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ROUTLEDGE

Studio-Based Instrumental Learning

KIM BURWELL



An **Ashgate** Book

SEMPRE Studies in The Psychology of Music

STUDIO-BASED INSTRUMENTAL LEARNING

SEMPRE Studies in The Psychology of Music

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Graham Welch, *Institute of Education, University of London, UK*

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Studio-Based Instrumental Learning

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Series Editors' Preface

There has been an enormous growth over the past three decades of research into the psychology of music. SEMPRES (the Society for Education, Music and Psychology Research) is the only international society that embraces an interest in the psychology of music, research and education. SEMPRES was founded in 1972 and has published the journals *Psychology of Music* since 1973 and *Research Studies in Music Education* since 2008, both now in partnership with SAGE (see www.sempre.org.uk). Nevertheless, there is an ongoing need to promote the latest research to the widest possible audience if it is to have a distinctive impact on policy and practice. In collaboration with Ashgate since 2007, the 'SEMPRES Studies in The Psychology of Music' has been designed to address this need. The theme for the series is the psychology of music, broadly defined. Topics include (amongst others): musical development at different ages; musical cognition and context; culture, mind and music; micro to macro perspectives on the impact of music on the individual (such as from neurological studies through to social psychology); the development of advanced performance skills; musical behaviour and development in the context of special educational needs; and affective perspectives on musical learning. The series seeks to present the implications of research findings for a wide readership, including user-groups (music teachers, policy makers, parents), as well as the international academic and research communities. The distinguishing feature of the series is its broad focus that draws on basic and applied research from across the globe under the umbrella of SEMPRES's distinctive mission, which is to promote and ensure coherent and symbiotic links between education, music and psychology research.

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As a researcher I have enjoyed, and learned much from, team members David Pickup, Vanessa Young and Matthew Shipton. Our work together was supported by grants from the Performing Arts Learning and Teaching Innovation Network (PALATINE) in 2002 and 2009.

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Kim Burwell
February 2012

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Chapter 1

Introduction

The broad intention in this book is to examine the interaction between teacher and student as they engage in studio-based instrumental teaching and learning. A case study based on a doctoral thesis, it undertakes a micro-analysis of the collaborative behaviour of teacher and student as they cultivate the complex skill of musical performance, and considers this behaviour in the light of the personal, social and cultural context.

It is assumed that the reader who is an instrumental teacher, an instrumentalist, a fellow researcher or any combination of these, will already know a good deal about these matters. The experience of engaging with instrumental teaching and learning offers all participants a personal and individual insight into the subject, that not only draws upon the technical and musical, but the emotional and social aspects of our selves. For many of us this has represented an ongoing and dynamic source of identity.

Instrumental teachers have been aptly described as reflective practitioners, developing their work and indeed identities through the process of reflection. Dewey explains that this involves ‘not simply a sequence of ideas, but a *consequence* – a consecutive ordering in such a way that each determines the next as its proper outcome, while each outcome in turn leans back on, or refers to, its predecessors’ (1933, p. 4). For reflective practitioners this can be a responsive and self-referential undertaking. It is also fluid: if it is a way of thinking, or a kind of knowledge in itself, it is not easily fixed or defined. Schön describes this in terms of on-the-spot experiments: ‘We think up and try out new actions intended to explore the newly observed phenomena, test our tentative understandings of them, or affirm the moves we have invented to change things for the better’ (1987, p. 28).

Viewed in this way, the business of instrumental teaching and learning involves the acquisition, development and application of reflective powers. All instrumental and vocal teachers will have met with the problem of supporting students who want answers, rules, certainties; who are bemused and frustrated to be told that ‘it depends’. As they mature as practitioners, many students struggle to appreciate that the contingent nature of the subject is its very essence, and that what their lessons might offer is induction into a discipline that consists more in doing than in knowing: in cultivating dispositions to frame, work and solve problems that exhibit aspects of both art and craft.

