THINKING FRAMES IN POPULAR MUSIC EDUCATION

MUSICAL OBJECTS AND IDENTITY IN REHEARSAL:

LEARNING TO PSYCHOANALYSE MUSICIANSHIP

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Abstract

This thesis is concerned with the teaching and learning of popular music, not as a process that can be defined and extrapolated, but as an interaction between musicians who consciously take on the roles of teacher and learner. The research project reported in this thesis focuses on the thinking that leads people to consider themselves to be musicians and how they frame their music making activities: their musicianship. Thinking takes place in the mind of people – their psyche. This thesis asks what psychoanalysis can contribute to research on music education, what insight can it bring to existing thinking frames that musicians and music teachers use? It explores how a reading of the work of Jacques Lacan may lead to new thinking frames that can help refine understandings of how musicians learn, how they identify with their own musicianship and how they interact with others.

Set as an action research project, the researcher uses his own experiences and the discourses that his students, teachers and fellow musicians engage in, to consider how the language we use informs our thinking and to explore methods for overcoming common difficulties encountered in music learning environments. There are the practical considerations of the materials and activities musicians engage in, but significantly Lacan asks us to also consider our motivations to act. Enjoyment, its production and manifestation, lie beneath and motivate the way we use musical materials and how we choose which activities to engage in.

Psychoanalysis employs challenging conceptions that have become entangled in anti-foundational philosophies concerning the truth and how we evaluate the world around us. The thesis takes key ideas: the master signifier; the split subject; the role of the Other in the psyche to create meaning; and *jouissance*, to understand how musicians think by mapping Lacan's framework of the Graph of Desire onto musical language to produce

a model of the internal dialogues of a musician's psyche. With the help of Slavoj Žižek's application of psychoanalysis to cultural studies the resulting language is used to analyse the discourse of professional musicians in rehearsal to understand how the ambiguity of language has an impact on the way musicians learn.

The thesis then considers how this sits with formal teaching and learning discourses encountered in British educational contexts. It concludes that music teachers need to recognise the important role we play for our students in leading them into ownership of their musical learning and that anxiety has a place in helping us recognise that a fear of uncertainty forces us to provide only a partial knowledge to our students. Music teachers play the role of the 'subject supposed to know' to our students, one that if we are successful our students should eventually reject. Ultimately it is argued that whilst many of the conventions and thinking frames we use to understand music education are valid, there is a need to maintain the joy of music making as central to the motivations of musicians, whether they be acting in the role of performer, composer, producer, teacher or learner.

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Part 1 - Introduction

This research project has been undertaken by a music teacher and is intended to contribute to the literature on music education from the perspective of popular music. In this first part the project is introduced, outlining the key ideas, the motivations of the researcher and an explanation of the theoretical development of the project. Starting with the experiences of teaching popular music in a large urban UK further education college, the exploration of different ways music teachers might define what they do has led into increasingly more complicated methods of thinking about what music education is. The research considers the language popular musicians use and what this might mean for the role music teachers play for their students.

Part 1 provides an overview of the project, the literature review and methodology, as well as an introduction to some of the key psychoanalytic terms as they have been understood and interpreted by the researcher. The data collection and development of analytic tools are presented in part 2, before consideration of how the data analysis and thinking frames encountered during the research project can inform the practice of music teachers in part 3.

Chapter 1 – Overview

Problem

Music is fun. Many people who choose to make music do so because they enjoy the process, whether it be the creation of sound, engaging with others, performing to an audience or finding a form of self expression through music.

Here is the problem though. To get a sense of satisfaction from making music many people feel that they need to improve on their music making skills over time, that they can find some measure of the quality of the music they make and they have some way of assessing the progress or outcomes of their music making. This can take many different forms, from the appreciation of others and of what they have produced, to the achievement of qualifications and graded exams.

For casual or amateur musicians this may not be something they articulate as a primary concern of their music making, but for professional musicians and others who take their music making seriously it is a very important factor in what they do. In music education institutions the quality and progress of musicians in their studies is a central concern constituting their reason for being. Music departments in schools, colleges and universities need to demonstrate that their activities are productive and their students need to feel a sense of achievement and see a clear path towards successful music making outcomes. Musicians want to be good at what they do and many choose to study both in their own way and in a formalised context.

But music institutions find themselves at a point of crisis, facing pressure from several directions that could broadly be described as both economic and cultural. There is an increasing need for educational processes to be relevant, in that the skills and knowledge their students possess are useful to society. Artistic endeavour is an end in itself but can those people

that fund education justify their spending unless they can demonstrate the utility and benefit of music education. The standard of music teaching and learning is therefore paramount in the contemporary music classroom.

The crisis then comes from the contrast between traditions that bequeath clear sets of standards to work towards and an ever changing creative industries sector that relies heavily on new and innovative approaches to making music. Likewise, educational institutions are measured in the progress their students make and therefore need to ensure the interests and methods their students bring with them to their studies are considered when curriculum is designed and delivered.

The work presented before you deals with one music teacher's encounters with many of these issues, between formal and informal approaches to music making, between the many different stylistic and cultural aesthetics recognised to be musical. Most specifically it deals with the development of a musicianship within people that enjoy making music and how a growing expertise may impact on any sense of being a musical learner, teacher or expert. This is particularly pertinent when musicians, and especially music teachers, engage in musical encounters with other people whose understanding of what constitutes good music may differ from their own.

What is the research trying to achieve?

The project presented in this thesis is a combination of a range of different research activities reflecting the long journey the researcher has taken in the course of developing his own skills and understanding as a musician, teacher and researcher. The motivation throughout this research activity has been a sense of equality, opportunity and social justice for musicians who may struggle to feel confident in their own identity as successful musicians, particularly when facing social and institutional

discourses and conventions that appear to insist on specific attributes being prerequisite to anyone hoping to describe themselves as musicians.

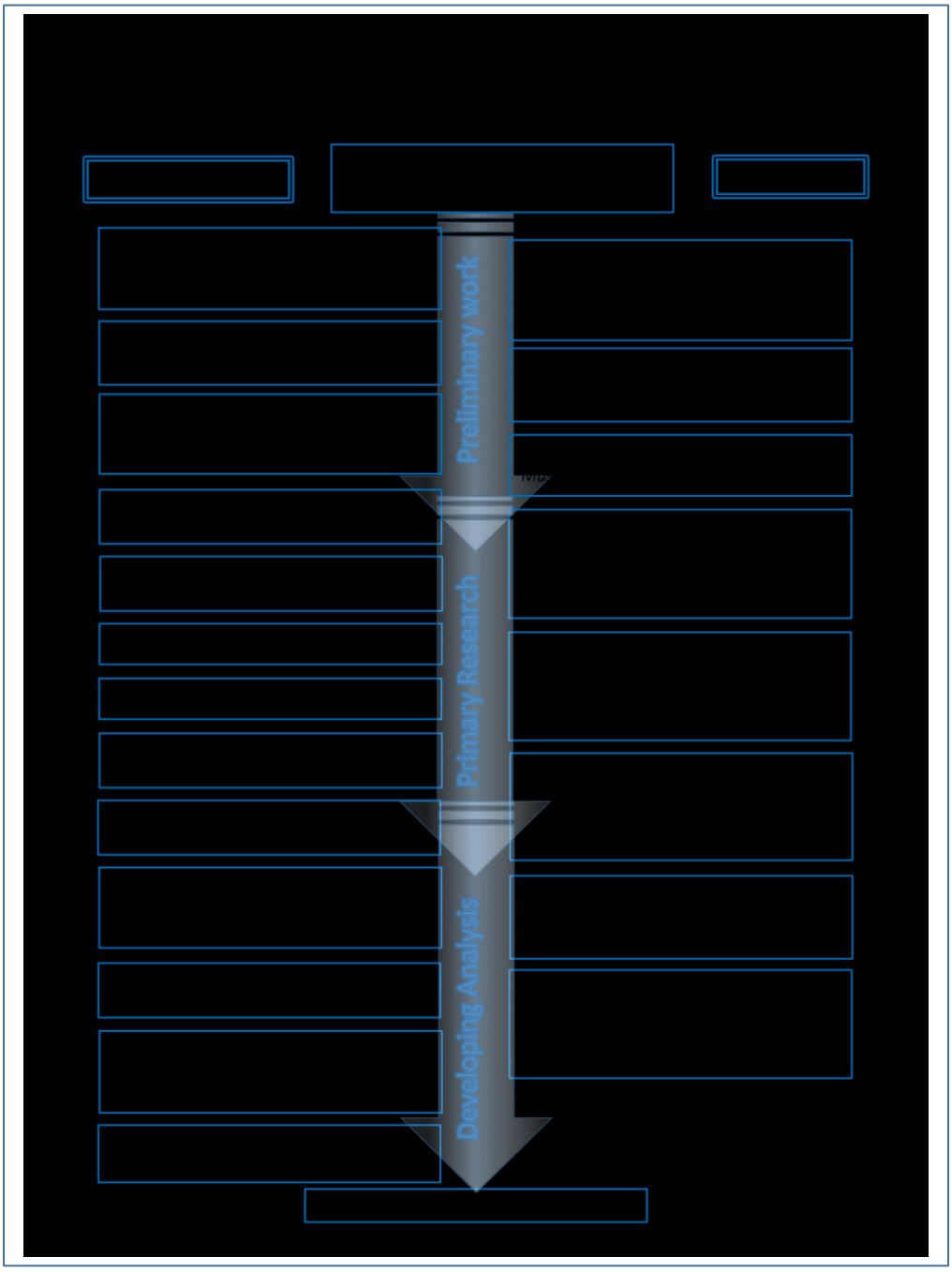

Figure 1: Research Timeline

As a teacher of popular music the writer already faces the dichotomy of differentiation between the conservatoire, its methods and traditions in the development of musical skills associated with classical music, and other non-classical musics. Sometimes these other musics are described as self-

contained discrete categories such as jazz, folk or pop, much as it is assumed classical music is itself a discrete fixed set of traditions whose standards are maintained by the conservatoire. This research project has been largely preoccupied with attempting to problematise and unpick some of the underlying assumptions that are ubiquitous in much of the social and institutional discourse surrounding music education.

At one level the research asks what are the differences in the rules that govern classical music traditions from popular music traditions. Significant pieces of work are found in part two of this thesis that look at the language used in music education settings, policy documents and research on music education. The actual language used by popular musicians in rehearsal is put forward as the key piece of primary research around which the thesis has been developed. This work specifically responds to a call in academic literature for the music education community to know more and understand in greater depth what popular musicians actually do.

During the development of this research it became evident that it was not sufficient to limit what is presented as purely descriptive, without questioning how the words that are used by musicians are devices for representing ideas that are more complex than they appear in a basic analysis of the discourse in which they are found. It became necessary to enter into the philosophical realms of discourse analysis, post-structural discussions and ultimately to begin to engage with the influence of psychoanalytic writing on educational theory. This has been no easy task and remains an unfinished business of this researcher. The complexity and controversy in these academic fields are not easily navigated and do not lend themselves to simplification for an audience of musicians, music learners and teachers. Yet this is what this thesis attempts to do.

Now, as the research is being written up in to a coherent and accessible format for readers that it is hoped will be primarily constituted of music educators, aspiring or experienced, the task of the researcher is to

encapsulate his journey into an accessible document that can be useful and relevant to those who want to improve their music making skills and engage in helping others do the same.

Perhaps this is best done by emphasising the importance of how each individual thinks about their own music making activities, how they construct a sense of what makes good and bad music, and how they react to their interactions with other people who talk about music making and the language that is used to think about, describe and communicate musical ideas.

The thesis ultimately contributes to philosophies of contingency, context and relative relations. That is to say that music is conceived in this thesis as dependant on the cultural fields within which each musician operates. Music cannot be defined in universal terms as is often implied by much of the language used to describe musical activity. If common standards for the communication and measurement of musical progress need to be imposed for social and institutional reasons then a reflexive approach, that recognises the goals and purposes of those standards must be at the forefront of such processes. To imply there may be a right way for all musicians to make music at all times and in all situations is deeply problematic as it does not recognise the fundamental relationships between the music makers and their audiences.

Musicians form their identities in relation to their understanding of what music is, if definitions of what constitutes good music are imposed upon them the possibility of alienation from their own activities may result. For musicians to become confident in their identities and activities as music makers it is necessary for them to take ownership of the language they use. Musicians need to develop a capability to engage with, question, create, and adapt discursive conceptions of musicality in order to develop the self-confidence to combine the enjoyment of making music, with the

understanding of who their audiences might be and how they may best express their music to those audiences.

What is the remit of the research project?

Whilst it has always been the intention to come to conclusions that could be useful to musicians and teachers in a wide range of contexts, the researcher recognises that the activities he engages in are located in specific contexts and speak of his particular experiences of them. It will be helpful to the reader to understand his background and interests, which are outlined below, but it must be made clear that the two primary contexts in which he works are that of popular music performance and non-compulsory education.

These distinctions are important as much of the writing on music education is located in formalised music contexts such as orchestras or big band ensembles and in school settings where teachers have responsibility for a wider curriculum than just music, students may not have chosen to study music and a duty of care for the pupils is an integral part of the institutions organisational structures.

In popular music contexts there can be great variance in the conventions and knowledge musicians bring to ensemble work. There is often no music reading involved and use of technical language can be very limited. Many popular musics sit in aural traditions, key artists and musical works of the particular genre will be the main reference point for setting common goals for an ensemble.

Non-compulsory music education has a certain level of freedom from restrictions that often exist in the school music classroom. Firstly, it can be assumed that everyone present has chosen to engage in music learning, has a willing desire to become a better musician and can leave the classroom at anytime. Further the curriculum is often less regulated, learning more likely to be negotiated between learner and teacher and the pace of learning is

not necessarily dictated by the learner's age or stage of achievement in other subjects.

The consequence of these distinctive aspects of non-compulsory popular music education is more freedom for the teacher to design the curriculum in ways that they feel is appropriate, but also less certainty as to how and when formalised frameworks for music learning might apply. Different genres and cultural associations, different types of learners with different backgrounds, different skill levels, interests and goals all impact on how a teacher may design, deliver and adapt curriculum.

This leads to the question of how best to structure musical learning. Does each individual student require their own curriculum? Does each different style of music rely on a different set of traditions and conventions? To what extent can well established methods be applied to musics that they were not designed for?

The research project was initially designed to look for commonalities and differences in the language used in music education contexts and see how and if they were used by popular musicians and students of popular music. The researcher wanted to know if there were assumptions implicit in the language used by music teachers, syllabi, exam boards and policy makers: preconceptions that might not be best suited to facilitating all types of music learners in all environments.

The four case studies that constitute Part Two of this thesis display the evolving research journey sparked by these questions. Firstly, a number of small projects were conducted collecting interview data, focus groups, classroom observations and a review of policy and curriculum documentation. This culminated in a survey of 60 trainee music teachers where they rated enjoyment of learning to be the most significant factor in successful learning of their future pupils. The technical and professional language that predominates curriculum related documentation appears at

the bottom of their perceptions of what is most significant to successful music learning.

The output of this first set of projects became the initial starting point for the design of a new project to collect the primary piece of data for this thesis. *A spectrum of perceptions of ownership in music theory* is a graph developed from nodes coded in Nvivo from text collected and processed through each part of the first set of projects. It suggests that some of the language associated with music learning gives a sense of ownership over them to the musician using those particular words. At the other end of the spectrum some aspects of discourse may lead to a sense of alienation.

The researcher then asked himself, would such a spectrum be a useful way to analyse the language popular musicians use. He embarked on a case study observing four different music ensembles in rehearsal, the language the musicians in each ensemble used and whether it demonstrated a sense of alienation or ownership. Each ensemble constituted a different style of music, varying backgrounds, levels of training of the musicians and different performance contexts.

These case studies continued with the participant research model established in the previous projects, but this time in very naturalistic setting. Each ensemble was a band in which the researcher already worked as an electric bass player, his presence is consistent in the data. Each ensemble was preparing for a professional engagement and the audio recording of rehearsal was a common occurrence for the benefit of reflection and further consolidation of the rehearsal process, it was not therefore out of place. Permission was sought for the recording to be used for research purposes at the beginning of each rehearsal and afterwards the researcher edited out and transcribed the language used by the musicians (in between the actual playing of the music) from one song from each rehearsal.

The analysis of this project evolved further though. The researcher, as he began to analyse and model the data, realised a far subtler understanding of language was needed if anything meaningful could be produced as an output to his analysis. It had been intended to use nodes from the 'spectrum of perceptions of ownership' but at each different attempt at coding and making sense of the data key questions kept arising about how the musicians used and identified with their own utterances.

A new model was developed as the researcher investigated the concepts of identity, culture and the psyche present in educational theory. This ultimately led to a decision to engage with Lacanian psychoanalysis as a platform for developing an analytical model.

The third chapter in Part Two was written as an exploration of the concepts of subject and object, how these ideas manifest in the psyche and relate to the process of identity formation. Using the work of Slavoj Žižek to explore how Jacques Lacan's writings can be used to analyse popular culture the researcher tries to understand how reality and meaning is created for the subject through their interaction with various objects. They are seen as objects of language progressing into consciousness through a complex of psychic manifestations.

The researcher chose to use a musical hero as an example: Jimi Hendrix. For some musicians to be like their hero is what they desire. Through the mediation of physical objects, such as a guitarist's plectrum, the musician uses this desire to emulate their musical hero's to engage in music making. They are driven to continue music making from the fulfilment they feel they achieve in the process of performing their music at gigs. This chapter explores how it might be possible to draw parallels between these three objects – Hendrix, a plectrum and gigs – and the objects found in Lacan's Graph of Desire: the object of desire (object petit a); the object that stands in for the Real; the object of the drives.

This description of the manifestation of language in the psyche is counterintuitive as it relies on a retrograde action in the interpellation of the subject. We assume meaning already exists in language, whereas we are actually placing meaning into language as we use it, creating a sense of reality at the same time. The subject is brought into being by language, although aspects of the psyche are at work below the conscious level of subject formation.

To apply these complex ideas to a context and model that might be useful to musicians who have not engaged with post-structuralism, deconstruction and psychoanalytic theory the researcher decided to devise a model that took advantage of another key concept: the master-signifier, a word or phrase that indicates a concept which doesn't have a physical reality. The master-signifier stiches together meaning in language representing the essence of particular discourses that ultimately disappears if deconstructed sufficiently.

The researcher asked himself: what if music was a master-signifier and a model inspired by Lacan's 'Graph of Desire' were created to represent this? The development of 'The Musicians Dialogue' is the focus of the final chapter in Part Two.

Whilst the precision of translation and interpretation of Žižek's and Lacan's writing may speak of the contentious debate surrounding the application of psychoanalysis to educational theory, it did provide a fruitful platform for the analysis of data collected from the rehearsal of popular musicians.

Part Three of the thesis looks at this analysis and some of the implications of the research as a whole on how music teachers may better understand their role in helping other musicians develop. A sense of enjoyment and ownership is found to be significant factor in musical development. Understanding identity formation and the fear of uncertainty

are found to be useful tools for analysis of the motivation, goals and language of musicians when they engage in the development of their musical skills.

Background of the researcher

A short introduction to the writer of this PhD Thesis will be helpful to the reader. In different places in the text he refers to himself in the first person, as the researcher, the music teacher, a musician or the bass player (B in the rehearsal transcriptions). Even when using more universal terms that may include himself – such as musicians, teachers, learners, us or we – there is always an awareness that this is my particular perspective. The changing use of pronouns or descriptive labels, is partly dependent on the pertinent topic and partly a result of the shifting understandings of personal identity, agency and voice that have been one of the key struggles of this research project and its writing up for submission. Whilst a more formal tone is maintained through large parts of the thesis to provide consistency for the reader, chapters in Part 2 allow for the thinking of the researcher at the time to be left evident in the writing - representing the evolution of the project and the conflicting methods for using language he was exploring. There are also several stories that are specifically told in the first person to illustrate the reflexive elements of the project, including the rest of this chapter, which lays out the contexts for the research project.

I was raised in East London, my parents worked as art teachers in local secondary schools. An urban and multicultural environment, I experienced music and culture in many different forms. I liked music, but my enthusiasm for it was encouraged by a couple of particular teachers who were more interested in their students' engagement than imposing traditions and standards. I attended a comprehensive school in East Ham from 1987 to 1992, there were very few students in my school who had a real relationship with the classical music that predominated the music classes I was in.

My understanding of music grew through self learning, friendship groups, the encouragement of some teachers and the media of the time. A friend made music on 4-track synthesis software on an Atari 1040 and this fascinated me, a teacher gave me guitar lessons where he could and we had a piano at home that my mum plays. Aged 13 I formed a band with friends, I became the bass player, we rehearsed in the garage of the guitar player's parents house. This is not to say I did not encounter formal music teaching, the Royal College of Music had an outreach centre locally that provided peripatetic lessons to a few pupils, but my on and off experience of piano lessons was largely not enjoyable or something that encouraged my interest.

On the advice of a careers advisor, who told me not to study music I ended up in the local newly built sixth-form doing academic A-levels that I found unengaging. I discovered that it was possible for me to study music at a college in Islington (North London) that had adapted a BTEC in performing art into a course for popular music. Against the better wishes of parents and teachers I dropped my A levels, undertaking a significantly longer and more difficult daily journey so that I could study music. I still feel now that this was one of the most important decisions of my life, the first time I had made a decision for myself, one that I have never regretted.

Whilst studying in Islington I played in a range of ensembles and helped a friend build a studio from equipment thrown out by the BBC. My teachers were keen for me to study at The University of Salford on their innovative Popular Music and Recording degree, which they supported me in gaining admission to.

Whilst at Salford my musicianship transformed. Whilst I only felt ready to start after I finished, the intense environment gave me a level of musical training and insight that I am still learning and growing from. I graduated in 1999 achieving a 2:1 and a 1st for my dissertation on Drum 'n' Bass.

I progressed into teaching at a local college, where I remained until recently, teaching a range of music related subjects to school age, adult and university level students. In this time, I also worked in schools and community centres running workshops, as well as teaching bass and guitar privately. I continued to perform, run events and projects, work in media and produce music throughout this time in professional, amateur and charitable contexts. I have recently started working at a conservatoire in Leeds.

Before concluding this introductory chapter with an outline of the following chapters I would like to share a note from my research diary that may help explain the personal and emotional reasons that I was motivated to conduct this research project.

A note from the researcher's diary

> while language is essentially blah blah blah, it is nevertheless from language that having and being derive. (Lacan 2001:757)

I, the researcher, am a musician and I am a teacher. These two things that I call myself have helped me understand the life I live and the ways I choose to conduct myself. The research presented here is precipitated by the way I identify with music and teaching, the struggle I have to understand what I am doing and how to improve the way I do it, as well as the striving towards helping others that I feel is integral to my work when teaching them about music.

The research journey began when I first became a teacher, wanting to be a good teacher, to encourage aspiring musicians to develop the skills and attitudes that I felt were important to me as a practicing musician. However, from my first day in the classroom I discovered that this was not a straightforward process of transferring knowledge and skills, nor could I expect my students to have the same aspirations or desires as me. Whilst

there was a commonality between my students, my colleagues, myself and the industry we are educating about – insofar as it involves 'music' – the differences between us were multiple and often apparently insurmountable. Not only did each person have different skill sets, instrumental, theoretical and technological knowledge, different tastes and understandings of how to create music, there was also frequent disagreement as to what constituted music, how it should be valued, developed and assessed. In the following fifteen years that I have continued to teach music, and practice in the industry as a performing musician, these differences have remained. My confidence in my knowledge and skills has grown, as have I as a musician. Consequently, the diversity of ways in which I value the musical activities of the people I work with has developed into a sophisticated model of musicianship focused around enjoyment, application of oneself to musical learning, sharing and recognising commonality of the musical experience and the embracing of differences which enrich that musical experience.

I have no doubt that key to my development and growth in confidence has come from an active engagement in learning; deliberately engaging in activities that have made me a better musician; enthusiastically engaging in teaching theory and experimenting with methods of delivery; attempting to have a better understanding of the cultures and social understanding of my students, the musical styles and genres they like; understanding my activities as a praxis – having a proactive, reflective approach to being a music teacher both in my guiding aims and in my everyday practice; ultimately engaging in academic research around the discipline of music education. I do not pretend to myself that I have come to the end of a journey, that I will ever be the perfect music teacher or that my musicianship will reach a point that it cannot be improved upon. I know that I once used to aspire to possess a status of being that I felt I had not yet achieved – to be a great and admired musician – but I no longer feel that way. Now, this developmental journey, this engaging and sharing with others, this embracing difference and new experiences, this confidence that

comes with recognition of one's own abilities, provides me with more than sufficient meaning in my life that is much more satisfying than the dream of one day achieving what I aspired to, yet felt I currently lacked.

The research project has evolved and changed similarly over the period of time since I began conducting projects, collecting and analysing data, reading about methodologies and getting lost in the overwhelming complexities of the philosophical underpinnings that hold together academic scholarly activities and their knowledge products. I have been challenged to rethink and reformulate my beliefs and approaches many times, some of those changes I hope will be evident in my writing. I reveal this to the reader, not only as it can help make visible my intentions and motivations – therefore also some of the implicit assumptions contained within the research – but because my experiences as musician, teacher, researcher and learner exemplify some of the processes discussed in the theory that I have engaged with, the methodologies I have adopted and the ideas, models and frameworks I suggest may be helpful to other music teachers as a result of the research I have conducted.

I began with an emancipatory goal, to help popular musicians find a voice in educational contexts that are dominated by language conceived in the conservatoire – classical music schools with prescribed methods and goals that are not always relevant to other cultures of music. This language can be limiting to musicians not raised in within the conservatoire ethos, in fact it appeared to me that it can be discriminatory. Further, even though the institution and department I worked in catered to popular musicians, the language we used still separated and categorised music making activities in such a way that some students were catered to far more than others, again unfairly so in my opinion. This is despite popular music working as consciously differentiated from the conservatoire.

There are problems with the emancipatory goals with which I started my research journey. In placing popular music in opposition to the

conservatoire a divide is created, as if the type of music is somehow different. Stylistically this may be merited to an extent, but are the musicians themselves so different – is the 'music' they are dealing with fundamentally different? Using these two traditions as binary opposites, placing them as a dichotomy, somewhat simplifies their relationship, hides nuances of their operation and fails to recognise many of the commonalities in the different traditions. Indeed, it presumes that each is a separate, distinct and coherent discipline. These musical cultures, despite the relative levels of formality contained within them, are not fixed in time or in structure but are subject to change, evolution, reinterpretation and misinterpretation. Who is to say which approaches are the most valid, which musical activities are more valuable than others?

In my work as a music teacher I needed to find ways of advocating on behalf of students from musical cultures that were marginalised by the language used in the educational institution I work for, whilst not dismissing the validity in the appropriate contexts of that language. There is a use for a reference point from which teachers measure the progress our students are making. We need to demonstrate and be accountable for what we do.

