind of thing,
RP	why?
John	well, I was gonna say that it's not really a story like, a musical is, but things are, a story. What I mean is, if you're seeing something live in a play, they're bound to be acting, they're never gonna get a job if they're not acting, whereas, even professionals might sometimes not look committed to the piece. I'm saying it's not guaranteed that every time you watch that piece being played it's gonna be beneficial for you. Whereas, if you're watching a musical, generally, because they've been hired to play the part that they're acting how they're supposed to be acting, does that make sense? …well, the audience is primarily expecting to hear the piece and hear it played well. Like I said, it's the icing on the cake if they see a good performance of it and they, and they get a

	whole sense of visual and audial [*sic*], it's like the icing on the cake, it's like all the senses that they could possibly get from that performance they've been given.
RP	are you talking about musical theatre again?
John	no, I'm talking about everything.
RP	so there's a visual aspect,
John	yeah
RP	and an aural aspect,
John	I mean, it depends,
RP	what,
John	as instrumentalists on their own, it's always, audial [*sic*], I would say. Everybody's going to hear the music, to listen to those pieces being played or to listen to that instrument perform.
RP	right,
John	yeah?
RP	why? Why are they going to listen to that performance, what are they gonna get from it?
John	they might enjoy the piece, they might know the piece themselves,
RP	in what way,
John	no, I mean they might enjoy the piece themselves, they might have heard the piece already, and like it, so they're going to hear it be played by somebody live.
RP	OK
John	and actually, I've just said the point there, they're going to see it played live. They might have listened to this piece of music for 5 years on a recording, but they make the effort to go and see it live because…
RP	why?
John	…it's different, because they want to see a performance. So that's what you've got to give them as a live performer, you've got to give them a sense of performance, something that is different to just hearing it. So that's why I said, that's the point I'm making, oh I've done a really good point here! is that, you can play the piece well, you can make the instrument sound beautiful, but you can get that from a professional recording. Straight into your ears. It could be louder, you can hear a lot more in your headphones. So the audience wants and needs something more from a live performance. And for me that's acting and my facial expressions and, gestures and, you know and, dialogue that I might say in the song.

John, interview, 10/10/07

From John's very thorough and thoughtful exploration, it can be seen clearly that the elements of music other than sound itself are vital to the experience of live music. The second relevant extract shows Ben's awe in the presence of Robbie Williams, even though Ben claimed not really to like the music; the other elements of the performance gave him the thrill. These findings support the growing body of audience research which is increasingly revealing the reasons why people attend live music events (e.g. Benzecry and Collins, 2014; Radbourne *et*

al., 2009). Ben highlights the effect of the "atmosphere" and the personal reaction which comes from experiencing live music as communication:

RP	right. So what is the atmosphere of live music, that is different from listening to an Ipod or a computer?
Ben	erm, well for a start you can, this goes back to body language, erm, you can see the performer, and you can see them singing, playing, dancing, and you think, wow, you know, I mean, I went, I've seen, [?] and I've seen people do ridiculous things with their body, and it's unbelievable, the amount of, things that they can do, and it's kind of the same with, with music, because you don't expect, erm, you know, if you listen to somebody like Robbie Williams, and then you go and see them live, it's just a completely different experience, and you don't expect to see what you see, because, it's like an incredible atmosphere, and the atmosphere's just because he's there, the guy who made this amazing music, I mean I'm not a big fan of his but, the person who made this amazing music is there, and he's singing, and it feels like it's [*sic*] singing to you
Ben, interview, 29/01/08	

Ben continues to expound the importance of being present as music is made, even (echoing John's comments) in classical music which might be assumed not to have any apparent visual element:

Ben	…watching artists perform something is ten times better because it adds a visual concept, whereas with MP3 players, and computers and everything, there is no visual thing, you know, you can't see what the artists are doing, and, you know, if you watch, something like Beethoven's, er, third symphony or fifth symphony or whatever and you watch the string players going up and down it's just an incredible sight because they're all synchronised, and it's just incredible, and the fact that there's so much, talent, in this, in a, in a tiny concert hall, you think, wow, that's quite cool
Ben, interview, 29/01/08	

The inclusion of classical music, by these two students, in a description of the impact of the visual aspects of performance differs from Finnegan's (1989) findings, which consistently consider classical music as different from other genres in terms of its (lack of) physicality and individuality.

h) *Audience*

It has been said that an audience has to be present in order for a performance to take place, otherwise the act is simply playing or singing, not performing (e.g. Finnegan, 1989). An increasing amount of research is now highlighting the importance of the audience in live arts events, some going so far as to place it at the heart of the live music experience (Burland and Pitts, 2014). In western classical music, the relationship between performer and composers

has traditionally been considered more important than that between performer and audience. Classical musicians have typically been thought to be focused on transmission of composers' intentions, rather than conveying something of their own, or responding to a particular audience or performance context (Brand *et al.*, 2012). However, performance is not a one-way system of communication running from composer through performer to listener. The listener is not in a vacuum; the listener is a meaning-maker. "Without a prepared mind, ready and able to create meaning from the sound relations, a musical work cannot exist" (Small, 1998, p.164). The audience make each performance distinctive through their attendance and their response. The listeners are a real, physical part of the performance, making themselves heard through the approbation of clapping and cheering, and by registering their thoughts and feelings on social media (Burland and Pitts, 2014), sharing their experience even with those not present.

Audience members, whether at the theatre, art gallery, opera or ballet, are now recognised as being positioned, not as passive recipients of meaning, but on a variety of social, psychological and cultural dimensions (Burland and Pitts, 2014; Karlsen, 2014; Radbourne *et* al., 2009; Young, 2010). There is also the matter of subject position: the listener is aware of what is happening in the music (its meaning) but also has a sense of her own perspective on that meaning (Clarke, 2005).

Students in the current study refer to their audience in a number of respects which are coherent with previous research. Firstly, as Thompson (2007) reports, music is about entertaining and feeding the emotions of the audience. In the current study, Dave speaks of his "duty", his "job", to entertain the expectant audience. What is more, he remembers that this sense of what he was about to do fuelled his performance:

Dave …Erm, basically I looked, and there was an audience, I was like, great, and that was it, that was, that elevated my performance, the fact that there was an audience there who wanted to be entertained, so I did my job, and then walked off the stage… some say it's good to have a bit of nerves, it heightens your performance, it rarely, well it might do for some people, but for me in this case, what heightened the performance was ah, I have an audience, I now have a duty to, perform and I'm going to do it, with gusto
Dave, interview, 18/06/08

This also corroborates the findings of Finnegan (1989), that an audience's presence makes a performance an occasion, and those of Brand *et al.* (2012), Burland and Pitts (2012), and Vines *et al*. (2006), that the audience's effect on the performer is significant.

When programming music, the audience's enjoyment should be considered. Students in this study do not have a high regard for music which they do not think audiences would like. Will

believes "the whole point of music is to entertain someone, to entertain people, so if you get a load of people to come to your new music recital and they think, that was really clever but I didn't enjoy it at all it was shit, really unpleasant to listen to… then you haven't, fulfilled your goal, you've made a lot of people say, oh, he's a clever chap, but if they didn't have a good time…" (Will, interview, 6/06/08). This echoes Young (2010), who believes audiences ought to be respected, and that their views on the aesthetic value of works are important. Those composers in the twentieth century who have been told to avoid being concerned with pleasing their public, and that success is a sign of inferiority, display a disregard for their potential audience, who have generally responded by staying away (Young, 2010).

Tom highlights the difference between a jazz gig and a classical music concert. His comment that people go to a jazz gig to have a good time suggests he may think this is not the case with a classical concert. He also attributes the difference in response to something that is simply an inherited fact, accepted without question but also without fully understanding why that should be the status quo:

RP	What is it about classical music that, people don't clap along whereas with jazz people clap along?
Tom	A good question. I don't know, I think people go to a jazz gig to have a good time, possibly dance, well that, it's more kind of come from, the music in itself, jazz comes from like, blues, which is, people have didn't have much in their life and they wrote about it, so it's a lot about inner expression, and it allows the musician to get, to put across something which the audience can then pick up on and relate to. And, with classical music, I don't know, it's not quite the same. Like, a lot of composers wrote pieces for other people, erm, but I think, I don't know, whenever I've been to a concert that's classical, you sit down and you listen and you enjoy the music, and you take the music in but you don't stand up and sway your arms about.
RP	why not?
Tom	just because it's the way it's been for, years.
Tom, interview, 7/11/07	

Finnegan (1989) also notes the silent contemplation at classical concerts which is very different from the dancing and cheering which can take place at jazz or popular music events. Griffiths (2009) observes that classical music has been perceived as a mental and serious art, in comparison with more popular styles of music; the less formal the music, the more physical engagement is possible, for performer and for audience. This could go some way to providing a reason behind Tom's observation.

i) *Live performance, and the examination context*

Live performance has special qualities that involve meaning making between performer and audience (Cohen 1991; Finnegan, 1989). The special crystallisation of musical experience created by the interaction of performers and audience represents somehow a shared symbolic dimension which removes it above and beyond ordinary experience (Bogdan, 2003; Myers and White, 2012; Radbourne *et al.*, 2009). Production and consumption are involved simultaneously, which creates a particular atmosphere, but also invites the possibility of the unexpected, each occasion being immediate, direct and spontaneous (Burland and Pitts, 2010; Cohen, 1991). Ritual and gesture, together with the paraphernalia they entail (Cohen, 1991), are part of the performance experience; expectations are high of both performer and audience. Public expression is given to deeply private emotions, which are shared by the audience, leading to catharsis and experiences of solidarity.

There is not a separation between audience and performer, but a bond (Cohen, 1991). Listeners who find engagement with the performance are more likely to say they enjoy it than listeners who perceive that the performance was of good quality (Thompson, 2007). Engaging with the performance is at least partially dependent on whether the performers themselves appear to be engaged with and enjoying performing.

The live, multi-modal presentation of music performance can be advantageous for performers (Vines *et al.*, 2006), who can influence the audience by means of their appearance, gestures, behaviour and movement, as well as through the sounds they produce. The audience can in turn contribute to the shared experience: they are active agents in the outcome of the event (Burland and Pitts, 2012). Some performers consider the presence of the audience adds a 'frisson' (Hallam, 2001).

Audience feedback to performers is important (Cohen, 1991; Woody and Parker, 2012). Musicians welcome positive feedback from their audience, such as clapping, which conveys approval and confirmation of the performers' musicianship (Woody and Parker, 2012), and in order to feel that there is a sense of connection, which makes for a more enjoyable experience, and possibly one of improved quality (Brand *et al.*, 2012; Branscome, 2014; Burland and Pitts, 2010, 2012; Coimbra *et al.*, 2001).

What research is revealing about the conditions and atmosphere of the ideal performance context, and about the relationship between performer and audience, is in fact largely absent from the situations in which the students find themselves performing for their examinations. Whatever the students' thoughts and beliefs about performance more broadly, they are in a

very specific situation during the performance assessments which form part of their degree. These performances are assessed and evaluated, endowing them with a special significance that subjugates the usual ephemeral nature of music-in-the-moment which attends other recitals and concerts. The participants describe the differences between a performance and an examination recital in respect of the examination's influence on the two themes which have permeated the data: self and enjoyment.

<u>Impact on self</u>

In an ideal world, interpretation results from the negotiations of musicians, using material and psychological tools (Vygotsky, 1978) between the musical work, the composer, the tradition, and the immediate context, which includes the audience, and themselves as performers (Davidson and Correia, 2001; Hultberg, 2008; Kingscott and Durrant, 2010; Myers and White, 2012). Data show that, although the strength of students' own conviction is relevant, they feel they need to be sure their interpretation will be accepted by the examiner.

A potential difference of opinion can be addressed in two ways: students learn that, if their interpretation is going to conflict with the tutor's, they should pick another piece; alternatively, they can accommodate the examiner's taste in the way they decide to perform it. Even instrumental/singing teachers are wary about what particular examiners want to hear, and make conscious decisions in order to achieve good marks.

Knowing who is the examiner, and whether there is an external examiner as well as familiar tutors, can make the students nervous or relieved, depending on the examiner and the student. Emma is pleased about the presence of the external examiner at her performance:

Emma	yeah, I was really glad he [external examiner] was there, cos some people have said it made them more nervous but I, that actually calmed me down quite a lot cos I thought well, if [tutor] has got something about the way I'm playing, [tutor]'ll be like, have that opinion, like straight off, [whereas] he's [external examiner] just gonna, you know mark me on my playing not on me

Emma, interview, 30/05/08

Many personal anecdotes describe experiences in which students have felt the examiner/tutor was influenced by a personal preference, rather than taking a performance on its own merit. The most current tale concerned Joe, a second-year violinist whose January performance mark had been compromised, apparently due to a lack of Baroque 'authenticity'.[37] Joe protests that his interpretation was a mixture of his teacher's advice and his own ideas. Mark, also present,

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[37] Here, 'authenticity' was used by the examiner in the historical performance practice sense.

declares that "there are professional performers out there doing professional recitals and getting professional bookings doing exactly what Joe did", making the point that an individual's interpretation is valid, even if it is different from the examiner's preference, which he describes as "opinionated" (interview with Mark and Joe, 4/06/08). Worryingly, Joe cannot say exactly for what he was criticised (note the double use of the word 'maybe'), other than that it had something to do with authenticity ("it wasn't on a Baroque violin, maybe, it wasn't, maybe the sound wasn't Baroque"). It is worth saying that this was Joe's first assessed recital of four that would count towards his final degree grade, and that he was therefore less aware of the risks of his choice than were the more seasoned students. It is likely he would learn from this and not fall into the trap a second time.

During the fieldwork period, I accompanied a violist in music by J. C. Bach, a performance which was criticised for not being "stylistically appropriate"; the fact of its being accompanied on a modern Steinway grand was, even without additional factors such as our interpretation, going to preclude it from being played in an 'authentic' way. The violist and I had worked on the interpretation together and enjoyed our version and our performance; the reaction to it and the mark awarded were not what we would have liked. Another student recounts how a fellow student had played a piano piece by Gershwin, which she had heard Gershwin himself play on a recording; the examiners did not like her version, yet she believed she had included elements of Gershwin's own style.

Will explicitly seeks the opinion of the tutor he knows will be his examiner for his final recital. He knows that this tutor has ideas about organ playing which "aren't that modern" and which conflict with his own teacher's ideas. He decides simply to "pander to what they want", and asks this tutor to come and listen to his pieces. He cannot believe nobody else is doing the same:

Will	…so I thought, cos I can't believe, no-one else was doing this, cos I was saying, [tutor] can you, can you come to [place] and listen to my pieces, can I, can I play you this piece, and, no-one, apparently no-one else seemed to be doing that
RP	mmm
Will	and I thought, this is ridiculous, you can, it's like, getting your essay marked five times before you handed it in… do they not realise that everyone has different views and even their teacher might well be different to the marker?

Will, interview, 6/06/08

The opinion is expressed that students should not be treated any differently from professional performers in the way they are 'allowed' to choose an interpretation. After all, in the 'real' world, musicians are not told how to play or interpret something; what makes them special is

their individuality. For everyone who, like the examiner, might not like an interpretation, there will be another audience member who does.

The prevailing opinion is summed up in heated fashion by Emma:

Emma	it's about performance, it's about the way *you* are putting the music across, not the way they want you to put the music across, or that's the way it should be, but probably, it's really annoying… you want to put across the music the way you, like it and the way you, you know, like you'll play a piece of music cos you like it, normally anyway won't you I mean, you want to get that across to the audience, but, you can't always do that if you're having to play the piece of music in a way that someone else is expecting you to play it cos, you're not necessarily going to like it, in that context
Emma, interview, 30/05/08	

Emma's use of "normally" is telling here: she believes the assessment is not a "normal" performance.

Impact on enjoyment

Enjoyment in performance is affected profoundly in an assessment situation. Dave says he cannot wait "til I'm not being assessed on performance… I'll enjoy performances much more if I'm not being assessed" (interview, 18/12/07).

Tom describes how he felt, firstly during his first semester recital, explicitly saying that, because he felt he could perform, it did not feel like an exam; and secondly how he feels just before performing in a lunchtime 'Student Showcase' concert, which is not an assessment but a performance opportunity:

Tom	…for, probably the first time, I felt quite comfortable in a performance situation… I think because we'd prepared well, I felt a lot more, steady, and, ok let's just do this… I'd done a lot more practice, I felt more comfortable with the notes and stuff and, I felt, more like I was about to give a performance, rather than, I was going into an exam
RP	mm. Is that a good thing?
Tom	I didn't really think oh there's people sat marking my every, move, reading the score and, seeing if I'm playing the wrong or right notes… I guess I've got to remember, like, I think on Friday [at the Student Showcase] the only people that, can probably judge me are gonna be clarinettists or people that know the piece really well, cos there's gonna be no-one with a score, like there normally is
Tom, interview, 12/02/08	

After the second semester assessment, though, the same student was disappointed that his experience had again been less like a 'performance' and more like an 'exam':

Tom	…I still knew I was being assessed
RP	all the time?

Tom	yeah, it didn't feel like a performance as such
RP	did you,
Tom	well the fact that they've got a video camera there and their head down in the scores doesn't help
RP	mm, were you aware of them then, what they were doing when you were playing?
Tom	it's hard not to be

Tom, interview, 3/06/08

In the examination situation itself, the students are constantly reminded of the fact that they are being examined, by the positioning of the examiners and their paraphernalia. The examiner(s) sit(s), with desk, video camera, laptop and scores, directly in front of the stage. Similarly, Coimbra *et al*. (2001) report that students in their study mentioned recording equipment and computers which they felt obstructed their communication with the audience.