These aspects of instrumental teaching and learning can be challenging and exciting, and yet they present teachers with particular problems. The teacher’s work can be developed continually, experientially and reflectively, but the reference points available to teachers are typically narrow and in a sense, vertical:

each can respond to her ongoing experience as a teacher, and each can respond – positively or negatively – to her historical experience as a student, but few have the opportunity to share their reflections ‘horizontally’ – with contemporary practitioners. The aspects of the work that defy definition also set constraints on any discussion of that work outside the context of the activity itself. This problem is exacerbated by the professional circumstances of teachers, who are often engaged by institutions on a part-time basis or work privately; who are unlikely to share a background in formal teacher training; and who typically teach on a one-to-one basis. In this way the nature of the subject and the nature of the profession leave reflective practitioners working in relative isolation.

There is an obvious gap here, an opportunity to facilitate the reflective practice essential to instrumental and vocal teaching and learning, and this is where research comes in: in helping to develop frameworks for discussion that can support reflection.

Legend has it that reflective practitioners are likely to resist discussing their work outside the context of their own studios; Schön attempts to explain such an attitude by putting into their mouths remarks such as, ‘While I do not accept [traditional academic views] of knowledge, I cannot describe my own’, ‘My kind of knowledge is indescribable’ and ‘I will not attempt to describe it lest I paralyze myself’ (1983, p. viii). Such remarks are not without validity; in my own experience as a teacher I have sometimes wondered whether it is possible to explain too far – that the more concrete an explanation, the more likely it is to be simplified, artificial or misrepresentative; or the more temporary its value. It would seem that Howard is sympathetic to such notions, when he describes the teacher’s choice of words as ‘necessary to start things off and to make corrections’ in a lesson, but quickly left behind, so that ‘refinements in their usage seldom keep pace with the elaborate developments in the activities to which they refer’. In the context of practice this can result in a reliance on a shifting vocabulary, ‘enlisted more or less ad hoc as the occasion demands’ (1982, p. 74).

The practitioner’s vocabulary-in-trade may make her remarks seem unhelpfully vague when taken out of context, and the ‘vertical’ and experiential traditions of learning mentioned above tend to limit the opportunities for finding common terms for discussion. These traditions can result in dynasties of teaching: thus Kingsbury, in describing conservatoire traditions, refers to pedagogical genealogies, to teachers as the nodal points of student cliques, and to highly individual approaches to teaching that members might wish to defend (1988, pp. 37–45). While individual approaches need not be regarded as incompatible or even as distinct schools of thought, the vocabularies and attitudes involved may represent obstacles in the development of professional discussion. It seems possible for example that teachers who have established sophisticated and successful practices through traditional approaches, might be cautious about embracing the ‘training’ opportunities that formal staff development might be taken to represent.

Similarly, there is probably a widespread attitude among practitioners of harbouring reservations toward research. Researchers are relative newcomers to the

field: while studio-based instrumental teaching and learning represents centuries of tradition, much of the current body of research has been accumulated only over the last generation. Progress has been slow, too, not least because research knowledge is different in nature from practice knowledge. The researcher seeks to explain aspects of practice rather than to operationalize them, and must try to establish an objective distance between herself and the subject. Although personal insight and expertise may offer the researcher some clues about what questions to ask, and how to interpret findings, the intervening collection and analysis of data must be conducted as methodically and transparently as possible. Unlike the practitioner, the researcher must always explain how she knows what she knows, so that the reader is in a position to make reasoned judgments about its validity. If research has the capacity to enrich our understanding of a subject that otherwise relies on personal contact among practitioners for dissemination, such an aim can only be responsibly approached through painstaking procedure.