The primary source of reference is the syllabus, from which we are subject to quality audits from external examiners, verifiers and inspectors. The wider institutional and social influences that could be referred to as the curriculum is also significant. It is a challenge for music teachers – with their own personal background, knowledge, skills, culture, understandings, competencies – to negotiate with a diversity of students and advocate on their behalf, in order to help them achieve their goals through the territory of varying educational discourses and particular resources landscapes they work in. How does a teacher find and develop a sense of agency, how do they engage with and respond to the needs and demands of the others they work with? Especially once one recognises that their own approaches and understandings not only differ from others, but that those others may not

recognise the rationality of one's own perspective and that there is no ultimate recourse to determine whose position if any takes precedence.

Chapter Outline

Chapter 2 constitutes the literature review where the context for popular music education is outlined, with examples of the tensions that exist for contemporary music teachers. Significantly though, as I began to read debates on educational theory the issue of culture became more complicated. It requires a sense of the relationship between the individual and their social relations, how language is used, shared and owned by people as they interact with each other. In order to explore this it is necessary to ask questions such as: what is language? Who is the person using that language? Where does the meaning of that language come from? Why do people assume that the meanings they place upon the language they use are transparently understood by the people they are trying to communicate with? How do we manage to operate in social environments unless there are common understandings of the language we use?

Concepts of discourse, subjectivity and identification are key terms used in the academic literature surrounding these broad and contentious areas of philosophical debate. In **Chapter 3** I will discuss how I have discovered and explored different writers and approaches to these questions, the participant research methodology that I have adopted and the place of historical analysis in the development of the underpinning theory.

These questions have ultimately lead to a deeper engagement with Lacanian psychoanalysis and the work of Slavoj Žižek on popular culture. **Chapter 4** will discuss my understanding of their ideas that I think are useful to music teachers and introduce the research projects presented as part two of this thesis. Using psychoanalysis to explore music education is not a simple task, which I have increasingly realised during my research activities.

Many of the concepts employed by Lacan and Žižek appear counter-intuitive and difficult to articulate in simple terms.

Part two of the thesis presents the research projects as they have arisen in four distinct phases. **Chapter 5** describes the preliminary research on language and music theory as an evolving set of small case studies: narratives in the form of interviews, observations and surveys.

Chapter 6 focuses on the collection of data from the rehearsal of popular music discourse found in the professional working environment of musicians. The working title for the project was 'The Curious Case of The Musical Rehearsal'. The four case studies are:

Case 1: All The Things You Are – Jazz Trio

Three musicians who are working through Jazz standards, using lead sheets which provide melody and chords to be improvised over. The rehearsal takes place in the trumpet player's front room.

Case 2: Is This Love? – Roots Reggae Function Band

An ensemble of eight musicians playing covers of well known Reggae songs in preparation for a performance in a village hall. The rehearsal takes place in another musicians living room that is hired out to local bands at a low rate.

Case 3: You Are My Emperor – R 'n' B Vocalist

A rehearsal of five musicians preparing for a live performance of original music produced electronically to be performed at a festival. The rehearsal takes place in a youth centre where the female singer's manager works.

Case 4: You Know How I Feel – Singer Songwriter

Five musicians preparing for a showcase of original material used to promote a collection of fine art. Commercial rehearsal facilities are used.

Chapter 7 deals with Žižek's analysis of 'The Graph of Desire' and **Chapter 8** looks closer at Lacan's original writings on the subject, attempting to bring a musical interpretation into a pragmatic model for music teachers: 'The Musician's Dialogue'. Both detail theoretical explorations of how a music teacher may begin to understand the environments they work in and the motivations of the people they work with through frameworks that may be derived from writing on psychoanalysis.

Language is so fundamental to psychoanalysis that it is posited as being a prerequisite for a person's sense of self. This means that from a psychoanalytical perspective what we think of as reality is in fact a constructed fantasy, our actual reality resides in what is termed our unconscious, hidden from us, unknowable and inaccessible. We derive our sense of meaning from what is signified to us through language, in fact our very existence as a subject is formed as we identify with these signifiers. Our knowledge and understanding is always contingent and temporal, but to operate in the world we always seek a sense of universality – something to fix our meanings to, something to solidify our sense of reality and provide us with a sense of certainty to what we do. Consequently, conceptions of truth and rightfulness are subtly changed, providing slightly different perspectives on the discourses we engage with. We as subjects shape and filter how we understand what we do, either unconsciously or, as is the aim of using psychoanalysis, with a sense of awareness of what drives us to act and the way that the goals we focus on affect how successful we feel we are in our activities.

In the third part of the thesis I discuss some of these implications. **Chapter 9** is an analysis of the data from the case studies on popular music rehearsal using nodes from 'The Musician's Dialogue'.

Chapter 10 looks at the crucial role of enjoyment in music making activities and how easy it is to overlook this in formalised educational contexts, hoping to provide some sense of lexicon from psychoanalysis to

musicians to describe what are otherwise often dismissed as ephemeral, emotive or unmeasurable descriptions of why we make music. It concludes by hoping to provide some reassurance to people who identify as musicians and as teachers that the fear of uncertainty should be embraced as a fundamental part of our practice, rather than be defended against as a potential source of undermining our sense of expertise and status as authorities on the processes and reasons that motivate us to make music.

Chapter 2 – Literature Review

What is music education?

Music education, whilst appearing to be a straightforward area of study, can be interpreted to be a wide range of different contexts in which learning about music can take place. This research project is based on the experiences of one music teacher in a multitude of different contexts, some that allow for an understanding of what other music teachers experience, but also in a way that is particular for him. The purpose of this chapter is to explain the way the research project is built on specific sets of previous researchers whose theories of music education have inspired and informed the work found here. In particular, it is in response to Lucy Green's work on informal music learning, but also to many of the writers who have contributed to the online journal *Action, Criticism and Theory in Music Education* that embraces contemporary continental philosophies to look at how music education can be viewed as discourse and culture.

Firstly, we need to look at some of they key principals that underpin this researcher's particular perspective on music education, which is placed in a particular historical context. Music education can be seen as enculturating students into established traditions that exist independently of their studies or it can be seen as a process where the student is at the centre of the learning process and the development of that student's musicianship is the predominant concern of curriculum design and delivery. More recent developments have brought a concern for the progression into employment of trained music students as a result of increasingly arbitrary education and cultural sectors of the economy here in the UK.

Cox (2012), taking from John Finney's account, describes some of these developments over the last half century, which:

> starts with an account of a child-centred tradition of teaching and ends with a future-oriented tradition bounded by principles of the market. (Cox

2012:123)

In the 1950s Sybil Marshall had a view of education as a child-centred process where:

> the nurturing of 'growth' and 'self-realisation' so that 'what had been given by the past to appreciate and cherish' should be made sense of 'here and now'. (ibid)

This is in opposition to the guardians of the music education tradition who stood for 'tradition, civility, and a high-cultural aesthetic' (ibid). But research in 1960s found that music teachers were dependent on performing, listening to and studying existing works. Creative activity was rare in the music classroom. A change came in the 1970s with the publication of *Sound and Silence* (Paynter and Aston 1970) with an emphasis on music as a creative art that should be at the centre of the school curriculum.

A real starting point for the theory of music education that this thesis is based upon is Keith Swanwick's *A Basis for Music Education* (1979) that takes a philosophical stance and provides practical advice for music teachers – 'an easily comprehensible scheme… that was to satisfy a much needed basis for the thinking about music in the curriculum' (Cox 2012:123/124). Yet many pupils remained unengaged with music in school. Finney developed an ethnographical approach to investigating the music his pupils liked to play outside of regulated class time where they could express themselves free from a kind of alienation they felt from the music their teachers expected them to engage with. This was

> a self-made informal learning situation' [where their] musical world was not separated from 'their being and becoming'. Their work centred on the 'realization of self'. This was not the case in their experience of formal schooling in music (ibid).

It is this child-centred progressive tradition of music education to which this thesis speaks. The researcher began his secondary education in 1987, when Finney was observing pupils forming and playing in rock bands

in his school, he too was engaging in the same activities encouraged by teachers influenced by this new approach to music education. It is the call to find fresh purpose for music education in an increasingly uncertain world, that this purpose should arbitrate 'the quest for self-realization, self-understanding and a productive, creative, critical and authentic orientation to the world' (ibid:124/125) that is essential to the motivation of the researcher in his daily work and in his attempt to contribute to this new music education.

The current context of popular music education can be described as a new 'second wave' (Allsup 2008: 2) that has tackled questions of authenticity: the differences between classroom music and the cultural experiences of music pupils. Lucy Green's *How Popular Musicians Learn*, in which she focuses on *informal music learning* (Green 2006), 'helped to legitimize popular music as a field of education research and smoothed the way for its inclusion in schools' (Allsup 2008:2). Whilst highlighting and placing pupils' musical culture as a central concern of curriculum design the term 'informal' sets up a dichotomy with 'formal' music learning and requires 'broad and self-critical illustrations of what constitutes a qualified, indeed highly qualified, music teacher' (ibid:5). Calls for research studies that locate and problematize methods of teaching of popular music (ibid:2) are heard in the academic community.

In further and higher education there is also 'a growing recognition of the need for research into music curriculum matters in higher education' (Broad & O'Flynn 2012:1). There has been research into the professional development and self-perceptions of music teachers (Hallam et al. 2008), the development of musicians into music teachers has though:

> focused more on exploring the processes of teaching and learning in performance that are rooted in (sometime centuries old) tradition and which are the core of the conservatoire's work (for example Burwell and Shipton 2011; Gaunt 2007; Jørgensen 2000; Pike and Carter 2010; Russell 2009) (Broad & O'Flynn 2012:2)

This again speaks of a dichotomous tension between traditional methods of understanding the purposes of music education, built from conservatoire-centred values and the growing recognition of the diversity of contexts in which music is experienced by the wider population.

Lucy Green (2010), in response to criticism of her work, makes some key points that in themselves problematise the relationship between attitudes disseminated by conservatoire values and factors at play in the new music education. The influence of government policy such as through the National Curriculum is significant in schools, affecting how practical activities are conceived. When approached as a form of creative art popular music was still approached by teachers 'with pedagogies that were fundamentally not very different from the approaches they used for classical music' (Green 2010:90). The evolution of technology, the internet and digital music production also have a significant impact on how music education has changed, also extending debates about 'issues of social inclusion, particularly along gender and class lines, which will present us with ever-new challenges in this area' (ibid:91/92).

Green is not arguing for a complete and discrete separation between the worlds of formal and informal music learning, nor a complete rewrite of how music education is done. She argues that her use of these terms requires 'a pedagogy that is thoughtfully derived from, and carefully structured upon the real-world learning practices of musicians in the informal real… 'education' can be adapted to incorporate some aspects of the 'informal' in certain ways, and vice versa' (ibid:91). Such an approach needs to be predicated at the level of Higher Education as music graduates consider careers in education as they will bring their understandings into the classroom and here there can be a significant difference between those trained in the conservatoire and those studying degrees in popular music. Working out

> 'how to provide a valid music educational experience which can be

> accredited across the different musical styles is a very real challenge… [data is needed] which in some way gets inside the thoughts and experiences of research-subjects seems to be so necessary in this period of musical and cultural diversity. (Green 2010:92)

The psychoanalytic approach of this thesis is an attempt to manifest and problematise some of these challenges faced by today's music teachers, many of whom may well still come from a conservatoire background where their primary goal to become performers or soloists gives way to 'what was initially their fallback position, teaching' (Lebler 2009, 243 quoted in González 2012:227). One tendency that has been identified to need questioning is the fetishising *'methodolatry'* (Regelski 2007), where whole scale methods of music education lack the reflective capacity to respond to pupils' musical cultures and 'very often fail to address transferability and reflective issues in the holistic musical and professional development of the student' (Broad & O'Flynn 2012:3).

Research on the response of pupils to the delivery of music education in schools also shows that where it does not respond to their needs music development will happen outside of school where they can express their own values and attitudes, developing their own praxis. The role and relationship of the music teacher to their pupils needs to be acknowledged and adapted whether or not the teacher's own musical background is one of conservatoire training or from a popular music tradition:

> It is a question not of style of music but of attitude... there is a transition of the role of the teacher from that of pedagogue/leader to that of guide, and a transition of the role of the pupil from that of recipient/participant to that of co – creator (Stålhammar 2003: 27).

In calling for more research into the teaching and learning of musicology, or of music technology, Broad and Flynn echo an idea central to this researcher's interest in the motivation of musicians, learners and teachers. Music teachers need to apply skills to our own practice in learning, teaching and curriculum design that are:

> both critical, in the sense of participating in an unceasing renegotiation of

> the value of particular ideas and skills, and reflective, in asking of themselves Peter Renshaw's deceptively simple but powerful question 'Why do I do what what I do?' (e.g. Renshaw 2009). (Broad & O'Flynn 2012:4)

Multi-cultural music education

Georgii-Hemming and Westvall (2010a) discuss the reflections of student music teachers in Sweden, where:

> higher music education is conventionally built on a conservatoire tradition where instrumental skills and aesthetic ideals are passed on from teacher to pupil in what can be defined as a master-apprentice relationship (Nielsen and Kvale 2000) ... Such principles generate a particular approach to the teaching and learning of music, regardless of the genre. (Georgii-Hemming & Westvall 2010a:355/356)

Despite and increasingly broad and inclusive approach in more recent years, they still detect these principles at work. They propose that music education can be viewed as either as a normative or socio-cultural discourse, seeing music either as an object or a process, bringing into question the role of the teacher in curriculum design (ibid:359).

In a paper accompanying their research they state that 'music education needs to address and include popular culture, but it should also contain a critical and sound discussion concerning popular culture and media' (Georgii-Hemming & Westvall 2010b:30). Here music is perceived as a unique source for personal and social development, where students take responsibility for their learning and that 'through positive musical experiences human beings can feel joy and solidarity, develop self-esteem and discover that different forms of knowledge have a value' (ibid:24).

Informal teaching strategies are a legitimate way to engage and motivate students (ibid:26) and schools are a part of the socio-cultural environment where their students experience music (ibid:30).

Another way of considering popular music education is as an aspect of multi-cultural society. To do this the debate needs to be wider than considering just what happens in the school music classroom. Questions of

identity, culture and inclusion are all concerns of education, only perhaps more visibly manifest when placed in conjunction with musical style. To use the term multi-cultural often implies the attempt to include into the mainstream 'other' cultures that are not considered normative of Western European traditions.

Yet multi-cultural can imply the coming together of different cultures, without any particular one being seen as having a privileged position. The value of this view point is becoming increasingly recognised as necessary in the field of music education (Drummond 2010:117). To overcome the tendency to operate within the dominant paradigm music teachers trained in the conservatoire will need to have an

> open reception to the breadth of music's multiple manifestations… [dealing with] a natural tendency to privilege the music that is 'theirs', and they must also deal with an educational system, reinforced in their teacher-training, which tends to acknowledge only one learning paradigm. (ibid:119)

Picking up on the work of Green, Drummond states that 'some music teachers can find it difficult to identify with the 'other' music that young people or particular community cultures most enjoy' (ibid), and that music teachers can experience musical alienation as much as the people they teach.

The 'othering' of musics, such as through the terms 'world music' or 'popular music' (ibid:120) has partly been precipitated by ethno-musicological enquiries that place such music in an awkward juxtaposition in the school curriculum. Yet Lundquist (1998) suggests that such methods if applied to traditions prominent in the conservatoire may allow such musicians to 'examine our perspective on music, since that determines what we teach and how we teach it' (Lundquist 1998:39).

The process of naming and labelling can in fact make an enormous difference in the way we perceive cultural practices. Drummond suggests that re-naming can have an impact on the social and historical

understanding we have of the different music cultures that are taught, proactively suggesting that Western Art Music (the classical canon traditionally taught in the conservatoire – the normative association of the word 'music' in Europe) be additionally named North-west Asian Court Music setting it in a global context and creating a sense of parity with 'other' musics that are evoked with the term 'multicultural' (Drummond 2010:122).

When we talk about culture in this way we see a relationship between the labels and language we use to describe what we do and the way we build a sense of identity. Culture is a term that gives validity to the way each individual chooses to express themselves and undermines attempts to place universal values on artistic expression. Drummond concludes:

> 'It also encourages the realization that 'my music' is part of 'my identity' as a social being in a cultural tradition, even when 'my music' is the music of Bach or Beethoven. It acknowledges that one's own music is part of cultural diversity, not apart from it… we should see our work in music education as a celebration of pluralism, an ongoing opportunity for the development of a new awareness of the richness of human life, and a new understanding of its possibilities' (ibid).

Hoffman (2012) highlights 'the propagation of social injustices such as unequal access to music education due to social class status' (Hoffman 2012:222) in a middle school wind band classroom in the US. Drawing on concepts from social psychology he posits that:

> identity… is both the outward projection of who we desire to be, as well as our internalised perceptions of such desired behaviours and characterisations … musical identity is constructed, confirmed, and maintained almost exclusively through interaction with others (ibid:210)

Music and culture are seen here as a process of constructing identity, by forming relationships with other musicians building an increasing familiarity of their activities, knowledge and understandings. Hoffman brings together Wenger's ideas regarding community knowledge and Swanwick's theory of musical knowledge to 'inform our understanding of socially constructed musical identity' (Hoffman 2012:213).

Popular music education then, when viewed through a cultural lens, looks to the thinking and being of musicians for its value. Music is not an object containing meaning, but a result of interaction between musicians. A socio-cultural framework is then appropriate for a multi-cultural learning environment, that may validly use informal techniques allowing the role of the teacher to be one of facilitator as well as expert. An individual musician's identity, whilst dependant on their own construction through language, will still be a result of their interactions with others. The social and historical contexts, the language and discourses at play, are very relevant.

There is an ideological struggle for control of the modern curriculum and its governing pedagogies according to Davis (2005:47), including the Kulturkritik tradition, post-imperial Interculturalist movements and the 'recent, aggressive, state- sponsored emphasis on economic instrumentalism and the performative calculation of educational value*' (Blake et al., 2000, pp. 30–54)'* (ibid). Marxist theories, feminisms and post-colonial studies all make commentary on these discourses, which manifest in different ways in different classrooms. They each have challenges to established dominance of the European metropolis that imposes and differentiates through an imperialistic aesthetic, that reinforces the 'insidious influence of representations routinely exposed as the discursive constructions of ideology and power' (ibid:50).

Significantly Davis sees music as an important social marker that bounds, delineates and allows for a sense of collective cultural identity.

> When music education engages with a superficially fixed, culturally talismanic form such as the lullaby, the dialogic processes of education inevitably reconfigure the cultural meanings of the musical object, relocating it to a symbolic order of acquisition and performance where its underlying remoteness from the discursive systems of cultural initiation are paradoxically revealed. (ibid:54)

Music not only brings people together through shared cultural artefacts and practices, it can be a 'signifying system to make realities, to

conjure into presence things that might not exist apart from signification' (ibid:55). The musical manifestation of culture can create a sense of the authentic, rooted in the specificity of a particular time, place or group of people. Davis uses this argument to consider how economic instrumentalism has combined with post-imperial, hegemonic forces. He believes that innovative challenges to such predicated ideologies, including calls for the decentring of Western art music from the music syllabus 'represent a persuasive response to the quest for cultural capital in a globalised society' (ibid: 57)

As we begin to consider the question of music in multi-cultural contexts we are forced to consider a range of concepts that will have a bearing on any analysis of specific musical examples or instances of musical learning. Informal learning is set in a dichotomous opposition to formal traditions and hegemonic relations between them. Culture is self-constructed in the formation of identity and represents a sense of the reality of interaction with others. Social discourse is full of signification that helps each individual find their own place in relation to others, even though music, learning, culture and society are all concepts made in language and without any real substance outside of our perception of them.

It is at this point that it can begin to become hard to follow some of the conceptual terminology as we move beyond debates about curricula, pupil behaviour, musical artefacts, performance processes or technological equipment, which are to some extent measurable and common in music education literature. We need to ask more probing questions about perceptions, motivation, expectations and desire. Why do musicians do what they do, what motivates music teachers, how do musicians learn? To ask these questions we need to go deeper into language and identification. Educational theory, drawing on wider philosophical traditions, contains many debates about the nature of the self and the ways in which we understand ourselves. The key words to understand are signification and

subjectivity, there are many complex and conflicting views of what the implications are for each.

Davis makes some pertinent points relevant to the research undertaken in this thesis taking from Deleuzian (ibid:54) and postmodern (ibid:59) viewpoints. Even though the researcher takes a little from the deconstruction of writers influenced by Derrida and a lot from the cultural analysts who rely on Lacanian psychoanalysis, he feels that these arguments invite him into a process of experimentation, interpretation and remaking to explore the concept of musicianship and its relationship to learning. It is a strategy given justification from the need to find new ways of understanding what music education is:

> Replacing unitary musicological frameworks implicitly derived from Western metaphysics, even where such metaphysics are expressly disavowed, with multiple and fluid hermeneutics can open music education to experimental, heterenomous systems of organisation and practice grounded in the actual materialities of different cultures and societies. (Davis 2005:58)

Popular Music as a vocational area of study

Before moving into the more involved theoretical considerations there is another area that must be briefly covered. The researcher's training, undergraduate degree and professional teaching experiences can all be placed into the term Martin Cloonan (2005) describes *'Popular Music Studies' (PMS)*, which in itself has a historical context that the reader should be familiar with.

The history of popular music is often located with its beginnings in the arrival of Rock and Roll in 1950s and its relationship with a growing post-war youth culture, becoming legitimised as an area of academic study with the pioneering work of the Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies and their study of every day life from the 1960s onwards (Cloonan 2005:78).

The study of popular music contained tensions between methods of written notation commonly used by the classical tradition not being capable

of capturing many of the important aspects of popular music performance, such as rhythmic subtleties, improvised elements and evocative sounds filled with meaning (such as James Brown's *whoops!*). Shuker (2013) argues that these extra-textural elements form the defining characteristics of popular music, over and above the insights the textual approach of lyrical or musicological analysis can achieve (ibid:79).

The evolution of rock music, alongside countercultural movements of the late 1960s, gave an importance to popular music as a form of valid cultural expression. But definitions of rock that wished to legitimise it as an art form attempted to do so through an opposition to the commercialised world of pop, in a new manifestation of the tension between perceptions of high and mass culture by 'new cohorts of professional rock critics whose work centred on attempts to legitimise rock as culturally significant' (ibid:80).

Historical and sociological writing on the fields of popular culture and its musics continued to grow with key works by Gillett (2011 [orig. 1970]), Frith (2006 [orig.1978]), Swanwick (1979) and Middleton (1990) amongst others. Theorists analysed not only textural and extra-textural musical elements, but also the broader facets of the music industry, its audiences, politics, identity and representations of performers. They increasingly focused on music as a central concern of the ordinary and everyday (Cloonan 2005:82).

In 1990 the University of Salford launched BA in Popular Music and Recording, the first of many degree level programmes that are now common in English universities. Entry onto these programmes is commonly found through vocational programmes, most notably BTECs. These vocational programmes mix a variety of elements: academic and practical, with a focus on employability. However, the actual activities and content of these programmes can vary considerably depending on the context and more significantly the knowledge, skills and interests of the teachers delivering

them. Curriculum design can depend on a variety of competing demands such as

> institutional constraints, the requirements of professional bodies, employer demands, student demand… A typical model might involve the teaching of 'core' modules and then varying amounts of student choice… curricula for undergraduate degree programmes in popular music within HE can be divided into three parts: musical, vocational (including business studies) and theoretical. (ibid:83).

The business orientation of many of these programmes is aimed at progressing students into employment, and whilst performance elements are the most obvious curriculum activity there are a range of programmes that are specifically aimed at non-performance aspects of popular music, such as music production, sound engineering, live sound, music industry, music journalism or music management. Even on programmes denominated as music practice, performance elements generally only constitute a third of the curriculum, the rest given over to subjects outlined above or to the theoretical and historical study of music.

Cloonan's commentary on popular music studies identifies these trends as different from the traditional study of music in several different ways. 'The first is that lineage of PMS which comes out of sociological and cultural theory. The second is that within the industry itself the majority of jobs are for non-musicians' *(Dumbreck et al.,2003).* (ibid:84) He goes on further to say that PMS is at the forefront of the employability agenda and rise of vocationalism, that many students 'undertake their studies in the (often mistaken) belief that this will be a route into the music industries' and that this has coincided with 'a growing concern within government to meet the needs of the creative industries' (ibid).

Popular Music Studies then sits in a difficult position between the aesthetic and pragmatic, between the academic and vocational, between a cultural expression of art and an apparent supplier of content for a commercial workforce. Perhaps popular music as a form of study can be

placed in such a way because it can as a concept work as a vehicle for many different agendas bringing together the needs of a range of people in a diverse population into one seemingly coherent concept that can be used in productive as well as artistic ways.

For music teachers there are a number of important ways in which we can help our students. Cloonan believes PMS speaks of a common culture, deals with the everyday, raises awareness of the impact of the media, the music industry, the political economy and 'can be seen as being inherently democratic in that it builds on a body of knowledge which most people have' (ibid:89/90).

The democratic value of popular music can be seen in a wide variety of literature on learning, especially the use of the concept of informal learning to counter hegemonic narratives. Looking at Brazilian music schools Feichas (2010), drawing on Fornas et al. (1995), says that 'institutionalised (formalised) learning process is often goal-oriented with ready-made aims' but that 'students do not know the details of the goals but they know or believe that someone – the teachers, the head-teacher or the school board – has laid down plans, and aims, for their instruction' (Feichas 2010:50). However, group learning of popular music engaged students in new and different ways, non-systematic, co-operative and according to their needs and motivation, a process which 'can be explained by situated learning theory *(Lave & Wenger, 1991)'* (ibid:51).

Feichas identifies both possibilities of combining formal and informal learning techniques and the problems that arise in situations that do this, such as contextualising outside of class what is learnt in class, the mechanical nature of what was learned in formal techniques versus the significance of aural skills used in informal learning (ibid:54). It is argued that the entire music community would benefit from a more integrated approach, but since 'it gives more autonomy to the learner, it demands a paradigm shift in the

teacher's role. In this model the teacher is not the owner of knowledge choosing what and how to teach.' (ibid:56)

Jaffurs (2004) asks the question of how musicians develop in informal learning contexts, that it is a relativistic approach that the:

> musicality of the musicians depends upon the unique perception and existence of music within the community… informal music practices are natural and spontaneous responses to music. There is no evaluation, formal or otherwise, and no teacher direction or guidance. (Jaffurs 2004:8)

But clearly in the context of PMS, as described by Cloonan above, evaluation and assessment must take place in the context of formal qualifications, no matter how informal the learning techniques are. The contrasting and dichotomous terms formal/informal, clearly have a use in identifying and separating different elements and methods of learning but in institutions that deliver popular music as a mode of study where vocational and academic study are also combined there may be a limitation in using such terms in opposition to each other.

Music teachers themselves have to tackle the issues of the techniques they employ and consider which they are familiar with themselves. The development of an identity as a music teacher is significant for musicians who become teachers. Jaffurs identified the importance of peer groups in informal music learning contexts, the high value students place on 'friendship, shared taste, tolerance, and the ability to listen to each others' ideas' *(Green 2006:114)* (ibid:11/12). This is echoed in some literature on the development of music teachers where participants in training 'indicated that their peers played a major role in their success' (Haston & Russell 2011:375) in authentic context learning experiences as part of pre-service training. Such teaching experience 'seems to have a profound impact on their identity development' (ibid:387).