Sue, because of the logistics of the building in which her recent recital was held, had the fortune to perform with the examiners behind her at first, and then dispersed in front of her amongst the audience members; she felt very relieved.[38] Sue describes the difference between a concert and an examination situation as being partly because, in the latter, they can see the examiners in front of them, with video camera and laptop. When they cannot see all of this, the occasion feels more like a 'normal' recital. Sue even uses the description "my concert":

Sue	it made me feel like I was giving a, more of a concert rather than a recital which I think is better, because, that's what recitals generally are really aren't they they're just concerts it's just that in the recital here you're being marked
RP	yeah
Sue	so, and the thing is I had the added bonus, the fact that the examiners were behind me, so I didn't have to see them
RP	ah right!
Sue	for the majority of my concert. The only time I saw them was when I was, in the centre doing, er, the Purcell and the Mendelssohn, and that's the only time I could actually see them where I could, not actually have to look at them cos they weren't all sitting together
RP	mm
Sue	and they were interspersed between the audience so it didn't feel, like I was being assessed as such
RP	mm, didn't feel like an exam
Sue	no

Sue, interview, 29/05/08

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[38] This student was accompanied variously by piano and organ, and had two parts to her recital, with the audience moving in between, by virtue of the location of these two instruments within the building.

In the tenure of a previous lecturer, who retired the year before this fieldwork was carried out, the examiners would sit in the gallery of the auditorium, in the corner, meaning they were less in the sightline of the performer on the stage and more inconspicuous. This may have been a better placement from the performers' point of view, though the sound balance might not have been quite the same.

Such is the power of the audience that negative feedback can be unhelpful and, at worst, destructive (Branscome, 2014). Brand *et al.* (2012) found that if jazz musicians are hindered from expressing their artistic freedom, they feel the quality of their performance is jeopardised. Throughout their preparation, students are anticipating the moment of performance in front of an audience, and this moment of confrontation may provoke anxiety (Coimbra *et al.*, 2001; Wilson, 2002; Wilson and Roland, 2002). Cohen (1991) also remarks how the sight of particular people in an audience can have an encouraging or discouraging effect on the performers. The current research findings underline the often anxious reaction of students in the current study, knowing their examiners are in the audience, and anticipating their responses.

Audiences are thought to go to live events in order to enjoy themselves (Burland and Pitts, 2012; Platz and Kopiez, 2012; Pitts, 2005; Radbourne *et al.*, 2009). Whilst data show (see previous section on ***Audience***) that students appreciate the importance of the audience's enjoyment of a performance, the audience at their examination recitals includes examiners. Here, the normal 'rules' seem to change. According to the data, students do not see how the examiners can enjoy the recital when they are following a score. Students even believe the examiners may not have the intention of enjoying the recital. The negative outcome from this is that examiners are perceived to be checking for mistakes, rather than going into the recital expecting to be entertained and to enjoy the performance:

Tom	…it just annoyed me what [examining tutor] said about note blemishes and things because …it's very rare that, people won't, play one wrong note …I think the whole ethos of the way they mark is wrong, I think they should, sit you down, and just, listen to you play …well it turns into what we were talking about for my psychology project, where you're, listening out for someone's errors …which is why it seemed to me like, the comments were, because he was trying to find a fault
Tom, interview, 12/02/08	

Given the importance of enjoyment for both performer and audience, students are bewildered by examiners who sit with their heads in the score checking for accuracy. This quote, from Will, is priceless, illustrating the point precisely:

Will   mmm, though the erm, external guy [external examiner] wasn't, he didn't have scores

RM   right

Will   he was kind of, well, enjoying himself!

Will, interview, 6/06/08

j) Summary

The central core of student activity, in which students prepare and perform music, is nourished by, and in turn feeds back into and revitalises, knowledge, belief and thinking in all the supporting areas outlined in this chapter. This central activity is brimming with emotional and personal resonances, through the importance of enjoyment, and the physical, psychological and social facets of the self. These factors have been examined as they have related to various aspects of the findings throughout this chapter

Self and enjoyment were suspected very early on during data analysis to be crucial factors in successful performance. The manifestation of self through body language and the visual aspect of performance, through the preparation of an individual interpretation of a piece of music for sharing, and through enjoyment, are central facets which can shape the success of a performance. These concepts are tightly bound with the notion of profane creativity (Willis, 1978), which was introduced earlier in this report, and which will be discussed in depth in the next chapter. Self and enjoyment also relate to two other strands permeating the data: wholeness and meaningfulness. Both of these concepts are linked with sense-making, about which more will be said in the next chapter.

From the current study's findings, it seems the supportive and uplifting conditions normally present in live performance are perceived by students to be conspicuous by their absence in the 'exam conditions' of the performance assessment of the music degree, adversely affecting the important elements of self and enjoyment. The special qualities of joint meaning making (Cohen, 1991; Finnegan, 1989) are threatened; the examiners seem not to be relating to the visual and multi-modal aspects of the performance (Vines *et al.*, 2006); the construction of a shared symbolic dimension (Bogdan, 2003) seems unlikely, when the examiners seem not to be engaging in any emotional response to the performance (Thompson, 2007); the relationship of trust (Myers and White, 2012) is absent; spontaneity (Burland and Pitts, 2010; Cohen, 1991) is restricted by the students' concerns about being marked according to accuracy; positive feedback (Cohen, 1991; Woody and Parker, 2012) is also perceived to be lacking.

III.   Recapitulation

This chapter has accounted in detail for the findings of this project. It has also included references to the literature, which was consulted as part of the data collection process (Glaser, 1998). In the attempt to leave out nothing, and include every detail, the rich seam of data from extensive fieldwork at first proved difficult to grapple with. The number of different topics which needed investigating in the literature also proved daunting. However, the necessarily wide-ranging findings reflect the wide-ranging knowledge and ways of thinking displayed by the participants. Some resemble previous research findings, whilst many ideas in this chapter are new. What is certainly unprecedented is the disclosure of evidence demonstrating the strength and unity of these university students' ways of thinking about performance. Although each student has a personal history, it is possible to construct an overarching model of music students' ways of thinking about music performance. The importance of being comfortable with one's decisions and actions, and of feeling that one's actions accurately or authentically embody the self, is also highlighted. Other researchers might wish to interpret the findings differently, or to compare the structures proposed here against others, but the framework utilised here is at least a coherent way to make sense of this vast amount of information.

In the following chapter, the implications of the findings will be discussed, and related in further ways to theory from existing literature.

Chapter 5: Discussion

I. Introduction

This study aimed to explore the thinking which supports university music students with performance, and how that thinking might be affected by their being in an institutionalised context, specifically by the assessment context of their performances. The previous chapter outlined a scaffold of interrelated sets of knowledge used by the students in their thinking about performance, which supports the central action of preparing and performing music. In this chapter, the implications of the findings will be discussed, as they are related to previous research and emerging interests for music and music education.

Research cannot seek to present an empirical reality, but only to present the human capacity for sense making (Willis, 2000). Human involvement in the sensuous world creates multiple codes and meaningfulness. The reality for students may not match the reality for those who teach them; this possibility is reflected in the discussion that follows.

Finnegan (1989, p.10) almost apologises that a written academic account of a piece of ethnographic research "can probably never totally avoid giving a faceless and reducing impression of what to the participants themselves is rich and engrossing artistic experience…". Willis (2000) urges the ethnographic researcher to "go for it" and take risks in writing up ethnographic research. In this discussion, every effort is made to paint a living picture of the music students' creative culture, and the manner in which their meaning making shapes their ways of thinking about performance, especially within the university context.

II. **Summary of key findings**

The key findings are as follows.

- Students possess large quantities of knowledge, and are active learners, theorisers and sense-makers. This may seem obvious, but it should be highlighted that these students continually demonstrate their engagement in constructivist learning.

- Students' thinking is supported by complex and wide-ranging frameworks of interrelated and overlapping areas of knowledge, the strength of which is demonstrated repeatedly. These frameworks enable them to manage their work, informing decisions and actions, particularly when resolving dilemmas and conflicts of interest involving often competing pressures or demands.

- Students draw on a range of knowledge bases, some shared, and some personal.

- Students' knowledge is highly 'situated', relating to concrete examples of occurrences which support particular theories or beliefs. This knowledge is developed over time.

- The ways in which students express their theories indicate a consistent search for wholeness and meaningfulness in their work.

- Students seek authenticity, not in the performance practice sense but in the sense of being able to express their creative selves; they work hard to find the "right" interpretation of music which suits them and allows them to express themselves through it.

- Students experience conflict between their views of performance and their perceptions of performance assessment in the university context. This causes them difficulties which they tackle in a number of ways, including both avoidance and accommodation.

A number of topics emerging from the data demonstrate links with studies identified in the literature and merit a further specific mention:

- the importance of the body and the visual element of performance;

- the extension of the self into music performance;

- the human qualities associated with selecting and forming a relationship with a piece of music;

- the significance of pleasure and other related elements of psychological well-being for musicians, especially in a learning environment;

- the connection between confidence and creativity, and between confidence and autonomy;

- the potentially detrimental effect of prioritising assessment of the measurable over other aspects of music performance which are less easy to measure;

- the tensions between traditional elements of music education which the establishment would like to transmit, as against the search for wholeness and meaningfulness of experience, and individualism;

- the practical manifestation of postmodernist, pluralist socio-cultural epistemology in the students' expectations.

The ensuing discussion of cultural creativity invited by the title of this thesis revisits these themes, with reference to how the findings concur with the literature, and to new ideas emerging from the current research.

III. Towards a theory of cultural creativity

Centrally placed within the theoretical framework proposed by this study[39] is the practical activity of planning, preparing and performing music. All other knowledge bases feed into this activity, and, in a dialectical process, are continually revised as students (consciously and unconsciously) modify their knowledge. The central pillar of activity also both completes and supports these other knowledge areas. Without it, there would be no focus or purpose for the knowledge, which would remain abstract; without it, there would be no confirmation or feedback as to the validity or usefulness of the knowledge.

Students' thinking about music links directly to the behaviours in this central realm of activity, behaviours which also largely reflect the themes of wholeness and meaningfulness, as the students make sense of the activity of music performance in human, not academic, terms. Preparation of music for performance, for the students, means seeking a 'right way' – the right way for them – of performing a piece, the way that works, the way that means something, the way that secures wholeness of experience between student and music. Their hopes and expectations, based in wholeness and meaningfulness, can be threatened by their experiences of assessed performance, creating a thorny disjunction. These overarching themes require some explanation.[40]

1. Wholeness and meaningfulness

Wholeness and meaningfulness are concepts widely used within the rhetoric of education (Mathieson, 2002). 'Wholeness' is recognised in education, especially primary education, traditionally concerned with educating "the whole child".[41] Through Rousseau, Dewey and Piaget, primary education has traditionally advocated constructivist learning, learning through experience, integration not fragmentation, starting where the learner is. Following Vygotsky (1978), teachers intervene to support individuals in constructing progressively higher levels of knowledge and understanding. Integration of experience is contradicted by divisions of any kind. This familiar notion has suffered assaults with the segmentation of the curriculum and the timetable, the discouraging of 'topic' work, which encapsulated the child-centred

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[39] The reader is referred back to Figure 3.6.

[40] Wholeness and meaningfulness are not concepts derived from the literature, but are part of my own theory.

[41] In Reimer's (2012) article, 'wholeness' refers to 'inclusiveness', encompassing the myriad forms of music and ways in which one can incorporate it into leisure and/or career. This is not the sense in which the concept is used in this thesis. He does write of "genuineness of individuation", a movement towards "wholeness of selfhood" which all humans should expect to attain through education. This meaning is closer to the sense in which the word is used in this thesis.

philosophy, and the move towards league tables and quantitative measurements which could be said to have left behind the individual child.

Wholeness also exists where realms of experience fit together, making sense. Assuring wholeness of experience remains something to which primary (and other) teachers would aspire, for their pupils and for themselves. Experiences of wholeness promote integrity, and facilitate the necessary comfort, preparedness and ease for 'flow', and for enjoyment of performance. Meaningfulness is intimately linked with wholeness, and is the desire to imbue experiences (lessons, performances) with reality, the need to ensure sense is always maintained.

Wholeness and meaningfulness, and the centrality of the self, were found in my previous doctoral study to be central to teachers' thinking about their work, and this finding is mirrored in the current research. For teachers, 'being yourself' in the classroom is vital (Nias, 1989). Aspects of the self repeatedly emerge as central to experience, and though each 'self' is different, individuality is, paradoxically, what they have in common.   The same is true for the music students in this study. Teaching is an interpersonal activity (Day, 1999), and the same personal, human, meaning-making relationship has been found to exist in this study between performer and audience. Students and teachers alike have demonstrated the need to feel in control and the need to experience wholeness (Nias, 1989; Woods, 1990). Additionally, both students and teachers experience a perceived threat to wholeness and meaningfulness from external factions and demands, and develop ways to avoid or accommodate conflict caused by context.

These similarities, and others, aided an understanding of the implications of the data in the current study, where these same themes began to emerge as captivating driving forces behind the detail of the findings of the present study, the students attempting at every turn to make sense of their situation. This applies to everything from finding meaningful ways of practising, to the human aspects of being a music student: forming relationships and looking for fairness.

Students demonstrate a need to maintain their world as a coherent whole. The world has to make sense as a whole for people to be comfortable. Fragmentation, where any part of the familiar and reassuring personal world is removed or undermined, is damaging (Ruddock, 1988). Psychological and practical stress results from interruptions and disturbances to the status quo (Elbaz, 1983). For students, psychological and practical stress results from tensions between their views of the nature of music, and those which their assessors appear to espouse. Compartmentalising elements of music in assessment, rather than reacting to the

whole (Johnson, 1997; McPherson and Thompson, 1998), unsettles the students; they wonder if the examiner is listening in order to feel affected (Cook, 1992), which would be the meaningful way to listen to music, or in order to check for accuracy, because that is measurable.

Meaningfulness is identified in the musicological literature in several ways. It is linked with authenticity, where a performance is imbued with intention, recognisable reality and a convincing expression which conveys sincerity and opens up genuine communication between performer and audience, and is supported in this by body language. Meaningfulness is inherent in the dual creativity of the two parties, performer and listener, present during the music. It exists in the possibilities for novel interpretations of music, in the creativity of the moment which is afforded by performance (Juslin and Persson, 2002; Lindström *et al.*, 2003).

Meaningfulness and authenticity are highly correlated concepts (Davidson and Correia, 2001), occurring when the music speaks directly to its listeners, a meaning which is connected to a bodily experience shared by us all (Small, 1998). Juslin (2003) notes that when we hear a convincing expression in music, it is perceived as 'sincerity', and we therefore tend to feel sympathy for the performer of the music. This can be seen to relate to the notion of 'authenticity'.

In seeking to reconcile resources to task, and in ascertaining their position on the continuum of progress, the students are storying in a sense-making narrative, both looking ahead, constructing the potential path from the present until the performance, and backwards through their journey of learning about music. Blaming gaps in their knowledge or skills on a lack of something in their past, and formulating an idea of positionality within a group through comparisons with other students, are indicative of reasoning towards wholeness and meaningfulness through sense making and narrative building.

As the data show, occurrences which threaten students' sense of wholeness or meaningfulness cause unease. For example, when some students are permitted to hold their performance assessments in different venues, perceived fragmentation threatens the students' sense of wholeness. The relevance of the inconsistencies is that the students want an equal chance to be able to express their individuality.

Meaningful preparation and meaningful performance are intellectually and emotionally satisfying. Creative work in performance exhibits innovation, ownership, control and relevance. It has to include an element of spontaneity and partial releasing of control, since the central event will include a chance element. Students are attracted by the variety and

stimulation which ensue from unpredictability and the consequent possibilities for innovation and creativity.

The projection of self, the quest for joy, the awareness of the body and of the actual sounds and movements that will be created for a physically present audience, determine that, during the process of formulating an interpretation of a piece of music, the student, the piece of music and the physical performance together develop a symbiotic relationship which will reach its zenith in either a recital, a concert or an examination. Confidence, control, autonomy, authority and the comfortableness which results from thorough preparation, ideally all need to be present if a performance is to deliver the optimum experience to both performer and audience. The greatest irony of all is that the occasion of the examination is unlikely to promote, and is more likely to inhibit, these conditions in the students. Their intensely creative, highly personal act of interpretation, lovingly laboured over and carefully wrought, is not simply offered to an audience in a gesture of sharing and mutual meaning making; it is presented objectively to be quantitatively evaluated.[42] This fundamental breach in the students' sense of wholeness and meaningfulness has far-reaching implications. It is to these implications that the discussion now turns.

2. An introduction to cultural work[43]

As a way into an interpretation of the study's main findings, use will be made of certain theoretical concepts proposed and explicated in Willis (2000).[44] Ethnographic methods were essential in data gathering, and an ethnographic approach is equally appropriate to explanation. There may be other ways of reading the findings (as there are various possibilities for interpreting music), but the present interpretation is currently the most satisfactory in its potential to account for all the details.

Postmodernist conceptions of the world have grown in significance and influence. Social life (life, by any other definition) should be seen as containing many different kinds of meaningfulness, connecting up in complex ways, and constructed and conveyed via many different codes. Language is one, but not the only, code; indeed, most meaning is situated outside language-based communication. What is revealed through this study is a culture of

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[42] Marks are given out of 100 for the examination recital.

[43] The theoretical underpinnings of this section are attributable to Willis (2000). I take full responsibility, nevertheless, for the present attempts to relate those theoretical concepts to aspects of music performance and to the findings of this study.

[44] The interested reader is referred to *The Ethnographic Imagination* (Willis, 2000) for further details, since it is not appropriate here to detail the whole theory, which emanates from Marxist/capitalist views on economics and society.

meaning created by music students in a university in the north of England in the academic year 2007-8. Understanding the findings of the study in this way facilitates an explanation of some of the strongest-held views of the students, ones which challenge norms and practices long accepted by academic musicologists, including some who teach these students.

Everyday human creativities are related to the wider social picture. The young, as a dominated group, are positioned by complex structures. In this study, the students are positioned by their enrolment on the degree course, involving university, department and programme requirements, as well as the dictates and opinions of particular, more powerful, individuals, and all that within the value- and power-laden fields of music and music education (Dyndahl, Karlsen, Skårberg and Nielsen, 2014). Institutions can be seen as the attempt by one group with power to tell another, larger, group what is good for them; the attempt, not to make their choices wider, but to choose for them (Willis, 1990). Power relationships in education can be damaging in the learning process, which should focus on improvement and progress and allow students to make their own personal meaning, expression, values and attitudes (Dibben, 2006; Leong, 2010).