For the moment this has meant that for practitioners, research findings have often seemed either limited in relevance or too obvious to be interesting. In a relatively new field for research, the researchers are hardly in a position to offer conclusions or advice that might be of direct use to practitioners. It is not the role of research, however, to do so. Bowman argues, rather, that research has a more indirect relationship to practice, ideally serving to '[expand] the range of fruitful possibilities for future action and future decisions':

The primary way research improves music education, [to the extent it does], is by helping us approach new problems more intelligently, more imaginatively, more creatively, more flexibly. It does this not by discovering and dispensing facts, but rather by helping us better understand problems and their significance for action. (Bowman 2005, p. 162)

If research findings cannot, and are not intended to, offer a prescription for action, they can help to identify issues, offer new perspectives, encourage and support ongoing reflection and assist practitioners in sharing their reflective processes. If researchers can convince practitioners that their observations represent authentic possibilities of practice, they might also be able to help them in developing a framework for discussion, and in identifying matter for discussion, that – perhaps unlike, for example, anecdotal evidence – can be shared among individual studios, specific instrumental traditions and even different musical styles.

A long-term engagement with research, and particularly in my own case, practitioner research, has allowed me to enjoy more opportunities than most to discuss instrumental teaching and learning with other practitioners, in formal and informal settings. In spite of what might be the inherent constraints on such discussion, I have always found my fellow practitioners to be equally fascinated by the subject, and enthusiastic about reflecting on, discussing and sharing their thoughts and feelings about it. Within the Music Department at South England University, and in visiting other institutions of music education, I have seen

research findings provoke eager and insightful responses from teachers glad to have further food for thought, and glad to identify further common ground for shared reflection. With the research presented in this book, I would hope that I might be able to contribute more, and in other ways, to this conversation.

My interest in this subject stems from three related sources: my own student career, which in many ways has never ended; my professional work as both a performer and teacher of music; and more than ten years' involvement in research in a university music department, investigating the conduct of instrumental and vocal lessons.

Participating in and then observing many instrumental lessons over many years, I have been interested in the behaviour of teacher and student, not only in terms of what they say and what they play, but in terms of the roles that would seem to be laid out for them, as distinct from what each brings to that role. I have been interested too in how the behaviour of one is implicated in the behaviour of the other: how the participants act together in a collaboration which may be more or less smooth, more or less fruitful, constantly changing and often surprising. My conviction from experience as a teacher and a student is that neither can single-handedly determine the nature of the interaction.

To the extent that instrumental teaching and learning involves verbal behaviour, some preliminary efforts to contribute to the shared knowledge of the subject have been made previously at my own university, which will be known here as South England University (SEU), and these efforts provide a backdrop for the current study. Research into instrumental teaching and learning in the SEU Music Department was instigated in 1998, by a research team comprising David Pickup, Vanessa Young and myself. A large part of the team's research has been focused on the investigation of verbal dialogue between teacher and student in the setting of individual lessons. Salient issues have included the content of dialogue, as participants discuss the various areas of study within the subject (Young, Burwell and Pickup 2003; Burwell 2003a); the distribution of talk between teacher and student, and how that might vary according to the personal attributes of participants (Burwell, Young and Pickup 2003; 2004; Burwell 2005); and the vocabulary used to discuss a practice which is largely ineffable (Burwell 2003b; 2006).

Verbal behaviour of course represents only one aspect of instrumental teaching and learning that might be analyzed. The tools used in the early phases of our research were turned toward generalization over a sizeable number of lessons, particularly in quantifying the wordage devoted to various areas of study, and the distribution of lesson dialogue between teacher and student (Young, Burwell and Pickup 2003; Burwell 2003a; 2003b; Burwell, Young and Pickup 2003; 2004). Later a more qualitative approach was taken in the examination of lesson dialogue, with special reference to the teacher's use of questions and of metaphor, worth exploring in themselves (Burwell 2005; 2006). In this study I wanted to take an approach which was quite different: which would at once allow a deeper

exploration of individual cases, and evoke a stronger sense of context for lesson behaviour.