The role and possible identities of music teachers is then a significant aspect of investigating and understanding music education.

Formal/informal, academic/vocational, institutional/democratic are all dichotomies that play on how a music teacher will understand their role and help them define what they think they should be doing. Freer and Bennett (2012) discuss research conducted into a 'possible selves framework' for music teacher identities that counters a narrative of musicians either being successful performers or music teachers (Freer & Bennett 2012:265). It focuses on task-goal situations where the 'planning and implementation of strategies towards realisation or avoidance of possible future identities... the 'ego situation' (ibid:267) is negated.

They suggest that music teachers should be focused on strong positive musical identities, rather than on dominant teacher identity, that music teacher identity be part of a broader musical identity (ibid:281). They suggest further multi-modal research including textual and non-textual elements is required. Significantly for this thesis they highlight the the role of uncertainty in the identity of trainee music teachers, a factor that calls on the possible understandings that psychoanalysis can bring to the debate. Their framework 'enables discussion to incorporate hopeful and confident possible selves alongside doubtful and feared possible selves, [but] for which our participants were unable to suggest strategies that might assuage their concerns' (ibid). The research project presented here hope to begin to suggest some strategies for music teachers who encounter such doubt and uncertainty.

Discourse and Ideology in education

It is clear from the debates on music education discussed in the chapter so far that the concept of identity, of musicians, teachers and learners, is of paramount importance. We have looked at how a progressive approach to education has placed the student at the centre of the learning process, with music education moving from a focus on musical objects, great works and composers to a focus on the processes involved in being a musician, making music and developing musical skills. The debates around

formal and informal learning techniques reflect the tensions between traditional, conservatoire based approaches to music education and the influences of a growing body of work flowing from cultural theory, the presence of popular culture in society and the media and the economic pressures upon contemporary educational institutions.

The researcher's understanding and exploration of these influences on his own practice has grown through his time working on the research project, encountering and seeking out theories that might help him better serve his students, working towards a socially just model of music education that is inclusive of all the students he works with, whatever their interests, background or motivations. In the writing of this thesis he has slowly developed an engagement with a range of concepts that centre around identity, discourse and culture. Much of the writing he has done has evolved and changed as a fuller understanding of each concept has been witnessed through reading and thinking through the ideas of the literature pertinent to the subjects relating to his field of study.

What follows is an outline of some of the ideas found in educational theory relating to discourse as he has encountered it, many of the ideas in following chapters represent not so much a comprehensive overview of the state of each theory or concept, but his individual and growing engagement with them. In the next chapter this can be seen as justification for the methodology applied to his research. The remainder of this chapter considers some of the places concepts of discourse and ideology appear in literature on music education.

Hargreaves and Marshall (2003) use the terms 'identities in music' and 'music in identities', the former being 'the ways in which people view themselves in relation to the social and cultural roles existing within music', the latter 'refers to the ways in which music may form a part of other aspects of the individual's self-image' (Hargreaves & Marshall 2003:264). They describe how peoples 'self-systems' contain different 'self-concepts' which

may apply to musical identity in varying degrees dependant on their level of interest or training. They consider how music in school involves control of the curriculum, whereas pupils' engagement out of school 'involves far more autonomy and ownership' (ibid:266). Central to research on music education is the way music teachers balance their identities as musicians and teachers in their relationship to their students. Research from this social perspective can bring new insights and solutions to practical problems and 'can also start to explain how individuals' views of themselves can actually determine their motivation and subsequent performance' (ibid:272/273). Hargreaves and Marshall also note that in much of the literature they reviewed on the subject of musical identity in trainee music teachers, vocational qualifications such as those discussed in the previous section on PMS, were rarely mentioned.

Yet the contrast of 'music in identity' and 'identity in music' also sets a dichotomous contrast between the social and the individual. As we investigate discourse further we begin to see that such a division is more problematic than society and individuals being separate fields in which identity is formed. Language is formative of both these concepts, yet we perceive and use such dichotomous constructs to help us investigate and better understand our place in the world.

Gracyk (2004) asks does everyone have a musical identity? The question derives from the observation that 'identities in music are routinely conceived in terms of a dichotomy between musicians and non-musicians' (Gracyk 2004:2-3). Stating that individuals recognise a musical work when actively constructing a musical object in the auditory imagination it is argued that 'listening to music always involves a complex synthesis and analysis of competing clusters of unfolding sensations' (ibid: 16). The argument here is that identity is formed in the imagination of the listener, musical identity is formed as the listener assembles musical objects in the act of listening. 'The musical work is an abstract object that is realized differently in many specific

objects' (ibid), but only becomes so when actualised in the imagination of the listener.

Is it the case then, that music exists in objects outside of the listener or is musical identity formed through the conscious thinking and bringing into being a sense of musical objects to meditate on and interact with? We can begin to ask if part of the process of forming musical identity is ascribing to these many specific objects the musicality that the listener forms in their own imagination. To do so may begin to help define reasons why so often music making is described in such dichotomous terms, in the case of Gracyk these might be the difference between musicians and non-musicians.

Roberts (2004) also recognises the growing awareness of the relationship between music and identity, discussing the struggle of a young person wanting to become a musician '- not to play the piano but to be accepted by everyone around him as the musician he believes himself to be; that is, as his musician identity' (Roberts 2004:5). Here it is the perception of others that are significant in the formation of a person's identity as a musician, even if those 'others' and their perceptions sit in the imagination of the person whose identity is being formed. The metaphor of the 'mirror' is at work here where a person's perceptions of the world, and of themselves, are dependant on reflections they see of themselves in a mirror formed by the language they use. This is a concept essential to Lacanian psychoanalysis as is explored in later chapters.

The consideration of language in the forming of identity and the way meaning is stitched together through discursive constructs can also have an impact on the analysis of the concept of informal learning. In Batt-Rawden and DeNora's (2005) paper on informal learning they discuss 'the creative and resourceful ways people use music and, to varying degrees how people use music as to construct themselves in situated and imaginatively situated relation to others' (Batt-Rawden & DeNora 2005:289/90). They assert that music is used to frame material practices by projecting or mapping music's

properties onto objects in order to organise something outside themselves (ibid:289). Drawing on the Cultural Historical Activity Theory of Vygotsky (cf.1978) they say that learning models are transmitted through musicians partaking in collaborative music making activity ("musicking"), even where this is not formal teaching it 'often consists of sub- conscious, oblique and real-time situated (hence fleeting) learning situations' (ibid:292).

In this way informal learning is operational, it is not aimed at specific, conscious goals 'e.g. it is not action, but it is rather subsumed by other goals or tasks and deployed in response to the fluctuating, the actual and the local' (ibid). Part of Activity Theory is the idea that tools, including linguistic ones, provide and encourage particular opportunities and viewpoints denoted as affordances. This is a very useful way of understanding different music making contexts as the instruments or technology used in each context will impact on what is done and how it is perceived. The objects of music, and indeed learning about music, create frameworks that provide particular instances of understanding. Of course each object, tool or word also limits each framework as certain types of understanding are simultaneously cut out of musical activities using these tools.

> This is to say that music's affordances are constituted through the ways music is framed or prepared for use. Turning to different types of music and the meaningful parts that reflect and register self-identity and which provide a template for self-knowledge, individuals choose music that affords self-images that are tenable, that seem do-able, habitable. (ibid:296)

Batt-Rawden and DeNora make clear that not only do particular frameworks delineate how we understand the world, but that we choose particular frameworks that we find suit our image of ourselves. One of the smaller case studies discussed in part two of the thesis explores this idea in the context of music technology and curriculum funding.

The influence of psychology on music education is discussed by Hargreaves, Marshall and North (2003). Interactions between teacher and learner have gained prominence due to a shift from psychometric and

acoustical studies towards socio-cultural perspectives, which has resulted from a move away from Piagetian theory to a use of Vygotsky's work as he places 'more reliance on the incorporation of these social and cultural networks into the development of thought itself' (Hargreaves, Marshall & North 2003:152). They state that as diversification continues in the fields of music education and music psychology there is a necessity for rethinking

> many of the distinctions that have been at the heart of the system for many years. These include the distinction between 'specialist' and 'general' or 'curriculum' music at school; that between formal and informal music-making in and out of school; that between institutional and community music-making; and even that between the teacher and the learner. (ibid:157)

They call for new models and concepts of thinking as dividing lines blur and break down. This may also speak of a level of uncertainty of what new models might look like, but also what can be useful and valuable in the old models on which much practice is already built.

Froehlich (2007) takes a pragmatic approach to considering the uncertainties that face professional music teachers, looking at the contrasts between routinized behaviours and the introduction of new ideas and models of learning. Much research fails to take account of the broader contexts in which the data collected from enquiries into music education take place and it is suggested that more work needs to be done on examining contradictions in value systems and policies, as well as identifying normative assumptions of what is "right" and "wrong" (Froehlich 2007:10).

In Froehlich's account music teachers are mediators of learning, their professionalism is seen as making decisions 'under conditions of unavoidable uncertainty… as teachers, we know that if our students are to have confidence in us, our actions must appear routinized' (Froehlich 2007:12/13). Yet routinised teaching occurs with prescribed action, uncritical and not taking account of the appropriateness of actions taken, it is

> what Abbott calls jurisdictional vulnerability (1988, p.51) … any pedagogy, no

> matter how innovative at one point, can fall prey to jurisdictional vulnerability, thereby weakening the music educator's professional status. I believe this to be at the root of what Regelski and others have referred to as "methodolotry". (ibid:13)

Arguing that when many new music teachers first come to teaching they bring with them routines from the music community, rather than those from the educational sphere, she asserts that trainee music teachers should be familiar with the broad range of psychological and sociological issues that accompany musical and instructional ones and that 'it is especially urgent that the presence of options be recognized in instructional situations that seem to implicate routine actions' (ibid:15/16).

It is not worth searching for "fool-proof" techniques or step-by-step instructional sequences as the reasons behind musical and social encounters may appear routine but need to be viewed as 'opportunities to transform routines into critical incidents, incidents that invite analysis' (ibid:17). Froehlich places an emphasis on the significance of the diagnostic act as the definitively professional component. She states that it takes courage to embrace uncertainty, which is always present in the learning environment, the realities of teaching music mean that trainee teacher should be prepared with an understanding of the many different issues at stake 'by embracing the diversity of those realities, along with their different routines and uncertainties' (ibid).

The methodology for this thesis has evolved in response to many of the questions raised in the literature on music education. The eventual decision to engage deeply with Lacanian psychoanalysis is partly due to the way it recognises uncertainty as a fundamental part of the working of the psyche, as well as a specific focus on subjectivity and the role of 'other' in understanding what motivates the subject. It also is part of a wider movement of philosophy that grapples with and confronts many of the hegemonic power relations that are apparent in the literature on music education, particularly when thinking about formal/informal learning and

the need for student centred, multicultural education where there are also complicated interactions with the social and economic pressures on institutions that deliver music education. As with Lucy Green's question as to the place of ideology in music education, many of the possible epistemologies that can be called upon rely on Marxist terminology in the context of a capitalist system of organisation that influences much of the environment that musicians work in.

The next chapter will demonstrate the researcher's development of a methodology and illustrate how Lacanian psychoanalysis came to be key to creating some of the resources that help to give methods for answering some of the questions raised by the literature on music education.

Chapter 3 – Methodology

This chapter firstly looks at participant research and the way data was collected for this thesis, before providing a dialogue on the evolving research aims and outcomes of the various projects that are found in part two. The data collection process is a part of these projects, but the theoretical investigation and applications of ideas found in Lacanian psychoanalysis are also entwined in the way this thesis developed. The process of considering a range of different possible theoretical frameworks before settling on psychoanalysis is detailed here as part of the research process.

What is participant research?

In some ways it is very clear why a participant research model has been used in this research. The researcher is an active professional musician, an experienced music teacher and continues to learn more about being a musician all the time. The research undertaken considers music education and collects data from music classrooms, music teachers and learners, policy and documentation relating to music education. The major piece of data concerns case studies of four rehearsals involving popular musicians preparing for professional performances.

Participant research is a form of action research which is

> conceptualised as research undertaken by practitioners into their own practice, in order to improve it (Elliott 1991). Practitioners (such as teachers) decide what is worth researching, carry out research and thereby become research-informed. (Cain 2008:283)

This researcher's journey started with the aim of changing his own practice and having a positive influence on the environments he works in. A common aim of action research in education is practitioners asking *'how do I improve my practice?'* (Whitehead 1989). This is ultimately a political aim 'to do with attaining greater social justice for the participants and the people they serve' (Cain 2008:284) It involves investigating one's own practice,

planning, carrying out interventions and interrogating data in order to ground evaluation in practice, reflecting on each stage to generate new plans in a cyclical model (ibid:283).

Practitioner research is, in an extension of the action research model, 'a systematic enquiry in an educational setting carried out by someone working in that setting, the outcomes of which are shared with other practitioners' (Menter et al. 2011:3). This is an aim of the research project presented here, with adaptions of working methods and the sharing of ideas taking place on a daily basis in the researchers teaching practice: exploring ideas with colleagues and students, experimenting with, implementing and evaluating curriculum delivery.

The research also has elements of participatory research where 'research is designed to create social and individual change by altering the role relations of people involved in the project' (Banister et al. 1994:111). These elements of action research, practitioner research and participatory research describe aspects of the various research activities, although there has been an evolution in research techniques as the project has progressed.

Initial enquires included observation of classrooms, interviews and surveys, which were done very much in collaboration with other research participants, relying on an interaction between them and the researcher. The discussion and debate evoked by the research activity permeated through the department the researcher worked in and had an influence on the work and attitudes of colleagues and students. In this sense it met the criterion of action research focusing on 'curriculum, resources, assessment, behaviour management and teaching approaches' (Cain 2008:287). At this point the research aims and agenda of the researcher were evident and had an impact on the way participants engaged with the research. Although the researcher was a participant and an integral part of the working environment being studied, his activities would have had an influence on the way other participants conducted themselves. Whilst many of the activities

recommended for carrying out practitioner action research were followed – to select data collection methods that do not distort and intrude on one's practice through the 'collection of documents; keeping a detailed diary; observation notes; questionnaire surveys; interviews; shadowing; tape/video recording; still photographs; triangulation' (Banister et al. 1994:114/115) – there is no doubt that the data being evaluated is strongly permeated by the objectives of the research.

The larger case studies on the rehearsals of popular musicians somewhat reverse this. It was clearly a form of participant research where the researcher obtained data from an environment where he was an equal participant, but here the objectives of the research were not explicit, nor a guiding influence on the outcomes of the activities. Data was collected by an audio recording devise that would have been present even if research was not being conducted. Each rehearsal was for a professional engagement, so the focus of the researcher was on the activity at hand and not on the research process. It is only after the rehearsals that data was processed and evaluated.

In this way aspects of the action and participatory research models are not met. This phase of research did not have a direct impact on the musicians in rehearsal, it was intended to be brought into contrast with the earlier research on explicitly educational contexts. Whilst it is suggested that professional musicians rehearsing is a case of musical learning, many of the participating musicians would not have explicitly articulated what they were doing as learning. The aims of rehearsal are to best prepare the ensemble for a successful performance – to sound good. This exercise in data collection can be described as a 'naturalistic setting' (Cain 2008:310) and a very specific method of selecting data was chosen to avoid the common problem of quantity making comprehensive analysis difficult (ibid).

Also, unlike in the preliminary research conducted, the data from the rehearsal of musicians did not give the participants an opportunity to make

the decisions about the study format and data analysis nor was it 'designed to create social and individual change by altering the role relations of people involved in the project' (Banister et al. 1994:111), which are important principals for some of the feminist writers who advocate the use of participatory research. It was, though, intended to embrace an ideal 'where the distinction between the researcher(s) and those on whom the research is done disappears.... in participatory research attempts are made to form egalitarian relations, with the researcher abandoning 'control' and adopting an approach of openness, reciprocity and shared risk.' (ibid)

Further, in Cain's review of action research in music education he discusses how Somekh conceptualised action research as an iterative process that integrates data holistically, yet this idea is challenged by Hammersley who states it is logically impossible (Cain 2008:287). As 'Conway & Borst (2001) pointed out that much reflection, of which action research is a part, is 'temporally truncated'; that is, there is only one turn of the action research cycle' (ibid:308). This research in totality undertakes many turns of the cycle, perhaps moving away from the initial action research model, to a participant research model and eventually to a much more abstract analysis of theory. Never-the-less it embraces the basic tenets of action research of an active professional seeking to improve his practice and create social transformation 'related to a moral and political standpoint of aiming for greater social justice for all' (ibid), which Cain finds very little of when looking at action research which has been conducted in the field of music education.

Reification and Ideology

During the course of conducting the preliminary research the researcher began to explore various educational methodologies and their underpinning philosophical frameworks. For Green (2006) alienation is central to understanding music classroom interactions. She argues that teachers who do not recognise the equal utility of non-classical forms of musical language, will struggle to engage students who do not have the

confidence, or have not yet found a way, to translate the symbols presented to them into musical concepts they can relate to:

> In bringing popular music into the curriculum, educators have largely ignored the informal learning practices of popular musicians. Popular music has therefore been present as curriculum content, but its presence has only recently begun to affect our teaching strategies. (Green 2006:101)

Informal music learning provides a place to start considering the psychological factors at work in the music classroom, the way students engage with the materials are presented to them and the expectations of their music teachers. Rodriguez (2009) indicates that the complexity of interaction found in the classroom is difficult to decipher once it is recognised that traditional conventions are not adequate to capture how learning is taking place.

> Green invokes the developmental theory of Swanwick and Tillman (1986) who support her contention that novice learners are initially "primarily immersed in the immediate sonic qualities of musical materials" (p. 71, footnote). If the sophistication of one's notational skills mediates one's initial selection of surface or structural aspects to learn music, then informal learning environments are perhaps even more diverse with respect to peer learning and cooperation than it is tempting to assume. (Rodriguez 2009:40-41)

The process whereby cultural tools and mediational processes become essentialised and separated from the relationship they have to the people enacting them can be defined as reification. The concept of reification is Marxist in origin and relates to discussions of alienation and ideology both of which are sites of contemporary discussion in music education and in wider philosophical debate. These concepts enable us to access some of the social and political dimensions of music education discourse. In activity theory the construction of meaning depends on reified processes:

> Meaning is constructed in communities of practice through the dual process of 'participation' and 'reification'… for Wenger this process [reification] of depersonalising ideas plays a key part in strengthening and developing the power of abstract thought. (Benzie et al. 2005:182).

The concept of reification also introduces us to critical theory and Marxist theories of ideology that are useful for discussing themes and perceptions of neo-liberal, economic instrumentalism, that are pervasive in British educational discourse. Burris (1998) defines reification as describing:

> A situation of isolated individual producers whose relation to one another is indirect and realised only through the mediation of things (the circulation of commodities), such that the social character of each producers labor becomes obscured and human relationships are veiled behind the relations among things and apprehended as relations among things. (Burris 1998:2)

> Persons are thus reduced to functioning as representatives or "personifications" of things in their possession, while productive relations among them become dependant upon the market relations that are established among those things (Marx 1967a:85 cited in Burris 1998:6)

Not only can reification describe an important part of the way meaning is produced and can obscure alternate relationships, it is also symptomatic of a sense of alienation from contemporary discourse which can be seen in the appearance of disapproving or cynical attitudes to informal learning environments.

However useful such arguments are to our understanding of how meaning is produced activity theory and Marxist conceptions of ideology and alienation are based upon a Hegelian historical dialectic (Burris 1998). They privilege knowledge that is grounded in an understanding of history and thereby limit other ways of being that are equally applicable (Hammersley 1995). This is evident if we turn again to the case of music.

Many musicians pride themselves in an understanding of the history of the cultural form from which their stylistic preferences are formed (although some do not). It is however fruitless to expect a student of music to necessarily be moved through reference to a great musician/composer or artist that does not pertain to the style in which they are interested in working. The lack of knowledge of the historical evolution of the stylistic form within which the student is working may be frustrating to their teacher and can be seen to limit them in their ability to create stylistically accurate

music, but that does not stop them creating music that is deeply meaningful to them. Many forms and traditions in music have evolved from a defiance, disregard for or re-conceptualisation of their own historical development, perhaps specifically Punk, Rave and Be-bop, but of course this is by no means exclusive or definitive of those cultures. Any argument that the basis for a belief in the ahistorical nature of these forms is wrong would demonstrate an undertaking that each cultural form is discreet and contained within a particular history, denying peoples' experience of engaging in them.

Music educators are surrounded by social, cultural and institutional forces that require us to engage in the use of language that reifies and requires us to use language that makes assumptions about the discreteness of the process we are engaged in:

> As Codd (2005, p. 27) notes, "current neoliberal policies [informing education] emphasise performativity, conformity, and maintenance of the status quo" in a system where "skills and competencies" are sought in students in order for them to function more effectively in the modern day economic world. Many teachers in neoliberal democracies work in cultures of technicism characterised by stringent accountability and an expectation to generate learning outcomes strictly in accordance with the directives of schooling authorities. (Lines 2008:3)

Often we can relate to and perhaps are used to using such language. Often we are confronted with language and musical forms with which we are not familiar yet we are expected to engage with as if they were a natural part of our own musicianship. This is as true for a classically trained musician trying to teach about Gamelan, as it is to a jazz guitarist trying to engage a student who only knows death metal, as it is a hip-hop DJ wanting to become a qualified music teacher. In recognising the reified nature of much of the language we use we can perhaps begin to devise strategies for engaging with the institutional and psychological demands that are inescapable in the social contexts in which we often work. Is it possible to describe music education interactions without being confined by reified language that may limit our understanding of the multitude of possible ways music education can function?

Deconstruction in Educational Theory

> Realist texts draw upon a shared inter-textual lineage that links them to countless other texts built on the same premises, and containing the same petitions to be read in particular ways. And when we, as readers, read them we draw on that inter-textual heritage too. We don't encounter each text as a unique and self contained object whose meanings lie entirely 'within' it, although that is exactly what it feels like. Instead, we activate our own inter-textual knowledge, which has already inducted us into a particular way of reading, one that covers up its own history, precisely so as to persuade us that meanings lie within. (MacLure 2003:93)

Maggie MacLure's excellent introduction to the theories of Jacques Derrida, *Discourse in Social and Educational Research* (MacLure 2003) provides an accessible place from which to view some of the most challenging contemporary philosophies that engage with ways of looking at education that do not rely on references to particular standpoints to argue for the validity of their claims. Such philosophies argue that much of our way of thinking, and therefore the knowledge we use, is based on inherited belief systems that belong to the Western European Enlightenment Project that is exemplified by philosophers such as Kant and Descartes and forms the basis of many of the scientific approaches to education. At the root of these beliefs is a separation between the body and the mind and an adherence to observation and reason as core tenants of how we can know about the world.

The ongoing questioning of such philosophies, whilst not providing any certain alternatives, does highlight the way in which many forms of discourse about the nature of education promote ways of thinking and being that are confined by inherited values but that are seen to be natural, obvious and unquestionable. A common theme of post-structural, post-modern and deconstructive approaches to education is a promotion of the awareness of the language we use and the way it controls our understanding of what we are discussing.

In preparation for this research project a “case study” of the music theory classroom was conducted. This preliminary research found there not only to be parallels with these contemporary philosophies and their struggle against received traditions, but also a need to question how we identify the tension between received forms of knowledge and other ways of thinking and acting. The basis for this research project lay in investigating how music theory was taught in a class of popular musicians.

Music theory is a good example of inherited language directing our understanding of how things should be. Music theory is a system of symbolic representations formalised by a set of conventions evolved from musical conservatoire teaching systems. Students’ understanding is typically assessed by a set of examinations run by the Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music and is seen to directly correlate with their progress as a musician. However popular musicians are often considered to use a different set of skills than musicians trained in the classical tradition, such as peer learning, aural imitation and improvisation that are given a higher status than the reading and performing of written notation as informed by music theory.

It is the researcher’s belief that the term music theory should be conceived as something much wider than musical notation, that popular musicians think about the music they make and therefore create theories that inform the way they do things; this is music theory as something much more than musical notation. But when investigating this during the case study the researcher realised that it was very hard to draw the line between formal and informal music language (that which directly relates to music notational skills and that which relates to popular musicianship skills). It was possible to impose a personal understanding and make decisions about which words belonged to which category, but this indicated the researcher’s conceptions of the meaning of the words more than it helped him understand the negotiations of the teacher in the classroom. It was difficult

to measure predetermined criteria based on presumptions the researcher was making about the music teacher and learners. The interaction of different exterior factors is far too complex to distil in this way. Hammersley (1995) criticises the belief that language has inherent meaning. This belief sees 'writing conceived as a matter of coding pre-existent messages, with reading as the decoding of the messages' (Hammersley 1995:85).

Presuming a clear distinction between formal and informal music language assumes that these frameworks for understanding musical learning had inherent and objective qualities that can be observed clearly, that it is possible to find inherent meaning in their relationships and in the relationships of the teachers and students using them. This assumption is simplistic and representative of tendencies to dichotomise meaning into binary opposites, therefore undermining the complexity of actual usage. David Lines (2003) uses early anti-foundationalist philosophers to develop a more complex way of looking at the nature of music education:

> Music educators have been struggling for years with practices that reinforce the dualism of 'musical sounds on the one hand and 'cultural assemblages' on the other. The Heideggerian perspectives of poiesis' and 'work' (Arbeit) and the Nietzschean notions of 'will to power' and the 'revaluation of values' challenge this dualism and lay the conceptual ground for a music education practice that is more critical. (Lines 2003:15)

Here is a philosophy that rejects an objective standpoint and provides potential tools for discussing how meaning is constructed between participants in the course of their interactions, helping the researcher understand how easy it is to let the language that he employs to do research direct and shape the results of that research. If an objective or scientific approach to music education is not appropriate and a simple distinction between formal and informal music learning styles is too simplistic to be meaningful, how can one build an understanding of the differing conceptions of what the nature of music education should be?

It became clear to the researcher that an interpretive approach would be needed for the design of the primary research of the project. An anti-foundational position would be important to creating open and reflexive approaches to research design. It was incredibly hard to decide on which terminology to use as the researcher's particular viewpoint was very evident in the language being used and he decided to develop a questionnaire that was more rounded and related to the wider community of music educators.

Smith (1993) provided some valuable strategies, identifying three broad schools of thought with regard the nature of inquiry: 1) a post-empirical, positivistic belief that in some form or other sought to find universality in claims to truth i.e. an objective standpoint; 2) critical theory traditions that were specific to a perspective and that privileged the viewpoints of particular groups in society. These traditions are emancipatory in nature and seek to make 'transparent the historical conditions that have resulted in false consciousness, distorted communication…'. These are what Hammersley names "standpoint epistemologies"; 3) an interpretivist tradition that seeks solidarity and is practical and moral but not abstract:

> For interpretivists… the point of inquiry is to understand the "whys" in terms of reasons, motivations, intentions and so on that stand behind human expressions. (Smith 1993:12)

By deconstructing and reconsidering some of the underpinning philosophical standpoints and empirical assertions found in some of the discourse surrounding music education processes different types of questions began to appear for the researcher. No longer is it so important to ask what are the right ways to conduct music education, what its content should be, how music teachers should act, rather from an interpretive perspective it became more important to ask why musicians, teachers and learners value particular activities and how they bring meaning to those activities. What motivates music learners and teachers must though be

caught up in the language they use and how this is stitched together through the various discourses they may encounter when thinking about music.