Whilst social restructuring occurs downwards from above, creativity, in the form of meaning making, is busily happening in an upwards direction, as the students, through their cultural practices, make active sense of the structural conditions of their existence. They utilise the things which initially constrain them, marking their positionality in relation to hidden or unseen overarching structures which limit their choices, and expressing their individuality. Using and transforming part of what is around them, changing slightly the prevailing conditions of existence, is the dialectic of cultural life (Willis, 1990). The group as a whole does this, using the same cultural forms. The group, a unit of cultural existence and of resistance to the dominant culture, also protects and influences individual subjectivities, which can project a strong and confident sense of an authentic self. This study confirms that, though the accounts of experience are individual, each individual lives out a version of a collective strategy. This process was also seen in the study of teachers making sense of and coping with their environment in my previous doctoral study (Mathieson, 2002).

In postmodern society, the communications and meanings of traditional and 'responsible' bodies (e.g. tutors/examiners, here) are commonly displaced or sidelined. Their meanings seem (to the students, here) to derive from a duty and worthiness as defined by others, and are thus irrelevant. Modernism functioned to reproduce social/cultural divisions and to render cultural elites socially unconnected. In particular, Willis's conception of 'mentalist' and 'manual' may seem to carry more weight in relation to previous generations to our own:

'mental' refers to a job or task in which one uses one's brain; 'manual' labels a physical job.[45] In musicological terms, this concept may relate to Dunsby's (1995) notion of 'talkers' and 'doers'. Members of a subjugated culture are more likely to trust the body rather than the word or the thought. However, a general cultural turn towards the body, and sensuous expression, has resulted in a blurring of these distinctions. Students growing up in a postmodern world are unlikely to be fixated by the distinction, and indeed in this study show that doing and talking are equally likely; they reveal an easiness with the body which (some of) their tutors might not share.

Society is now mapped and understood more in terms of its leisure and expressive relations rather than work. Engagement in recognised cultural practices, such as musicking, is creative and active, and is linked with being human (Finnegan, 1989), the rewards of participation being in the promotion of self-esteem, artistic satisfaction, the admiration of others and sociability (Lamont, 2012). Far from being residual or disposable parts of life, the sense of purpose and the self-image engendered through music induce feelings of identity, power and control, along with a sense of creativity and unlimited possibilities ((Bogdan, 2003; Cohen, 1991).

There are ideological meanings defining work as 'paid work', i.e. the opposite of leisure, which, taken alongside an inherited Protestant work ethic, that 'work' is serious, difficult and possibly unpleasant, throws into relief the seemingly frivolous nature of the students' attempts to create enjoyment for themselves and others through their music. In the present study, it is possible to conceive that the students see a distinction between 'work' as being obliged to conform to opinions and approaches cascaded downwards, and 'leisure' as being able to formulate their own interpretation and present music performance in a way which suits them. In this new version of society, everyone is voiced, or allowed a space (meaning, here, that the students should be able to choose how to express themselves through their music). According to the former ideology, they should be doing what they are advised, formulating an individual interpretation being seen as self-indulgent. Learning has taken on the mantle of being a serious business, but it does not have to be (Hodges, 2010); indeed, learning is more effective if accompanied by pleasure or even fun.

Penetrations (Willis, 2000) are the manifestation of a culture 'thinking' for its members. The culture sees through (penetrates) the dominant ideology. Participants may not realise

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[45] This distinction plays a large part in social stratification, with the working classes denigrating 'mentalist' professions (Willis, 2000), thereby prolonging their condemnation to manual labour. The disappearance of manual jobs over recent decades has resulted in widespread unemployment amongst the (now ironically termed) 'working' class. See Willis for further details.

consciously that this is occurring, but have a secure, bodily, somatic form of knowing, holding off or even invalidating prescribed models of behaviour and approach. This is especially possible when contradictions or carelessness from above causes gaps or weaknesses to appear, which can be exploited. Consequently, the dominated group throws off institutionalised roles, and asserts its individuality and autonomy, clothing itself in a fuller and more rounded sense of self within a knowable cultural world. Literally working on or with a material form (socio-symbolic work), such as working on a piece of music, produces a culturally 'authentic' connection. This relationship must reward the group with (*inter alia*) security, certainty and confirmation of identity.

Cultural objects (physical objects, or practices) are imbued with meaning via human 'activation', producing what Willis terms a **homology**, where the actors' identity is projected onto a form or commodity, and the human and the material are brought into sensuous relation through human practices of **symbolic work**. The value and meaning of a cultural item is not totally within the item (the item can cease to be viewed in this particular way); nor is it totally socially given (the **objective possibilities** are provided by the item). The objective possibilities are taken up into homological social relations with the group.

Sensuous meanings have the potential to reveal general ideological meaning as partial or inadequate. Supposedly accepted ideologies are shown to be poor and static, whereas the vibrant, active culture produces a fuller, more dynamic ideology. As a result, the oppressive meanings of objects are cast off and replaced by new ones. Dominated groups will often subvert accepted meanings, in an attempt to protect their own culture and promote their own meanings, especially with a view to secure resistance and survival.

Figure 5.1 below is an attempt to represent this theory in diagrammatic form. On the left, the red boxes denote individuals and their behaviours; on the left, the blue boxes denote cultural items or practices. The black line down the middle, at first solid, then increasingly penetrable, marks the initially sensuously unconnected nature of human and object. Over time and through socio-symbolic work, objects are engaged by humans for specific cultural purposes, the arrows and the gradual mixing of colours representing the sensuous relationships being developed. Finally, the social and the symbolic (the individual/group and the object/practice) are held together by a meaningfulness which contributes to the identity of the individual and the group.

HUMAN AGENCY

CONCRETE FORM

Specifiable human practices
(sensuous human activity)

with humanly appropriate-able
symbolic form
(objective possibilities)

SOCIO-SYMBOLIC WORK

Human subjectivity
(selection and appropriation)

Humanly engaged materials

SOCIO-SYMBOLIC WORK

SOCIAL + SYMBOLIC

IN SENSUOUS USAGE

HOLDING PERSONAL MEANING

AS ASPECT OF IDENTITY
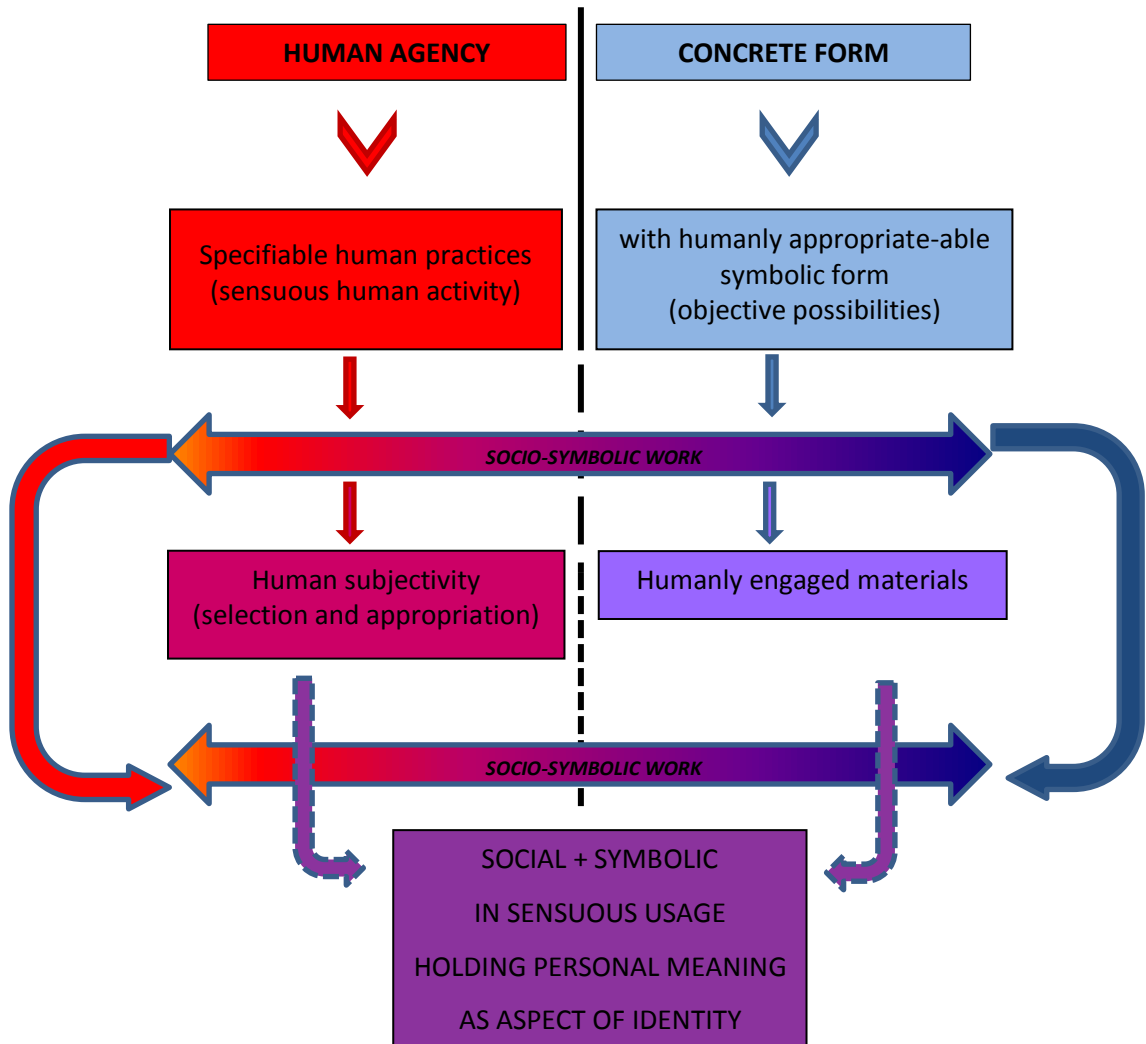
Figure 5.1: Socio-symbolic approach to homologies. Diagram created after Willis's descriptions

A good example of homology is found in the bikes of the bikers in 'Profane Culture' (Willis, 1978). The bikes, material, functional objects, were imbued by the bikers with symbolic cultural value, coming to represent much about the style, attitudes and character of the bikers themselves. Willis also found a clear basic homology between music and the social groups in his study (Willis, 1978).[46]

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[46] Willis (1978) investigated hippies and bikers; it is no coincidence that the expression of their identity was achieved largely through their choice of music.

3. Cultural creativity in the current study

Five material forms have been identified as being appropriated by the students (human agency, in the diagram) for their expressive possibilities: instruments, ensembles, recital programme, preparation and interpretation, and music performance itself. Each form provides objective possibilities for the creation and preservation of the wholeness and meaningfulness for which the students strive. Through socio-symbolic practice, each undergoes symbolic work, overthrowing oppressive meanings, to one or more of the following ends:

- Rejection of technical priority in playing an instrument, in favour of anthropomorphism and projection of self into the instrument.
- Rejection of institutionalisation and requirements, in favour of investing 'selves' into performing and participating, on the basis of 'suiting' and 'liking'.
- Rejection of 'authenticity' in the performance practice sense in favour of 'authenticity' in the sense of being true to oneself.
- Rejection of transmission model in favour of individual interpretation.
- Rejection of score-based reception of performance and assessment in favour of aspirations towards reception and assessment based on enjoyment, communication and visual/paramusical aspects of performance.

What is remarkable is that the meanings of these items are all culturally defined and deflect the received or dominant meanings cascading downwards in favour of meanings that suit the students' ideology.

These young people, who dare to play Bach on modern violins or to cut expansive tutti introductions from a concerto movement accompanied necessarily by piano (which can attract a negative reaction), develop what could be seen as a defence mechanism, seeking to justify their own approaches, as delinquents seek to justify their deviant behaviour by condemning their condemners, rejecting their rejectors. A technique of neutralisation, it shifts the focus of attention from their own acts to the motives and behaviour of those who disapprove of them (Patrick, 1973). It is part of the cultural creativity of sense-making. Contrary to the view of such young people as empty vessels, displaying no culture and needing to be educated, these students are in fact alive with cultural busyness, creating their own culture from what is and what happens around them.

This cultural creativity is a search for authenticity, an authenticity which is manifest in a variety of guises, through homological relations with instruments, ensembles, recital programme, preparation and interpretation, and, finally, music performance.

215

a) *Authenticity incorporating self with instruments and ensembles*

It is easy to envisage the voice as an extension of the singer. The voice emanates from within the body, and uses various parts of the body to make its resonance: the instrument and the person are one and the same, naturally, physically.

Students also relate to instruments as part of themselves. Cohen (1991) and Willis (1978) similarly identified personification or anthropomorphism (of instruments, in Cohen's case, and many objects, including bikes, in Willis's) in a humanly constructed world of meaning. In the present study, instruments are very much a part of who the student is as a musician, just as they were for Cohen's rock musicians, for whom instruments were equally important for their visual qualities as for their sound. Dependence on and affection for instruments should not be underestimated.

A small but significant contradiction within the findings, and relevant here, concerns membership of the choir and of the orchestra. It seems strange to Mark that first-study instrumentalists generally think it a privilege to be chosen as first clarinet or first trumpet in the orchestra, whilst first-study singers do not particularly enjoy singing in choir. This may link with the bodily element found by several researchers (Coimbra *et al.*, 2001; Woody, 2000; Wrigley and Emmerson, 2011) to be different for singers: if the bodily and the visual are more significant for singers than for other instrumentalists, they may feel less able to be themselves within a choir situation. It may also be possible for an instrumentalist to retain a more soloistic role in an orchestra, with its variety of component parts, than for a singer keen on solo performance to blend into the homogenous massed timbre of a choir.

The desire to resist institutional requirements where they do not provide the self with possibilities for emotional and intellectual reward again reflects the search for meaningfulness and wholeness. The findings show that involvement in ensembles is less intense where there are fewer opportunities to project the self into the activity. Humans strive to 'do their own thing' in many aspects of life, and being able to do this has high value. A quote from a participant in Finnegan's research is relevant here:

> "I've been called everything – punk, skinhead, futurist. I'm none of those… I'm just me."
> Finnegan, 1989, p.105.

b) *Authenticity in selection of programme*

<u>Liking and suiting</u>

For these students, and for musicians (and others) in other studies (Cohen, 1991; Finnegan, 1989; Mackinnon, 1993; Willis, 1978), authenticity in life and in any kind of performance means expressing oneself directly, not through a role or a borrowed personality. When music is involved (and it so often plays an important role in cultures), a meticulous selection of music takes place, to find music which suits and has something to say about the person in question. One's sense of belonging to and identifying with a group, or simply one's own sense of identity, is bound up tightly with choices of music.

Liking and suiting are underlying driving forces during selection of repertoire for recital programmes. Only by selecting pieces of music which 'suit' them can students enter into interactive socio-symbolic work, creating meaning from the music. Every performance of the same piece of music can be slightly different, because something of our self goes into it. We need to choose music that suits us, because we are going to wear it, like a hairstyle, or a dress, or a partner on our arm. Students choose music which will extend their sense of self and reinforce their sense of identity. As the student gives to the music, the music gives back to the student.

A major influence on selection of repertoire is the prospective audience. Where the audience will include examiners, students must use their knowledge of what those examiners 'like', what 'suits' them, to make a potentially successful match, securing optimum results for the student both in terms of playing a programme they like, and achieving a good mark. Problems can ensue for wholeness and meaningfulness unless this is carefully managed.

c) *Authenticity in preparation and interpretation*

<u>Thinking about music</u>

> The ability to engage in musical thinking is central to one's ability to engage in and understand music… The extent to which an individual understands the ways sounds are assembled to create music determines the sophistication of his or her ability to engage in music and musical thinking.
>
> Wiggins, 2002, p.79

Once the recital programme is selected, preparation and interpretation of the music begin in earnest. How the music is lifted from the score and given life is a fascinating process of mental and physical steps.

217

Research on expertise of all kinds suggests that experts in any field have a bank of knowledge on which to draw, which helps them perceive patterns, analyse problems, recognise errors, monitor progress, and choose strategies appropriate to particular situations. Despite considerable differences in approaches to musical practices (e.g. interpretation, rehearsal, memorisation and performance), this shared fund of knowledge, ranging from the most basic concepts of notation to the higher echelons of the nuances of expression, enables musicians to "do the right thing at the right time" (Hallam, 2001, p.28).

Musicians need to reflect on their learning, and on their own strengths and weaknesses. Also essential is knowledge of potential rewards, in terms of not only performing good music but the psychosocial outcomes of success and the impact on self-identity. These are all examples of metacognitive awareness, the importance of knowing what we know, how we do things, and why this knowledge is necessary. Professional musicians possess and use metacognitive skills, demonstrating extensive knowledge of themselves, the requirements of their tasks, the nature of their goals, and how to achieve them (Hallam, 2001).

If experts possess and use more metacognitive knowledge than learners, one of the goals of educators is surely to assist learners to develop their metacognitive knowledge and thence to use it. Teachers should encourage students to become independent learners who can teach themselves (Hallam, 2001; Duffy, 2013.) Learning how to learn is vital in today's degree and post-graduate courses. The 'reflective practitioner' is now a common concept in professional development (Hallam, 2001; Hultberg, 2008; Johansson, 2013; Nielsen, 1999). Johansson (2013) believes more research is needed to tap into the hitherto inaccessible knowledge of music teachers and learners. Knowledge needs to be made explicit, so that it may be codified more readily but also so that individuals may know what they know and use it more efficiently, in their own work and in teaching others. The present study contributes to this area.

A folk musician in Finnegan's study (1989) said of classical musicians that they "are taught to play like typists who can type from one page to another without it going through their head at all" (*ibid*., p.139). This can certainly be the case, unless the learner is taught also to think. It is the combination of doing and reflecting, of music making and musical thinking, which encourages artistic development and promotes new and productive understandings (Garnett, 2013; Parsonage *et al*., 2007). The oft-quoted line, attributed to Elvis Costello, that writing about music is like dancing about architecture, attracts little if any support from the literature; the increasingly prevalent view is that an awareness of music's philosophical, psychological and conceptual implications extends one's ability to perform. A degree course should actively encourage students to engage with the intellectual, as well as the physical, side of music

(Duffy, 2013; Parsonage *et al.*, 2007). The practical and the theoretical are absolutely intertwined. Recent innovations have seen 'theoretical' areas such as academic studies and pedagogy added to the conservatoire curriculum (Duffy, 2013; Parsonage *et al.*, 2007).