In addition to reviewing verbal behaviour more closely, I had become interested in exploring another salient aspect of instrumental lessons: performance behaviour. To date, we had investigated how teachers and students talked, conscious however that it is somewhat artificial to consider that separately from what they were talking about (Folkestad 2005, p. 283). The nature of lesson talk is predicated by its subject to an extent that has only been recognized relatively recently, through developments in the epistemology of practice (Schön 1983; 1987; Howard 1982; 1992); to understand verbal behaviour in lessons it is necessary to examine its relationship with performance behaviour. This is all the more so because – as our research at SEU has suggested – the distribution of both kinds of behaviour between teacher and student is likely to be asymmetrical: whether in performing or in speaking, the roles of the two participants seemed to be quite different from each other, in quality and quantity. The notion that participant behaviour in instrumental lessons is likely to be distinct from what is found in other educational settings has also been endorsed, albeit indirectly, by a number of relatively early research studies in instrumental teaching and learning. In these, expectations of the teacher's verbal behaviour, based on classroom research, were disappointed (Kostka, 1984; Yarbrough and Price, 1989).

Finally, although verbal and performance behaviour seem to complement each other as interrelated aspects of instrumental teaching and learning, I had become interested in behaviours which fell into neither category. This interest evolved within the current study, as I moved repeatedly back and forth between the research problem and the analysis of data, and in the first instance it was driven by a felt response to the data: a feeling that the lesson interactions I observed were somehow variable in consonance. The feeling arguably stemmed from my experience and values as a practitioner, and in principle therefore I could position myself in the role of researcher as instrument, and make legitimate use of my tacit or intuitive knowledge (Lincoln and Guba 1985, pp. 39–40). This seemed reasonable enough, particularly if I were to be as self-conscious and explicit as possible about my position in the research; but although they might be seen as tools, or conscious influences on the research process, it would not be sufficient to present either myself or my tacit knowledge as research evidence. Instead, I sought first to substantiate my impressions, and second to understand the variation among individual cases.

The desire to substantiate my impressions led to a closer investigation of lesson behaviour. This included the addition of other functions of verbal and performance behaviours, including joking and apologizing, modelling and imitation. It also led to the investigation of nonverbal behaviours, such as the use of physical gesture, posture and space. Each of these added a little to the dimensions of the lesson that could be articulated and described. The desire to understand the variation among individual cases led to a consideration of how lesson behaviours could be connected or contextualized, through reference to the individual attributes and perceptions of

participants; to the Performance Studies course of which instrumental lessons are part; and to the nature of the institution, which in turn draws upon traditions such as the university, the conservatoire and the broad musical culture.

As a performance student, a performance teacher, and – I would now wish to argue – performance researcher, what I have found most exciting about learning is that with each step forward its potential grows; each opportunity to learn more is another candle lit, revealing a little more of the expanse of the Aladdin's cave ahead. This personal aside is closely linked to the research aims of the current study. As suited to a subject that continues to prove, to me, ever-increasing in complexity and richness, my research aim is to understand more, to open the subject further by revealing more of its complexity, rather than attempting to define it. Wittgenstein helpfully questions whether it is always an advantage to replace an indistinct picture with a 'sharp' one; and although his *Philosophical Investigations* explore such thinking on too great a scale to be justly represented here, another of his remarks seems relevant:

We feel as if we had to *penetrate* phenomena: our investigation, however, is directed not towards phenomena, but, as one might say, towards the '*possibilities*' of phenomena. (Wittgenstein 1953/1972, p. 42; italics original)

Through the micro-analysis and close description of a small-scale case study, this book seeks to give an interpretative account of lesson behaviour that might be recognized by practitioners as an authentic possibility within the practice of studio-based instrumental teaching and learning.

Research Aims

With a central interest in the processes involved in studio-based instrumental teaching and learning, this study explores a series of 'how' questions:

1. How is instrumental teaching and learning undertaken?
2. How does the conduct of instrumental teaching and learning vary with participants?
3. How is the interaction between teacher and student contextualized?