The Tools of Music Education

The preliminary research evolved to explore a range of descriptive opinions that might be found in a group of music educators through the use of survey techniques. A data set concerned with perceptions of the purpose of music education was developed to inquire into similarities and difference between policy, research and practitioner aims across a variety of music education sectors in England, with specific consideration to the impact on the developing 14-19 agenda in the UK education system. This involved a questionnaire designed to reflect key themes appearing in some of the literature discussing music education. Sixty students on a post-graduate certificate of education were surveyed. Using a scale of 1 to 5 of perceived importance a mean score of each term employed was ranked into a table.

What was most striking about this result was that creativity was clearly considered most important as were other similar concepts such as fun, engagement and exchange of ideas. Other issues that can dominate syllabi and discourse in music education, such as technology, Conservatoire curricula, ethnicity, class formal instrumental lessons, society, gender and the music industry all were considered less important. This data did not provide a large enough sample to make any claims about how this may represent perceptions of music educators in general, but it does raise questions as to how music educators may choose to negotiate the delivery they are engaged in.

If creativity, fun and engagement are at the forefront of music educators concerns, yet the materials they use and concepts they engage with fall into dichotomous relationships forcing them to choose between formal music learning techniques or alternative informal music learning techniques then they are faced with a set of choices in the classroom. What methods can be used to balance any scheme of work to ensure that formal

techniques are engaged with, whilst maintaining the engagement of students and giving them a sense of fun in their music making? Could a better understanding of reified language and the role it plays in managing curriculum help not only provide greater detail in an analysis of the way musicians use language, but also help produce tools for identifying and coping with the anxiety that may accompany the challenges of such a situation?

The relationship between the creative or musical act and conceptions of what music educators should be teaching is an important tension in music education discourse. The researcher's initial desire to locate the differences between the popular and classical domains is reflected in much of the literature. As well as the discussion of informal learning styles above, Bill Crow's (2006) article discussing the use of sampling and computer games used for composing music explicitly discusses this relationship:

> Research into music teacher identities suggests that the bulk of trainees entering the teaching profession are still predominantly trained in the classical performance tradition (Hargreaves, 2003), making it difficult for them to articulate and model effective teaching approaches in musical creativity. (Crow 2006:122)

The difficulty of articulation implied here arises from the formal music learning techniques of the conservatoire and its emphasis on music notation, training students to be able to read and follow through the composer's instructions is a skill not essential in the use of samplers or modern sequencing packages central to the production of much contemporary popular music. Despite there being a common point of tension between knowledge gained in the classical performance tradition and demands of working in contemporary music classrooms there are parallels with other traditions that precipitate exclusivity in certain domains of knowing. In a survey of *Contemporary Music Students Expectations of Musicianship Training Needs* (Hannan 2006) the data seems 'to indicate that different curriculum agendas might be necessary for performance students, composition students and music production students.' (Hannan 2006:155)

A further preliminary case study was conducted into the way in which the division between performance and technology, imposed by the curriculum, influenced the language and perceptions teachers had of students that studied in one of the two areas in the researcher's place of work, citing different skills sets and knowledge requirements. A multi-modal assessment of the ecology of the music technology classroom identified a presumption that technological resources are sufficient to provide for viable curriculum delivery, that an investment in computers should be enough to ensure an effective learning environment!

In seeing these parallels among discourses of music theory, music technology, music education and musicianship the researcher began to look for conceptual frameworks that would help him articulate the commonalities in such dichotomous language and begin to ask how they appeared to manifest themselves. Cultural Historical Activity Theory provided some useful tools. Wertsch (1998) discusses and focuses on the relationship between the agent (in this case the teacher/students) and the tools they use, which he calls the "mediational means". He takes these terms from Burke's "Dramatistic Method" which 'takes human action as the basic phenomenon to be analysed' (Wertsch 1998:12). Wertsch has an interest in avoiding dichotomous language and cites an irreducible tension between agent and tool, that it is not possible to separate them or discuss them in isolation from each other.

This conception of cultural tool is very useful, it helped the researcher identify commonalities between some key tools used in the act of music making and central to music education processes: music theory – the mastery of notated form; music technology – the mastery of equipment, as well as: technique – mastery over instrument; style – mastery over audience; and form – mastery over composition. These were all conceptions that were symbolised to represent processes that are important in the act of music making.

All of these processes are in some way a part of music making but also meaningless when seen outside of the contexts in which musicians use them. However, they are often perceived to be autonomous objects used and articulated in linguistic traditions that presuppose a correct method of application and therefore also an incorrect method – reified dichotomies. This sense of setting up a binary opposite in language is a key concern for anti-foundational theory and also seems to be primary to Activity Theorists:

> A major part of the problem is how the terms placed in opposition are understood. They are typically understood as referring to essences or objects that have some kind of independent existence…these terms are hypothetical constructs or conceptual tools (tools that maybe of only temporary use) in our process of enquiry. (Wertsch 1998:11)

Examples of such binaries are very evident in everyday musical discourse as well as in the realm of music education: classical (/popular), talented (/untalented), urban (/rural? Or perhaps /white), improvising (/composing), serious (/commercial), performing (/listening) etc. some of which have been discussed earlier in this chapter and can be found in part two of the thesis.

The multi-modal assessment of the ecology of the music technology classroom undertaken was able to demonstrate that the relationship that can be implied between technical resources and good quality teaching environments ignores the existence of a relationship between those resources and the teacher/students. It also conceals some of the practical considerations of delivering curriculum and developing musical skills in such an environment. This is a key theme for activity theorists:

> People often seem to think of the environment as something to be acted upon, not something to be interacted with. People tend to focus on the behaviours of individual objects, ignoring the environment that surrounds (and interacts with) the objects. (Resnick 1994:239 cited in Wertsch 1998:21)

The preliminary research projects undertaken (music theory case study, survey of trainee music teachers, multimodal analysis of music technology, see chapter 5) helped the researcher to see how the language

we use can define and direct how we perceive the nature of music education, and that assumptions about the nature of music can often be revealed by dichotomous relationships. It had shown that such language can obscure and undermine the relationships between teacher, learner and educational environment, and that creativity was a key concern for at least some new music teachers. Activity theory had provided a good set of tools to discuss these issues, that reification is an important concept in exploring these relationships and deconstructing further the philosophical tensions that are revealed.

Anxiety and ownership

The tensions discussed throughout this chapter manifest themselves in a multitude of contexts, impacting on the language, engagement, activities and relationships of musicians, music teachers and music students alike. The researcher has explored a number of different approaches to understanding such tensions. He has looked at how binary relationships – dichotomies – in language obscure a sense of deeper machinations within the human psyche that lay behind the language used by teachers and educational theorists. These can be the explicit cultural and social institutions, such as the relationship between classical/popular musics and related theories of formal/informal music learning techniques. They can exhibit themselves in the practicalities of the classroom, through curriculum design and delivery: the tensions between music theory, music performance, music technology, composing, listening, improvisation etc. and the impact this has on relationships between music student and teacher.

More specifically for the researcher, tensions exhibit themselves in the emotional engagement of musicians to the process of learning in musical contexts, the confidence and anxieties they face when encountering situations that involve problematic decision-making processes. As outlined at the beginning of this chapter, the uncertainties that musicians face and

the ways in which they choose to overcome the fear of uncertainty to engage in action towards their goals is seen as fundamental to providing a perspective on their motivation and sense of achievement in their learning. The anti-foundational and interpretivist theories the researcher has explored have led him to draw ideas from psychoanalysis to develop a model of musical learning that provides more than a description or deconstruction of the behaviour of musicians, but also to suggest their possible motivations and how these become manifested in the language they use.

When musicians speak, it is a form of action. To identify verbal (and non-verbal) communications as acts gives us the ability to think about the issues discussed in this chapter in terms of each individual's performance of their own symbolic discourse. The move towards psychoanalytic techniques is encouraged by a recognition of the importance of dichotomous relationships in language, not as an either/or epistemology, but as an intrinsic and necessary manifestation of tensions that lie behind unconscious motivations in the psyche.

As we begin to discuss psychoanalysis in the following chapters it is important to recognise the importance given to the psychic functioning at a conscious level that each of us is aware of and forms our sense of reality and the psychic machinations that occur before they become manifested in language, the preconscious or unconscious workings of the psyche. This is a conceptualisation that separates the conscious from the unconscious for the purposes of consideration, but does not imply a discreetness. There is a state of continuous flux and the fixity – sense of permanence – that we experience. This is part of the process of coming into consciousness and forming a language in which each individual can engage with the world, making sense of the phenomena they encounter and providing some sense of certainty to the reality that they exhibit.

> When tradition thus becomes master, it does so in such a way that what it 'transmits' is made so inaccessible, proximally and for the most part, that it rather becomes concealed. Tradition takes what has come down to us and

> delivers it over to self-evidence; it blocks our access to those primordial 'sources' from which the categories and concepts handed down to us have been in part quite genuinely drawn. Indeed it makes us forget that they have had such an origin, and makes us suppose that the necessity of going back to those sources is something which we need not even understand. Dasein [the human subject] has had its historicality so thoroughly uprooted by tradition that it confines its interest to the multiformity of possible types, direction, and standpoints of philosophical activity in the most exotic and alien of cultures; and by this very interest it seeks to veil the fact that it has no ground of its own to stand on. (Heidegger 1962:43/H21)

As musicians and music educators we know that the musical act, the creative act, is the essence of what we do. Yet in attempting to define or substantiate these acts we have no choice but to use language that we have inherited and does not enable us to fully capture the nature of what that creative act is. In the meantime, we are pressured into taking on the concerns of traditions, institutions and the cultures of others and to incorporate them into our own way of being:

> By using the cultural tools provided to us by the sociocultural context in which we function we usually do not operate by choice. Instead, we inherently appropriate the terministic screens, affordances, constraints, and so forth associated with the cultural tools we employ. (Wertsch 1998:55)

A prime example of this are the contradictions we face when trying to work with the new music education that overtly proclaims the importance of multi-cultural approaches to musical style and student-centred understandings of learning techniques, yet insists on a core knowledge of the Western cannon and exemplifies alternative approaches in exotic musics from cultures far removed from our own. An advocacy of student-centred and multi-cultural approaches might actually imply that it is wrong to predetermine what constitutes 'good music' and therefore label students who do not meet their teachers chosen precepts as 'bad students'. But in our role as music teachers it is expected of us (we expect it of ourselves, as do our students) that we teach and assess the progress of our students in their learning about music. This appears to imply some superior knowledge: we feel we must be experts! Yet if we are dealing with the wide variety of musical styles that our students are interested in, it can be impossible to

claim expertise when what we are teaching about often rests in a tradition and language with which the student is more familiar.

It is important to ensure that we give the best opportunities to our students and find a way of coming to terms with this paradox. This not only means accepting that the boundary of our expertise is permeable and often reversible, but that we can recognise the structures, linguistic or otherwise, that continually work to reinforce the difficulty of this struggle. There is a psychological impact that is irreducibly bound up with the social conditions that define our identities as music educators. Thinking about this psychological impact requires a linguistic framework that allows us to consider the relationship between us as musicians, teachers and learners and the social and cultural environments that we work within. The *Mapping Music Education Research in the UK* review commissioned by the British Educational Research Association discusses many approaches to understanding music education and within it is a suggestion of a methodological framework that may be useful:

> Not only is music a 'mirror' that enables us to recognize aspects of the self, but the specific properties of music also come to represent or transform the image reflected in and through its structures. (O' Neil and Green 2004:253)

The researcher would like to take a step towards a philosophy that can work within: the economically instrumental positivist paradigms from which music teachers cannot escape; the standpoint epistemologies which we use when we feel we have privileged status in dealing with students that have less experience than us with a particular musical tool; and the relativist's ability to recognise the validity of the musical opinion of others when trying to engage with students that have different musical tastes to us, even though our sensibilities may be telling us otherwise.

Culture and psychoanalysis

Slavoj Žižek's (1991) psychoanalysis of popular culture provides new tools that may be useful in dealing with some of the contradictions we have

to confront as music educators. His work is enjoyable in that it is not concerned with some cultures being more or less serious than others; this is reassuring to the researcher as a popular musician. It also gives a way to label the creative act without defining it, as a 'fantasy object' (Žižek 1991:82), a master-signifier. If we regard the music that we are educating about as a symbol that represents something that we cannot define then we open up space to be filled by individual creative acts, be they the musical acts of our students or our own acts of musical expression. We can continue to engage in discourse with the interactions of that thing we call music or creativity but we do not need to fix it to a set of rules or definitions.

In defending his own work on music education and democracy Woodford (2008) appears to employ just such an approach:

> I'm not interested in defining the nature of music or of musical experience except how it is qualified by events, people, and circumstances in the wider world. Indeed, I'm inclined to agree with Wayne Bowman that "it is at least possible to hear anything musically" and that, further, "one sonorous system's noise may be another's music and vice versa." (Woodford 2008:118)

To employ a method that does not attempt to define or attempt to essentialise the musical or creative act may be useful in two ways. By allowing for a space that can be shared between student and teacher, it is possible to overcome the psychological construct of the teacher as expert in all circumstances, imposing a language on the student and keeping the teacher on the defence against a slip of their mask of expertise. It also allows for the language we use to be adapted, invented, borrowed and used in the way we feel is appropriate to the particular circumstance, allowing both student and teacher to reclaim ownership of musical and educational interactions.

In doing so it may help overcome the sense of alienation that comes with the commodification of our actions through the range of regulatory discourses we encounter in our educational endeavours (Brown, Aitkinson

and England 2006). The way that music teachers approach and think about their teaching practice is constrained by the environment and requirements of the educational institutions that they are employed in. The devices and language used to control the activity of educational establishments to the ends of policy and decision makers become the discourse from within which learners and teachers work. Progression of students into employment or further qualifications is one contemporary concern for teachers. There are also discourses of recruitment and retention, discourses of skill in the subject area, which in turn can lead to discourses of industry practice and their financial regulation.

How each teacher reacts to the differences between their own expectations and the behaviour of others is subjective. The focus on the subject found in Lacan allows for an engagement with cultural theory that currently informs debates about multiculturalism and inclusivity in education. Žižek has demonstrated how Lacan can be read to understand culture in a way that is very different from other forms of cultural theory. To understand how Lacan understands the formation of the subject it is necessary to be familiar with his description of the mirror stage in child development.

The mirror stage is the moment in a child's development when it begins to recognize itself when it looks in a mirror. The recognition of self in this moment is where a child begins to form a sense of its own subjectivity and is the root of every person's identity. To this image of itself the child will structure an understanding of the world that will be vital to its future social development and its ability to interact with others. It is here that the subject develops an 'armour of an alienating identity, which will mark with its rigid structure the subject's entire mental development' (Lacan, 2001:5).

What is important is that this identity is imagined, its purpose is to provide a coherent, logical picture of the world, and the self, that makes

sense of the incoherent range of sensations we encounter everyday. The mirror image:

> would seem to exhibit, in an exemplary situation, the symbolic matrix in which the I is precipitated in a primordial form. [The child forms an idea of itself as a subject. It is then] objectified in the dialectic of identification with the other, before language restores to it, in the universal, its function as subject. To the child the mirror-image would seem to be the threshold of the visible world. (Ibid:2-3)

The child will experiment with its mirror image, making movements and watching itself in the mirror. Crucially:

> this act, far from exhausting itself, once the image has been mastered and found empty, immediately rebounds … in a series of gestures in which he experiences in play the relation between the movements assumed in the image and the reflected environment, and between this virtual complex and the reality it reduplicates – the child's own body, and the persons and things, around him. We have only to understand the mirror stage as an identification, in the full sense that analysis gives to the term: namely, the transformation that takes place in the subject when he assumes an image… the important point is that this form situates the agency of the ego, before its social determination, in a fictional direction, which will always remain irreducible for the individual alone. (Ibid.)

The social and cultural environments we work in are not discrete places in which each individual operates, but are constructions that help us understand what we are doing and allow us to act with some certainty of the possible consequences of our actions. They give meaning to our interactions and are a product of them. Through this formative process our identity and understandings are structured, providing the language with which we communicate, a language that is not fixed to an external reality but a fluid and changeable set of identifications.

A psychoanalytical framework would suggest that it is our sense of the others that we believe we are interacting with that allows us to make some sense of what we do. This relation to others is termed the ‘big other’ (Žižek 1991:18), a concept central to Lacan’s ideas explored in detail in part 2 of the thesis.

Seen from a psychoanalytic perspective it would be possible to consider the music we make and the language we use as no longer being perceived to be controlled by a 'big Other', we would be able to recognise the nature of our inter-subjective symbolic interactions and to negotiate with the other that we are engaged with. The tools that we use may take a reified status but we could recognise their temporal nature as such and their ideological power would be subverted.

Certainly the discipline of popular musicology has begun to engage with Lacanian ideas as is exemplified by one of its foremost writers Richard Middleton, who in his 'Voicing the Popular' (Middleton, 2006) takes inspiration from Slavoj Žižek's application of Lacanian psychoanalysis to popular culture. However, Lars Iyer takes exception to Middleton's use of psychoanalysis and in doing so provides some lucid explanations of key concepts in Lacanian theory. His explanation of *jouissance* gives us a chance to look at how we might bring an understanding of the role of enjoyment in learning and its possibility as a discourse to confront other regulatory discourses.

> A successful course of psychoanalysis aims to allow the analysand to traverse the fantasy, in Lacan's phrase, showing that the ostensible power and authority of the big Other is merely a sham. The aim of analysis is for the analysand to confront the void of the big Other, having learnt that desire arises simply as a result of entering the symbolic order, and that the particular objects it takes are only metonyms in a chain without end. As such, Lacanian psychoanalysis can offer no cure for distressing symptoms, but shows our suffering to be part of those structures of fantasy that organise our desire.
>
> Traversing the fantasy does not reconcile me with our suffering, but I can understand it for what it is, without nostalgia for that complete and fulfilled life the big Other seems to promise. I can now focus on those nuggets of enjoyment permitted me rather than dreaming of a utopia of fulfilled desire and complete and total jouissance. As Lacan puts it, there is a shift from being the subject of desire to being the subject of drive; jouissance, the analysand now understands, is given in repetition itself – the endless metonymical displacement of desire. (Iyer, 2008:9)

The regulatory discourses that arise from the patterns of experience that are encountered by music teachers can only reflect our own

understanding of the relationship we conceive as constituting our identity as music teachers. For a music teacher to measure him/herself against the symbols that represent these discourses (such as registers, reading music or progression into employment of their students) that they may identify with as being 'other', is to alienate him/herself from important processes that are important to forming an identity as a music teacher. Music teachers cannot reject these discourses and neither can they embrace them as fully independent reflections of the value of their teaching.

If this is the case how do you measure the quality of teaching and how do you assess students' learning? The researcher again asked himself - how do I know if I am doing a good job and can enjoyment be used to measure of the quality of my teaching? If I am enjoying it then am I doing the job well? Such an approach might allow music teachers to negotiate their way through the regulatory discourses they encounter, taking pleasure in their ability to identify and contend with those aspects of their work that they find difficult. It might also help our students enjoy their learning, encouraging them to take ownership over their activities and their engagement in learning to become more effective.

Another concern of music teachers is the way the quality of their teaching is assessed and who is doing the measuring? Music teachers' interactions with students, colleagues and managers all involve an exchange of discourses that are part of their understanding of their identity as a music teacher. To what extent are these others concerned with the quality of our teaching and do they measure it in the same way we do? These 'others' may be more concerned with the quality of what they do themselves, than of those they are working with. The quality of what we do is other to them. So who cares if we are doing a good job? The construction of identity is also considered by Iyer:

> Culture, for Lacan, is the effect of the differentiation of the signifier, the distribution of which permits the construction of identities. The individual always finds itself enmeshed in the symbolic dimension, the trans-subjective

> field of signifiers which are held together in a system of differential relations, none of which can appear in isolation. These relations account for the way meaning is produced. The entry into the symbolic order demands a sacrifice of jouissance that thereafter persists only in fragmentary forms, which can never be wholly integrated.
>
> It is this fragmentation, however, that gives me the motive for identification with what Lacan calls the big Other – a projected source of authority. My fantasies, for Lacan, concern this kind of identification, opening a frame in terms of which I articulate my desire. It is this fantasmic structure that gives sense to my experience of particular things, allowing them to become desirable in view of my identifications, becoming invested with what Lacan calls the 'object a'. Desire, for Lacan, is only the effect of the object a in its dissimulation; it is intelligible only in terms of this 'object cause.' (ibid:8)

The researcher's interest in the use of Lacanian psychoanalysis was first aroused by Slavoj Žižek's (1989, 1991) discussions of the 'objet petit a' (sublime objects), which represent the void that he argues ultimately lies at the end of the chain of signifiers that we use to symbolise our environment and interactions. Could teaching, learning, measurement and progression be sublime objects? Discourses that we engage in, that we take to represent the work we do and symbolise our identification with our own practice, but that we can accept are ultimately indefinable, resisting any ultimate consolidation into objective measurable criterion of quality. Discourses that we cannot escape yet do not fully capture the contingent nature of our activities and the meanings we create from them. As well as those discourses that pertain specifically to the work of music teachers, could the very ideas of fun, enjoyment and happiness also be sublime objects? Despite being irreducible to specific meanings we create symbols that appear to capture their essence and use them in our exchanges with others. If we reify and objectify the processes and experiences we engage in we can better come to terms with them. We can use these objects as tools in our praxis and as the purposes that we work towards. We can know these objects to be signifiers of the unsignifiable other, with which we are continuously engaged with and that defines our sense of identity.

The researcher finds it useful to think about these relationships in terms of a spectrum of perceptions of ownership (see chapter 5). There are

those objects we feel we are able to take ownership over, that we have control of and those objects that we perceive to have come from others and we are not in control of. The researcher often sees this in students who know that they can produce good music; they see themselves as good musicians but are also dismissive of their ability to perform other aspects of musicianship. This is frequently the case with popular musicians who engage with music theory. Music teachers may often be frustrated by students who say they cannot do music theory because they are intimidated by the language of score notation with which they are not very familiar, yet are able to produce and describe in great detail, with nuance and understanding, the music they produce, their methods and motivations. It should be asked of such students, does the artistic and technical skill that you demonstrate not count as music theory? If you are thinking about music, must you not also be theorising, constructing your own language to understand the tools and purposes that you are working with? This is an encounter with the alienation of discourse in the creative act.

Issues of ownership are very relevant to the discussion of the role of music in society as can be illustrated by writing on the impact of technology on perceptions of musical activity:

> Ownership, or at least a sense of actually being an important part of a community, is a key issue in designing learning environments – online and offline (Salavuo 2008:129)

Could this, taking from our examples above on music technology, allow students to be given credit for making music in new and innovative ways? For example on their game-consoles:

> For music teachers, who often find themselves in culturally complex classrooms, the ability of these musical tools [in this case game consoles] to cross boundaries within the context of authentic musical expression should be recognised (Crow 2006:126)

Such a space could allow for new innovations in ICT, stylistic diversity or experimental approaches to inclusion, as well as provide opportunities to

advocate for more traditional forms as is appropriate to the particular context. The dissolution of distinctive boundaries found in much of the discourses surrounding music education, often identified through dichotomous language, could also be considered in a similar way. To do so might provide opportunities for under-represented perspectives, new voices and experimental collaborators to express and articulate how and why they choose to make music the way they do. It would also provide a framework for thinking about how music students and teachers communicate with each other.

Chapter 4 – Terminology

In the writing up phase of this thesis it became clear that there is a significant difficulty in the researcher's embrace of psychoanalysis as a model to bring insight onto current debates in music education. The contrast in working methods and underpinning philosophical language between the two fields is significant. It was felt that before Lacanian psychoanalysis was explored in greater detail it would be useful to summarise some of the key terms as the researcher currently understands them. Part two describes stages in the research process from preliminary research explorations into the primary data collection and a deeper engagement with the writing of Žižek and Lacan. This chapter is intended to provide a bridge between the evolution of ideas described in the literature review and methodology chapters and the challenging ideas that follow on from this in the later parts of the thesis.

A note on the terminology used

The language used in psychoanalysis and many of the other theories on subjectivity, identity and discourse is built from concepts and employs language that to the uninitiated is unfamiliar, counter-intuitive and difficult to understand. It turns from 'common sense', empirical and apparently logical deduction about the nature of the world around us, as we can observe and measure it; to a questioning of the very way we perceive reality, that language creates our sense of being and existence, that it is not purely descriptive of an already existing state of affairs. Lacan explicitly applies a concept of retrograde action in the psyche that makes it very hard to fully explicate the impact of his philosophy in plain language. Writing for music teachers, who are the intended audience for this research, finding precise and clear language to explain the ramifications of these concepts has been something the researcher has really struggled with.

The broad consideration of a wide range of issues means that summative terminology is often too generalised to do justice to the nuance of many concepts. A decision to use metaphors, analogies and abstract models to explore these ideas and locate them in a music education context has been a strategy employed throughout the research. This has enabled the researcher to explore these concepts from different angles but has resulted in particular readings that are partial, limiting and require further work to consider them to be authentic to Lacanian orthodoxy.

Žižek has been key in motivating the researcher to employ this tactic, his use of Lacan to interpret popular culture is significant as this is not what Lacan intended his work to be used for. Lacan's interpretation of the work of Freud itself was met with sufficient disdain that he was rejected by the Freudian orthodoxy. This researcher does not claim to bring fresh interpretation to the work of any of these theorists, he struggles to get to grips with it himself! The aim of the research is to draw on some of their ideas to find alternative perspectives for assessing the values and relations of participants in popular music education – to make a contribution to the ongoing debates outlined in Chapter 2 of this thesis.

As a way of explaining the interpretations of some of the key Lacanian concepts used by the researcher, this chapter will attempt to provide tentative definitions and detail how parallels with music have been drawn. This will provide the appropriate ground for readers familiar with these concepts to interrogate the research conducted and provide an introduction to readers that may not have encountered them before. The understandings that have been developed by the researcher depend largely on key select works by Lacan, Žižek and some accompanying secondary commentators. This has provided a limited and introductory interpretation, but one that hopefully lays the ground for further future investigation.

First some key terms will be laid out, then an example will be given of how psychoanalysis can be used to understand discourse in popular music.

Who is Jacques Lacan and who is Slavoj Žižek?

Jacques Lacan was a French psychoanalyst who advocated a return to Freud, taking the clinical and philosophical ideas in a different direction to many of the other branches of psychoanalysis (Homer 2005). His ideas evolved over his lifetime and although his writing was primarily about the clinical context in which he worked his influence spread into wider social discourses from the 1960s onwards. The two key texts that this researcher draws on is a collection of his written work – 'Ecrits' (Lacan 2006), and his Seminar XI – 'The Four Fundamental Concepts of Psychoanalysis'.