However, concern is widely expressed in the literature about music students' lack of ability to discuss their work, and their lack of engagement with aspects of music other than the behavioural (e.g. Parsonage *et al.*, 2007). This could be because research into music performance in higher education has mostly targeted conservatoire, not university, students (e.g. Creech, Gaunt, Hallam and Robertson, 2009; Duffy, 2013; Gaunt, 2008; Parsonage *et al.*, 2007). Conservatoire practices, where the focus is literally on 'conserving', rather than challenging and adapting, have been criticised (Gaunt, 2008; Persson, 1996; Stock, 2003). Over the last decade, research has indicated an overriding unease about the master-apprentice model of teaching, prevalent in one-to-one conservatoire teaching, which supports a culture of transmission. Knowledge is held by teachers and authoritatively transferred to students, who are positioned as passive. Rigid parameters of interpretation are common, and technical content currently tends to dominate (Gaunt, 2008; Haddon, 2011; Nielsen, 2010; Persson, 1996). A transmissive pedagogy presents musical knowledge as atomistic, static and transmittable; music, and an accepted way of playing it, is objectified and passed, like an heirloom, down the generations (Stock, 2003). This analogy demonstrates a lack of recognition that music is recreated anew in every performance. Students are likely to believe that this is the way it is and should be; they are also likely to believe that playing something 'correctly' will score more highly in an exam.

This model of learning enacts a behaviourist epistemology. The behaviourist paradigm denies opportunities for self-expression, connection and community and decouples music education from the search for personal meaning in music through critical thinking and problem solving (Stewart Rose and Countryman, 2013). The focus should be on encouraging students to think for themselves and reflect on their performance and the music, planning, monitoring and evaluating their own learning (Salazar and Randles, 2015; Stewart Rose and Countryman, 2013). This constructivist epistemology represents a participatory model of learning (Vygotsky, 1978) in which knowledge is relative, contextual, and socially constructed. Through shifts in authority, teachers position students as "constructed knowers", participating in their own learning processes. Creech *et al.* (2009) found a need to foster in students a sense of control over their learning, and an increasing autonomy. Students should engage in relevant, creative and cooperative learning, where motivation is also based on confidence and a sense of relatedness to others (Criss, 2011; Freer, 2009). Engagement, challenge and intrinsic

motivation are linked positively; where learning is fun, learning is more successful (Hodges, 2010).

A paradox currently exists, then, in higher music education, particularly in the classical tradition, whereby students are responsible for preserving and carrying forward traditional cultural practices, whilst needing to formulate new, individual interpretations (Johansson, 2013). Evidence about students' knowledge from the current study suggests that these students are indeed musicians who think. The tutor who insisted on 'authentic' (Baroque) performances had formerly taught in a conservatoire, and openly espoused the rhetoric and ideology of conservatoire culture, as if it were something to aspire to, something which would afford the university performance module more kudos. It may, in fact, have had the opposite effect, stifling students' creativity, feeding their resentment. These students are not conservatoire students, and are learning to think critically and analytically in their academic modules, frequently incorporating knowledge from those areas to inform their performance.

<u>Self or score central to interpretation?</u>

As the focus moves from the work to the performer, so the emphasis on self takes shape, and the students use their preparation and interpretation time to develop homological relations between themselves and the music. They, and the music, grow to reflect one another. From selection of music, to appropriation of it as an expression of identity, the relationship deepens and the socio-symbolic work continues. Music which 'suits' gives students something through which to express themselves. Self-expression may indeed now be the function, the purpose, of music.

Individuals and groups creatively establish their presence, as well as important elements of their identity, purpose and meaning, through expressions, signs and symbols. Young people are constantly expressing, or struggling to express, something of their own or their hoped-for cultural significance, and, in the current study, students are attempting to do this precisely through music performance, an ideal commodity for this purpose. They need to be empowered, given ownership of their sense of self, identity and possibility (Willis, 1990). Identifying, recognising and supporting their existing creative experiences and activities rather than trying to make them enter a world of high art.

Two classical music world phenomena relating to this may be mentioned here: the relatively recent appearance of a classical chart, and Radio 3's Saturday morning programme, 'CD Review'. The classical chart promotes, not a musical work, but a performer's version of the work, the emphasis being on the performer. At first, the notion of a classical chart smacks of

popular culture; it seems the classical world is attempting to shed its 'stuffy' image by appropriating pop music's paraphernalia; perhaps a shift is occurring regarding the centrality of the performer in performance. Similarly, the programme 'CD Review' on Radio 3 recognises and celebrates the existence of varied interpretations of a different piece of music each Saturday, exploring how they differ, the presenter selecting a favourite version based on particularly pleasing details of interpretation. Whilst there is an acknowledgement of the popularity, endurance and importance of a central (yet now ever-widening) canon of masterworks, the focus is slowly broadening to accept the subjectivity of different interpretations.

Cohen (1991) found that band members regarded the practice of doing covers of other people's music as demeaning; performing original material was considered preferable. Performing classical music from a score implies, in essence, always 'doing covers'. However, the students here do not want to perform music in a way which sounds like someone else's version. They want to put their own stamp on the music.

It is possible to imagine a socio-cultural explanation for the tension between self and score. Perhaps music's purpose used to be to say something about an occasion, or about a king or duke for whom music was written; music also enhanced spirituality in church. Music was regal or stately on royal occasions, sombre at funerals. Church music had to be beautiful, so that God would approve of it, as Will says. We know that music was written by composers such as Mozart for particular performers, to give them a platform for their talent, in which case the performer becomes important, but only insofar as their talent is exploited; their self is not necessarily important. The nineteenth century introduced virtuoso performers, but also brought the contemplative reception of great 'art music' by composers of prodigious genius, at the same time as academic music was establishing its credentials through pretensions to scientific objectivity (Cook, 1992). From this point, western musical works were commonly seen as auratic objects, to be revered and not tampered with (Abbate, 2004; Willis, 2000).

Appealing to Willis's socio-cultural theory, it is possible to note that music itself became a commodity, a thing, an object; western art music, in becoming an auratic object, to be contemplated in the same way as a statue or a painting, lost its commodity quality of usefulness. Popular music took over the mantle of the useful musical medium (perhaps popular or folk music had always worn it). Into the twentieth century seeped the influence of individual expression, the cult of celebrity, and the culturalisation of commodities. The latter is a condition of post-scarcity western society and of how we make sense of our culture. There may no longer be any non-culturalised objects, as everything has a social or emotional

meaning (Willis, 2000). Classical music itself by this token is endowed with cultural value – in this sense, not meaning 'culture' in terms of 'high culture', but in the sense of holding meaning for a particular social group.

Classical music now suffers from bifold tensions. An internal struggle persists between fetishisation (score as auratic object) and communication (cultural commodities are full of meaning, unlike ordinary commodities). Additionally, the usefulness of the commodity clashes with the notion of the auratic object being revered but not used. Some kind of authenticity may be regained through the application of symbolic work to the relevant materials – musical 'works' and music performances – but only if musicians feel able to create meaning through selections and appropriations of music which dismiss the notion of the musical score being an auratic object, to be revered but not used. These students find only fragmentation and meaninglessness in the detached contemplation of a great work. They would much rather use a great work to express themselves.

An anomaly appears at this juncture. The students believe that music composed for the church expresses praise, thanksgiving, respect, and prayer, and communicates this to God. This does not sit easily with putting one's self into the performance, nor communicating to a live audience. The parallel finding, that music from oratorio is not expected to be performed from memory, may suggest that the communication of this music is different: the direct connection between performer and audience is different here. Performance of religious music may not work by the usual 'rules'.

Nevertheless, there is still something to be communicated, and a means of communicating it. The bodily attitude here is one of reverence, and the sharing with the audience (or, here, the congregation) is slightly different, perhaps with the performer stepping out of the limelight to share with the audience the act of communication to God, who is not present in the audience and does not need to be engaged in the same way as human beings. There is a belief amongst the students that the beauty of music connects with the intended expression of thanksgiving and praise. The irony is that this beautiful, meaningful music is a commodity: it has a function and a usefulness – praising God – and is an entity which communicates no social message: it says (or should say) nothing about the people who wrote/write or perform it. This anomaly poses an interesting challenge, but in its very contradiction it highlights the theory of self extended into performance.

Interpretation and expression

Much has been written about 'expression' in music (e.g. Davidson and Da Costa Coimbra, 2001; Lindström *et al*., 2003; Woody, 2000). An essential goal of teaching is to provide the performer with tools for the development of personal expression (Juslin and Persson, 2002). Yet little is known about how learners or more expert musicians acquire or have acquired the ability to use expression (Johansson, 2013; Lindström *et al*., 2003); preparing the expressive aspect of music is not talked about as much as technical preparation (Hultberg, 2008). Students tend to describe their attention to instrumental and technical issues. In 2008, Karlsson and Juslin asked why expression, if it is so important, is neglected in music education. At that time, while studies on individual teaching of expression (indeed of individual teaching altogether) were rare, it was known that little teaching of expression occurred explicitly.

Some musicians, including great composers, believe that expression cannot be discussed; or, they have difficulty discussing it in a more than vague way, since their knowledge is implicit (Lindström *et al.*, 2003). Some say a performer either has it or does not, or that it is the result of intuition or innate talent (Lindström *et al*., 2003; Woody, 2000) as if excusing that it is not taught. Lindström *et al*., in 2003, suggested that no useful theory existed to guide teachers, though added that the use of metaphors was the most common way of teaching about expression. Since teachers tend to teach as they themselves were taught (Schleuter, 1997), neglect of expression is perpetuated (Karlsson and Juslin, 2008). Music students imitate the expressive styles of teachers and other performers (Parncutt, 2007), and often learn about expressivity through listening to recordings (Woody, 2000).

Music education now recognises the importance of this aspect of performance. The notion that expression cannot be studied objectively is, according to Juslin (2003), a myth, and has had a damaging effect on music education. It can and must be taught, or at least made explicit and not just attributed to talent or intuition.

In the current study, the word 'expression' is infrequently used: the students seem not to talk about expression in the abstract, although they frequently, in rehearsal, discuss or state what they wish to say (or express) through the music. One instrumental teacher uses the word in a particular way, treating it as an add-on: "Now let's put the expression in," she will say, some way into the process of learning a piece. It seems that, to her, adding "expression" to notes and rhythms is a separate process, like icing a cake. Two of her students occasionally use the word as she does, mentioning adding it in. Otherwise, two kinds of talk were coded as 'expression' (my definition): the expression *of* something (e.g. characterisation/scene-setting);

223

and the means by which this is achieved (through rubato, dynamic contrast, tempo, articulation etc.), constituting both a means and an end.

Students believe communicating is central to performance. Although there is inevitably some spontaneity, the performer has an advance notion of what she wants to communicate, and how. The process of interpretation and preparation involves planning the means, and the goal, of expression. A clear indication of the superiority of these two planning goals – the means, and the end – over content is Dave's attitude to the performance of his compositions. Dave was a prolific composer; I was involved in several performances of his works. He was no pianist; often his piano writing was difficult or unidiomatic. In rehearsal, he always said the effect of his music was more important than the notes or rhythms he had written in the score. He was happy for me to paraphrase the content, as long as I was achieving the end he had intended, via a means which I had suggested and he had sanctioned.

In this postmodern society, pluralist versions of music generally, and of specific pieces of music, are acknowledged. Art is partly defined by its presentation of novelty, and the meaningfulness of music in each new performance derives directly from the infinite possibility of a novel interpretation with every performance (Lindström *et al.*, 2003). The participants in this study strongly believed that there is no one correct interpretation. The interpretation is not in the score: it is in the performer, in the act of communication. Different performances of the same piece by the same performer can produce different interpretations, because the act of communication is new each time. Music is not static or mummified, but living and in constant recreation, as Will's analogy of the box of matches and the ever-changing flames beautifully demonstrates. Music is made meaningful in the context of individual performances and performers. Music performance is nothing other than expression. Interpretation is simply the process of working out what the performer wants to communicate and how she intends to communicate it.

Confidence

There is a link between confidence in oneself and confidence in one's interpretation and ideas. Pandering to examiners' preferences militates against being able to exert the supremacy of the self, which is important to the students' culture. The more confident performers are also less likely to be concerned about what they must do to achieve good marks, other than perform music that suits them, in a way they like. Ben and John talk the most about putting themselves into their performances. They can afford to do this, because they ooze confidence in themselves. In their preparation, socio-symbolic work ensures that the homology between self

and music becomes complete, such that the authenticity of the match will be convincing. Self and music will become one and the same in performance.

In an apparently anomalous finding, Will seeks feedback on his pieces from the tutor who will be examining the recital; yet he does not lack confidence. Will was a confident, secure, intelligent performer. Examining this finding in the light of Willis's socio-cultural theory, an explanation can be found. Will was only in the department for one year, taking a year out of a medical degree. He was not part of the same culture as the other students. He had no baggage, as they did, from previous years. His organ teacher was not steeped in department knowledge and history as were the instrumental/ singing teachers of the other students. Will does not have the same homological relationships as the others with their cultural objects. To him, seeking an opinion in advance from the examiner was part of his cultural world; for the others, it was not. He did not avoid pieces which he thought might prompt a conflict of interpretation: he chose pieces he liked, and then found out whether he was playing them as the tutor liked. This is a confidence of a different kind, a confidence which shows that he could push self aside for the sake of results, and could engage in impression management, publicly agreeing with institutional demands whilst privately maintaining reservations.

Students learned much during the summative assessments, recognising and articulating what they had learned, both about the sort of repertoire to choose or avoid, and about their own physical and psychological reactions to performing and to being scrutinised. They described their frustration at not having enough formative experiences, in the way of preparatory performances, before the summative assessments. Real performance situations enable students to learn how to cope with performance; confidence grows when the unexpected is banished as far as possible and the students are comfortable knowing what they can expect. More performance opportunities which are assessed according to actual examination criteria but *without* those assessments counting towards final marks would lead to greater confidence when the actual assessments take place.

d) *Authenticity and self in music performance*

Enjoyment and bodily experience in performance

In western society nowadays, most music is heard in a context where the performers are absent (Brand *et al.*, 2012; Mackinnon, 1993). We listen alone, to a CD, the radio, the internet; music is an accompaniment to a more important activity, or is a mood-enhancer. In these situations the performer-listener relationship is non-existent. We are habituated to not listening to humans; Mackinnon (1993) suggests we have almost forgotten music's potential to

serve as direct interpersonal communication. Yet visual and bodily aspects of performance are absent from printed music and audio recordings. Recordings have only been possible in the last hundred years or so: before that, only performers, or live audiences, heard music.

Music performance is a bodily experience, a special sense of self experienced in the moment of music performance, for performer and audience alike. The feelings of elation or "feeling shit" during and after a performance are real, physical feelings caused by actual changes to the brain and body. It is like sport, in many ways: the importance of stamina, preparation, controlling nerves, psychological interference or strength, and feelings of success or failure after the event.

Music has the capacity to provoke bodily reactions in listeners too. An audience at a live music event experiences the music somatically as well as (or even rather than) intellectually, and taps, moves or hums along, muscles contracting in sympathy. In certain contexts, music can encourage dancing, or even fighting (as with the bikers in Willis, 1978). For the students in this project, music awakens deeply-felt instincts of self.

Following Hargreaves *et al.*, (2003), the present study found that, for these students, rather than necessarily developing specific musical skills (sightreading, technical ability, etc.), more general 'personal' outcomes such as artistic creativity and emotional expressiveness were paramount. The sense of self bound up with performance has been shown repeatedly in the literature (e.g. Coimbra *et al.,* 2001; Lamont, 2012; Persson, 2001) and in the present study. Experiences of performing music must be fulfilling, to feed into the spiral around the processes of motivation, practice, performance success, enjoyment, flow and re-engagement. Performers' strongest experiences of music are characterised by engagement and a search for meaning; experiences which encourage further performance are largely positive and enjoyable, sustaining motivation. Since enjoyment of performing can be developmental, enjoyment should form part of performing whilst a student is in education, or the student might be put off performing in the future. Given that the flow state is unambiguously positive, and a valuable contributor to successful performance for both performer and audience, educators could potentially begin thinking about supporting and promoting flow experiences during educational experiences.[47] Clearly, the flow state is an ideal towards which to aspire, and reaching it, especially on a regular basis, is not a straightforward process. The material point here is that it seems even more difficult, perhaps impossible, to attain if any examination-related anxiety, or doubt about how an interpretation would be received, were

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[47] This view accords with that of Sinnamon *et al.*, 2012.

present in a student performer's mind. The current study has highlighted the threatening effect of the assessment situation on enjoyment and positive experiences.

Music is meant to be beautiful and pleasurable, according to the data. The widespread suspicion and dislike of 12-tone or serialist music amongst these students (even though they are serious music students) support this. They do not regard such music as beautiful and would not listen to it for pleasure. 'Pleasure' does not imply that music has to render the listener happy, but music must be *felt*. Music affects us physically: emotions are physical, which is why we want to engage with them, and that is what gives us pleasure.

Ben	… and then we go straight into am I right in thinking 'O cessate' wonderful slow Italian beauty

Ben, rehearsal, 14/05/08

Equally, entertainment does not imply making the audience happy, but making the audience feel *something*. Wanting *to entertain* is acknowledging the audience's desire to *feel*. Making music involves a desire to *share* physical feelings as well as create them. These findings reflect those of Hallam (2001) and Woody and Parker (2012).

<u>Effect of assessment on students' experiences of performance</u>

Students do know a great deal, explicitly and implicitly, and think deeply and extensively. In performance, they enact what they know and believe. They attempt to learn in a constructivist way, using what they know and can do as a starting point. Performance displays personal beliefs and values relating to how students see themselves and how they see music. Personal responsibility lends a sense of empowerment which is linked to satisfaction.