The focus of the inquiry is the instrumental lesson, and specifically, the example of clarinet lessons; but the procedure to be studied is not clarinet playing itself, but how it is taught and learned. Instrumental teaching and learning is regarded as a practice in itself, and the first research question asks how teacher and students engage in that practice through lesson interactions. The texture and dynamics of those interactions are explored through the micro-analysis of a small-scale case study, consisting in one teacher giving single lessons to two individual students. These lessons, captured on video tape, are examined in terms of specific

collaborative behaviours, alongside the participants' own comments about their activity in the filmed lessons.

This will be case study research, and because its scope will therefore be bounded, the meaningful interpretation of the case may depend on the consideration of contextual issues. Thus the third question is focused on links that might be drawn between lesson behaviour and the sociocultural setting of the practice. This may include reference to the institution – the Performance Studies course at SEU along with its aims and assessment procedures – as well as the broader professional and indeed artistic aspects of musical performance. Further, it might be possible to draw other links among lesson behaviours and the individual characteristics, perceptions and biographies of participants.

The second question presupposes that lesson behaviour does vary with participants, though in a case study bounded by only two lessons, the scope to examine the potential variety of behaviour is necessarily narrow. Comparison however is not the chief object of this research, but a means of introducing a further dimension into the study of the subject, effectively an element of triangulation that might enrich the interpretation of lesson behaviour. Importantly, too, the study of two lessons rather than one highlights the significance of context, since it allows the investigation of the effect when even slight differences in context are present. This means that the second question may provide a significant link between the first and the third.

The nature and rationale for the choice of the case study is discussed further in Chapter 5.

Structure of the Book

The book is divided into nine chapters, including the Introduction. The conceptual framework is the underlying theme of first half of the book, comprising the next four chapters. This includes a discussion of epistemology, or the nature of the subject knowledge; it also gives an account of research literature specific to instrumental teaching and learning, and the theoretical perspective represented in the methodology.

In Chapter 2 the discussion of epistemology falls into two broad areas. Since teaching and learning cannot be meaningfully considered without reference to what is being taught and learned, the first area to be considered is the epistemology of skill, in general terms and with particular reference to instrumental teaching and learning as a regime of competence. Complementing the discussion of what is to be learned, the second issue for consideration is how it is to be learned. This is approached through an exploration of apprenticeship, often mentioned in music education literature, to see if it might offer ways of understanding the process and the nature of instrumental teaching and learning.

Chapters 3 and 4 consist of reviews of the research literature directly related to instrumental teaching and learning. Chapter 3 examines literature specific to

lesson interactions, while Chapter 4 examines literature in which those lessons are framed by drawing links to a broader context. These literature reviews thus match the scope implied in the research questions, by focusing initially on activity located within the lesson, and then on ways of framing that activity.

In Chapter 5 the fieldwork design is discussed; this goes some way toward meeting the obligation of the researcher to explain the advent of her findings. While some readers may be tempted to skip ahead to the findings themselves, it is assumed that an explanation of the methodological approach will be of interest not only to other researchers, but to practitioners who might be starting to engage with research processes or enter into the kind of discussions they support. The chapter includes some remarks about the theoretical perspective specific to this case study, and its alignment with the research aims and questions, including consideration of the position of the researcher and of ethical issues. The detailed research methods adopted in the study are then outlined.

In Chapters 6 and 7 the findings from the empirical study are presented. The presentation is based essentially on description; an effort is made to keep these descriptions objective, so far as possible, in the hope that the reader might be able to imagine these situations as recognizable or lifelike, and even to draw some personal impressions from them. The analytical descriptions of video evidence are framed by the presentation of material drawn from interview data. Thus Chapter 6 is prefaced by a contextual sketch based on the teacher's views of instrumental teaching and learning, followed by a presentation of the findings from the observation and micro-analysis of a clarinet lesson. Chapter 7 begins with the presentation of parallel findings from a second lesson, and ends with some reflections on both lessons in the light of the participants' own views.