Slavoj Žižek is a Slovenian philosopher who is renowned for commenting on popular culture and political analysis. His controversial viewpoints, which are often considered sensationalist, call on the writings of a wide range of theorists from different fields, but is primarily known for combining the ideas of Lacan, Marx and Hegel. His early thesis found in 'The Sublime Object of Ideology' (Žižek 1989) is the inspiration for the interpretations found here. A range of his other writing is also called upon, although it is inevitable that this only represents a small proportion of his prolific writing.

Uncertainty and anxiety

Psychoanalysis addresses the entirety of people's lives. Effective psychoanalytic treatment must consider all aspects of a patient's ('analysand' in a clinical setting) life.

> For Lacan, as for Freud, far from separating the session and the patient's life, it'll be about getting psychoanalysis to happen in the patient's life. That means, among other things, that nothing in the patient's life can be left aside. Psychoanalysis enters into relation with the whole signifying system in which the analysand moves. (Guéguen 2009)

Anxiety is a factor in everybody's life that is generated by a sense of uncertainty of how the world actually works and what the place of each of us is in it. The search for 'truth' is a means for the psyche to cope with, and overcome, a fear of uncertainty that continuously threatens to undermine any sense of coherence to our understandings of reality and our ability to operate in the world.

> truth is a value that (cor)responds to the uncertainty with which man's lived experience is phenomenologically marked (Lacan 2006:79), [psychoanalysis] explains how the dimension of truth emerges in human reality. (Žižek, 2006:3)

Psychoanalysis is concerned with the symptom, which in any other analysis may be considered an indicator of an abnormality. The symptom for Lacan is though the manifestation of the fear of uncertainty, it is what stitches together our reality without which there would be a disintegration of all meaning.

> symptom is the way we … 'avoid madness', the way we 'choose something instead of nothing' … through the binding of our enjoyment to a certain signifying, symbolic formation which assures a minimum of consistency to our being-in-the-world. (Žižek 1989:75)

The purpose of psychoanalysis is transference (the 'passage to the act'): to become aware of this role of the symptom in the psyche and embrace it as 'sinthome', 'by acting out we identify ourselves with the symptom.' (Žižek 1989b:27)

Psychoanalysis can be useful in considering popular music education as it shifts the onus of enquiry away from pursuit of correct, accurate or truthful understandings of what music is, how it should be taught and how curriculum should be designed. Rather the purpose of investigation becomes a question of how musicians create meaning, what they are trying to achieve with their activities and why they choose to represent their own musicianship in the ways that they do.

Musical expression is not factual, but symptomatically constructed either through the desire to find ultimate satisfaction or sinthomatically (symptoms seen for what they are and the way they structure reality for the subject) through a realisation that striving for musical expression is the closest one can get to the impossible ideal of self satisfaction (Roustag 1990:82), providing a place from which musical identity can be built. In this research project symptoms are interpreted and labelled as musical goals.

The subject

The subject, subjectivity, is the key contentious term in the literature on educational theory. At its most basic level the subject represents what we think of when we think of ourselves. In everyday language we may describe the subject as the person doing the thinking, but this does not convey the fundamental role of language in constructing our sense of personhood.

For Lacan – 'unlike most poststructuralists, who seek to deconstruct and dispel the very notion of the human subject' (Fink 1997:xi) – the subject is split between a symbolic identification with itself and an imaginary identification that represents 'some mythical, pre-symbolic intention' (Žižek 1989:101) that came before the formation of subjectivity.

Perhaps Lacan's best known writing describes the formation of the subject at the mirror stage, the moment in a child's development when it begins to recognize itself when it looks in a mirror. To this image of itself the child will structure an understanding of the world that will be vital to its future social development and its ability to interact with others. It is here that the subject develops an 'armour of an alienating identity, which will mark with its rigid structure the subject's entire mental development' (Lacan 2001:5), 'to the child the mirror-image would seem to be the threshold of the visible world.' (ibid:3)

In the simplest terms the subject is split between the image of themselves they identify with, their ego, and the actuality of the preconscious, unknowable forces at work that might clumsily be described as the being doing the thinking. The imperfect attempt to know and understand oneself through identification creates an irreducible tension in the difference between the way we think the world is and the way the world appears to respond to our existence.

> We have only to understand the mirror stage as an identification … the transformation that takes place in the subject when he assumes an image … the important point is that this form situates the agency of the ego, before its social determination, in a fictional direction, which will always remain irreducible for the individual alone. (Ibid.)

In this thesis the subject is designated as 'musician', as it is to the subjectivity of musicians that the research is addressed. At one level this is a straightforward designation, but it should not be underestimated that the split in the subject that remains inexplicit in the term 'musician' creates a tension that permeates the operation of the psyche and constitutes the field of Lacanian psychoanalysis. The philosophical implications of this can be seen in the way Žižek weaves Hegel with Lacan:

> the fissure between us (the subject) and the Absolute, is the very way the Absolute is already with us' (Žižek, 2008a, p. 91). In other words, what brings Substance (reality) to coincide with Subject (consciousness) is the very splitting that prevents each of the two notions from fully coinciding with themselves: 'the Hegelian "subject" is ultimately nothing but a name for the externality of the Substance to itself, for the "crack" by way of which the Substance becomes "alien" to itself (Žižek, 1993, p. 30). (Vighia and Feldnera 2010:33)

Registers of the psyche

Lacan designates three registers of the psyche, different aspects of the way the subject understands itself. These are: The Imaginary; The Symbolic; The Real.

This ontological schema resists simple definition as the different parts are dependent on each other. They are a product of the split in the

subject and represent the way the psyche attempts to deal with the irreducible tension created during interpellation (the process of coming into subjectivity).

The Imaginary and The Symbolic registers represent the two aspects of the split subject that interact with each other. Interpellation occurs when the subject comes into contact with the signifying chain – phenomena that the subject encounters that bring into being subjectivity and create the split subject. It is imagined by the subject that these phenomena are the result of the actions of an other, known as 'The Big Other'. In response to this other an identity is formed and projected in the symbolic register, the domain of the 'Other' sits within the imaginary register where the subject encountered the signifying chain, before interpellation took place and remains pre-linguistic.

There is an interplay where there is 'circular movement between symbolic and imaginary identification' (Žižek 1989:111) quilting the signifying chain and retroactively fixing its meaning in an ongoing interpellation of the subject. But this 'never comes out without a certain leftover.'(ibid). This leftover/excess/gap is that which is impossible to symbolise/impossible to know (Roustag 1990:82): the register of the Real. The researcher attempted several times to understand the relationship of these three registers to Lacan's graph of desire, to represent them diagrammatically. Although this was never to his satisfaction that he had yet fully grasped the nuance of these ideas, it provided possible ways to express how a musician might start to use them.

The Symbolic is the reality we consciously inhabit. We are not aware of the machinations of the psyche. The way we interact with phenomena gives the world a sense of solidity. The symbolic exists as language, language brings us into being through interpellation where the subject and the signifying chain intersect. The Imaginary is the non-linguistic, unconscious source where the desire to express ourselves in relation to others emanates

from. All language, sense of ourselves and reality we inhabit, is constructed in a (failed) attempt to identify with the 'big Other'.

The Real is the fear of that which we cannot comprehend. This unknowable void/thing that constantly threatens to unravel the meanings and reality we are continuously constructing in the symbolic. It stalks the psyche as a tension that cannot be avoided and so must be transmuted and used as energy that Lacan terms '*jouissance*'. Frequently in the research the Real is referred to as the world outside of us, and whilst the actual substance of the world outside of us is beyond the subject's comprehension, the register of Real should be more authentically considered the impossibility of satisfaction (Roustag 1990:82). We can never know the truth of the world or ourselves, no matter how sophisticated a model we construct.

Objects

The word object appears in three different ways in Žižek's analysis of the graph of desire. Each has been read by this researcher as pointing to each of the three registers.

The 'objet petit a', also referred to as the small other or the object of desire, is vital to the construction of our sense of reality and therefore is constitutive of the symbolic. This reality is actually a fantasy that Lacan defines as the (split) subject in relation to the 'objet petit a'. The small other is a linguistic object that covers over the inconsistencies in the subject's attempts to identify with the big Other and create a coherent sense of reality. It is the extemporal, impossible-real kernel of the symbolic order (Žižek 1989b:24). It gives a name to the tension and energy created during the interpellation of the subject, giving it a place in the symbolic.

> This ideological point de capiton or master-signifier is not some underlying unity but only the difference between elements, only what its various mentions have in common: the signifier itself as pure difference. (Butler 2006)

This thesis proposes that 'Music' is a master signifier. The word 'Music' collects together all the different things it could be and all the differences between them creating an object that is to be desired but that can never fully be defined. A key example given in the research is that of Jimi Hendrix as a musical hero. What might make Hendrix special to his admirers is the special something that makes him a great musician in their eyes. This specialness resides somewhere in his musicality, not the things that can be described, measured or defined such as guitar licks, melodies or chord progressions, but the bit that is left over once all description is exhausted. In striving to emulate Hendrix many guitarists are attempting capture that specialness for themselves.

The object petit a is symbolic manifestation of the tension (*jouissance*) being processed in the imaginary register. In the imaginary *jouissance* manifests as the drive. Freud describes the drives as the basis of the unconscious a 'force or an energetic charge which has "its source in a bodily stimulus"' (Roustag 1990:75). Lacan's definition is different, although in places the researcher has used this definition as a convenience (and is a possible weakness in this interpretation of Lacan), reducing the drive to a montage rotating around its object (ibid).

Gigs, or live performances by musicians, are given as an example of the object around which the drive circles. The enjoyment and discomfort of performance is what musicians are driven to experience in this example, never captured, always passing, anticipated and remembered. Whilst the aspiration to emulate Hendrix exemplifies the impossibility of desire, musical expression through performance can be repeated in an ongoing deferral of satisfaction.

> The opposition between desire and drive consists precisely in the fact that desire is by definition caught in a certain dialectic. It can always turn into its opposite or slide from one object to another, it never aims at what appears to be its object, but always "wants something else." The drive, on the other hand, is inert, it resists being enmeshed in a dialectical movement it circulates around its object, fixed upon the point around which it pulsates.

(Žižek 1991: 134)

Ultimately both the object cause of desire and the object around which the drives circle are manifestations of *jouissance*, the tension caused by the subject being split in the process of interpellation, the impossibility of satisfaction. This impossibility, though, cannot be consciously recognised as it would literally collapse any coherent sense of reality the subject has. The void of impossibility would dissolve the symbolic order and the subject needs a mechanism to reassure itself that reality is real.

In order to do this a third object is required, one that appears to have physicality and projects a sense of solidity onto the world we have constructed around us. This is the object that stands in for the Real (Žižek 1991), hiding its emptiness with an apparent substance. In our example a plectrum (a small shaped piece of plastic used to pluck guitar strings) is used to reassure our aspiring musician who wishes to emulate Hendrix that his activities are in fact musical and whilst he or she may never actually become Hendrix, the motivation to perform at gigs is reinforced and becomes self perpetuating.

This is the object in the conventional sense, physical things that have no meaning in themselves but appear to have substance and so are easier to locate when trying to judge value and understand motivation, far easier than the objects created in the symbolic (desire) and imaginary (drive) from *jouissance* that the subject always fails to attain or continuously defers.

Maybe such a reading can explain why music education is so often described as if its meaning resides somewhere in the musical instruments, the music technology, the curriculum materials, the music notation etc., rather than being seen as a construction of each musician in their attempts to identify with other musicians.

This One Goes to Eleven! – Spinal Tap in a Psychoanalytic Frame

> In art, rejected because of our bondage to it, the object becomes the very problem of reality, and so objective elements mingle with abstraction. (Huelsenbeck 1969:140)

> [Asked by a reporter if this is the end of Spinal Tap] Well, I don't really think that the end can be assessed as of itself as being the end because what does the end feel like? It's like saying when you try to extrapolate the end of the universe, you say, if the universe is indeed infinite, then how – what does that mean? How far is all the way, and then if it stops, what's stopping it, and what's behind what's stopping it? So, what's the end, you know, is my question to you. *This Is Spinal Tap* (Reiner 1984)

Central to the thesis presented here is Jacques Lacan's assertion that the fear of uncertainty is a key concern of the psyche (Žižek 1991). How human beings react to uncertainty, defending the reality upon which their actions are based, is indicative of the motivations behind their actions. Without some sense of certainty, it is difficult to know how to act. It is argued that a consideration of this understanding of the motivations of people can be very useful for music teachers, both in understanding the actions of our students and how best to help them learn and also for us and the way we respond to situations in which we are uncertain of the best course of action.

Questions of the quality of music-making activities (what is the difference between good music and bad music), the most efficient modes of delivery (what is the difference between good teaching and bad teaching), the appropriate assessment standards (what is the difference between students who present work that is good enough to achieve a grade and those that don't) are all based on value-judgements that music teachers are responsible for making on a daily basis.

In the creative arts, such as music education, it is possible to approach these questions from two mutually exclusive view points. An instrumental approach may create, frameworks, schemas, criteria and taxonomies which allow the teacher to measure a students' music-making activities against a fixed standard that ensures a fair and transparent system

for the comparison of different students' work. It also ensures that students achieving a particular qualification are in possession of particular sets of skills and knowledge bases. But instrumental approaches cannot account for creative acts, those that are innovative creating new associations or revealing perspectives unique to the artist's viewpoint, their prerogative to express an individual aesthetic and idiosyncratic formulation of the materials of the medium. Musical creativity cannot be prescribed, but then neither can it be measured, causing the opposite problem for music teachers that need to assess the progress of their students and evidence the achievements of their learning.

These two sides of the coin – the logical/measurable and the creative/expressive – are dichotomous providing a dualistic view of the world. It forces the language we use to be separated into right and wrong ways of understanding the phenomena we encounter and expecting us to seek the truth and reject falsity. This division causes a tension: our decisions and our actions must be either one or the other, right or wrong, our beliefs are either truthful or built on fallacy and if in each situation we encounter we are not certain what the correct course of action is we are faced with a risky dilemma, to make a choice with the possibility of it exposing our integrity and status as someone who knows what they are doing. For teachers who carry the responsibility of expertise (at least in the eyes of their students) this is a heavy burden.

Such is the weight of this dilemma that it speaks to our very identity as human beings and our role in the world. If, as a music teacher, one is unable to apply one's expertise – perhaps because of a lack of knowledge of a particular genre or sophistication of technique on a musical instrument in comparison to a student – then that undermines one's credibility as the teacher or even the validity of one's musical experience and the right to be called a good musician. The role of the music teacher is then to negotiate their way through their professional life, continually presenting themselves

as a person who is in a position to make judgements and apply knowledge to the learning of other musicians.

There are of course a number of ways in which music teachers avoid the blind panic and inaction that could occur at every step of the decision making process, strategies that convince, reassure or mitigate uncertainty. Reference to instrumental frameworks is the most obvious with syllabi providing criteria with which a curriculum can be designed and delivered with confidence. A belief or claim to superior knowledge is another device that can impose one's view upon a situation, no need to explore or debate the details that may validate an assertion, merely the knowledge that one has greater experience, qualifications or skills. The great and talented musicians stand on their own terms from this position and an association or insight into their methods may be enough to validate one's expertise and opinions. It is also possible to take a position that absolves one from such responsibility, providing caveats or only engaging with material tentatively, cautiously or without commitment. Deferring one's agency to that of an other is a tactic that allows for absolution of responsibility for decisions taken, perhaps most evident when working in particular traditions that explicitly draw on an established body of work that delineates good practice from bad.

There is a tension created by language based on dichotomous understandings of the world. The coping mechanisms that people develop to deal with these tensions are deeply embedded in the psyche and remain unconscious unless deliberate action is taken to identify and become aware of them. This is specifically the work that psychoanalysis allows us to do and is the reason why it forms the basis of the methodology of the research project presented here. The purpose of the psychoanalytical approach is to raise awareness of the process of identity formation that lies behind the language we use, not to negate it but to embrace and take ownership over this fundamental aspect of the psyche.

As long as the logical and creative aspects of thinking appear to remain exclusive to each other understanding their interplay is difficult, one way to disrupt the boundaries between these two categorisations is through the use of humour. Dadaism and subsequently the surrealist movement used humour to challenge conventions in a response to the need for political action following the outbreak of World War One. A role for humour can also be found in deconstruction, post-structuralism and postmodernism with political, social and cultural ramifications. Humour is also a vital ingredient in contemporary psychoanalysis:

> In many respects, this is Žižek's tactic – some outrageous joke enables him to open up the functioning of everyday life through the anamorphic screen of psychoanalysis – never a dead on perception but askew or awry, because the body has shifted it's position from the common place set out for it by the structuring social forces, which go by the name of hegemony and its paradoxes of complicity in the ideology of the social order. (Jagodzinski, J. 2010:16)

The instrumentalism that can occur with an insistence on a logical approach to curriculum design and delivery can be powerful. Sticking to the rules, allowing the tools of the curriculum to be the sole determinant of quality can create a disenfranchisement for students and teachers, even when self-imposed in avoidance of taking responsibility for decisions made. Without the sense of some creative input that an individual can have on the learning process a shallowness can develop in the goals and outcomes of that learning. In order to develop a student towards a level that they can assert an independent expert view, requires them to be able to synthesise what they have learnt into more sophisticated learning techniques. They need to take ownership of the tools they use, even if this means challenging some of the conventional knowledge associated with each tool, developing personalised skills unique to them that are also adaptable to the needs of others.

One challenge the researcher uses in his professional working life to the imposition of viewpoints that conflict with his sense of constructive

learning is a little joke that can reveal limitations of an instrumental approach and reassure the person being challenged: *Serious people are too busy being serious to take anything seriously.* To focus on the seriousness of an issue, does not necessarily imply that it is being dealt with in a serious way, it is rather a bit like a panic that sets in when considering the consequences of making the wrong decision. Focusing on how serious something is does not help you consider the relative merits of the options you have to decide upon only the gravity of the outcome of the decision. When encountering a situation where the proposed course of action only leads to an attempt to mitigate the potential negative reactions to a problem, but does not attempt to solve it, is probably the best time to employ such a phrase.

A prime example of the convergence of surrealist humour, music and popular culture is the 1984 film 'This Is Spinal Tap', a movie that parodies touring rock bands and the lifestyle of musicians exemplified by the emergence of stadium rock bands from the late 1960s onwards. It is very funny, and whilst many of the scenes are extremely exaggerated for comic effect, there is also a truthfulness to the commentary on discourses surrounding popular music culture, underpinned by memorable quotes that many people feel they can relate to. The quote at the beginning of this chapter speaks directly to the relativism that is central to post-modernism, but also produced anti-foundational philosophical movements including deconstruction, post-structuralism and Lacanian psychoanalysis. Like the inhabitants of the fictional 'Matrix' (Žižek 1989) the entirety of a human being's knowledge of the universe is filtered through its senses, the actual universe (substance) may well exist in a naturally occurring form outside of the human being's mind (psyche) but it can only be known through our senses. Like Thomas Anderson in the movie our senses can be deceived to the point where our sense of reality can only bear limited relation to the actual state of things. David St. Hubbins' response to the question about the break up of the band questions how we can truly know where the end of the

universe is and if we don't know that how can we know where the end of anything is, including his band. In fact, how can we know the truth at all?

Post-modernism and post-industrial society deal with the same problem, if there is no underlying way to know the truth of things then their appearances become of predominant importance. Causes, consequences and phenomena become completely detached from our descriptions of them making it very difficult to make sense of the world, with significant political, social and cultural ramifications. Many traditions of thought, including forms of Marxism and Feminism that utilise philosophy for the basis of taking political action find this deeply unsatisfactory and dangerous, with a strong belief in the need for a solid basis for decision-making and evaluation of economic circumstance. Deconstruction on the other hand embraces the emancipatory role that such a position can have in rejecting hegemony and other forms of imposed knowledge. Psychoanalysis however takes a different position, it does not attempt to investigate, refute or validate any such claims to truth or knowledge, its role is to provide an interpretation of how each subject (human being) forms their own conceptions of the truth and how this influences their behaviour in a way that they may find useful.

Perhaps the best known moment from *This Is Spinal Tap* can be summarised in the number 11:

> **Nigel Tufnel**: The numbers all go to eleven. Look, right across the board, eleven, eleven, eleven and...
>
> **Marty DiBergi**: Oh, I see. And most amps go up to ten?
>
> **Nigel Tufnel**: Exactly.
>
> **Marty DiBergi**: Does that mean it's louder? Is it any louder?
>
> **Nigel Tufnel**: Well, it's one louder, isn't it? It's not ten. You see, most blokes, you know, will be playing at ten. You're on ten here, all the way up, all the way up, all the way up, you're on ten on your guitar. Where can you go from there? Where?

Marty DiBergi: I don't know.

Nigel Tufnel: Nowhere. Exactly. What we do is, if we need that extra push over the cliff, you know what we do?

Marty DiBergi: Put it up to eleven.

Nigel Tufnel: Eleven. Exactly. One louder.

Marty DiBergi: Why don't you make ten a little louder, make that the top number and make that a little louder?

Nigel Tufnel: *[pauses]* These go to eleven.

(Reiner 1984)

Marty is a documentary film maker, following around the band 'Spinal Tap' for the spoof documentary that is the format of the movie. Nigel is the band's lead guitarist. Nigel is showing Marty around his rehearsal room and they are looking at his equipment. In the scene transcribed above they are looking at Nigel's guitar amp. The dialogue exemplifies a number of the key themes that this thesis attempts to draw from psychoanalysis to examine the behaviour and language musicians use.

Nigel and Marty clearly have very different viewpoints that lead to a humorous failure of communication. Marty's rather logical question about an adjustment of parameters for the guitar amp are met with a response, that not only is a refusal to answer the question, but denies the relevance of the logic that is implied. Nigel is being characterised as someone either unable or unwilling to engage in such logic. Yet despite the illogicality of using a measuring system that goes to eleven, the metaphor that has been created is very powerful; not only in its ongoing use in popular culture, but also within the scene itself. Marty's underlying assumption that a round metric ten is the best possible measurement of volume only speaks of a number that has been applied as a gauge in the use of an analogue potentiometer. The symbols (numbers from 1 – 11 in this case) provided on the guitar could theoretically be divided in many different ways, or even

named in a much more bizarre fashion, it would make no difference to the effect it has on volume as the dial is turned.

In fact, psychologically, eleven has even more value than ten, for the same reasons that Marty assumes that this is the best formulation. If it is such common practice for amps to go up to ten, to the point that anything else appears wrong, then having a little bit extra is revolutionary – an impossible 110% – suddenly possible through the playful subversion of convention and a detachment of abstract conceptualisation (numbering system) and objective form (dial on the guitar amp). How objects are used and their role within the psyche is explored in great detail in a later chapter where a Lacanian prescription for objects help us build a picture of the three psychic registers Lacan describes as Imaginary, Symbolic and Real. In this case the numbers on the amp exist in the Symbolic register and are meant to provide a common point of communication for people such as Marty and Nigel. They however have two different understandings of what those numbers represent based on their own understandings formed in the Imaginary register. The actual volume of sound produced by the amp, dependant on the position of the dial, exists in the register of the Real as it is unaffected by either the symbols on the amp, nor the underlying reality each of these characters inhabits.

Ultimately the real humour of the scene lies in the pause before Nigel responds “These go to eleven”. There is moment of uncertainty existing where the apparent logic of Nigel’s argument is not recognised by Marty, which is eventually rebuffed with Nigel’s refusal to accept the logic of Marty’s argument. The symbolic constructions of each character, despite using the same set of symbols (numbers, concepts of loudness, metric measuring systems, guitar amps) don’t quite meet in the middle, there is a gap in their communication which can be interpreted as the tension in the psyche discussed above. The focus on this something extra is a key to Slavoj Žižek’s argument about the utility of Lacanian psychoanalysis. Described as

the ‘objet petit a’, it is the symbolic manifestation of the root tension in the psyche that Lacan describes as *jouissance*. This is what differentiates Lacanian psychoanalysis from other associated philosophical traditions, whilst there is much discussion of the meaning of things/the symbolic register/our identification with reality, psychoanalysis insists we also take account of the enjoyment we take in life and how this manifests itself both as pleasurable and painful experiences. Such analysis provides a slightly different perspective which can both supplement and challenge other methods of interpretation, whether mainstream or unconventional.

Part 2 – Thinking Frames – Research Projects

Presented in this part of the thesis are four chapters that represent the development of the research project. There are descriptions of the data collection process, but more significantly how project design, methodology and engagement with theoretical literature evolved in response to reflection on the data. Each chapter represents a different phase in the research process: a preliminary set of small projects; the primary data collection exercise observing the rehearsal of musicians; an engagement with ideas stimulated by Slavoj Žižek; an attempt to contrive a way to use Lacanian schema as the basis for the analysis of data collected in the primary research phase.

Much of the writing is given in situ, as it was written at that particular time in the research process, to give a clear demonstration of how the researchers thinking, writing and activities evolved. In this way it is in contrast to part 1 that provided a more systematic explanation of the basis and rationale for the research project, written at the end of the research project. Part 3 will go on to consider the resulting analysis and some of the possible implications for music education, before the concluding chapter summarises what might be taken from this research project and how it might contribute to the ongoing debates surrounding popular music education.

Chapter 5 – Music Theory, Music Teachers, Music Classrooms

Introduction

Recent developments in music education have lead to recognition of the need for pluralistic and inter-disciplinary approaches to teaching music (Welch et al. 2004, O'Flynn 2005). The growth of children's or student's knowledge and understanding is seen as key to their musical development (Lines 2003, Welch and Adams 2003). In order to design the best possible curricula for achieving this, attempts have been made to account for and to explain musical experience, ranging from the classification of musical activities into performance, composing and listening (Swanwick 1999, Hannan 2006), to the categorisation of musical elements, musical styles and associated subcultures. Research on informal learning styles (Green 2010, Jaffurs 2004) has asked if students are better left to find their own ways of developing skills and repertoire, and new technologies have opened up possible approaches to music-making that defy conventional instrumental work (Savage 2005). How ever the musical experience is understood, the difficulty for music educators lies in deciding how to ensure learning and musical development take place and can be demonstrably measured.

A lot of music education research is focused in schools (Cox and Hennessy 2004, Green 2006) yet in post-compulsory education there is a greater remit for experimentation and flexibility in allowing a diversity of style, here a variety of approaches to music making can flourish. In the further education college in which I work I am struck by the different types of music professionals I work with, their different stylistic and industrial backgrounds. This leads to an environment where a multitude of, often conflicting, conceptions of the purpose of music education are apparent, held together only by the common goals of a specified syllabi and a shared desire to see the best from our students.

This chapter explores some of the research I have been engaged in to discover commonalities and differences between different music education practitioners' conceptions of the purpose of music education and discover if these conceptions vary significantly between educational sectors of British society. Foremost in my research is the question of pedagogy, how we as practitioners deliver music education and if this is informed by our identities as musicians and teachers. How do we feel if the music student is at the centre of curriculum design but we are meant to be teaching and assessing their musical skills?

The main pieces of research I conducted are a case study of a music theory classroom, a survey of the perceptions of a cohort of music PGCE students and a multi-modal assessment of the ecology of music technology classrooms. These were conducted as part of my studies on a Master of Research programme and lead me to question whether the language we use as music educators takes for granted assumptions about how music should be taught that have been inherited from traditions that are non-pluralistic and are unable to recognise many of the aesthetics that motivates young people to engage in music in the first place. Perhaps this research can contribute to our understanding of possible methods for providing a multi-cultural music education that can include both students and teachers.