With no agreed definition of musicianship or musicality (Cantwell and Jeanneret, 2004), it is possible that it is variable, and individual, and related to the self. If students' interpretations succeed (that is, if they are musical – if they express, communicate something to the audience), this shows that students have an understanding of how the music works, which is more important than anything else. This is surely the true meaning of musicality or musicianship, not technical brilliance or getting all the notes correct. Musicianship can be demonstrated variously, including through listening, and through dance. Listening draws on imaginative conceptions of musical ideas as they are produced in sound; dance (which could include movement whilst performing) draws on the body's powers to convey in space what music sounds like (Jorgensen, 2003). It is rooted in understanding and responding to how music works. Mindfulness of intention is amongst the most important aspects of musicianship for Regelski (2009). For the students, the process of preparation and interpretation first allow

an exploration, using their musicianship, of a piece of music, leading to its performance which is the culmination of the intentionality of the performers.

There has been an abhorrence, on ideological grounds, amongst teachers in further education institutions, of applying to artistic endeavours objective criteria usually associated with the sciences; teachers have been resistant to the quantification of music performance quality, saying it is unmusical and artificial (if not impossible) to measure music performance objectively (Boyle, 1992; Coimbra *et al.*, 2001; Stanley *et al.*, 2002; Wrigley and Emmerson, 2011). It has been argued that assessment of music is always likely to be inherently subjective and intuitive, due to the aesthetic nature of performance. Wrigley and Emmerson refer to the "indefinable subjectivity in the form of tacit knowledge that is intuitive and impressionistic, which will remain inaccessible through the use of a verbal and numerical rating scale" (2011, p. 115); they suggest academics (e.g. Johnson, 1997) who have insisted that criteria cannot replace examiners' subjective judgements have been at least to some extent correct.

Hunter (2004) describes the continuing debate about what exactly it is that we are assessing, and the consequent variety in criteria, finding, "worryingly… an obsession with measurement", an approach which is "symptomatic of a desire to emphasise the quantifiable in performance assessment in an attempt to minimize subjectivity" (*ibid.*, p.11). He asks:

> Is there a danger that, in articulating performance features that are measurable, we encourage correctness (in the sense of fidelity to the text or score) at the expense of imaginative realisation?
>
> Hunter, 2004, p.11

Furthermore, some theorists claim music cannot be segmented into separate assessable elements, due to its inherently holistic nature (Mills, 1991; Swanwick, 1998). A listener listens in terms of impressions (Cook, 1992); listening to music in terms of musicological perceptions can get in the way of an aesthetic response to music. Holistic assessment maintains the integrity of the work of art, which is meant to be experienced as a whole, not dissected into fragments by the listener (Johnson, 1997; McPherson and Thompson, 1998). Once a listener starts paying attention to separate parts of the performance, she stops listening to the whole, which is the music; if one is to feel, and be affected, one must be listening to the music, not to the elements. This begs questions, of course, as to what one is or should be listening for or to. Is an examiner listening in order to feel and to be affected? We tend to remember our experiences of a piece of music, rather than the music itself (its melodies or rhythms):

> …it is the affective content conveyed, however inadequately, by means of such descriptions, and the sense of satisfaction engendered through absorption in a piece of music, that is the real object of the listening process, and not the sound of the orchestra, nor the score, nor any musicological representation of what was played.
>
> Cook, 1992, p.160

The musicological approach (examining the aspects which make up the whole) is necessary if justification is to be provided as to why a performance is of good quality, and also if students are to be helped to improve through formative assessment which identifies strong and weak aspects of their performance. There must be shared meaning of what makes a quality music performance, or else there could be no shared agreement as to what we are teaching students to become, and there would be no agreement about which artists are masters of their instruments. This is consistent with disciplinary objectivity. Common constructs and dimensions, explicitly and precisely defined, reflect shared meaning and knowledge and are used by teachers across the profession, and teachers do break music into segments in order to teach it. A combination of holistic and criteria-referenced assessment strategies is useful, especially in giving constructive feedback to students (Blom and Poole, 2004; Stanley *et al.*, 2002). At A-level, one examination board uses a performance marking system in which a holistic mark is given and then cross-referenced against a series of individual criteria evaluating particular aspects of the performance (Edexcel, 2013).

Assessment necessitates observing what a student does and says, to find out what they understand. This is, as Regelski puts it, "reading behaviour backwards" (1986, p.197). Assessment in music, as evidenced by Ofsted inspections in schools, is dangerously close to becoming focused on behaviour, rather than on understandings which give rise to behaviour. This leads to the curriculum being approached as concepts to be taught rather than to be developed by students from their experiences. Assessment should be able to probe students' intellectual processes as much as seeing and hearing the physical aspects of a recital (Parsonage *et al.*, 2007).

The problematic aspect of assessing music performance is that the assessors should be able to recognise what is musical and what is not in the same terms as the students. This should be a shared understanding. If students and assessors do not share the same conception of what the performance event, or even music itself, is about, a mismatch of cultural ontology occurs, in which the assessors cannot assess on the same terms as the students perform.

Musical performance in which there is a shared sense of aesthetics heightens the participants' (performers and audience's) sense of community and identity, and can lead to personal fulfilment (Willis, 1990). If performers and audience share the same or similar socio-cultural experiences, and are thus disposed to understand and interpret the performance collectively, then performance symbolises, activates, redefines, and reaffirms values, meanings, concepts, identities, or myths that they might share (Cohen, 1991). Audience members come to a performance with an agenda and expectations; a mismatch of perception or intention, between audience and performer, will cause a breakdown of communication.

The students' experiences of music performance examinations could be better. The constructivist way in which students, with their teacher's help, prepare interpretations of musical repertoire is being undermined by behavioural assessment procedures. The performer as an individual is being neglected. Their skill is being abstracted from their self, and the technical aspects of their playing are being separated from the commitment embedded in the performance. Ironically, participants rarely mention what they are learning in seminars and classes; evidence of their learning relates predominantly to development resulting from their own thinking.

Concern is expressed in the literature over the adherence to a behaviourist-technicist rather than constructivist paradigm across the current education system generally (Garnett, 2013; Gaunt, 2008; Karlsson and Juslin, 2008; Paynter, 2000). There is a lack of opportunity for constructivist learning; the basis of assessment is now about imposing specific learning objectives from above, and assessing whether those concepts have been learned. Teachers across the sectors are faced with opposing educational paradigms and ideologies. A commitment (most associated with primary education but relevant to any stage) to constructed knowledge has been replaced by direct teaching with a view to initiating children into an established corpus of knowledge (Cleaver and Ballantyne, 2014; Salazar and Randles, 2015; Stewart Rose and Countryman, 2013). Ideally, assessment would provide instructional feedback and encouragement; education now largely operationalises a different set of assumptions, requiring summative and evaluative assessment, and explicitly categorising achievements (Cantwell and Jeanneret, 2004; Daniel, 2004; Kingscott and Durrant, 2010; Mathieson, 2002; Pitts, 2003).

In 2002, Struyven, Dochy and Janssens reported that literature on students' views of assessment was limited; the current study does its part towards remedying this paucity. Struyven *et al*. also reported that students' perceptions of assessment have a considerable influence on students' approach to learning: students learn what they think they will be

assessed on. The current study certainly bears out the impact of the assessment situation on music students preparing performance recitals.

Students are not being assessed as to what they know about music, which would come through in their musicality; they are being assessed on whether they have learned what the tutors think they should know. This becomes a deficit model, rather than a credit-giving model. What students bring to the performance is overlooked and replaced by what the examiners think the students should bring. Students are not encouraged to see themselves as originators of knowledge. The students feel that examiners expect them to be learning how to perform a task correctly, essentially a piece of behavioural learning, rather than experiencing an encounter with music that prompts them to engage and expand their own concepts of how musical material can be organised. They are encouraged to be task-orientated, and to consider the 'right' way (someone else's 'right way') to address the task, in a technicist sense. They are not technicians, but creative, active agents with values and identities; yet they feel their displays of knowledge are not validated. The constructivist curriculum is thus enforced in a behaviourist manner, fuelled by conceptually driven learning objectives imposed from above (Garnett, 2013). Taking away control from learners compromises their motivation and commitment (Bartolome, 2013; Criss, 2011), and this is borne out by students' dispirited responses to negative comments about accuracy or stylistic appropriateness after their examination recitals (cf. Brand *et al.*, 2012; Cohen, 1991; Coimbra *et al.*, 2001; Lamont, 2012).

According to a dynamic and constructivist view of self, knowledge about how to perform accumulates and changes in response to circumstances throughout life, and is part of the development of oneself (Calderhead, 1993). We are all constantly learning, actively constructing knowledge as we try to make sense of our environment (Börger and Tillema, 1993), and we learn best if we enjoy the experience (Hodges, 2010). Positive experience is vital to being and feeling effective. Success depends on trial and error, and progressive consolidation.

It is possible that the tutors/examiners misunderstand how their students learn. Approaches to music pedagogy are and have been undergoing severe criticism and challenge, as the ramifications of the new musicology and pluralist attitudes to music catch up with long-established institutions (Stewart Rose and Countryman, 2013; Viljoen, 2014). Socio-cultural aspects of music, only relatively recently acknowledged as relevant, are a particular challenge to established teachers and academics; research shows that music education is, on the whole, slow to alter the status quo (Mantie and Talbot, 2015; Regelski, 2009, 2014; Reimer, 2008; 2012). How music, or the teaching and learning thereof, is viewed by students is perhaps not

something tutors have ever contemplated; traditional pedagogical approaches simply do not work any longer (Regelski, 2009). Part of understanding a music performance must involve an awareness of the social identity of the performers (Mackinnon, 1993). It must start with them, not with a score produced in a far-off time and place. For the students, it is entirely the case that the score gives performers something to perform (Small, 1998). If examiners are of the view that the score is an auratic object, there is immediately a mismatch of ideology.

From the other side of the fence, it is imperative that students understand assessment criteria and how they are applied (Wrigley and Emmerson, 2011). Staff would rightly say that students are provided with handbooks which explain the assessment criteria, and that students have seminars and other opportunities to work with tutors in learning about performance and how it will be assessed at the end of each semester. The fact remains that students protest that they do not understand how performance is marked. It could be that the students feel that the elements of performance which they value highly, into which they put a good deal of effort and time in preparation for the recital, and which may well indeed be highlighted and addressed in developmental seminars and classes by a number of tutors, are not valued so highly by their examiners in the event; conversely, elements such as accuracy and the odd slip seem to be magnified by examiners out of the proportion which the students believe should be attributed to them. One particular paragraph in the performance module handbook discloses an admission of something of the complexities inherent in marking music performances (also addressed by, amongst others, Garnett, 2013; Parsonage *et al.*, 2007; Savage and Fautley, 2011; Wrigley and Emmerson, 2011) in the proviso that "It must be recognised that the examiners, like teachers, are individuals"; that the criteria "provide a general guideline" but that:

> the many different and complex aspects of performance cannot be rigidly defined or equally weighted within such criteria, so the description of each marking band remains relatively flexible.
>
> Advanced Performance module handbook, 2007-8, p. 8

Tension exists in the apparently differing views of the nature of the examination recital amongst different groups of people. Students and teachers favour coherence, especially in a short recital, because wholeness is part of their search for authenticity. Even a forty-minute final recital can have unity, as demonstrated in the all-French programme (Poulenc, Messager, Saint-Saëns) planned by Tom and his teacher. Students and their vocal/instrumental teachers are possibly thinking like professional musicians, viewing the experience as a public recital, and planning the recital programme thoughtfully. Conversely, and possibly due to the change in

staff leading and examining the modules, a new conception is emerging of the performance recital as primarily an exam, with the university tutors thinking like examiners who want to assess particular skills.

Similarly, when student singers and their teachers debate whether to sing from the score for oratorio items, as in a public performance, the fact that this is an examination bears out, though teacher and student are trying their best to behave as professionals. Singing from memory is considered appropriate in a recital, since this is believed to facilitate a fuller and more meaningful communication between singer and audience. Yet one might argue that flautists and violinists, who are allowed to play from score, therefore have a barrier between them and the audience in the shape of the music and music stand. A pianist has a large instrument as a barrier, even if playing from memory, and is usually facing side-on to the audience, rather than towards them. The message being communicated is not contained within a singer's words, but more widely within the music.

Furthermore, the students and teachers do not know why the score is allowed for oratorio, simply that this is the convention. Perhaps putting oneself into the music is not appropriate in oratorio, which is generally based on biblical text. The (verbal) text, in these cases, is more important than the performer. Perhaps the symbolism is that there is no interpretation here (though there will inevitably be): this is relaying something which *is* set in stone.

The final evidence of the overwhelming sense that this is an exam comes from a perceived necessity to follow scores during performances, which does not happen in a 'real' recital. Checking for accuracy, from the ideological standpoint of the students and their teachers, is nonsensical. To them, the score is merely the starting point of preparing a performance; it is a passive resource, not an active agent in the negotiation of meaning, quality or authority, and providing only a partial view of the work (Ingarden, 1962; Kingsbury, 1988; Taruskin, 1995). Live performance is far removed: now, the interaction, the construction of meaning, is between performer and audience, not between the score and anyone. That relationship was important during initial preparation but is now largely irrelevant; it now seems illogical to use it as the central reference point in measuring the success of the performance (Hallam, 2001; Hunter, 2004). Being aware that assessors look at the score encourages students to be literal, and reliance on the score seems somewhat at odds with the creation of a learning environment in which curiosity, imagination and innovation are encouraged, a non-threatening environment in which students can develop as individuals (Hunter, 2004).

When examiners purport to assess accuracy, they are doing several things which contradict the students' cultural values, and which, in so doing, offend their quest for meaningfulness and wholeness:

- for the students, performance is about communication and expression, and the relationship between performer and audience is crucial. Examiners appear to sidestep this process and this relationship, which is as inconsiderate as not listening to someone who is talking to them;

- for the students, performance is about self, and about what the performer gives to the performance to make it suit them and to make it a creative act. Examiners appear to look straight through their interpretation to focus on the composer, and the score as a fetishised commodity, which, in the student's view, is merely something to perform, not something which has one correct version. Frameworks provided by score-based versions of music prejudice listeners against individualistic interpretations;

- for the students, the audience in a live performance is an important part of the creative act of meaning making. The experience of the performance can only be thorough if the listener engages emotionally and personally with, and brings meaning to, the performance. Examiners distracted by the score when listening for discrepancies cannot engage with the music in this crucial way;

- for the students, the 'whole' performance counts. Examiners who remain detached, who are listening for fragmented evidence within the performance, cannot experience the music holistically;

- for the students, visual and bodily elements of performance are important aspects of live performance. Examiners burying their heads in the copy miss details of facial expression and bodily movement, whether carefully calculated to enhance performance or spontaneously generated.

Students are frustrated at the inflated importance of measurable, observable, largely behavioural elements of their performances, and the downplaying of what they consider to be more important elements: an obvious enjoyment, a valid interpretation that works, and an input of individual originality and creativity.

In the technical-rational model, a deficit model of students lacking knowledge and having to be 'filled' with knowledge by teachers, it is the measurable which is assessed.[48] Assessment is

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[48] Compare this with the extensive use of phonics as a measuring tool for the assessment of literacy skills in primary schools. Phonics ability is easily measurable, and the teaching of phonics is easy to segment into progressive tasks. Phonics comes to stand for literacy in general. However, it has been

outcomes-based. It measures students against criteria which are as near to objective as the examiners can get. Observable, measurable, assessable criteria are chosen, as opposed to criteria relating to individualistic, autonomous, perhaps risky but creative interpretation. Performance of all kinds (including teaching) involves unpredictable aspects of human behaviour (Burland and Pitts, 2012; Stewart Rose and Countryman, 2013). Risk-taking is associated with creativity, and shows knowledge has been internalised (Garnett, 2013). An assessment based on creativity would assess understandings, not outcomes. Figure 5.2 below shows Cantwell and Jeanneret's (2004) model of assessment, in which copying or reproduction is set at the lowest extreme of the creativity dimension (reproductive focus, in the diagram) with the least amount of individual contribution. According to this model, the greater the individual's contribution, and therefore creativity, the higher the mark should be. Applying this model to the current study, it can be seen that assessing students according to whether they are accurate by the score is to assess them at the very bottom of the creative rung, at merely reproductive level. Being aware that assessors look at the score could encourage students to be literal, which would result in a fail or, at best, a mere pass, according to Cantwell and Jeanneret's suggestion for marking. Cantwell and Jeanneret's theory proposes that greater input from the student (represented by the shaded areas), moves their performance into a manifestation of higher order understandings and demonstrations of greater musical quality. Far from being happy to copy an interpretation, students want to express themselves, taking their performances into higher order areas of creativity.

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found not necessarily to be the best indicator or predictor of success in literacy (see Mathieson, 2002). Other skills, less easily measured, are afforded less importance.

EXTENDED ABSTRACT ⟶ HIGH DISTINCTION

RELATIONAL ⟶ DISTINCTION

INTEGRATIVE FOCUS

CATEGORICAL FOCUS

REPRODUCTIVE FOCUS

MULTI STRUCTURAL ⟶ CREDIT

UNI STRUCTURAL ⟶ PASS

PRE STRUCTURAL ⟶ FAIL
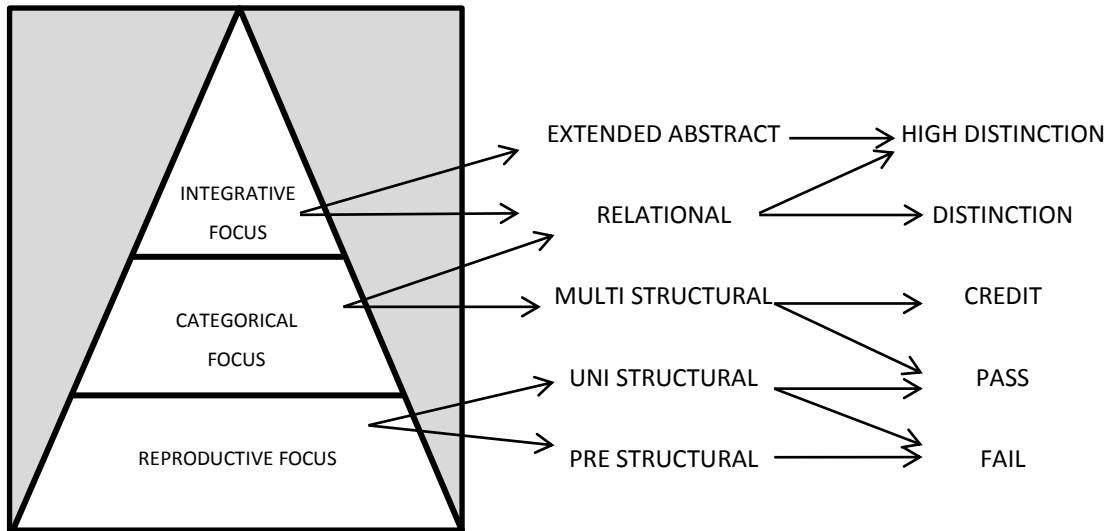
Figure 5.2: An integrated framework for assessment. From Cantwell and Jeanneret, 2004, p.12

V. Summary

The results of this study are clearly bound by the contexts of time, place, circumstances and participants. A similar study with any variable altered would undoubtedly produce slightly different results. Equally, another researcher investigating exactly the same agglomeration of people and events would theorise in a different way from that encapsulated in this report.