Chapter 8 offers a more freely interpretative discussion of the findings, drawing some comparisons between the accounts of the two lessons, proposing some ways of understanding lesson activity, and considering both in the light of the earlier literature reviews. Chapter 9 offers some concluding remarks and suggests implications for practice and for future discussion.

Chapter 2

The Epistemology of Instrumental Teaching and Learning

In this chapter the epistemology, or theory of knowledge related to instrumental teaching and learning, is explored, largely through an examination of the language that is used to discuss the subject. Essentially, the first part of the chapter examines the complex skill involved, while the second part examines its acquisition, in terms of apprenticeship.

Our use of words, in discussing music, musical skill and the acquisition of musical skill, encapsulates a good deal about our understanding of these concepts. Musical phenomena do not consist in words, and discussing them is notoriously difficult; and yet musicians do discuss them, and with some confidence, often in language particularly adapted to the purpose: ‘special jargons in which recondite, mostly inarticulate procedures and traditional lore find verbal expression that is as fragmentary as it is pointed’ (Howard 1982, p. 5). Our traditional lore, the ‘folk psychology’ in which the language is nested, itself represents ‘the culturally shaped notions in terms of which people organize their views of themselves, of others, and of the world in which they live’ (Bruner 1990, p. 137).

Much of Wittgenstein’s *Philosophical Investigations* is devoted to demonstrating how language is naturally embedded in the active lives of its speakers, and by examining the common use of words clarifies ‘the grammar of our concepts’ (McGinn 1997, p. 14, p. 40). In the context of the current study, the tacit theories underlying our understanding of instrumental teaching and learning, as embedded in the language we use to discuss it, are examined in this chapter through two distinct lenses.

The first of these is focused on the conceptualization of the subject matter, ‘variously labelled “artistry”, “craft”, “know-how”, “technique”, or “skill”’ (Howard 1982, p. 5). An assumption here is that what is learned is inseparable from how it is learned (Folkestad 2005, p. 283), which implies that before examining the interaction between teacher and student in the music studio, it will be helpful to have some clear ideas about the nature of their subject matter. The section begins by considering the terms we commonly use to discuss the skills of musical performance, though many of those terms are found to be surprisingly unhelpful. In an effort to clarify matters, performance as a more general phenomenon is considered in the light of the broader literature on knowledge. Afterward, recent attempts to review and develop the epistemology of professional practice are discussed, with special reference to its potential application to instrumental teaching and learning. Finally, an attempt is made to characterize instrumental and vocal performance as a regime of competence.

In the second section of this chapter, the lens is focused on the acquisition of performance skill, looking in particular at apprenticeship as a way of understanding aspects of instrumental teaching and learning. The terms ‘master’ and ‘apprentice’ are often coined in the literature devoted to the subject, but they are rarely systematically defined, and the assumptions implied in their usage are rarely examined. The section begins with a brief overview of apprenticeship in history, before identifying features that continue to resonate with modern approaches to instrumental teaching and learning, and the language used to contextualize it.

The chapter concludes with a summary of the discussion of both skill and apprenticeship, and their relationship to the language commonly used to discuss instrumental teaching and learning.

Skill

Introduction: Talking about Musical Performance

Among musicians the artistry involved in instrumental and vocal performance is highly prized, and its prestige perhaps difficult to overstate. Kingsbury in his anthropological study of an American college of music reports that ‘[t]he value of playing (or singing) “musically” is a genuinely sacred value in the conservatory, quite possibly the ultimate value ...’ (Kingsbury 1988, p. 51). Describing the resemblance of the institution to a seminary, he further asserts that ‘[t]he sense of commitment among conservatory students seems more personal, moral, and emotional than professional or economic’ (p. 20). The pursuit of excellence in musical performance is the paradigmatic activity of the conservatoire, and superiority in outstanding professional performances is a matter of ‘surprisingly general agreement’ even among critics (Schön 1987, p. 13).