I struggled to come to terms with the underlying belief systems that determine my desire to facilitate student centred learning experiences for musicians with a diversity of musical backgrounds. The issue of diversity in musical style is currently important to music education discourse, the questions of what should be taught and what strategies music educators take is widely debated. Through the examples of three research projects I have undertaken I will try and explain how I have come to believe that curriculum design needs to take account of the irreducibility of the musical act leaving a space for individual evocations of its constitution to be defined by learners and teachers during the educational act itself. I rely heavily on

the language of activity theory and explore the implications of the concept of reification, which has lead me to an interest in the master-signifier of Lacanian psychoanalysis as a useful method for symbolising the musical act.

In desiring to better understand how to improve the opportunities and methods I use to help people who come to me to learn about music and enhance their musicianship skills I have embarked on an investigation into how music education is perceived. I have come to believe that the ideas music educators possess about the purpose of music education greatly influence the educational processes engaged in and the outcomes of these processes. However, despite the significance that I feel these perceptions of the purpose of music education have, I find many people involved in learning about and teaching music hold firm assumptions about the supposed content of music education processes. Such universally prescriptive approaches to content are often seen to be essential to the process of doing music education and central to the achievement of standards.

This research has been exploratory, pertaining to both the actual activities that take place in sites of music education and to the belief systems and underlying linguistic and philosophical structures that support the actions of music teachers and learners. This chapter reflects upon my research activities and identifies important questions that will direct future work. I outline three specific research projects I have undertaken and define how these can serve as the basis for generating future data that helps me better understand how music education is perceived, both in the commonalities and differences between my belief about its purpose, and the beliefs of other teachers, learners, musicians and policy makers.

I am aware that my experiences as a music educator, not to mention as a musician, are located in specific contextual spaces and that these environments are formative of my ideas of the constitution of ‘good’ and

'bad' music education. In attempting to define some of these environments I am aware that the influence of aesthetic, ethical and institutional factors will differ from others that work in differing environments. In trying to locate commonalities and differences in attitudes to music education, important philosophical debates are seen to be relevant to the social and psychological dynamics of any understanding created. However, I have come to believe that music education is a good medium in which to explore some of these wider debates that can often appear abstract and elusive. Central to my investigations are questions of relative meaning and importance, that can clearly be illustrated with examples of musical style and culture, and pertain to anti-foundational philosophies found in debates about the role and content of education in general.

It is my argument that it is not possible or desirable to fix the proposed content of educational processes, that such content is defined by the actors and the tools (Wertsch 1998) they use when engaging in such processes, but that how music students engage in musical process is dependent upon the language used by music educators and therefore affects how the successful achievement of proposed outcomes is perceived. The language that is used, not just for doing music education but also for thinking about music education, is both given to and created by music educators and is contradictory, directional and representational of particular concepts of music. Music educators are required to achieve objectives that are in themselves defined by such language and therefore are impossible to apply universally. How music educators deal with such objectives is central to the process of doing music education and the psychological and linguistic tools they adopt is central to how successful they feel they have been.

The argument made here is that music educators who adopt ideas of the universality of the content of musical processes can disempower and exclude learners who possess differing ideas of what the essence of music is. This is not to say that music educators cannot employ specific language

dependant tools for the achievement of outcomes, but that the recognition of the purpose and nature of these tools is important. Ensuring that any person wishing to engage in music education has the opportunity to have a part in defining and contributing to the language they employ in learning about music is key to their sense of satisfaction and achievement of any given outcomes.

Musicians are people who create and manipulate sounds in order to create meaning for their audiences. When musicians want to discuss describe or define the ways they create and manipulate sound they need to use words that they can associate with the sonic phenomena experienced when music is heard. The words musicians use influences the way they understand what music is, its purpose and function in their own lives and that of others. Music teachers also need to be aware of, not only their own ways of understanding music, but the different ways their students may understand the activities they engage in. The language each musician uses, whether it be in recreational, professional or formal educational contexts, will depend on a mixture of their cultural influences, types of instruction they may have received and personally developed conceptions that have helped them develop their skills and methods of working.

In traditional music education contexts there are particular sets of conventions that are taught as the correct methods to compose and perform music, however contemporary music classrooms need to be more responsive to the different ways different music cultures produce and understand music. The centrality of language to the communication between different musical cultures is significant interpreting how musicians interact and learn from each other.

As a keen musician and music teacher the researcher has been concerned with the impact particular uses of language by musicians may inhibit their confidence in forming understandings about their music making activities. This has provoked him into thinking about the differences in

language used by different musicians and more importantly the deceptive apparentness of commonality of meaning assumed to exist in technical lexicon used by musicians and referred to in broader social contexts.

Presented here is a discourse analysis focusing on the way musicians use language, the ambiguity of meaning in the words used by musicians and the way music is identified with to create symbolic meanings that can help us interpret the activities of musicians. Case studies explore the comparisons between music used in formal educational contexts and the work professional musicians do in rehearsing musical material in preparation for performance. One output of this research is the development of a model for analysing the activities of musicians that has taken its structural inspiration from Lacanian psychoanalysis. A thinking frame that may be of use to popular music educators, which the researcher has named *The Musician's Dialogue*.

The researcher is aware that he is a participant in the research he conducts working as a musician and music teacher. It is the explicit intention of this research to generate tools for music teachers to facilitate their work and the primary challenge the researcher has faced is presenting some of the philosophical ideas he has encountered in educational research, as well as the psychoanalytic influence explored within the thesis, in such a way that it can be useful to other music teachers. Taking a case study approach to applying a participant research model has allowed data to be collected from two fields: the working environment of the professional musician, most explicitly when rehearsing in an ensemble; the music classroom where many discourses are at work and the activities of professional musicians are imagined, simulated and aspired to.

Background

The project is inspired by the researcher's experiences of problems some young adults encountered as they progressed through a UK college music department in which he taught. Students from particular cultural

backgrounds found it far harder to adapt to the learning and music making practices they were expected to adopt as they studied increasingly higher level qualifications.

One prominent issue in this environment is that of music theory, something seen as essential to becoming a better musician, but also an intimidating new language to be acquired for many musicians that were not schooled in a conservatoire tradition since childhood. The relevance of music theory to the learning of musicians is called into question when looking at the practices of many popular musicians, for whom there are many different traditions and cultural backgrounds. For many popular musicians, theory plays a less dominant role in their activities, music theory's purpose is more ambiguous than those traditions where reading music is the primary form of communication between composer and performer.

Music teachers in UK schools, colleges and university encounter students with different interests, aptitude and abilities. When they design their curricula the question of music theory may be one that is important, how relevant is the development of music reading skills, how does this balance with other skill sets requiring development and how best to equip students with these skills?

These are issues that have been addressed in literature and often lead to dichotomous juxtapositions such as the term formal/informal learning referring to the conservatoire music reading techniques as opposed to the aural interpretations common to popular musics. It is argued here that the relevance of any technique that is applied to the music learning process is relative to the musical context. This implies that it is impossible to design a comprehensive music curriculum without first defining and limiting the music that is going to be learnt.

When the researcher was in school, he was lucky enough to have a few music teachers that recognised that he might have an interest in jazz

and popular music. Their teaching began him on a journey of fascination with music, one that has frequently been disrupted by ideas of what music should be and how music should be learnt.

As the researcher began teaching popular music to school leavers and adults he soon became aware that only certain types of music seemed to flourish in the institution where he worked. He understood that the popular music courses that he delivered (and those on which he had previously studied) were predicated on and emerged from an academic and cultural history that had struggled to allow a voice for popular musicians. Popular musicology had begun to create a platform that stated not all musics could be described or learnt through the conservatoire methods that dominate western European classical music. As Jazz music had found a way to engage with the establishment, the counterculture of the 1960s had similarly opened a space in academic discourse and had claimed Rock music's position as a valid means of expression and a worthy subject for the academy.

As he began to teach at the beginning of the 21st century new forms of music had evolved different from the popular musics of the 1960s, which by this time were seen as very relevant to British cultural values and economic exports. Urban musics and post-Rave culture rippled through commercial and underground music scenes and it is in this context that he engaged with the local community, training young musicians who wanted the skills to express themselves in the modern world.

Each step change in what was included in 20th century musical syllabi, from a conservatoire tradition, to include Jazz, then Rock music was preceded by a rejection of those musics as somehow being inferior and as each tradition was introduced it claimed a place as a different but equally valid tradition. School and University curricula have filtered these changes into subjects of study, yet the criteria by which music students are judged

still sit in a linguistic framework that assumes certain practices, practices built on the conservatoire tradition.

In schools and universities teachers of music are recruited from a range of traditions, even though the conservatoire still dominates popular music courses such as those the researcher teaches on, bringing with them views on the standard to which music should be learnt and played.

The researcher faced a dilemma in his workplace: many applicants to his courses were interested in post-Rave and urban musics, musics that did not necessarily place a musical instrument at the centre of their activities. He endeavoured to find ways to help students create evidence that would meet the criteria set down to recognise the skills of guitarists, drummers, keyboard players, singers etc. but not the skills of rappers, MCs, DJs and electronic music producers. More recently teaching syllabi have increasingly acknowledged the place of these musicians and their role in the music industry.

The researcher began a journey, culminating in this research project, which lead him to ask: How does music education engage people that want to be musicians? And how can it be designed so as not to exclude people whose interests in music may be different from those who are delivering it?

The researcher realised that these are not easy questions to answer. Firstly, it is important to gain recognition for musics not currently included in the lexicon of musical syllabi. But this requires a definition of music that would need to encompass not only new and contemporary musics, but also future iterations of musical expression, which any single definition could not hope to predict. Secondly any attempt to include forms of music previously excluded needs to be careful not to reject or ignore those established conventions that are important to the musical traditions that currently dominate, despite the apparent lack of acceptance of alternative forms of music by the conservatoire.

Lastly there needs to be a recognition that the musical discourses that constitute a sense of 'rock', 'pop', 'classical' or 'urban' musical style, within the music classroom or in wider society, exist in a context of political and cultural interactions that are beyond the confines of musicality.

Perceptions of music

Clearly it would be important to focus on what different people's perceptions of music were. The researcher's university training in popular musicology came in useful at this point as he knows that the relationship between the 'intrinsic' nature of music – its physical properties and acoustic origins, and its sociocultural value – how it is perceived and used by people, is central to debates surrounding authenticity in musical performance and musical analysis. What counts as 'good' or 'bad' music is important because musicians need some means to evaluate their own skills in order to improve and progress in their musical development.

Musicians continuously make judgments about the quality of the music they and others produce, as do their audiences. There are many rules that have the appearance of being universal in the methods of the conservatoire, but as other forms of music and cultural influence have become a part of the broader music education provision in the UK other methods are also advocated. The influence of other musical styles sometimes contradicts and begins to undermine traditional classical methods of performing and teaching music. This tension calls greater attention to musical cultures and the question of what culture actually is.

The field of cultural studies defines culture as the everyday meanings and practices that people engage in where a study of the 'text' can include non-verbal phenomena such as images and sounds. From the field of cultural studies it is possible to move from musical texts and the cultural artefacts that produce, and are produced by these musical texts, into structural and post-structural debates on the nature of musical knowledge and activity. Is there an essence to music? Are there an underlying given set of meanings to

the vibrational phenomena we experience as sound or is what we interpret as music totally subjective and different for each individual?

There are merits to the belief in the subjectivity of musical judgements. It allows each persons voice to have a value providing a defence against stifling structures and conventions, giving room for creative growth and precipitating space for reflective contemplation. But there are also problems with the belief in the subjectivity of musical judgements. How can musicians communicate with each other if there is no basic commonality between their musical activities? If we embrace a relativistic attitude to musical quality, then how will we progress as musicians and how will we find any meaning in anything we do?

In his workplace the researcher wanted to include musicians who came to study with him, but came from musical traditions that utilised different skill sets than were implicitly and explicitly required by the syllabi he worked to. He wanted to ensure that the musical skills they possessed were recognised, even if they were not evident in the criteria he had to use. Likewise, he did not want to exclude in the process those students who did possess the skills called for by those criteria. He certainly needed to retain some sense of a standard by which he could measure his students' progress and achievements.

The researcher engaged in a range of research activities to explore methods for investigating perceptions of music: writing a research diary, observing music classes, recording conversations about music and musical rehearsals, creating quantitative surveys and qualitative questionnaires. He used multi-modal, hermeneutic and ethnographic methods to analysis the data.

This brought him to four interesting conclusions: that the researcher could not capture any sense of actuality in the classroom without it including the significant presence of himself as researcher, musician and teacher; that

it was worth further exploring the idea of objects as tools, a multi-modal analysis of the status of technology in the music classroom identified a confusion between learning objectives and objects used for learning; that the language of musicians, musical learners and teachers tend to equate expressive and creative activities with the meaning of music, but structure and systems with the production of music; and that the sense of ownership over musical discourse is central to student's engagement in musical learning.

These dichotomous relationships needed to be unpacked further and a reading of Lacanian psychoanalysis through Slavoj Žižek set the researcher thinking in a new direction. Žižek shows how Lacan's registers of the Imaginary, the Symbolic and the Real can transform cultural theory into a tool for analysing agentic motivations in social relations. Musical expression and creativity can sit in the Imaginary register; whilst the signifying chains of musical meaning and organizational structures flow through the Symbolic register; into and returning from the Real – those biological sensory experiences and the physical realm we perceive them to come from, which includes the intrinsically acoustic nature of music.

Educational frames

The issues tackled in this thesis then can be viewed as a question of overcoming dichotomous relationships in language to progress understanding and produce methods that allow constructive approaches to music learning and music teaching. Psychoanalysis is used to explore both the limiting effects of such dichotomies and their central role in developing a system of symbols in the psyche that is essential for operation in social contexts. The use of psychoanalysis however is part of the evolution of this research project and not its starting point. The researcher engaged in research in response to a set of problems he encountered in his professional working life that frustrated him and that he subsequently discovered were common issues discussed in academic literature within the particular

discipline of music education, the wider field of educational theory and the associated philosophical paradigms.

Many writers express clear value judgements, which this researcher began to recognise as dichotomies realising that looking for and unpicking binary oppositions in academic writing and social discourse is a very useful starting place for understanding the contexts and agendas of their proponents. Illustrative of this is the classical music/popular music binary that would immediately situate the work presented here on one side of the binary, but in doing so undermines the intentions and argument of the researcher who has taken considerable effort to ensure that this work does not exclude or denounce the work of the conservatoire in his efforts to advocate the ramifications of taking popular music education seriously. The great composers such as Beethoven or Bach created some very serious music, but then so did NWA.

Preliminary research conducted in preparation for this project focused on the boundaries between the classical/popular music dichotomy, focusing particularly on the work of Lucy Green and her proposition that popular musicians use 'informal music learning' (Green 2006) techniques. Observations and interviews with students and teachers focusing on the learning of music theory by popular music students. Classical music is communicated in a coded text constituted by a set of conventions, both written and symbolic, which have evolved and are disseminated by the conservatoire. Whilst popular musics and other non-classical forms are recognised as valid by the curriculum they are still framed and defined by the classical paradigm.

> Christopher Small describes how western musicians (and by implications music teachers) have a 'strong tendency to work more or less exclusively within the assumptions of the western high art tradition and to accept them as universals of music (1999:10). (Spruce 2001: 120)

Popular musicians have an uneasy relationship with classical music theory. They recognise its importance as the predominant form of accepted

communication, but they also realise the limitations of its usefulness in the performance/compositional contexts popular musicians are familiar with. In learning to understand music making, there is a tension between, a presumption as to the necessity of classical music theory and the ability to create music without the aid of a classical music theory framework.

> One of the strongest, if perhaps implicit delineations transmitted by popular music is the notion that its musicians acquire their skills and knowledge without any apparent need for education in the first place! (Green 2006: 106)

Students of music often come from cultural backgrounds that have different conventions about the meaning of music and how information about music can be communicated. Successful students of music are able to create links between their own ways of thinking about music and symbols used by other musicians, interpreting meaning from language to language. Effective methods for delivery of musical concepts and developing new understandings approach a topic from a variety of perspectives including classical and non-classical. Green advocates recognising the difference between the 'inherent' and 'delineated' meaning of music. Inherent meanings being the physical sonic properties of sound, delineated meanings are cultural and social associations that people make with the music they listen to. Using this she suggests that unless informal music learning techniques are employed in the music classroom there is a danger that music students may become alienated from musical learning.

> Negative experiences of inherent meanings arise when we are unfamiliar with the musical style, to the point that we do not understand what is going on, and thus find the musical syntax boring. Negative responses to delineations occur when we feel that the music is not ours… Musical 'alienation' occurs when we feel negative towards both inherent and delineated meanings (Green 2006: 103)

The alienation of music students is one of the motivating factors for this researcher and his research, the above passage summarises the very processes identified as a concern in the preliminary research. Enthusiastic and often able students the researcher encountered in his work as a music

teacher would become disillusioned with learning about music, he wanted why was this happened when he knew them to be active musicians keen to learn. Green articulates well possible reasons why they may feel alienated by the implicit cultural assumptions of the different working practices of their teacher or peers.

Classical music is the predominant form that shapes the broader social assumptions of the use of music education and frames its assessment and delivery. However, the idea of reification used by Green is particularly pertinent, giving certain forms of musical ideologies an objective autonomy, thereby implying a difference in status and relevance. This trait can be recognised in other forms of music, often there is a pressure to be deferential towards 'great' musicians, styles and songs, giving them attributes that are unavailable to others. This is a question of authenticity that is clearly also significant. A more subjective approach to music pedagogy might open up the possibility of recognition and learning beyond the stylistic and cultural markers that are often perceived to be autonomous.

> A shift in perspective from the notion of music as a complete, autonomous object possessing inherent meaning to that of music as open-ended and socially constructed, can move pedagogical focus onto the process by which music – particularly of other cultures and styles – is created. (Spruce 2001: 128)

There are a number of dichotomies raised by a discussion of Lucy Green's work: Classical/Popular, Formal/Informal, Inherent/Delineated, Classroom/outside world, alienation/engagement, which are employed to confront and tackle many deeply held assumptions that can limit the learning of music students.

Research Project: ~~How~~ Do Perceptions of Music Theory Affect The Motivation Of Popular Music Students?

The preliminary research conducted explored the boundaries of some of these concepts, particularly investigating and attempting to define the difference between language used in the music classroom that could be

identified as relating to 'score notation' or 'alternative notation'. Although in the course of conducting data collection the simplicity of such binary oppositions unravels. Observations of music theory classes aimed to examine the extent classical music terminology intimidated music students, identify if music teachers were able to use informal music language and explore ways that teachers tried to engage students in classical music terminology. Yet the observations conducted did not present sufficiently clear data to use in analysis of these aims. There were far too many extraneous factors. As well as the social, cultural and educational issues mentioned above there were environmental factors affecting the ability of the researcher to gather data, not to mention the way the researcher's presence in the class fundamentally changed the interactions in the room. The following extracts from the report on this research illustrates some of the difficulties (T = class music teacher, Me = researcher):

> T) ok let's go over the different minor scales… the main ones are harmonic, melodic and natural minor these may have other names
>
> T) (turns to me) do you know other names for the natural minor?
>
> Me) Aeolian in a modal system
>
> T) interesting (discussion about my presence ensues)
>
> (Music Theory Lesson Observation 2006/11/27:51-54)

Here the researcher is called upon to explore the very issues for the class that he is trying to observe, specifically because both the students and the teacher knows that this is an area he is particularly interested in. As a committed music teacher the researcher cannot stop himself from engaging with musicians who want to learn! Again in the first observation the researcher is doing what he was hoping to observe:

> Lauren taps me on the shoulder – she has written a C major scale but has labelled it A B C… etc. "Is it three notes up?" trying to find the natural minor. "Three notes down" I say. "Is this right?" she has written E – I look at her, she looks back blankly. (Music Theory Lesson Observation 2006/11/06:3)

Whilst there are issues about the methods of research associated with any ethnographic observation and participant researcher models evident here (discussed in further detail below), it is the exchange between the music student Lauren and the researcher that is of most interest. As with Nigel and Marty from This Is Spinal Tap there is a moment of uncertainty, a failure of communication and a divergence of understanding between the two people interacting that they both recognise, but do not know how to overcome. Discussion of the inherent/delineated meanings, formal/informal music learning or alienation/engagement may provide an interpretation of this interaction, but what is really needed is a discussion of how these people are thinking about the purpose of their activities and the tools they expect to be useful to them in pursuing their goals.

I found there not only to be parallels with contemporary philosophies and their struggle against received traditions, but also a need to question how we identify the tension between received forms of knowledge and other ways of thinking and acting. The basis for this research project lay in investigating how music theory was taught in a class of popular musicians.

Music theory is a good example of inherited language directing our understanding of how things should be. Music theory is a system of symbolic representations that is formalised by a set of conventions evolved from musical conservatoire teaching systems, a student's understanding is typically assessed by a set of examinations run by the Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music, and is seen to directly correlate with a student's progress as a musician. However, popular musicians are often considered to use a different set of skills than musicians trained in the classical tradition, indeed there has been a lot of work recently to identify what these informal learning skills are, most notably Lucy Green's *How Popular Musicians Learn* (Green 2002). Here peer learning, aural imitation and improvisation are given a higher status than the reading and performing of written notation as informed by music theory.

It is my belief that the term music theory should be conceived as something much wider than musical notation, that popular musicians think about the music they make and therefore create theories that inform the way they do things; this is music theory as something much more than musical notation. My research was to investigate how teachers negotiated, on the one hand a knowledge that the popular musicians they were teaching used informal techniques and on the other a knowledge that these musicians needed to acquire musical notation skills in order to progress as musicians.

I was motivated by a project on grounded theory, so I observed several classes and conducted an interview with a teacher, transcribed and coded the results using Nvivo. The project evolved in several stages,

attempts were made at unstructured and semi-structured techniques to gather data, which was processed using open and axial coding respectively.

Table of Binaries and Ulterior Counterparts

Overt	Improvisation	Composition
Ulterior	Music Performance Students	Music Technology Students
Reference	189: Stuff like improvising, cause that's essentially composing isn't it	

Overt	Plays Instruments	Uses Sequencers
Ulterior	Music Performance Students	Music Technology Students
Reference	191: he's really quite proficient at using Reason and Cubase and you know like he, he knows how to get certain sounds but he's not an amazing keyboard player and he composes very randomly	

Overt	Knowledge of Scales	Knowledge of Chords
Ulterior	Learning Classical Music	Learning Popular Music
Reference	199: if he's got a knowledge of scales he's gonna have a knowledge of chords	

Overt	Knowledge of Harmony	Ability to Improvise
Ulterior	Formal	In-Formal
Reference	201: you got to have that knowledge in order to improvise	

Overt	Adapt Theory	AB Theory Guidelines
Ulterior	Our choice	Not our choice
Reference	148: A. If we didn't have to work to sort of, the AB theory guidelines, do you think you would still want to teach them AB or do you think you would adapt it and do, there are some things that you wouldn't do	

Overt	Yes we know it	Not sure about that
Ulterior	We don't understand	We don't understand
Reference	166: two students that know what they're talking about and are both very good musicians but yet, you'll say do you know this that and the other and they'll go yes we know it you'll go ok what about what about... 168: A. What about this and they'll go I'm not sure about that,	

Overt	Know the Word	Don't Know the Word
Ulterior	Can communicate	Can't communicate
Reference	118: A. Then they know that that means getting louder, so they don't need the word diminuendo within their own context but if someone comes along an, and uses that word then they need to have some awareness of that word in fact if they start to use that word then it becomes, it becomes a part of their tool, you know their tool box and they are better able to communicate with more people	

Overt	Own Context	Someone Else
Ulterior	Personal language	Common language
Reference	118: A. Then they know that that means getting louder, so they don't need the word diminuendo within their own context but if someone comes along an, and uses that word then they need to have some awareness of that word in fact if they start to use that word then it becomes, it becomes a part of their tool, you know their tool box and they are better able to communicate with more people	

Overt	Fluency	Lack of Fluency
Ulterior	I don't have to think about it	Don't you even think about it
Reference	205: S. So readily available that you don't even think about it,	

Overt	Developed Own Terminology	Slang Words
Ulterior	Valid	In-Valid
Reference	54: S. They've probably developed they're own terminology, 56: S. Well, not they've developed they're own, but just…e…they'll be using words, slang words,	

Overt	Know what sounds discordant	Don't know what sounds discordant
Ulterior	Uses appropriate harmony	Uses inappropriate harmony
Reference	197: S. Its sounding discordant to me erm and he, he's he says well I don't know if it sounds discordant or not	

Figure 2: Table of Binaries and Ulterior Counterparts

'*The Tables of Binaries and Ulterior Counterparts'* arose from an unstructured interview with a colleague. I identified assumptions in the language we used discussing his music theory classes that I observed, and posited ulterior significances that perhaps we were not aware of. The *'Spectrum'* arose from my realisation that it was not possible to completely separate language pertaining to formal or informal learning techniques

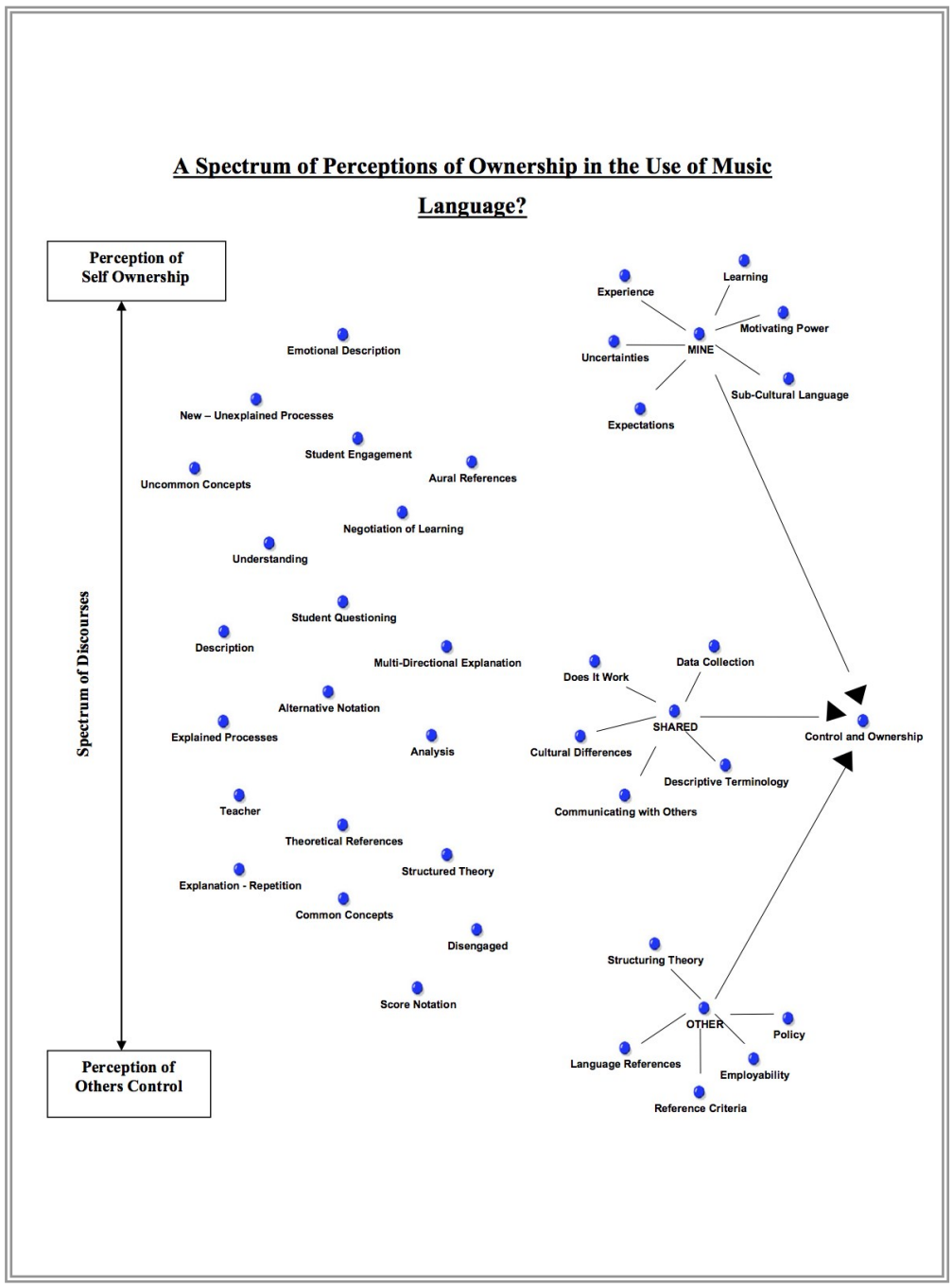

Figure 3: A Spectrum of Perceptions of Ownership in the Use of Music Language?