Yet the story told by these findings and this interpretation, by virtue of connections with previous research, and of thorough and grounded methodology, is as valid and reliable as an ethnographic project can be. A picture has emerged from this study of a group of young people who think intelligently about music performance, feel music performance to be a significant element of their identity as student musicians, and adhere to a version of music and music performance which they believe genuinely is not necessarily or completely understood and respected. Their search for meaningfulness and wholeness throughout the process of preparing a music performance is constantly tempered by the knowledge that compromise may have to be reached between the desire fully to express the self, and the pragmatic necessity to achieve the highest mark possible in the examination.

The ideological disjunction between tutors and students with regard to the ontology of music and music performance was found to provoke the greatest emotional barrier to a fulfilling experience of music performance during the degree course. Yet the importance of enjoyable and satisfactory experiences of music has been shown to be crucial both for the students' sense of identity as musicians and for their continued motivation to perform (Lamont, 2012; Persson, 2001). Nias (1989) wonders if pupils' responsiveness in lessons is valued because it gives teachers a sense of emotional well-being or an awareness of professional success. The overlap between the personal and professional self means that these feelings are one and the same. For students, a successful performance may produce a feeling of emotional well-being and an awareness of a job well done, which again are inseparable.

The special status of (literally) 'high art', for so long accorded to classical music due to its enjoying the patronage of church, court and state, is being challenged. For two centuries or more, specialist musicians, experts trained by rigorously traditional methods and assessed by the highest members of the profession, have practised its art. Its artistic heritage has been handed down and preserved through generations. It receives validation from particular groups of people, and has a socially defined canon (Finnegan, 1989). However, western classical music is no better or worse than other musical systems, but communicates, and constitutes, different social meanings, which has serious implications for musical education (Mackinnon, 1993). In

237

particular, tension was found in this study between on the one hand what might now be deemed by some as old-fashioned or outmoded views of music, which protect traditional, inherited, revered attributes, including the 'work' at the centre, and on the other the new, pluralist, postmodern views of music resulting from socio-cultural shifts to the subjective and the individual.

It is possible that the power dynamic of the musical institution (the university itself, and the wider world of high art music) affects this situation too. The process of musicking (the students' labour) vanishes according to the 'auratic objects' principle, and the score is fetishized; autobiographical and social context become irrelevant; the *students* become irrelevant. Only the score deserves respect, and that is immutable. The significance of the examiners' not watching the performance, not acknowledging the body, the presence, is that they turn their eyes away deliberately from the cultural commodity which holds meaning for the students, where the students have invested their cultural work, where labour is most clearly embedded. The examiners are living in the pre-pop music era, where sheet music was the essence of music, and the text was therefore considered the same, whoever the performer; with rock and roll, the formal written mode was displaced: (recorded) sound took over as the artefact or the commodity, where labour and the embodiment of the musician is obvious (Willis, 1990).

The personal nature of a musician's style and interpretation is part of their professionalism; it needs developing through experience, practice, reflection and evaluation (Eraut, 1994). Within this, the relationship of performers with their audience is crucial. Musicians assess their performance according to how it relates to what they had planned to do, and what happened in the moment, which includes responding to the prevailing conditions. The negotiations of meaning between performer and audience are the encounters which lead to learning (Cooper and McIntyre, 1996).

At this point, it is relevant to revisit the two overarching perspectives derived from Cohen (1991) and mentioned in the Introduction to this report:

a) music both *reflects* and *affects* the social environment;

b) there are different underlying conceptions of music, which determine both the musical categories and constructions utilised by members of a culture, and their evaluation of music, musicians, musical knowledge and skills.

In considering the first statement, this study has shown that the students' cultural work is rooted in the social environment in which they are located. Their own background and

influences, interpersonal relationships with their peers, their belief in the importance of enjoyment in the interactive performance context, their positioning in relation to other groups within the location – all of these, with music intertwined in each instance, combine to make it impossible to isolate from the context either the individual or the individual's music making. Furthermore, the students' cultural work enables them to make sense of and continue to exist within the social and cultural framework of the university music department.

The second highlights the variation between members of the student community and members of the teaching community, in their respective understandings of the nature of music performance and music performance assessment. This variation can undermine opportunities for positive and developmental dialogue around music performance, and, in the most serious cases, students' negative experiences can dissuade them from performing altogether.

In pop music, performance is the focal point; the energy, informality and self-direction inherent in pop music need not and should not be excluded from classical performance. Classical music, and classical performance, if looked at as static, minority and elite, produces boredom and disaffection; preserving the privilege and power of high art through classical music is an outdated and moribund attitude. The real symbolic energy of young people can and should be channelled through whatever music gives them pleasure and promotes desire, be it pop, jazz, classical, world, electronic, or any other of the many musics that exist or may exist in the future. Music-as-production, not music-as-commodity, is more important than technical or musical skill, promoting the supremacy of social and emotional facets of performance (Cohen, 1991; Willis, 1990).

In the light of the focus on cultural creativity in this report, the dual meaning of 'culture' in this regard ultimately provides the clue to the tensions experienced by students in this study. They are embroiled in the 'high culture' of university music education, bearing particular burdens of expectation and responsibility placed on them by the institutionalised context; yet their cultural busyness, their sense-making in dialectic with the world around them, becomes the stronger of the two 'cultures', because of what the students bring to music.

Chapter 6: Conclusions

The final chapter of this report revisits the fundamental challenges posed by the study at its outset. It reconsiders the research question, and estimates the success of the descriptions provided and theories proposed in the preceding pages in addressing the study's aims and objectives.

I.   Revisiting the research question

It is appropriate to consider whether a satisfactory response has been presented to the research question:

> **How does the institutional recital context, as part of the university degree course, affect music students' ways of thinking about performance?**

This study has demonstrated that the institutional context has a profound effect on how music students think about performance. Indeed, the particular context of the research may have helped to throw into relief aspects of the students' thinking which might not otherwise have been articulated.

This thesis has thoroughly addressed the dual aspect of the research question, presenting extensive evidence in support of this response. First, the research sought to explore students' perspectives on, and knowledge and beliefs about, performance; to investigate students' frame(s) of reference (Dunsby, 1995) and establish whether students share any particular set(s) or framework(s) of knowledge; and to attempt to discover how students make sense of the phenomena of musical productivity and creativity. Evidence has emerged about students' broad-ranging and detailed thinking, which draws on all manner of knowledge and beliefs regarding music and the nature and demands of music performance, the sum of which illustrates an active, dynamic, constructivist approach to their work. These findings, presented and discussed at length in previous chapters of this report, are interesting and relevant in their own right, adding to the corpus of literature regarding constituent facets of music performance which merit attention within psychological, social, philosophical and educational domains of musicology.

Second, the research intended to explore how students' ways of thinking about performance are affected by experiences of being examined in music performance at university. Evidence shows that the requirements and constraints of the assessment context within the music degree course (at least, within this assessment context and this degree course at this time) necessitate for students an approach to performance which considers a possible mismatch of

ideology between performer and assessor. In turn, this situation provokes behaviours and decisions which incorporate strategies for preserving as far as possible the embodiment of the cultural and expressive self in performance. Furthermore, the trappings of the assessment context (video camera, laptop and examiners with scores), along with perceptions of an inflated importance of certain assessment criteria (accuracy and historical/stylistic authenticity) can inhibit the enjoyment, comfort and confidence which previous research, as presented in the literature, has shown to be important factors in both achieving success in performance and motivating performers to continue performing.

II. Revisiting the study's aims and objectives

The motivation and rationale behind this research project derived from personal and professional interest, alongside intellectual curiosity. The impetus driving this research from start to finish has never waned; indeed, in pursuit of meaning from the data and from relevant literature, my own personal-professional development has been extensive. As an example of practitioner-led research, this project's success is undeniable. It also gives a voice to a previously unheard group in an environment subject to power relationships, and extends the understanding amongst music educators of the perceptions of those they purport to educate (Colwell, 2009; Pitts, 2005). The use of ethnographic methodology has specifically facilitated the generation of data, and illustrates the value of this type of research, in cases where it can be practically implemented. The resulting data reflect a human agency and a relevance which may not be so fully penetrable in any other way (Willis, 1977).

The modest aim of this exploratory study was to begin to gather empirical evidence from music students regarding their thoughts about performance, to investigate how they use their knowledge practically, and explore how their thinking and experiences might be shaped by the university teaching, learning and assessment context. The account of the findings has demonstrated fulfilment of these aims. Indeed, for these students, the act of reflecting on their own thinking was arguably beneficial to their learning and to their developing understandings.

This account does not aim to describe 'reality', or to reduce complexity to general laws. The theory proposed here illuminates the phenomenon in question (Hammersley, 1992; Regelski, 2009). It recognises the human capacity for sense-making (Willis, 2000), embracing complexity and acknowledging the socially-constructed meanings of the participants (Berger and Luckmann, 1967). The grounding of the theory in detailed contextual data (Glaser and Strauss, 1967), and the influence of my own position as researcher, have resulted in an account which is socially and culturally situated, but one which adequately displays an understanding of the phenomenon under study, responding descriptively and theoretically to a real level of social existence (Willis, 1977). Generalisation was not an aim of this research, since generalisability plays a minor role in qualitative projects (Creswell, 2003; Heffernan, 2000). Further relevance beyond the students and situations presented here will come from the reader who recognises the picture, or elements of it, painted within this account.

This thesis has also suggested a potential explanation for some of the tensions which students feel between their thinking about performance, and their experiences of performing in the

assessment context. Some of the tension is not necessarily related specifically to music, but to positionality within a power relationship, and the concomitant perception of subordination of the self and its constituent elements of autonomy, comfort, confidence, enjoyment (personal and professional wholeness and meaningfulness) by 'others' perceived to have different (and, according to the participants, less valid – less whole and meaningful) ideologies and philosophies. That the ideological mismatch in the current study relates to music is relevant in its own right, but also illustrates ideological tensions more widely between social groups and positions.

III. Limitations, and suggestions for further work

As acknowledged throughout the report, the research is situated within a particular context in terms of time, location and people. Had the fieldwork been executed in a different context, results may have been different. Nevertheless, triangulation and cross-checks on the data, across participants, contexts, and the length of time spent in the field, support the validity of the patterns emerging within the context. In addition, a sole researcher has a certain perspective on data and findings, which may have been slightly different for another researcher examining the same phenomenon. However, this factor can be seen as the very strength of the research: a single-minded path through a complex web of data can result in more comprehensive coverage and more coherent theory. The potential limitations of this study are off-set by firm and convincing resemblances identified between its findings and patterns of theory relating to various aspects of music performance and music education currently being presented in the literature.

The findings provide a foundation on which future research can be built. Given the results, it would be interesting to explore a similar type of context, such as a different university department, or a music department in a different university, to establish similarities and differences among institutions of varying sizes, locations or types. Further research within institutional programmes of study would allow comparisons to be made. Future work could also include replicating this study in conservatoires, or with drama or dance students in university contexts, for example, investigating how their thinking about their practical work may be affected by context. Similar research could also be carried out, from a slightly different angle, with professional musicians, exploring their ways of thinking about performance. An interesting question for them would be whether they are affected by any perceived constraints on their work – perhaps such factors as the awareness of the opinions of critics or journalists, the obligations of a recording contract, or the desire to please particular audience types – or whether they feel able to put themselves into their performance completely.

IV. Wider relevance of this research

It was not necessarily the intention that this research should inform future practice. However, the nature and value of music education and musical understanding are in need of urgent re-evaluation (Bowman, 2009; Elliott, 2009), a situation which affords this research a relevance beyond being valid for its own sake. Music research of all kinds is nowadays highly likely to feed into music education. Educational practice in music should take note of research which contributes to an understanding of what people (performers, teachers, students) are doing and why (Stock, 2003). Education can and should promote questioning, thinking, and action in order to produce social transformation; the empirically-derived, grounded theory which has been presented here may be considered sufficiently interesting to practitioners and policy-makers within music education, education more widely, and performance, for questioning, thinking, and perhaps even action to be contemplated.

Music education occurs within the public sphere. Its practice is necessarily political and ethical as well as aesthetic and artistic. Thought should be given not only to music as an aspect of culture, but also to the practices whereby musical knowledge, and conceptions about music, are passed from generation to generation (Jorgensen, 2014). Music curricula should engage with music(s) in and beyond the canon, confronting politics and ideology in ways that acknowledge music, including performance, as a living expression of and commentary on life (Viljoen, 2014), a means of cultural transmission, reproduction and resistance.

One important implication of the findings is that higher music educational establishments might examine their teaching and assessment methods, to ascertain whether a damaging disjunction exists between students' and tutors' views on what constitutes, or what should constitute, quality within performance; they might also consider whether teaching methods and learning objectives are appropriate to whatever are considered to be the desired learning outcomes of the course. Practices within higher education are built upon shared and historically entrenched values and beliefs. Habitual ways of thinking and critique may limit possibilities for change. Any attempt to alter the status quo would have implications for those in powerful positions, such as teachers and policy makers, who might currently benefit from a privileged status due to the preservation of power relations implicit in an enduring cycle of social reproduction (Mantie and Talbot, 2015), and this alone may be a barrier to the willingness of individuals and groups to embrace change (Duffy, 2013).

The differing perspectives on assessing performance have significant implications for music education, especially regarding what and whose values are being acknowledged within

assessment criteria (Daniel, 2004; Hewitt, 2009; Stanley *et al.*, 2002). The debates around what is actually being examined when music performance is assessed, and the fact that there is no agreed definition of musicianship or musicality, indicate that a closer and more explicit relationship should be established between what teachers are teaching and what students are learning, based on an agreed principle of what will eventually be assessed. Viljoen (2014) equates musicianship with in-depth musical knowledge. Teachers' central responsibility should be to enhance students' musicianship through helping students to increase, deepen and broaden their musical knowledge; concomitantly, music curricula should build on a foundation of related musical practices which spiral upwards in the demands they make of students' developing musicianship.

Although non-specialists are not always the best assessors, and it is easier to assess an instrument and style that are familiar (Blom and Poole, 2004; Daniel, 2004; Latukefu, 2010), one assessor cannot be expected to be an expert in all styles and instrumental/vocal techniques. This may shift the emphasis, from examining how well a performer copes technically with playing a particular kind of music on a particular instrument, towards how the music is communicated and how the performance is received. Musical fragmentation and pluralism should be acknowledged, and any claim to 'correctness', or the primacy of one interpretation over another, should be abandoned. Students should be demonstrating that they have an understanding of how music works; this criterion is more important than anything else.

Another implication of the findings is that students' affective as well as cognitive development is paramount. Emotion affects learning. Music education, and experiences of musicking more widely, present possibilities for either negative or positive learning. Learning which occurs within a positive, supportive context is successful and long-lasting, as well as resulting in positive feelings being associated with the activity or knowledge in question. It is within the power, and is the responsibility, of those who organise learning and musicking experiences to ensure a bias towards the positive (Hodges, 2010).

Finally, students who are aware of what factors contribute to their success are more likely to be able to seek appropriate support and encouragement (Burland and Pitts, 2002). Students need to recognise or be helped to recognise the validity of both epistemic and social dimensions of learning. Indeed, perhaps teachers need to learn to recognise these themselves; educationalists are often in the dark regarding what is happening in their students' lives (Patrick, 1973). In this way, students can recognise, and be helped to recognise, their aspirations, and know that their own views and attitudes are valued, whilst acknowledging the

importance of the body of knowledge which can aid their understanding of music (McPhail, 2013b).

The findings taken together underline the importance of engaging the music education community as a whole in creating a supportive environment which helps to shape and encourage students' learning and development. Collaborative and nurturing practices are required, rather than top-down programmes; guidance is needed in constructing learning, rather than dictation by the powerful of what is 'correct' or 'expected'. This would necessitate some self-examination by of individuals, departments and faculties.

In terms of the immediate applications of this research, lessons can readily be taken away and implemented in other contexts; indeed, they already have. Participating in the study may well have influenced how the students engaged with their musical development during the fieldwork year. Students were being asked to think and speak about themselves, their views, their approaches, their reactions, their emotions, their intentions, possibly for the first time, which may have foregrounded an awareness they would not otherwise have had regarding music performance and their relationship with it. This itself is a benefit, considering the importance attributed to metacognitive awareness in learning and becoming expert (Hallam, 2001; Hultberg, 2008; Johansson, 2013; Nielsen, 1999). The simple, immediate measure of encouraging more self-reflection can easily be introduced into performance courses in higher education, and, indeed, earlier.

Undoubtedly, this work has influenced my own practice, as a musician and a teacher. It has heightened my awareness of what I am doing when preparing music. Discovering details of how learners manage and process their cognitive and affective responses to learning experiences, and the impact of the disjunction between learners' expectations and understandings and those of the people assessing them, has directed me in my own teaching to attempt to create platforms on which more explicit agreements exist between the expectations of both parties. I have, in my A-level teaching, achieved some outstanding results with students, which persuades me that my approach in this regard, influenced largely by this study, is successful.[49]

Another potential wider application of the findings from this study comes from the angle which originally stimulated my thinking. Part of my own interest in this topic was originally its potential to combine theory proposed in the current study with that of my previous doctoral

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[49] For example, in 2015, of nine students taking A2 Music, eight achieved grade A in the performance unit, four of those being awarded full marks for their recital.

study into teachers' thinking about literacy teaching in the first year of the National Literacy Strategy. Similarities were indeed identified, illustrating how thinking is often based in concrete examples derived from experience, as well as conceptual knowledge, and that experiences lead to further developments in thinking. This thinking is deeply rooted in emotional and affective, as well as cognitive, responses to personal, interpersonal and social situations, and becomes part of the self. Furthermore, a clear link between the current research and my research into literacy teaching shows the usefulness of theoretical structures proposed in both studies to organise a description of the thinking which enables individuals to prepare for and perform practical, interactive work. A similar framework can therefore be postulated to account for the knowledge and beliefs which inform the thinking of both teachers and students. Figure 6.1 summarises this framework.