Standards of musical performance are widely agreed, and excellence admired, in the university music department as in the conservatoire; and yet, perhaps because ours is a non-verbal art, we are not particularly adept at explaining what we mean when we discuss our own skills. The language we use when we attempt to do so is often vague and self-contradictory, and in some ways even suggests that skill is inferior in kind to the mental operations that are more likely to be associated with the traditional values of the university.

The vocabulary we use to characterize musical performance must be common to almost any everyday discussion of skill, but it does not always stand up well to examination. A brief consideration of even a small number of examples quickly reveals ambiguities that make them inadequate for the task of defining what it is that performing musicians do.

‘Talent’ is perhaps the most obvious example of a word used to describe those who have a particular aptitude for performance. The term is widely accepted, with the National Academy for Gifted and Talented Youth (2002), for example, offering the straightforward explanation that talented learners are those ‘who

have practical skills in areas like sport, music, design or creative and performing arts' (DirectGov). Music education researchers however tend to view the term as being problematic and imprecise. Kingsbury suggests that it is 'frequently used to explain something that couldn't be explained otherwise' (1988, p. 81), while Schön describes talent, along with 'wisdom', 'intuition' and 'artistry' as being 'junk categories' that are substituted for genuine explanation, and indeed 'serve not to open up inquiry but to close it off' (1987, p. 13). Sloboda, in an effort to establish musicianship as an aptitude of the race rather than of lucky individuals, argues that 'talent' is a mythical inborn trait, and he relegates the term to folk psychology (Sloboda 2005, pp. 276–312). This 'myth' of talent, arising 'as if independent of teachers, tradition, or technique' (Howard 2008, p. 39), is challenged further in expertise theory, in which attention is drawn to the importance of deliberate practice (for example, Ericsson et al. 1993) rather than the notion that 'exceptional performance [might be] based in innate musical capacities' (Lehmann and Gruber 2006, p. 457).

'Sense' might be a more useful word to musicians than talent, in that it can evoke the indescribable way in which, for example, a performer might interpret a musical turn of phrase, or negotiate an idiomatic technical difficulty. Paradoxically perhaps, the same term that applies to these relatively ineffable procedures is also used to denote the five specific human senses, though of course ear, eye, and touch are all more or less implicated in musical performance. None of these however are regarded as intellectual procedures – we even use the term 'common sense' to distinguish the everyday from the scientific – and this might seem to put them in a lesser light. The meaning of 'sense' is further blurred too by the fact that it might be applied to an enormous range of skills: the potentially high level of achievement implied in interpreting a musical phrase or playing by ear might easily be categorized alongside the ability to 'see colours, feel a pinprick, or digest cabbage' (Howard 1982, p. 50).

'Feel' might be a still more useful term for practical musicianship, because it can imply a physical aptitude for playing an instrument or using the voice, or a grasp of rhythmic character, or the involvement of emotion in expressive performance. No matter how sophisticated they may become, however, technical skills belong to a category once again considered somehow inferior to the intellectual: Ryle observes that '[s]ince doing is often an overt muscular affair, it is written off as a merely physical process' (Ryle 1949, p. 32). Feeling is almost inevitably elided with 'emotion', too, which suffers from a 'strongly entrenched' comparison with thinking: thus Scheffler complains that '[this opposition of cognition and emotion] distorts everything it touches: mechanizing science, it sentimentalizes art, while portraying ethics and religion as twin swamps of feeling and unreasoned commitment' (Scheffler 1991, p. 3).

Skill in musical performance is sometimes discussed in terms of having a "nose" for how things should go' (Jorgensen 2006, p. 11; Wittgenstein, in Howard 1992, p. 135). The same term is applicable to team sports, however, with Kingsbury for example referring to the concept of having 'a nose for the ball'.