(classical or popular musicianship), however there did appear to be a proximal relationship to perceptions of belonging to the self, the other or shared. The chart was generated in Nvivo and represents a culmination of several stages of coding.

Research Project: Perceptions of the Purpose of Music Education

If an objective or scientific approach to music education is not appropriate and a simple distinction between formal and informal learning styles is too simplistic to be meaningful, how then to build an understanding of the differing conceptions of what the nature of music education should be? I decided to describe the range of opinions that might be found in a group of music educators through the use of survey techniques. I decided to develop a data set concerned with perceptions of the purpose of music education. I wished to inquire into similarities and difference between policy, research and practitioner aims across a variety of music education sectors in England, with specific consideration to the impact on the developing 14-19 agenda in the UK education system.

I developed a questionnaire designed to reflect key themes appearing in some of the literature discussing music education. The quantitative data collected in the survey was to be used to develop further strategies for inquiry, identifying trends and informing an analysis of the discourse encountered in follow up interviews. In many instances I used similar language as used in the literature. I felt that the way issues are defined affects our perceptions of them and I used academic terminology to assess if respondents feel such symbolic constructions are relevant to them.

I decided to employ terminology that was used in the literature on music education. This allowed me to avoid creating my own distinctions in the terminology and potentially compare the performance of different

Survey Questionnaire

Perceptions of the Purpose of Music Education

Constructed by Alex Timewell – Manchester College of Arts and Technology/Manchester Metropolitan University 2007

Name: Qualification currently being studied:

Degree qualification and awarding university:

Please circle all the following that you feel apply to you:

I Play:

Guitar Piano/Keyboard/Organ Drums Recorder Flute

Violin Clarinet Brass Saxophone

Other_____

I:

Sing Rap DJ Do Karaoke Write/Mix Music

Do Another Musical Activity_____

I consider myself to be a:

Musician Professional Amateur Specialist

Instructor Mediator Teacher Facilitator

Trainer Learner Good Communicator

How important do you think the following aspects of musical experience are to music education?

	Very Important			Not important
Self –Expression	1	2	3	4
Engagement	1	2	3	4
Musical Form	1	2	3	4
Different Methods	1	2	3	4
Specialist Knowledge	1	2	3	4
Technical Skills	1	2	3	4
Sound Materials	1	2	3	4
Expressive Character	1	2	3	4
Personal And Cultural Value Of Music	1	2	3	4
Creativity	1	2	3	4
Fun	1	2	3	4
Relaxing	1	2	3	4

How prominent do you think the following factors should be in the delivery of music education?

	Very Prominent			Not Prominent
Classical Music	1	2	3	4
Jazz Music	1	2	3	4
Popular Music	1	2	3	4
Folk Music	1	2	3	4
Musical Quality	1	2	3	4
Musical Elements	1	2	3	4
Integrity	1	2	3	4
Formative Assessment	1	2	3	4
Summative Assessment	1	2	3	4
Complexity	1	2	3	4
Reflecting Society	1	2	3	4
Exchange of Ideas	1	2	3	4
Interpretation	1	2	3	4
Fairness	1	2	3	4
Authenticity	1	2	3	4
Student Voice	1	2	3	4
Multicultural Representation	1	2	3	4
Oral Transmission	1	2	3	4
Notational Systems	1	2	3	4
Musical Translation	1	2	3	4
Cultural Context	1	2	3	4
Musical Systems Outside Western Cultures	1	2	3	4

How important do you think the following factors are in preventing students developing musically?

	Very Important			Not Important
Expense	1	2	3	4
Cultural Attitudes	1	2	3	4
Parental Aspirations	1	2	3	4
Perception of Self	1	2	3	4
Gender	1	2	3	4
Family	1	2	3	4
Peer Networks	1	2	3	4
Social Class	1	2	3	4
Ethnicity/Religion	1	2	3	4
Ability/Musicianship	1	2	3	4
Formal Instrumental Music Training	1	2	3	4

How important do you think the following factors are in improving the standard of music education?

	Very Important			Not Important
Links between primary and secondary schools	1	2	3	4
To foster continuity	1	2	3	4
Higher expectations	1	2	3	4
Diagnostic planning,	1	2	3	4
Differentiated learning	1	2	3	4
Demanding goals	1	2	3	4
Weaknesses in music teaching	1	2	3	4
Educational competence	1	2	3	4
Vision and goals	1	2	3	4
Attitudes at home	1	2	3	4
The wider community	1	2	3	4
Informal learning settings	1	2	3	4
Promotion of specific musical behaviours	1	2	3	4
Learner empowerment	1	2	3	4
Ownership of musical development	1	2	3	4
Music technology	1	2	3	4

How important do you think the following factors are in influencing music education policy?

	Very Important			Not Important
Application of Research Data	1	2	3	4
Music Conservatoire Curricula	1	2	3	4
Pedagogical Innovation	1	2	3	4
Formal Musical Knowledge and Skills	1	2	3	4
Consensus	1	2	3	4
Music Industry	1	2	3	4
Media	1	2	3	4

Please briefly summarise what you think the purpose of music education is:

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timewell@gmail.com

Figure 4: Questionnaire - Perceptions of the purpose of music education

pieces of literature in the responses I received, although of course I selected

which terminology to use. As well as academic articles I included terminology from a number of key documents relevant to music education in the UK.

To pilot this questionnaire, I surveyed sixty students on a post-graduate certificate of education course at a university in the north west of England. I conducted a focus group and some follow-up interviews after processing these results. The terminology used is derived from relevant literature relating to music education. Using a scale of 1 to 5 of perceived importance I took a mean score of each term employed and ranked them in a table. What was most striking about this result was that creativity was clearly considered most important as were other similar concepts such as fun, engagement and exchange of ideas. Other issues that can predominate syllabi and discourse in music education, such as technology, Conservatoire curricula, ethnicity, class formal instrumental lessons, society, gender and the music industry all were considered less important.

This data provokes many questions and as a pilot I would not want to make any claims about how this may represent perceptions of music educators in general, but it does raise questions as to how music educators may choose to negotiate the delivery they are engaged in. Concepts were sourced from: '*Music manifesto'*, a government-led initiative defining future roles for music in the British education system. '*Musical futures'*, a project based in Nottingham that investigates the role of informal learning in the classroom. The Edexcel syllabi used at the college I work at. The National curriculum guidelines for key-stage 4. '*Our Music: Musical engagement of young people aged 7 –19 in the UK*.' An omnibus survey commissioned by the charity Youth Music in May 2006. The Music Industries Association '*Attitudes to Music in The UK – Nexus Survey'*. Taylor (1989) 'the Associated Board guidelines to music theory'. Welch et al. (2004). '*Mapping music education research in the UK*'

Preferred Variable by Mean

Creativity	1.15
Fun	1.22
Engagement	1.35
Exchange of Ideas	1.38
Self - Expression	1.43
Fairness	1.50
To foster continuity	1.50
Links between primary and secondary schools	1.55
Personal And Cultural Value Of Music	1.60
Student Voice	1.60
Expense	1.60
Vision and goals	1.60
Interpretation	1.63
Expressive Character	1.68
Multicultural Representation	1.68
Ownership of musical development	1.68
Musical Elements	1.70
Differentiated learning	1.70
Popular Music	1.72
Cultural Attitudes	1.75
Application of Research Data	1.75
Musical Quality	1.77
Different Methods	1.78
Pedagogical Innovation	1.78
Formal Musical Knowledge and Skills	1.78
Perception of Self	1.80
Learner empowerment	1.80
Relaxing	1.82
Cultural Context	1.83
Parental Aspirations	1.83
Peer Networks	1.83
Higher expectations	1.83
Oral Transmission	1.85
Musical Systems Outside Western Cultures	1.87

Classical Music	1.88
Jazz Music	1.88
Promotion of specific musical behaviours	1.92
Attitudes at home	1.93
Media	1.93
Authenticity	1.97
Diagnostic planning,	1.97
Music technology	1.97
Musical Translation	1.98
Integrity	2.00
Demanding goals	2.00
Educational competence	2.00
Music Industry	2.00
Folk Music	2.02
Reflecting Society	2.02
The wider community	2.03
Specialist Knowledge	2.05
Technical Skills	2.05
Sound Materials	2.05
Summative Assessment	2.05
Consensus	2.07
Weaknesses in music teaching	2.13
Social Class	2.15
Informal learning settings	2.18
Formative Assessment	2.22
Formal Instrumental Music Training	2.22
Musical Form	2.28
Notational Systems	2.32
Ability/Musicianship	2.35
Family	2.43
Ethnicity/Religion	2.47
Music Conservatoire Curricula	2.47
Complexity	2.57
Gender	2.83

(Q.99) **Please briefly summarise what you think the purpose of music education is:**

Self-expression, participation, understanding of culture
Help kick develop awareness of types of music + self expression
To allow children to experience music and interact with others through the concept of music
To allow students to express themselves and experience things that perhaps they don't know how or have the facilities elsewhere. Promote creativeness.
To enable each person to reach their own musical potential
To enable pupils to learn about something that constantly surrounds us.
To enable children to be creative and inspiried tp want to learn to be able to work well in groups
To develop an individual's knowledge of musical styles and their ability to play music, in any form to create a differentiated sequence where all pupils can find their own level and be shown different options to choose their own taste
To open up the world of music for everyone to enjoy
To educate all students about the different aspects of music
To teach music to everyone, giving all the opportunity to learn and further their knowledge
To encourage creativity and give pupils opportunity to express themselves
To encourage playing and appreciation of music
To express the individual through music and to encourage strong links between peers and everyone
To enable pupils to learn various concepts that are non musical and music through the contrast of a music lesson
To inspire stretch creativity and confidence. Give a chance to learn new skills
To inspire learning in young people
If nothing else it can help children learn a new form of communication, get a glimpse into other areas of the world, the communities and music, and to provide a safe non-verbal form of expression which allows them explore and develop themselves.
To introduce music into people's lives that would maybe not be involved with it or their own without school involvement
To broaden to knowledge of pupils and to create enjoyment
To develop a musical understanding on even a basic level to as wide a spectrum of people as possible for enjoyments
To develop musical knowledge and understanding, but also to develop personal skills such as team work and confidence
Self expression. Stimulating creativity. Interaction with others
To introduce people to being creative, expressive and to have fun
To give pupils group and self music skills. To bring a positive cross-cultural advantage.
For everyone to be musical in some way and to appreciate music
To give pupils an experience of music, of playing with people, and some empowerment through technical improvement
To teach music to a wider variety of children
To give everyone the opportunity and access to musical education and develop certain skills (abstract/confidence ... etc)
To give everyone an idea about music and create the opportunity for students to learn about and bulid upon the core facts
To give pupils tools with which they can go forward and take part in some musical activity themselves also important is to stretch students intellectually
To add breadth to students understanding of a number of subjects cultural and academic settings
To develop knowledge

Figure 5: Perceptions of purpose survey - brief summary of results

Research Project: The Tool Is Not the Object – Exploring Activity Theory Through the Application Of Music Technology In A Further Education Setting

This research project was developed for presentation at a Discourse, Power and Resistance conference. The intention was to demonstrate that the relationship between given resources and pedagogy is not fixed, that the identification of tools for music education can create language that obscures the complexity of the relationship between students, teacher and the environment that they work in. I used the language of Activity Theory, relying particularly on Wertsch's *Mind as Action*. I found it a very useful method for expressing relationships between objects without losing the irreducibility of their interactions.

Below are two slides from the presentation that represent the multi-modal nature of the investigation, not only using pictures as evidence of issues in a music technology classroom, but also to demonstrate the variability of the tools we use and how they can express specific modes of meaning. The use of the word Object is deliberately used in two distinct senses: as things that exist and we use, as tools often are; to mean the goal, purpose or objective of our activities, that which we are using the tools for. My concern is to ensure we do not lose sight of the purposes of music education (however they are defined) in the process of learning to use the tools of music creation and performance (whether they be objects, skills or specific linguistic knowledges).

Figure 6: Slides from the multi-modal analysis of a music technology classroom

Summary

Each of these research projects represents different attempts to consider how language affects music education and experiments with different research methods. An initial interest with music theory, inclusive education and pop music lead to observations and interviews with music teachers and students. Reflecting on the researcher's experience lead him to realise that straight-forward representation of interactions in the music classroom was not possible. The analysis of the language used and the interplay of different discourses would not reveal easy explanations and a step into forms of meta analysis were needed. Using Nvivo to experiment with how themes evolved proved to be useful and developed a basic schema for recognising underlying implicit associations with ideas musicians used. This helped identify different ways language in the music classroom may either indicate a perception of self-ownership or a perception of alienation and the ownership of ideas belonging to others.

The research then moved to consider more quantitative type data collection and a survey of the perceptions of a cohort of music teachers. This survey compiled from concepts and language sourced from policy and syllabi relating to music theory, demonstrated that enjoyment and fun was perceived to be most important to engaging music students to these trainee music teachers. This was intended as a pilot for a larger survey, but the researcher decided that qualitative methods would be more fruitful to the development of an understanding of language.

The possibility of activity theory for devising a useful framework for understanding was then the inspiration for considering the role of music technology in the relation between the management of the curriculum and its delivery, using pictures to explore what technology actually looked like in the classroom in a multi-modal analysis. What was most interesting as an output from this study was the play on the word 'object' as both a thing in

the world – the technology/computers/tools of music education – and something to be achieved, a goal or objective.

These three preliminary projects then set the stage for development of the primary data collection exercise and the consequential theoretical exploration of the role of objects and goals in the way musicians engage with education. All the while with a focus on the sense of enjoyment central to an idea of positive and meaningful music education. The observation, through audio-recording and transcription, of popular musicians in rehearsal was planned and conducted. But the initial intention to analyse the data using language developed at this preliminary phase was found to be very problematic. The researcher turned to the idea of objects and the role they play in the psyche. A deeper engagement with psychoanalysis was required finally leading to the researcher conducting an analysis of the data based on ideas develop through an encounter with psychoanalytic theory.

The next three chapters tell this story, before the actual analysis is presented in part three along with consideration of some of the implications psychoanalysis might have for music teachers.

Chapter 6 – Language in the rehearsals of professional musicians

The actual data collection process for this project was a relatively straightforward process. With a busy schedule of gigs with a wide range of different music ensembles, it was a relatively simple task for the researcher to record a number of rehearsals of the bands he worked with. Transcription of the audio recording was a more laborious process and so the decision was made to restrict the actual data to just four rehearsals and the language used from the period of rehearsing just one song from each.

It is the process of deciding how to analyse the data, reflecting on different aspects of what was trying to be achieved and trying to compose a coherent model for data analysis that was far more challenging and resulted in the theoretical explorations that constitute the last two chapters of this part. This chapter then includes some of the thinking in writing done by the researcher during the collection, transcription, ongoing reading and analysis that has ultimately taken a number of years. Progress has been infused and limited by the ongoing employment of the researcher as a full-time teacher of music. This may have meant a long gestation period that at times has been frustrating, it also has provided plenty of opportunity for the evolution, reflection and reformation of ideas presented in this thesis.

The final data analysis is presented in part three as well as reflections on how the output of the project might be applied to music education contexts. Here the struggle to create a coherent narrative is represented and the journey of trying to combine solid data that shows the actual language used by popular musicians with the pragmatic issues that face music teachers and the abstract theorisation brought to bare through the application of psychoanalytic themes. The chapter ends with an anecdote that is intended to illustrate some of the daily thinking encapsulating the considerations of this type of participant research.

Ownership and identity

The methodology for this research is founded on this question of the relativity of culture and how systems of measurement are applied where educational frameworks are needed to track the progression of students. Deconstructive and post-structural writers provide opportunities to interrogate and unpick assumptions and reifications that may exist in music teachers' comprehension of music theory. Is music theory the same thing as the ability to read a notated music or are there a range of meaningful constructions that constitute or underpin the language musicians use? Is the range of linguistic and symbolic understandings only limited by the number of people that engage in music-making?

Preparatory research conducted focused on perceptions of ownership of musicians over the language they use and the appearance of musical terminology in educational discourse. In designing the primary data collection for this thesis the researcher has worked with a participant research model of discourse analysis, producing transcriptions of the discussions between popular musicians during four different rehearsals. Taking into consideration his teaching practice the researcher engaged with psychoanalysis to ask: what role does language play in the psyche and how does it influence the construction of identity that musicians use to understand their own music making?

Psychoanalysis can be dense with much contested territory and technical language that creates a challenge for any writer exploring these fields and some of the apparently counter intuitive assertions can be frustrating for many readers. However, the perspectives allowed by considering the work of Jacques Lacan provides a productive platform to engage with some of the questions posed by this thesis. Here is described some of the processes during the design and collection of data observing the rehearsal of popular musicians. The following two chapters attempt to engage directly with some of the ideas found in his writing and that of a key

proponent Slavoj Žižek, resulting in a framework called 'The Musician's Dialogue'. The resulting eight terms produced are used in the data analysis chapter as nodes for axial coding conducted using the Nvivo qualitative software package. Results and analysis are discussed one node at a time taking examples from each of the four rehearsals transcribed and exploring possible connotations of the language used.

Evident in the data is the role that a fear of uncertainty can have in influencing musician's behaviour, whether this be through an over identification with the musical artists they are emulating, through defensive statements compensating for or hiding potential judgements of the inadequacy of their performance or an indecisiveness in choosing a course of action during rehearsal. Some musicians have a clear sense of the goals they want to achieve and there are moments when enthusiasm and energy are an outcome of their activities.

Significantly the use of music theory and technical language varies, words with specific meanings are used, but do not guarantee clear and unambiguous communication. The musicians in the data use creative and descriptive words, or verbalisations of the sound they want to achieve more often than they use technical language. It is also evident in the data that a supportive role of reassurance and negotiation is important to musicians, both in rehearsals where there is a clear leader in the form of a musical director or songwriter and in the rehearsals where goal setting and organisation appears to be a collective responsibility.

Designing the research project

Following the preliminary projects, the researcher decided to design a further set of case studies with a participant research methodology to analyse the language musicians use in rehearsal, recording four different occasions where he rehearsed with other musicians, each a different musical context.

The researcher embraced the participant model of fieldwork capturing data through a recording device that he already use in rehearsal to help capture and develop songs. For the purposes of the research project he transcribed the discussion and conversation that occurred between musicians in the band during the rehearsal of one song from each of the five rehearsals used for the project. Each transcript was treated as a case file and a thematic analysis applied using open and axial coding in the Nvivo software programme. Axial nodes were developed from readings of Lacan's (1986) seminar XXI and Žižek's (1989) 'Che vuoi!' using models of 'the other supposed to know' and the 'Graph of Desire'.

Starting from the precept of 'music' as a Lacanian master-signifier the researcher identified key utterances amongst the participants that indicate confusion when using terminology that is assumed to have a common meaning or where musical activity is not within the expectations of all participants. A lack of certainty amongst musicians leads to anxiety and interactions that attempt to defend the integrity of each musicians' skills.

The process of collecting data and applying analysis lead the researcher to ask if the terminology that he was investigating could be mapped across Lacan's 'Graph of Desire', locating different aspects of the activity of musicians in particular registers. The master signifier 'music' and its immediate connotations, 'musician', 'musicianship', 'musical expression', 'musical quality', 'musical discourse', 'audience', 'performance' seemed to the researcher to have a relation to concepts expressed by Lacan.

However much of Lacan's writing is specifically based in the psychoanalyst's clinic, it is Žižek who encourages a re-interpretation into cultural studies. Furthermore, Lacan's writing is extensive and a dense field of study, the researcher felt that he needed a way of exploring these ideas that allowed him to relate the activities of the music classroom to those developed in the clinic.

The researcher developed a dialogue with the graph of desire, trying to understand how different ideas he had encountered in his research could be interpreted in this framework. He produced a graphic representation of this thought-process that tries to chart an understanding of how a subject identifies with him or herself as a musician. This lead to an interpretation of 'music' that is neither placed in a deterministic discussion of its inherent physical manifestations or the essence of its value in various cultures, but is an interpellation of the subject's sense of self through an identification with the persona of 'musician'.

Looking at the data

During the data analysis phase the researcher was able to identify key moments in the rehearsals when specific linguistic tools are used by musicians to communicate their ideas. However often these tools are not drawn from the musical lexicon taught in the music classroom, but are emotionally or texturally descriptive or are onomatopoeic verbalisations of musical sound. Often singing a bassline or drum pattern, for example, facilitates the process of learning a song.

The identification of each musician with an image of themselves as a 'musician' is evident in the desire for each to do a good job – to prepare to perform the song well and in the way they tackle any difficulties in communicating with each other or in their response when the rehearsal is not producing confidence in the band's ability to perform well. How musicians feel about themselves affects the quality of their performance, confidence being an integral aspect of the musical performers skill.

There are moments in the data where musicians are confronted with a failure of communication as the linguistic tools they use do not appear to translate into the musical language that the other musicians understand. These moments can produce a number of different reactions, some more productive than others. If the aim of the musician is to get better at performing the musical material they are working on then how they react to

difficulties in the rehearsal process is central to their improvement. It is also therefore central to the work of music educators.

The researcher wanted to understand better how a Lacanian cultural analysis could provide an alternative viewpoint to many of the discourses present in the music classroom. If music is seen as a master-signifier then any fixations ascribed to it in discourse do not denote qualities essential to musical meaning, rather they are indicators of the intentions of the speaker. Such assertions whether explicit or implicit, conscious or otherwise, reveal assumptions that the speaker has made about what music means to other people.

One of the most evident places these assumptions occur is with the subject of music theory. To the researcher music theory means thinking about music, a tool for understanding what you as a musician want to achieve and how music may be used to communicate with an audience. Yet often music theory is directly associated with the written score, a fundamental tool of the conservatoire but having a less significant or non-existent role in many other musical cultures. In these discourses music theory is seen as an arbiter of excellence – musicians that struggle to read music will struggle to play well and this is true in musical contexts that are precipitated by the conservatoire. In orchestras and choirs, theatre pits and big bands, the ability to read the written score is essential.

But these situations do not represent all the occasions when people play music, in many other circumstances and musical cultures the written score appears as an alien object, something from outside that imposes a particular way of making music that is not familiar or necessary to the music making process. The researcher had encountered music students who were caught in a negative cycle in their relationship to music and the written score. They enjoyed making music and wanted to improve their skills, but the difficulty they had in understanding the relevance of the music theory they were being asked to learn meant they were too preoccupied with

feeling inadequate as musicians to concentrate on developing their music reading skills.

Practices of a contemporary music educator

A number of other contexts provided opportunities to visit the field as well as the researcher's ongoing work: teaching adults on further and higher education courses. The opportunity to work with a commercial education provider for a year, coordinating the franchise in his city to provide rock and popular music after school clubs, meant the researcher gained direct experience working with children aged 10-15 years old. Not only was he able to compare my experiences of working with both adults and children, he was also able to compare the realities of a commercial education organization and the pressure to commercialise within the public sector. He continues to mentor trainee teachers and have the pleasure to work alongside colleagues who were previously students, allowing him to continually explore how music educators identify with the discourses they encounter. He provides instrumental tuition on a one-to-one basis as a self-employed music teacher and is contracted by independent record labels as a performance consultant for musical acts with development and publishing deals.

The researcher has also had the interesting experience of visiting a range of local secondary schools with his daughter who is leaving primary education and having to choose from a selection of schools that she would wish to attend next year. How he as a parent identified with the process presented to him challenged the researcher's preconceptions of the contemporary educational landscape in the UK, particularly the discourses surrounding GCSE results.

As a musician the researcher feels that learning is an essential part of being able to play music. When he works as a musician, work that is captured in the data of this research project, he sees learning taking place in rehearsal and performance environments and considers how, and whether,

they should be emulated in the classroom. The distinctions between music in and out of the classroom, between the identity and role of music teacher and music learner, between professional and amateur musician are considered by the researcher to be discursive constructions enabling individual musicians to find a place within musical and social contexts and so engage with their own musical improvement. The researcher believes, however, that there are no intrinsic differences between the musicians who identify with each of these roles as they share a common interest in the engagement in music-making activities as a driving force in their lives.

Air on a G Thing – an anecdote

The researcher has arrived at his university's business school to continue with writing up when he discovers that a graduation ceremony is about to begin. Around the concourse are staff waiting in anticipation to greet graduates and their families, there are tables lined with champagne flutes with red and white wines available and there is a string quartet preparing to play. The open concourse is overlooked by five stories of classrooms, offices and study spaces, of which the researcher currently has a preference for a workspace that is open to the concourse on a fifth floor mezzanine in an unusual but effective arrangement that gives a sense of studiousness that helps with study, something that the researcher finds very valuable in attempting to find consistency in his writing of the thesis. As he arrives on the fifth floor and enters the study area he can hear the distant murmuring of the first graduates arriving and begins to wonder what music the quartet will be playing.

The researcher is a popular musician, he defines himself in this way at times as he has not had a conservatoire education (although he enjoys many pieces from the classical canon and has some level of appreciation for the aesthetic qualities of some styles in the canon). He is trained and experienced in the performance of a wide range of musics and therefore his skill set is predominated by popular and jazz traditions, his knowledge of

classical repertoire is limited in comparison and this sometimes leaves him feeling inadequate, especially in situations where the music is associated with the classical tradition.

There is a standard line that the researcher has developed when he meets someone for the first time, in a situation that is unnervingly frequent, and he finds the conversation turning to his occupation as a musician. He will politely discuss his interest in popular musics if an assumption is made as to his training, but frequently he will receive the response "I don't mind popular music – but I am more interested serious music!" The researcher 's response to this situation is: "What is not serious about NWA?"