> ***Figure 6.1: Theoretical organisation of knowledge in both doctoral studies.***
> Arrows indicate direction of knowledge flow.
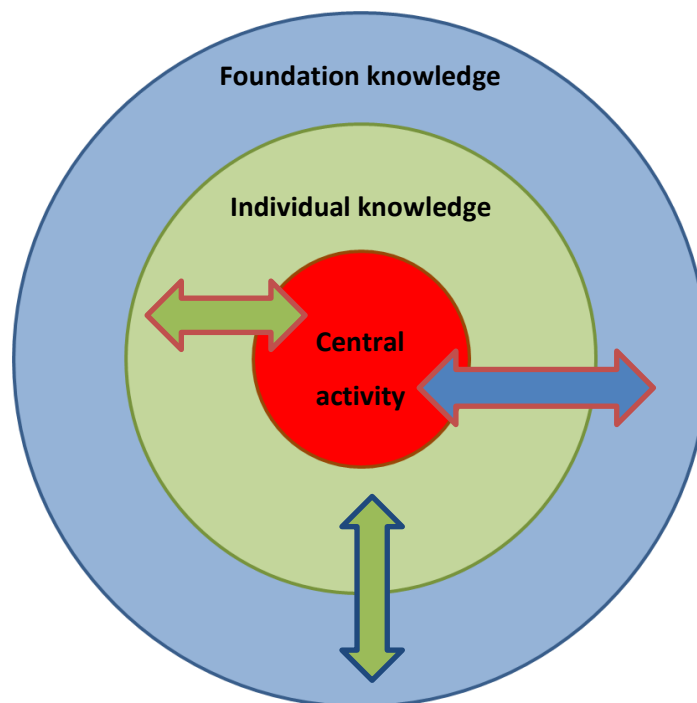
This framework has at its centre the activity in which teachers and students are principally engaged: lesson planning and teaching on the one hand, and preparation of music and music performance on the other. Feeding into this central activity are networks of knowledge and belief, some of which can be identified as being objectified, codified and presented within the literature in its respective discipline, but some of which is based in practical scenarios more personal to the individual. The resulting practical activity then in turn nourishes the individual's knowledge-bank, and future thinking consequently takes into account practical knowledge constructed through personal experience, as well as conceptual knowledge. In both cases, the theory shows actors in a practical situation, where preparation is possible and desirable, but where in the final analysis the actors must react spontaneously to their moment-by-moment experiences. The affective impact of living out, reflecting on, and making sense of practices is at the heart of both teaching and performing; the thinking, feeling, experiencing self is central. The concepts of wholeness and meaningfulness of experience have been identified in both studies as having a significant impact on the extent of satisfaction and fulfilment, and, in turn, motivation, of the actor.

Equally, in both studies, interesting and relevant similarities have been revealed in the impact on individuals of directives, requirements, restrictions and perceived threats to self, and in the reactions and responses of those individuals in coping with tensions between the self and such impositions. The effect on the teachers of the disjunction between their preferred ways of working and the external requirements imposed on them mirrors the effect on the students of the mismatch between their preferred approaches to performance and the perceived expectations of their assessors. Individuals in both dominated groups manage to organise ways of promoting their preferred methods and styles, preferences which allow them to maintain wholeness and meaningfulness in their work, and an authenticity and integrity of self.

The closeness of fit between these aspects of the findings of both studies suggest that a further implication of this research would be to explore other activities which embody both thought and action, to investigate whether the theory could be applied in areas such as dance or drama.

V. Summary

Central to this research is the revelation of a unity of purpose, and a strength of feeling, amongst university music students, regarding what they believe is the essence of music and music performance, and the nature and purpose of assessment within their degree course. Their passionate thinking is voiced strongly throughout the data. Musicological research is turning more and more to the field, listening to what different people and groups, like the students in this study, have to say. The personal and social aspects of music performance are being acknowledged as integral to the musician's professional self; personal, experiential knowledge comprises professional knowledge, resulting in the commitment of individuals to their own ways of thinking about their work.

Recommendations were not intended to be an outcome of this project. Indeed, changes may already have occurred in the department where this research took place, and/or in other similar departments. However, readers recognising any relevance in the story told within these pages may wish to examine their practice or that of those around them, such that small steps may be taken to ameliorate any less than fulfilling experiences which may still be occurring for music students they know. To paraphrase Willis for the last time: revolutionary cultural change will come about through reinterpretations, reformations of consciousness, and stirrings from the ground, involving the most trivial, everyday and commonplace items. Such change cannot simply be provided from above, or from intellectualism.

> We must listen to the streets before we listen at the towers.
>
> Willis, 1978, p.7

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Appendices

Appendix I

Details of the academic course in 2007-8 at the University of Hull

Table 1: Structure of the academic year

Semester 1		Semester 2	
Registration and introductory sessions	24.09.07–28.09.07	**Teaching weeks (1-6)**	28.01.08–07.03.08
Teaching weeks (1–12)	01.10.07–14.12.07	**Easter vacation**	10.03.08–28.03.08
Christmas vacation	17.12.07–11.01.08	**Teaching weeks (7-12)**	31.03.08–09.05.08
Assessment period	14.01.08–25.01.08	**Assessment period**	12.05.08–06.06.08

Table 2: Choice of second- and third-year modules

Level 5 (Year 2)
BA (single) and BMus students choose 40 credits from Options 1 in each semester and 40 from Options 2.
BA (joint) students choose 20 credits from Options 1 in each semester and 20 from Options 2.

Semester 1		Semester 2	
Options 1	Credits	Options 1	Credits
Performance I	20	Performance II	20
Composition I	20	Composition II	20
Classical Music Studies	20	Romantic Music Studies	20
Techniques of Transcription and Editing I	20	Techniques of Transcription and Editing II	20
Options 2			Credits
Orchestration			20
Ensemble Performance			20
Creative Music Technology Applications			20
Music and Multimedia			20
Jazz			20
Free Elective (BA single students only)			20

Level 6 (Year 3)
BA (single) and BMus students choose 40 credits from Options 1 in each semester and 40 from Options 2.
BA (joint) students choose 20 credits from Options 1 in each semester and 20 from Options 2.

Semester 1		Semester 2	
Options 1	Credits	Options 1	Credits
Advanced Performance I	20	Advanced Performance II	20
Advanced Composition I	20	Advanced Composition II	20
Modern Music Studies to 1945	20	Modern Music Studies since 1945	20
Advanced Editing Techniques I	20	Advanced Editing Techniques II	20
Special Study			40
Options 2			Credits
Advanced Ensemble Performance			20
Psychology of Music Performance			20
Individual Project			20
Arranging			20
Opera and Music Theatre			20
One long-thin module at level 5			20
Free Elective (BA single students only)			20

Appendix II

Specimen data tables: A

Initial codeframes constructed from interviews and rehearsals with the two main participants, Mark and Tom. They illustrate, alongside each code, how many occurrences of the code were found, and in how many examples of the source (rehearsal or interview).

Table A1: Codes derived from rehearsals with Mark

Code	Number of sources in which code occurs	Number of occurrences
Difficulty	1	17
Negotiating moments/placings		
Formulating interpretation	1	14
Dynamics	1	12
Enjoyment/liking		
Knowledge of how solo fits with piano	1	11
Metaknowledge	1	10
Having a run in	1	9
Tempo		
Making sense/working/being right	1	8
Getting it together issues	1	7
Description of piece	1	6
Knowing how it sounds		
Page turning issues		
Practice		
Knowledge of instrument	1	5
Knowledge of form		
Knowledge of self/ability	1	4
Physical positioning		
Putting together programme		
Recordings		
Score, faithfulness to		
Stages of preparation		
Technique/technical aspects		
Articulation	1	3
Knowledge of instrument		
Module/dept		
Tuning		
Writing in score		
First impressions of piece	1	2
Marking/assessment		
Visual aspects of performance		
Satisfaction/pleasure		
Accompaniment vs tune	1	1
Ensemble/balance		
Knowledge of repertoire/composer		
Knowledge of style		
Nerves		
Physical/mental conditions of player		
Relationship of performer with audience		
Relationship with participants		
Relationship with pianist		
Rhythmic/counting aspects		
Teacher input		
Tone		
Worries about performance		

Table A2: Codes derived from interviews with Mark

Code	Number of sources in which code occurs	Number of occurrences
Enjoyment	1	13
Cynicism/questioning status quo	1	9
Interpretation		
Career ambitions	1	8
Involvement of self		
Marking/assessment		
Modules/department/politics	1	7
Influence/importance of teachers	1	6
Opinions/differences/preferences/playing to tutor's opinion		
Social factors		
University course content/teaching		
Metaknowledge	1	5
Development as a musician	1	4
Tutors' influence		
Knowledge of professional world		
Relationship of performer with audience		
Technique/technical aspects		
Ensemble vs solo	1	3
Practising/attitude to		
Preparation		
Progress		
Time/work commitments		
University orchestra/choir		
What is a piece of music		
Authenticity vs interpretation	1	2
Importance of singing for musical development		
Investment of time		
Knowledge of self/ability		
Performing, what is it		
Pressure/stress		
Reasons for doing performance		
Recital programme, planning		
Relationship between composer-performer		
School music/A-level		
Score/faithfulness to		
Tone		
Audience response	1	1
Colours		
Influence of peers		
Ingredients of music		
Intonation		
Knowledge of how solo fits with piano		
Knowledge of repertoire		
Musicianship		
Nerves		
Practical vs theory		
Reacting to sonic aspects of music		
Reasons for listening to music		
Recordings		
Relationship with pianist		
Stylistics		
Suitedness to types of music		
Voice vs instrument		

Table A3: Codes derived from rehearsals with Tom

Code	Number of sources in which code occurs	Number of occurrences
Tempo	2	37
Formulating interpretation	2	36
Difficulty	2	27
Knowledge of self/ability	2	25
Negotiating moments/placings		
Dynamics	2	24
Making sense/being right		
Getting it together issues	2	23
Satisfaction/pleasure		
Player's physical condition	2	21
Teacher input		
Enjoyment/liking	2	20
Knowledge of how solo part fits with piano		
Practice/preparation		
Coordination of players	2	19
Knowledge of instrument		
Rhythmic aspects/counting		
Technical aspects		
Stages of preparation	2	18
Relationship with pianist	2	16
Relationships between me and participants		
Instrument-related issue	2	15
Metaknowledge		
Tuning	2	12
Articulation	2	11
Page-turning issues		
Recordings		
Description of piece	2	10
Breathing	2	9
Having a run in		
Knowing what it sounds like		
Writing in score	2	7
Putting together a programme	1	
Score/faithfulness to		
Physical conditions in department	2	6
Visual aspects of performance		
Key/key signature	2	5
Knowledge of form		
Knowledge of style/composer	1	
Department/module/concert occasions	2	4
Editorial related		
Worries about performing		
Mentions of particular pieces	1	
Seminar/video session		
Nerves/confidence/chickening out	2	3
Positioning/physical place		
Tone		
Tutor input		
Drawing on experience of other pieces	2	2
Marking/assessment considerations		
Performance spontaneity	1	
Practice vs performance		
Department politics	1	1
Interpretation over accuracy		
Scales/other technical related patterns		
Solo vs ensemble		

Table A4: Codes derived from interviews with Tom

Code	Number of sources in which code occurs	Number of occurrences
Practice/preparation	3	22
Knowledge of own ability/self/tendency	3	19
Mentions of particular pieces	3	16
Technical aspects of performance	3	13
Marking/assessment considerations	2	13
Nerves and confidence	3	12
Difficulty of/in a piece	3	11
Enjoyment		
Feelings in performance		
Interaction with audience	3	8
Mistakes/problems during performance		
Putting oneself into the music		
Visual aspects of performance		
Interpretation, formulating	2	
Metaknowledge of theory/research		
Knowledge of particular instrument	3	7
Ratio of effort to enjoyment/reward	2	
Description of a piece	3	6
Worries about performing		
Making sense/being right	2	
Considerations whilst playing	3	5
Knowledge of repertoire	2	
Knowledge of how solo part fits with other parts	1	
Audience reaction to performance	3	4
Levels/gears of performance		
Listening vs playing		
Reasons for doing performance		
Recordings		
Relationship with pianist		
Tempo		
Interaction with other players	2	
Personnel in ensemble		
Relationships between me and participants		
Being 'into' the music/flow state	2	3
Co-ordination of players		
Knowledge of particular composer		
Knowing what a piece sounds like		
Musicianship		
Dynamics	1	
Memorising music		
Score/faithfulness to		
Being on stage	2	2
Different perception of performer from audience		
Genre history		
Practice vs playing		
Self-criticism		
Awareness of harmony	1	
Expression		
Solo vs ensemble		
Tone		
Articulation	1	1
Characterisation/literary allusions		
Composer's intentions		
Composing		
Concentration		
Jazz vs classical performance		
Knowing performance has multiple aspects		
Knowledge of profession/conservatoire		
Knowledge of structure		
Other ensembles		
Phrasing		
Piece/music suiting		
Purpose of music		
Questioning and response		
Transposition		
Tuning		

Specimen data tables: B

These data are derived from interview and rehearsal transcriptions. They illustrate the number of occurrences of each theme, and the percentage of the interview/rehearsal involving each theme (based on word count as percentage of total words).

Table B1: General data from two interviews with Will, June 2008

TOPIC	TOTAL TIME (%)	NUMBER OF MENTIONS								
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Relationships/attitudes to tape/interview situation	**5.10**	0.28	0.31	0.77	1.05	0.64	0.91	0.13	0.14	0.87
Music: where is it? Score? Performance?	**2.49**	1.09	1.40							
Music and spirituality/religion	**2.38**	2.38								
Music's purpose	**1.99**	0.59	1.40							
Pleasure/enjoyment/beauty	**1.82**	1.82								
Music vs literature	**1.71**	1.71								
Differences year to year relating to staffing/organisation in dept	**1.24**	0.34	0.91							
Me explaining my research	**0.80**	0.38	0.41							
Me checking my understanding/reviewing what's been said	**0.46**	0.46								
My reasons for selecting particular respondents	**0.44**	0.44								

Table B2: Performance-related data from two interviews with Will, June 2008

TOPIC	TOTAL TIME (%)	NUMBER OF MENTIONS														
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
Marking performance	**23.24**	19.34	3.90													
Teacher/tutor involvement/ input	**15.54**	0.62	0.34	0.38	0.44	0.3	0.23	0.29	0.76	1.16	5.68	1.4	0.2	0.33	2.9	0.51
Module structure/ seminars	**14.35**	0.65	7.83	5.36	0.51											
Knowledge of own instrument	**9.46**	3.90	2.07	0.80	0.94	1.76										
Technical aspects of playing	**7.55**	2.57	2.22	0.92	1.84											
Knowledge of composers	**7.15**	1.09	2.64	1.13	0.80	1.48										
Judgements/ comments about other students	**7.13**	1.27	1.31	0.47	0.50	0.82	0.72	0.47	0.47	1.10						
Historical knowledge/ issues	**6.84**	4.73	2.11													
Making mistakes	**5.24**	2.24	1.34	1.66												
Audience	**4.80**	0.32	1.70	1.20	1.58											
Visual aspect of performance	**4.70**	0.21	1.51	1.40	1.58											
Criteria for marking	**4.52**	0.76	2.36	1.40												
Authentic/ historical performance	**4.43**	4.43														
Preparation	**4.07**	0.33	1.01	1.37	1.37											
Score: faithfulness to/ interpretation of	**3.70**	1.20	1.63	0.86												
Students knowing how marking is done	**3.67**	3.67														
'Flow' state	**3.49**	3.49														
Learning	**3.47**	0.81	0.27	1.41	0.98											
Memorising/ playing from memory	**3.07**	3.07														

Articulation	**2.89**	0.67	2.22																	
Practice	**2.57**	0.36	1.30	0.91																
Breathing	**2.54**	2.54																		
Acoustics	**2.53**	1.38	0.96	0.18																
Score: examiners following in recitals	**2.30**	2.30																		
Consistency of marks	**2.26**	1.97	0.30																	
'Functional' music	**2.22**	0.32	0.31	1.59																
Ability	**2.09**	0.36	0.41	0.41	0.91															
Dynamics	**2.02**	2.02																		
Life stage	**1.60**	0.50	1.10																	
'Knowing' a piece	**1.43**	1.43																		
Choosing music/devising programme	**1.35**	0.78	0.20	0.38																
'Types' of music	**1.22**	1.22																		
Counting/ timing	**1.21**	1.21																		
Music as paid work	**1.19**	1.19																		
Background/ influences	**1.18**	0.27	0.91																	
First thoughts	**1.07**	1.07																		
Context and how it affects composition/ performance	**1.06**	1.06																		
Tempo	**1.06**	1.06																		
Differences between composition and performance marking	**0.94**	0.94																		
Differences between instruments/ sensing	**0.91**	0.26	0.65																	
Difficulties/ problems associated with uni setup	**0.88**	0.88																		

Standards/ assessment of own level	**0.86**	0.35	0.51																
'Comfortable'	**0.81**	0.37	0.43																
Different performance situations	**0.80**	0.80																	
Different preparation times	**0.80**	0.80																	
Timbre	**0.80**	0.80																	
Knowledge of other professionals	**0.77**	0.50	0.18	0.09															
Examiners' understanding of instrumental issues	**0.75**	0.75																	
Exams: awareness of examiners	**0.73**	0.73																	
Editions	**0.65**	0.65																	
Success	**0.65**	0.37	0.27																
'Suiting'	**0.60**	0.60																	
Video sessions	**0.53**	0.53																	
Ornamentation	**0.52**	0.52																	
Recordings	**0.52**	0.52																	
Feelings about performance/ nerves	**0.51**	0.51																	
Individual vs team performance	**0.51**	0.51																	
Practicalities/ pragmatics	**0.50**	0.50																	
Playing vs practising	**0.49**	0.49																	
Effort:reward	**0.42**	0.42																	
Knowledge of research	**0.33**	0.33																	
Planning ahead	**0.32**	0.32																	
Ensemble issues	**0.18**	0.18																	
Phrasing	**0.18**	0.18																	
Sightreading	**0.15**	0.15																	

Table B3: Data from sample interview with Ben, 29/01/08

TOPIC	TOTAL TIME (%)	NUMBER OF MENTIONS										
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
Audience	**38.95**	0.42	0.56	4.65	1.47	1.60	1.35	28.38	0.52			
Appearance/body language	**16.87**	3.67	6.20	1.58	1.98	1.49	1.95					
Enjoyment	**15.87**	1.88	0.56	1.72	2.08	0.97	0.77	2.15	1.15	0.70	0.43	3.47
Interpretation	**11.71**	10.9	0.81									
Practice	**11.44**	2.31	6.66	2.48								
Knowledge of self	**9.27**	0.74	1.31	2.64	1.00	3.57						
Things going wrong/not according to plan in performance	**9.19**	3.24	1.67	3.04	1.24							
Knowledge/thoughts about other students	**8.88**	1.04	1.47	3.85	0.65	0.51	0.42	0.93				
Knowledge of rep/composer	**8.09**	0.54	1.58	0.85	0.69	2.60	0.52	0.38	0.93			
Nerves	**7.04**	1.65	3.79	1.60								
Improvising/winging it/getting out of a tight spot	**6.86**	4.04	0.51	2.31								
Scales/exercises	**6.33**	2.60	3.73									
Drama/acting	**6.19**	2.50	3.70									
Learning a piece as a singer	**6.07**	3.60	2.48									
Research process/tape etc./relationship with me	**6.07**	0.65	0.69	0.74	3.36	0.41	0.21					
Aural learning	**5.42**	3.60	1.82									
Visual aspects of learning/practice	**5.41**	5.41										
Dislike of performing	**4.98**	2.92	2.06									
Range	**4.83**	0.93	3.90									
Preparation/being well prepared	**4.71**	2.40	2.31									
Drama students vs music students	**4.37**	4.37										
Muscle memory	**4.37**	2.60	1.78									
Experience (gaining)	**3.95**	0.69	3.26									
Learning	**3.94**	1.44	0.89	1.61								
Technique	**3.73**	3.73										
Relaxing	**3.71**	1.57	2.14									
Flow	**3.69**	3.69										

Knowledge of genre	**3.65**	1.58	2.08										
Describing character	**3.51**	1.78	1.73										
Uni requirements/modules etc.	**3.39**	3.39											
Teachers	**3.35**	0.43	1.27	1.65									
Performance, nature of	**3.30**	0.65	2.64										
Making mistakes	**3.29**	3.29											
Trust	**3.29**	3.29											
Exams	**3.20**	2.39	0.57	0.24									
Success, experiencing/being appreciated	**3.14**	0.42	0.56	2.16									
Technical/theoretical vocab	**2.69**	1.12	0.91	0.42	0.23								
Music as an outlet for/connection with emotion/memories	**2.66**	2.02	0.64										
Differences between singers/others	**2.54**	2.54											
A-level memories	**2.50**	2.50											
Being 'found out'	**2.38**	2.38											
Live musicians/ superstars	**2.24**	2.24											
Creativity	**2.16**	2.16											
Reasons for going to concerts	**2.11**	2.11											
Rehearsing	**2.11**	1.21	0.90										
Physical things	**2.08**	2.08											
Difficulty	**1.79**	0.54	1.24										
Score: sticking to/ interpreting/adding	**1.72**	1.72											
Music's different aspects	**1.67**	1.67											
Relationships with other performers	**1.64**	0.74	0.90										
Auditory aspect of music	**1.60**	0.19	1.41										
Composing (as a performer)	**1.47**	1.47											
Sharing	**1.31**	1.31											
Recordings	**1.22**	1.22											
Being 'into' the music	**1.02**	1.02											
Instrument-specific knowledge	**0.99**	0.99											
Effort/hard work	**0.94**	0.94											

Ensemble behaviour	**0.90**	0.90										
Personal experiences	**0.90**	0.90										
'Comfortable'	**0.88**	0.88										
Breathing	**0.72**	0.72										
Emotion	**0.72**	0.72										
Performers' talent	**0.69**	0.69										
Live music	**0.64**	0.64										
Backstage elements of performance	**0.61**	0.61										
Spatial awareness	**0.59**	0.59										
Performance as a job/paid work	**0.48**	0.48										
Music production/recording (technology)	**0.33**	0.33										

Table B4: Data from interview with Tom, 7/11/07

TOPIC	TOTAL TIME (%)	NUMBER OF MENTIONS									
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Practice and preparation	**35.16**	2.23	2.34	2.59	2	3.23	3.23	4.98	5.4	1.21	1.75
Knowledge of own ability/self/tendency	**18.07**	0.45	2.59	2.45	1.94	6.27	1.6	2.77			
Ratio of effort to enjoyment/reward	**17.47**	6.51	3.57	1.94	3.51	1.94					
Knowledge of how solo part fits with other parts	**15.74**	3.59	5.31	3.23	2.76	0.85					
Enjoyment	**11.76**	1.72	2.84	2.18	2.14	2.88					
Technical aspects of performance	**10.81**	0.72	0.94	1.21	1.75	4.02	2.17				
Mentions of particular pieces	**10.57**	2.24	0.91	0.42	1.71	1.27	4.02				
Knowing what a piece sounds like	**9.92**	9.92									
Levels/gears of performance	**9.14**	7.02	2.12								
Interaction with audience	**8.97**	6.42	1.62	0.93							
Difficulty of/in a piece	**8.39**	0.82	3.57	1.9	0.84	1.27					
Memorising music	**7.64**	2.53	2.24	2.87							
Being 'into' the music/flow state	**7.51**	5.53	1.98								
Visual aspects of performance	**7.05**	0.9	0.77	1.61	2.88	0.89					
Nerves and confidence	**6.64**	0.93	2.88	0.89	1.94						
Interaction with other players	**6.24**	0.78	2.59	2.87							
Dynamics	**5.91**	0.73	2.59	2.59							
Jazz vs classical performance	**5.52**	5.52									
Practice vs playing	**5.4**	5.4									
Knowledge of particular instrument	**5.33**	1.31	4.01								
Recordings	**5.3**	5.3									
Audience reaction to performance	**4.81**	3.61	1.19								
Awareness of harmony	**4.79**	3.59	1.2								
Knowledge of particular composer	**4.72**	3.59	1.13								
Composing	**4**	4									
Co-ordination of players	**3.71**	0.83	2.88								
Relationship with pianist	**3.7**	0.46	3.23								
Feelings in performance	**3.34**	0.19	2.29	0.86							
Putting oneself into the music	**3.29**	1.06	2.22								

Musicianship	**3.11**	0.94	2.17									
Mistakes/problems during performance	**3.09**	1.36	0.35	1.38
Personnel in ensemble	**2.77**	0.32	2.45
Worries about performing	**2.67**	0.73	1.94
Tempo	**2.59**	2.59
Phrasing	**2.59**	2.59
Articulation	**2.59**	2.59
Genre history	**2.58**	2.58
Reasons for doing performance	**2.41**	1.66	0.74
Questioning & response	**2.2**	2.2
Solo vs ensemble	**2.14**	1.78	0.36
Knowledge of repertoire	**2.01**	1.52	0.49
Other ensembles	**1.79**	1.79
Tone	**1.65**	0.34	1.31
Description of piece	**1.34**	0.5	0.85
Different perception of performer from audience	**1.34**	1.34
Considerations whilst playing	**1.24**	1.24
Relationships between me and participants	**1.19**	1.19
Purpose of music	**1.01**	1.01
Transposition	**0.85**	0.85
Listening vs playing	**0.82**	0.82
Knowing performance has multiple aspects	**0.62**	0.62
Tuning	**0.57**	0.57
Being on stage	**0.44**	0.44

Table B5: Data from interview with Tom, 12/02/08

TOPIC	TOTAL TIME (%)	NUMBER OF MENTIONS						
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Marking/assessment considerations	**30.78**	1.47	2.14	2.19	2.14	1.84	18.16	0.84
Practice/preparation	**29.83**	12.27	6.04	4.12	1.84	2.31	2.14	1.1
Mentions of particular pieces	**22.94**	3.5	3.29	11.43	1.7	0.99	2.02	
Difficulty of/in a piece	**19.5**	11.62	6.04	1.84				
Interpretation, formulating	**18.01**	1.91	11.02	4.09	0.99			
Technical aspects of performance	**16.25**	11.62	2.75	0.66	1.22			
Knowledge of particular instrument	**15.37**	11.62	2.75	0.99				
Making sense/being right	**14.94**	2.12	4.62	3.12	4.09	0.99		
Knowledge of own ability/self/tendency	**13.76**	3.38	4.12	4.33	1.94			
Description of piece	**13.26**	2.49	9.78	0.99				
Metaknowledge of theory/research	**10.59**	0.72	2.16	4.59	3.12			
Listening vs playing	**9.39**	3.12	6.27					
Tempo	**9.25**	19.25						
Different perception of performer from audience	**7.9**	7.9						
Interaction with audience	**6.52**	5.06	1.46					
Audience reaction to performance	**6.26**	6.26						
Visual aspects of performance	**6.02**	1.46	4.56					
Recordings	**5.48**	2.57	2.91					
Knowing what a piece sounds like	**4.61**	3.23	1.38					
Feelings in performance	**4.45**	2.31	2.14					
Nerves and confidence	**4.33**	4.33						
Self-criticism	**4.12**							
Relationships between me and participants	**3.77**	0.66	0.53	2.58				
Putting oneself into the music	**3.76**	2.3	1.46					
Enjoyment	**3.01**	0.99	2.02					
Being 'into' the music/flow state	**2.3**	2.3						
Considerations whilst playing	**1.84**	1.84						
Knowledge of particular composer	**1.84**	1.84						
Piece/music suiting	**1.84**	1.84						
Relationship with pianist	**1.79**	1.79						
Worries about performing	**1.68**	1.68						

Mistakes/problems during performance	**1.67**	0.82	0.85					
Reasons for doing performance	**1.47**	1.47						
Levels/gears of performance	**1.46**	1.46						
Being on stage	**1.46**	1.46						
Practice vs playing	**1.46**	1.46						

Table B6: Data from interview with Tom, 3/06/08

TOPIC	TOTAL TIME (%)	NUMBER OF MENTIONS							
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Marking/assessment considerations	**40.79**	22.77	4.73	4.45	1.54	1.68	5.61		
Enjoyment	**26.28**	6.14	3.11	16.49	0.54				
Nerves and confidence	**23.44**	9.17	4.03	0.78	2.75	0.74	3.11	2.86	
Feelings in performance	**21.88**	4.87	2.19	7.66	2.87	3.11	1.19		
Knowledge of own ability/self/tendency	**21.48**	0.66	6.24	4.03	0.78	0.61	4.87	1.42	2.86
Considerations whilst playing	**15.38**	4.87	2.34	8.18					
Interpretation, formulating	**15.26**	1.54	7.04	0.39	6.29				
Difficulty of/in a piece	**15.19**	4.87	2.67	7.65					
Personnel in ensemble	**14.22**	10.44	3.78						
Technical aspects of performance	**12.68**	7.61	2.34	2.74					
Mentions of particular pieces	**11.8**	2.78	2.67	4.84	1.5				
Expression	**11.59**	10.36	1.23						
Metaknowledge of theory/research	**10.39**	2.27	1.91	2.3	3.91				
Characterisation/literary allusions	**10.36**	10.36							
Knowledge of repertoire	**10.2**	1.08	5.78	3.34					
Mistakes/problems during performance	**10.07**	7.61	1.23	1.23					
Interaction with other players	**9.81**	9.81							
Score/faithfulness to	**9.11**	0.89	1.93	6.29					
Ratio of effort to enjoyment/reward	**8.65**	4.87	3.78						
Worries about performing	**8.26**	5.24	0.78	2.23					
Practice and preparation	**7.25**	1.54	2.84	2.86					
Audience reaction to performance	**7.04**	7.04							
Genre history	**6.29**	6.29							
Putting oneself into the music	**5.65**	1.54	0.61	0.39	3.11				
Reasons for doing performance	**4.96**	4.96							
Interaction with audience	**4.88**	2.74	1.53	0.61					
Description of piece	**4.84**	4.84							
Tempo	**3.81**	0.96	2.84						
Listening vs playing	**3.47**	3.47							
Self-criticism	**3.47**	3.47							

Musicianship	**3.11**	13.11								
Knowledge of particular instrument	**2.76**	0.73	2.02							
Levels or gears of performance	**2.67**	2.67								
Composer's intentions	**2.4**	2.4								
Knowledge of professional/conservatoire issues	**2.39**	2.39								
Concentration	**2.23**	2.23								
Making sense/being right	**1.95**	1.95								
Recordings	**1.67**	1.67								
Co-ordination of players	**1.5**	1.5								
Relationship with pianist	**1.37**	1.37								
Visual aspects of performance	**0.61**	0.61								

Table B7: Summary of Tom's interview data

TOPIC	TOTAL TIME (%)	% OF INTERVIEW		
		NOVEMBER	FEBRUARY	JUNE
Marking/assessment considerations	**25.34**		30.78	40.79
Practice/preparation	**22.21**	35.16	29.83	7.25
Knowledge of own ability/self/tendency	**18.27**	18.07	13.76	21.48
Enjoyment	**15.29**	11.76	3.01	26.28
Mentions of particular pieces	**14.52**	10.57	22.94	11.8
Difficulty of/in a piece	**14.28**	8.39	19.5	15.19
Technical aspects of performance	**13.09**	10.81	16.25	12.68
Nerves and confidence	**12.90**	6.64	4.33	23.44
Interpretation, formulating	**11.29**		18.01	15.26
Feelings in performance	**11.27**	3.34	4.45	21.88
Ratio of effort to enjoyment/reward	**8.98**	17.47		8.65
Metaknowledge of theory/research	**7.22**		10.59	10.39
Considerations whilst playing	**7.22**	1.24	1.84	15.38
Knowledge of particular instrument	**7.07**	5.33	15.37	2.76
Personnel in ensemble	**6.70**	2.77		14.22
Interaction with audience	**6.61**	8.97	6.52	4.88
Audience reaction to performance	**6.13**	4.81	6.26	7.04
Description of a piece	**6.10**	1.34	13.26	4.84
Interaction with other players	**5.97**	6.24		9.81
Mistakes or problems during performance	**5.56**	3.09	1.67	10.07
Making sense/being right	**4.96**		14.94	1.95
Tempo	**4.95**	2.59	9.25	3.81
Knowledge of how solo part fits with other parts	**4.89**	15.74		
Knowledge of repertoire	**4.82**	2.01		10.2
Expression	**4.76**			11.59
Worries about performing	**4.69**	2.67	1.68	8.26
Putting oneself into the music	**4.39**	3.29	3.76	5.65
Knowing what a piece sounds like	**4.36**	9.92	4.61	
Levels or gears of performance	**4.34**	9.14	1.46	2.67
Listening vs playing	**4.30**	0.82	9.39	3.47
Characterisation/literary allusions	**4.26**			10.36
Visual aspects of performance	**4.12**	7.05	6.02	0.61
Recordings	**3.86**	5.3	5.48	1.67
Score/faithfulness to	**3.74**			9.11
Genre history	**3.39**	2.58		6.29
Reasons for doing performance	**3.20**	2.41	1.47	4.96
Being 'into' the music/flow state	**2.97**	7.51	2.3	

Different perceptions of performer/audience	**2.62**	1.34	7.9	
Self-criticism	**2.57**		4.12	3.47
Memorising music	**2.37**	7.64		
Musicianship	**2.24**	3.11		3.11
Relationship with pianist	**2.21**	3.7	1.79	1.37
Practice vs playing	**2.08**	5.4	1.46	
Knowledge of particular composer	**1.98**	4.72	1.84	
Dynamics	**1.83**	5.91		
Co-ordination of players	**1.77**	3.71		1.5
Jazz vs classical performance	**1.71**	5.52		
Awareness of harmony	**1.49**	4.79		
Relationships between me and participants	**1.42**	1.19	3.77	
Composing	**1.24**	4		
Composer's intentions	**0.99**			2.4
Knowledge of professional/conservatoire issues	**0.98**			2.39
Concentration	**0.92**			2.23
Phrasing	**0.80**	2.59		
Articulation	**0.80**	2.59		
Questioning & response	**0.68**	2.2		
Solo vs ensemble	**0.66**	2.14		
Other ensembles	**0.56**	1.79		
Being on stage	**0.54**	0.44	1.46	
Piece/music suiting	**0.51**		1.84	
Tone	**0.51**	1.65		
Purpose of music	**0.31**	1.01		
Transposition	**0.26**	0.85		
Knowing performance has multiple aspects	**0.19**	0.62		
Tuning	**0.18**	0.57		

Appendix III

Initial communication to staff and students

This email was sent to Year 2 and 3 students, and all staff, at the start of the academic year.

To performance students in Years 2 and 3; music staff.

This academic year I am conducting fieldwork for my postgraduate research project, in which I will be exploring the areas of knowledge informing music students' thinking about performance.

This initial communication is intended to inform students and staff briefly about the work I will be doing, and to invite students to participate in the study. Any performance student wishing to be part of the fieldwork would be very welcome; however, students are not obliged to take any part in the research. I will only collect data from students who have given their permission for me to do so.

The fieldwork period will extend over the whole academic year, and incorporate data from different settings (e.g. rehearsals, interviews, seminars and instrumental lessons). If anyone requires more detailed information about data collection I will willingly provide it. Students taking part in the research will automatically be given more in-depth information about the study.

I am in the department most days and can also be contacted by email at [*address given*]. I am interested in any issues relating to performance, and am keen to hear from students either on a one-off basis or across a longer time-span.

Many thanks.

Rachel