The association between the conservatoire and 'serious' music has been much discussed (Chapter 2), but to this researcher's mind is a prejudiced perspective that undermines the relevance of music and musicians outside of the canon to contemporary society and equally does a disservice to the very powerful works and activities of musicians working within the classical tradition. Sometimes his credibility as a musician is questioned when he cannot recount the precise history of a classical style or admits to not being a strong sight-reader of music – a problem he never has with people who have seen him perform.

For these reasons then the researcher will use the qualifier 'popular' when discussing his musicianship if he feels it is necessary in the context. He also on occasion has hostile thoughts when confronted with icons of the classical tradition in situations that he is not expecting. Fortunately, he has come to realise that these are his own prejudices and is cautious about the feelings that are sometimes evoked. When walking into the business school today and faced with a string quartet the researcher felt a little uncomfortable, here was a classic music ensemble hired to provide an atmosphere that had an air of seriousness to it. He is able not to be perturbed but only wonder if the event organisers had considered an ensemble from a different tradition, perhaps folk or jazz, that would have

suited the occasion just as adequately – the researcher has performed at many such similar events in the past. In actuality the history, co-influence and connections between folk, classical, jazz and popular musics is dense, the similarity is not just in the body of work produced but also in the activities of the musicians that work in each of these traditions.

The string quartet was immediately able to provide the researcher with some examples to contemplate. The first piece they performed the researcher recognised immediately 'Air on a G String' by J.S. Bach. The recognition was pleasing but also the familiarity with the situation his fellow musicians were in. The researcher frequently is hired to perform at functions and night-clubs to provide music to entertain the audience – this is a different role to musicians whose performance is as a creative artist and whose audience have come to see them express that creativity. The role of musicians at functions is to provide a service, an experienced musician will be careful to compile a set from their repertoire that the audience will appreciate and enjoy and as many audiences are diverse, pieces are often chosen because they are very well known and popular. Whilst the researcher performs popular pieces of music from pop, soul, funk, R'n'B and jazz idioms, the string quartet played popular music from the classical idiom as well as popular music interpreted in the classical style such as 'That's Amore' made famous by Dean Martin and 'God Only Knows' by the Beach Boys. The audience did seem to be enjoying themselves so that must be job well done by the string quartet!

But there is another similarity between the researcher's musicianship and that of the musicians performing in the string quartet. As he was siting about to commence his thousand words for the day he couldn't help but notice the lead violin having intonation problems in the melodies he was playing – there were some badly executed notes and definitely some moments were he was quite a long way out of tune. In the popular tradition this is not the end of the world, as long as the music is being performed with

conviction and the flow of the music is not disrupted, the reaching for and sometimes failing to quite make difficult notes, phrases or passages can enhance the music. Also as a function band they will know that the vast majority of their audience will not have had the extensive training or experience needed to develop a sensitive ear that is able to discern performance issues such as being out of tune, these sonic considerations are actually relative to each person or musician's sensitivities. As the researcher often says to his students "If you make a mistake, keep going. The audience will only notice if you let them know by stopping, getting frustrated or making a face. Keep smiling, save your criticisms and analysis until after the audience has left!" Even though the violinist was clearly having issues with his performance, only his fellow musicians, himself and the odd member of the audience (such as the researcher) would notice.

The researcher could not resist looking over the balcony that borders the study space down at a perfectly happy audience not paying much attention to the musicians and chatting about the graduation ceremony they had just come from. However, the intonation issues were making the researcher feel a little uncomfortable and he wondered what the musicians felt as they were playing. Here an expert eye for performance skills and emotional projection through body language were useful. Even from four floors above looking down on the quartet there were obvious signs that the violinist and his colleagues were uncomfortable with his performance. As they finished playing 'Air on a G String' the violinist looked round behind him, took out a handkerchief, shook it, wiped his brow and put it back in his pocket. A couple walked past him and his head followed them, not sure exactly what he was looking for. He did not make eye contact with the other musicians until he was ready to count in the next song. His colleagues' demeanour contrasted this, all three sat still and relaxed waiting for the next piece to begin but they said nothing and made no eye contact with each other.

From the researcher's many years of watching, performing and teaching music these signs of uncomfortableness and embarrassment are obvious to see. The researcher is not judgemental, he enjoys sharing the journey other musicians make when he is a member of their audience – his intense familiarity with the situation both as performing musician and audience member only enhances the pleasure of listening to and watching live music being performed. He would have continued watching – a favourite game – but he had a thousand words to write. He continued to enjoy the music as he successfully reached his goal, for its aesthetics and imperfections and for a commonality he felt with the musicians in the string quartet that entertained him as he wrote.

Chapter 7 – Music education and Objects with Žižek

The writing in this chapter represents an exploration of ideas found in the writing of Slavoj Žižek, how they inspired the researcher to engage with theories of subjectivity and think about how they may be applied to issues found in music education. It is presented here as a step in the research project, where the researcher had conducted his primary data and was in the process of transcription, but was not satisfied that he had sufficiently coherent framework for analysis. In attempting to decipher some elements of Lacan's 'Graph of Desire' a number of useful ideas began to emerge. There is the question of identity formation important to how musicians see themselves; there is the question of the relationship between subject and object important for understanding the way in which musicians use various theoretical and technical tools; and there is the question of enjoyment enabling us to ask how considering musicians' motivation can enhance existing forms of inquiry used in the field of music education.

Why Žižek changing everything makes a little difference to music education

> In a private conversation someone asked me (this was how he put it) whether to speak for the blackboard did not imply belief in an eternal scribe. Such a belief is not necessary, I replied, to him who knows that all discourse has its effect through the unconscious.
>
> (Lacan 1977:359)

> LACAN presents us with a radically new theory of subjectivity. Unlike most poststructuralists, who seek to deconstruct and dispel the very notion of the human subject, Lacan the psychoanalyst finds the concept of subjectivity indispensable and explores what it means to be a subject, how one comes to be a subject, the conditions responsible for the failure to become a subject (leading to psychosis), and the tools at the analyst's disposal to induce a "precipitation of subjectivity." (Fink 1997:xi)

Introduction

The value of the schema for a psychoanalytic ontology of the subject provided by Lacan is its applicability to all circumstances that are available to be read and interpreted by anyone prepared to assume the role of analyst (Žižek 1997). The researcher here is concerned with the subjectivity of musicians, specifically those actively involved in the educational process, and takes permission from the writing of Žižek to find meaning-in-enjoyment (Žižek 1989b:10) in playing with Lacanian lexicon when considering his own praxis as a music teacher. If Žižek had not demonstrated the use of psychoanalysis with such diverse and bountiful examples the opportunity may not have arisen for music teachers to benefit from the resources available to validate the emotional and cultural discourses present in our working environments. Instead Freud and Lacan's concern with the psyche may have been considered insufficiently relevant (compared to, say, the proper scientific methods that dominate educational theory) to any practice outside the psychoanalyst's clinic.

In tackling the question of ideology in cultural studies Žižek has opened a viewpoint which evokes new possibilities for answers to difficult questions, not by excluding or denying the assertions of other perspectives, but by adding a further fundamental consideration that allows him to make creative connections between ideas and experiences. Enjoyment, the production of meaning, the motivation of the subject and the operation of the psyche are important factors in the work of musicians and teachers. It is easy to see how it would be of great value to have examples of a Lacanian reading of musical and educational processes that could be used by musicians and teachers to reflect upon their own praxis and enhance the range of understandings available to them

In *The Sublime Object of Ideology* Žižek (1989) gives a detailed explanation of Lacan's 'Graph of Desire', which this chapter uses for the starting point of a discussion about objects, how they are seen by musicians

and how they may be used discursively in the music classroom. Outside of the psychoanalytic discourse, many people would regard objects to be things with a physical presence in the real world, but Žižek gives examples of how objects are interpreted by the subject in order to bring coherency and relieve anxiety in the subject, anxiety caused by differences between their understanding of what reality is and their actual everyday experiences thus creating tension in the psyche. Žižek's expounding of the 'object cause of desire' and how the subject's relation to it is described by Lacan as a 'symbolic fantasy' (the basis of the subject's understanding of reality) leads him to also describe an object's relation to the drive. The movement from desire to drive is described as 'traversing the fantasy' and the aim of psychoanalysis is for the patient to identify with one's symptom – the object cause of desire – becoming aware that the motivating force of the psyche originates in the drive, composed of the imaginary manifestations of the biologically real body that the psyche is an aspect of. The subject comes to recognise the drive as the source of their psychic energy, still masked by fantasy but also made possible by it (as sinthome).

If we think of the reasons why people like music and want to play music an analogy can be drawn. The aspirations of musicians are an integral part of their identity, famous musical artists for example, are often cited as a source of inspiration in demonstrating the possibilities that are achievable by musicians. This in itself is not enough to provide the motivation to commit to the technical practice musicians need to engage in, nor explain the anxiety that performing music can produce. Musicians enjoy performing, it is fun but not easy, in a way that relates to the Lacanian concept of *jouissance* – pain in pleasure (Homer 2005:89) in exciting tension.

The source of pleasure in the psyche is the drive, its manifestation can be seen in the gigs where musicians perform that are associated with the adrenaline rush of sharing and expressing music with others. For music teachers such a viewpoint can be valuable because it helps us understand

the importance of our music students taking ownership of their musical identities. Admiration of musical idols is not diminished by a realisation that each musician must find their own voice in order to understand the pleasure of musical expression. Considered from this perspective, music teachers have an obligation to ensure that: their students have fun when playing music; that the criteria by which they make value judgements and give feedback to students is a necessary but ultimately subjective cultural construction; and whichever methods are employed they are continually seeking to induce a precipitation of musicianship in their students.

The Graph of Desire and the Lacanian registers

When we act and speak we presuppose there is an actual real world with which we are interacting, that the state of the universe is what we believe it to be. We need a sense of certainty in our everyday thinking, although much of the knowledge we have and the skills we apply are constructed on assumptions and perceptions about the way the world around us works. The people we meet and the objects we use exist to us in these guises because this is the most meaningful explanation that we have for the sense perceptions and emotional reactions we have experienced throughout our lives. Žižek shows us that there are linguistic tools to describe the mechanisms at work in the psyche by reading Lacan with various philosophical traditions that re-imagines identity and culture so that they are applicable at all levels.

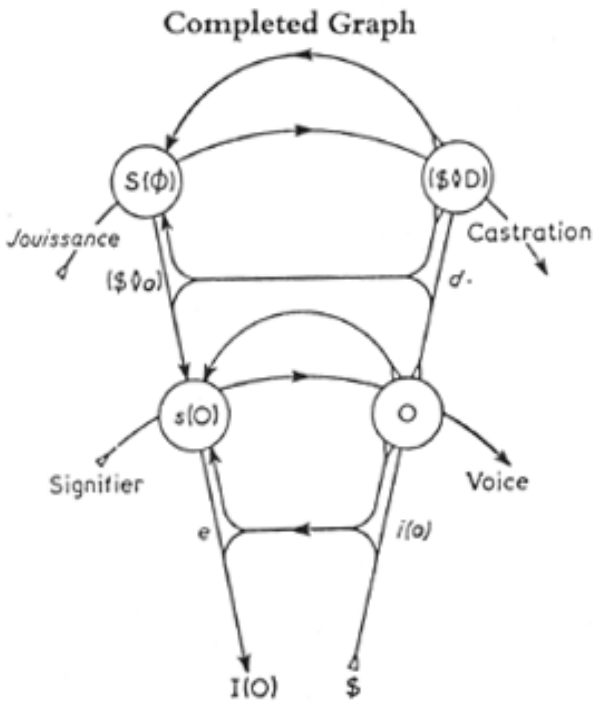
In differentiating between the registers of the Real, Symbolic and Imaginary Lacan provides a framework to understand why we feel the 'real world' is something concrete and understandable. The 'Real' is our sense of that which lies outside of us, the incomprehensible, but as it is outside it can never be known to us in its true form. The meaningful sense of the 'real world' sits in the 'Symbolic' and the unconscious mechanics of our thinking sit in the 'Imaginary'. The psyche is a complex interaction of these different

ways of making sense of ourselves and the world around us, 'reality' is in fact a fantasy:

> Lacan's fundamental thesis is that a minimum of "idealization," of the interposition of a fantasmatic frame by means of which the subject assumes a distance from the Real, is constitutive of our "sense of reality" – "reality" occurs insofar as it is not (it does not come) "too close." (Žižek 2003 para13)

The subject's interaction with its environment must be understood from the operation of the psyche – the way that each of us thinks – and the graph of desire can help us map some of these operations in order to come to terms with Lacan's very counter-intuitive description of our subjectivity and sense of reality.

The graph of desire can be read in many ways and is confusing as the purpose of it is to show the retroactivity at work in the operation of the psyche. The subject reading the signifying chain backwards imagines the face they present to the world pre-exists its symbolic construction. One way of exploring this psychic process is to search in this direction, starting with symbolic identification back to the signified, which comes before it, through to fantasy and the level of enjoyment emphasised in Žižek's reading in 'Che Vuoi?'. What can we read of subjectivity and its vissitudes through subjects, objects and otherness if we trace back backwards/forwards from symbolic identification to the split subject along the line of interpellation in the graph of desire? Traced in this way we have:



I(O) – Symbolic Identification – the ego ideal
e – the ego
s(O) – the signifier of the Other – the signified
($<>a) – Fantasy
S(Ø) – the signifier of the lack in the Other
($<>D) – the Drives
d – desire
O – the big Other
i(o) – imaginary identification – the ideal ego
$ – the split subject
Δ – the mythical – pre-symbolic intention

Figure 7: The Graph of Desire read backwards

Each stage could be read as a step backwards from the person that the subject believes they are presenting to the world – who the subject thinks they really are – peeling back layers (Symbolic – Imaginary – Real) of psychic construction into increasingly less certain and tangible territory until we arrive at the split-subject. The split subject itself stands in for what comes before it; a way of representing 'some mythical, pre-symbolic intention' (Žižek 1989:101) that lies behind the point of interpellation of the subject; the Real of the subject that it can never know – as any knowing implies interpellation. This is an imminent process that is continually evolving from the traumatic kernel of existence at the beginning of the subject's becoming

in the world. It is also an unmeasurable sketch of how people think and form their identity, it is not an epistemological truth but a schema for a psychoanalytic ontology that helps us understand how a subject forms an understanding of reality.

The little piece of the real and the object petit a

The key to understanding the graph of desire is that it explains what happens in the psyche when the subject encounters sensations caused by an outside influence from the Real or the internal biological or emotional processes. This happens at two levels: the level of identification where meaning is made from these sensations, producing identity and helping the subject decide on the actions they should take (indicated by the line from signifier to voice); and at the level of enjoyment from where the motivational forces that drive the psyche emanate (indicated by the line from *jouissance* to castration). Fantasy, and therefore our sense of reality, sits between the two in a symbolic relation between the subject and that undefinable sense of something extra that creates meaning for the subject. This is known as the object cause of desire or the object petit a:

> From seminar XI onwards Lacan will oppose the drive and jouissance to desire, and that little piece of the real – of jouissance – that the subject has access to will be designated the objet petit a. (Homer 2005:77)

Identity formation (interpellation) must be understood as the place at which the subject encounters signifiers (sense perceptions and emotional reactions) and the way these are stitched into meaning. When a subject encounters sensation there is a presumption of causation: that there is another subject that in some way is trying to communicate something and that some form of response is expected. The role of the 'Other' is central to this psychoanalytic framework. The 'Other' demands something of the subject and in order to make sense of this a fantasy is constructed, a fantasy that is reified retroactively into reality. This sense that people have of reality is only possible because of an unconscious forgetting of the origin of fantasy, this splits the subject between their existence and relations in reality

(symbolic identification) and the pre-symbolic intention that the subject emanates from.

> The crucial point that must be made here on a theoretical level is that fantasy functions as a construction, as an imaginary scenario filling out the void, the opening of the desire of the Other: by giving us a definite answer to the question 'What does the Other want?', it enables us to evade the unbearable dead-lock in which the Other wants something from us, but we are at the same time incapable of translating this desire of the Other into a positive interpolation, into a mandate with which to identify. (Žižek 1989:114-115)

Positive interpellation requires going through the fantasy bringing focus onto the object of the drives. The existence of 'lack' – the fear that the Other does not exist, that the Other's existence cannot account for/provide a satisfactory explanation of the desire placed on the subject – must be accepted.

Drive circles the object

The subject's relation to the 'object petit a' is a complex one and is central to Žižek's use of Lacan. For Žižek enjoyment is the missing factor that needs to be considered in any discussion of theory or culture. It is through the object petit a that *jouissance* is understood by the subject. The cause of desire structures the subject's fantasy and although the subject sees this as their reality there is always tension, discrepancies and an unknown quality (Žižek 1989:119) that calls the subject to try to understand it. What lies further back in the psyche is the drive, a concept that describes the subject's physical interaction with *jouissance*:

> What Lacan had to suggest is that the drive is to be understood solely in terms of satisfaction, and that, as far as satisfaction goes, there simply isn't any: Satisfaction is impossible. (Roustag 1990:81)

The drive is a contentious concept that has evolved through Lacan from Freud's use of the term and the translations between German, French and English are not exact (Lacan 1977:334) The pleasure principle and the death drive are separate but united drives for Freud, but Lacan propounded the partiality of the drive (Homer 2005:76-77). This is the distinction

between instinct and drive, illustrating a crossing of the Lacanian registers, as Fink discusses:

> When Vorstellungsreprasentanz is translated as psychical representative of the drive, things seem clearer, because we do not think of the drive as consisting of words or signifiers alone, but rather as that which crosses the mind/body gulf or continuum. Yet Lacan stresses that the drive is not unrelated to language: unlike "instinct," drives are, in some sense embedded in language. (Fink 1997:188)

Whereas fantasy structures reality, the biological manifestations of the body are understood at a psychic level as drive. The subject feels they are a person with a body, fantasy allows the body to be understood as part of the subject's person. 'Signifiers are what allow drives to be represented: presented to us as beings of language.' (Fink 1997:74) The reality that the subject experiences is only an egotistic representation of the constructions being imagined during the process of interpellation. Experiences, sensations and emotional reactions sometimes do not fit this picture of reality and this causes tension in the psyche – *jouissance*. The subject makes sense of this through the object petit a (the desire of the Other, the object cause of desire) but the point of psychoanalysis is to recognise desire for what it is – a construction that helps give meaning to our existence – the actual source of our motivation is better understood to be the drive where *jouissance* is experienced:

> analysis is over when we achieve a certain distance in relation to the fantasy and identify precisely with the pathological singularity on which hangs the consistency of our enjoyment (Žižek 1989b:26)

The registers of Symbolic, Imaginary and Real can be understood through objects and how they are used by subjects if read from their place in the graph of desire. Objects can be viewed in three corresponding ways gaining significance in the process of the interpellation of the subject. There are objects that cause desire "a", these are integral to the fantasies that stitch together reality for the subject, producing meaningful conceptions from the signifying chain. There are the little pieces of the real "S(Ø)" that

we latch onto to providing reassurance that the other does exist giving us something concrete to build meaning upon. Then there are the drives "($<>D)", driven by imaginary objects arising in the psyche in response to physical and emotional sensations experienced by the subject who exists as an entity in the biological real. The Other exists as a necessary part of the subject's psychological functioning. Desire cannot be satisfied by physical objects, the subject needs to recognise that the underlying drives provide access to *jouissance* bringing pleasure and enjoyment that are the source of motivation for the subject's activities.

> In the course of the psychoanalytic treatment, the subject has to learn to assume directly his relationship to the object which gives body to his jouissance, bypassing the proxy who enjoys at his place, instead of him. The disavowed fundamental passivity of my being is structured in the fundamental fantasy which, although a priori inaccessible to me, regulates the way I relate to jouissance. (Žižek 2003:para16)

The impact for music education may become clearer with some examples that will allow these ideas to be utilised by music teachers and music students, allowing the focus of their activities to be the joy of performing music as the primary motivator from which technical methods and theoretical frameworks can be structured.

Hendrix as the object cause of desire

> The Real may be represented by the accident, by the slight noise, the small element of reality which is evidence that we are not dreaming. But, from another perspective, this reality is not so slight, for what wakes us is the other reality hidden behind the lack of that which takes the place of representation—this, Freud tells us, is the Trieb. (Lacan 1977:58-59)

The interpellation that takes place when the music student engages with the signifying chain, creating meaning in relation to the Other, locates subjectivities of musicianship upon a range of objects which the student takes to constitute the real world – reality. Musical realities are stitched together meaningfully by the master-signifier 'Music', which comes to represent the underlying rationale for the function of many musical objects,

but in fact only represents the idea in the subject's imagination that there must be something meaningful in the sounds they hear. The way in which musicians judge and evaluate music is bound up in this attachment of meaning to objects, this can be seen in the collecting of physical objects to stand in place of the meaning musicians perceive in music but are unable to capture due to the sonic and non-linguistic nature of sound, however the 'objet petit a' is the 'object cause of desire' – the essence of meaning perceived within this physical object.

> Object a is not what we desire, what we are after, but rather that which sets our desire in motion, the formal frame that confers consistency on our desire. Desire is of course metonymical, it shifts from one object to another; through all its displacements, however, desire nonetheless retains a minimum of formal consistency, a set of fantasmatic features which, when encountered in a positive object, insures that we will come to desire this object. Object a, as the cause of desire, is nothing but this formal frame of consistency. (Žižek 1997: para 7)

We will now draw a parallel between these more elusive objects and two discursive objects found in music education: musical idols – such as Jimi Hendrix; gigs – where the joy of musical performance is felt by musicians. The idols of musicians are people that have created musical work that inspires others to make music. When a musical idol causes desire in a musician there is an aspiration to emulate some facet of what their idol has achieved, to become like their idol in some way. A fascination with the life and methods of a great musician is the basis for the improvement of many musicians, learning to play the same riffs and melodies, performing their songs, adapting attitudes and accessories that in some way link the musician to their idol in an attempt to be associated with the elusive essence of greatness the musician perceives in their Idol. The essence that is perceived in the musical idol, the thing that makes them more than just another musician or songwriter, the something that evokes a sense of excitement that makes the idol great in the eyes of the musician, this is the object petit a. It is an object only in a psychic sense, it is the subject's attempt to create distance from the Real (a terrifying un-comprehensible void), and any

attachment it might have to a physical thing is constructed in the fantasy of the musician.

If we use Jimi Hendrix as an example, a universally respected singer, songwriter and guitarist who has inspired many other musicians, we can look at other guitarists and see the homage they pay towards Hendrix's style musically and in appearance. Of course we could look at other musical artists such as B.B. King, Steve Vai or Neil Young (in the case of 'guitar heroes') and similar associations can be seen between them and their fans – many musicians will have many idols whom at different times inspire them with a sense of that exciting thing. This is the metonymic sliding Žižek is referring to in the above passage. Desire can be placed on an object, but that desire is slippery and at one moment a particular artist may have it and the next moment our musician is idolising, imitating and learning from a different artist.

There can be real advantages to the idolisation of another musician, it is important for building instrumental technique, the aesthetics of a particular style of music, building positive attitudes to performing and creating music, a sense of self confidence and independence of musical expression and so on. But not everything about Jimi Hendrix is necessarily useful, helpful or possible for other musicians to imitate. There is no harm in imitating his dress sense for the purpose of stagecraft and entertainment – but an obsessive approach to the clothes Hendrix wore might detract from the performance of the individual musician, or worse that musician may think that wearing the same clothes as Jimi Hendrix equates to being able to play like him, which is not the case. There are the very biological restrictions that race and gender bring to any imitation, but does this prevent a musician from idolising and learning from Hendrix, can a drummer or violinist not be inspired by his playing? In the worst case Hendrix's drug addictions were responsible for his death and it would be unwise for any music teacher to advocate this part of Jimi Hendrix's life be imitated.

There is another level to reading a musical idol as the object petit a. When a musician desires to be like one of their idols, the thing they desire did not exist in their psyche until after they saw it in their idol. The musical idol causes that desire – creating a field of possibilities in the musician's fantasy. Only after a musician has heard (or at least heard of) Hendrix can they aspire to be like them. The researcher's personal experience of learning to play '*All Along The Watchtower'* led him to understand the use of double-stopping (playing two strings at once) in creating particular sonic effects in solos, but this was only after he had learnt to play it, before that point he thought "What is that amazing sound I have never heard before? I want to be able to make it!" That inspired the researcher to idolise, imitate and learn from Hendrix's performance. Once the techniques had been learnt the researcher still enjoyed listening to and respects Jimi Hendrix's playing but it no longer causes desire, inspiration is now found elsewhere. If the researcher had never discovered Jimi Hendrix's playing, then he may have never explored double-stopping across pentatonic scales and his guitar playing would have sounded very different to the techniques he employs now.

It is also important to stress that this object, Jimi Hendrix, exists only in the subject's psyche. At one level the figure we associate with Hendrix, was a person that existed in a historical sense, but all we can access of that 'real' person are the artefacts he has left behind: recordings, photos, documentaries etc. even the memories of people who knew and interacted with Jimi Hendrix when he was alive are not concrete physical things we can point to and say "that is Hendrix!" The music we hear and images we see of Hendrix are all partial and filtered through the biological senses into the psyche as imaginary and fantastic objects that in turn are reified in their association with physical objects such as an LP, a scarf or a plectrum with Hendrix's face on it. Having chosen Hendrix as our example idol may make it difficult to believe that he is not actually universally revered. His greatness as a musical artist is subjective, personal to the musicians who idolise him

each in their own way. There are musicians who would list other greats long before they came to Hendrix and others who may not consider Hendrix's music to be pleasant at all. The there are those people who will never have heard of Hendrix, who knows if he would cause desire in them if they had the opportunity to hear one of his records.

The plectrum of the Real

Many musical objects appear in the register of the Real, designated as the 'signifier of the lack of the Other' and it is here we can tackle objections some musicians have to complicated theory. Abstract ideas often do not feel real. Musicians like to play through musical ideas to begin to gain an understanding of them, for them music theory needs to feel real. Žižek accounts for this from both sides, firstly there is a Real which the subject lives in relation to, secondly there is a need for the subject take account of the Real. For musicians the sounds we hear are real, as is the need to make sense of sound through the discourse of music. However, this is not a straightforward representational exchange, partly because any representation of the Real can only be a partial manifestation produced as fantasy, but also because a psychic energy is invested into the signifying chain – the subject has a vested interest in producing particular meanings. This can be seen in the way an electric guitarist whose amp is making a feedback noise will not be happy, unless he is working in a genre where this sound is desirable. A country musician seeks to avoid feedback in the tone produced by his amp, a rock musician by contrast may seek nuances in tone including and often dominated by a feedback sound. One musician's noise is another's music.

In one example given by Žižek (1991), the 'signifier of the lack in the big Other' is a button from the coat of a man who was killed in a fit of anger. The subject of the story, the killer, keeps the button as it reminds him of something traumatic he has repressed. T-shirts are often sold at gigs to fans of the musician(s) performing. The function these objects play for the fans is

the same as the 'signifier of the lack in the big Other', to provide some concrete reassurance that the focus of their musical desire does exist.

A guitarist's plectrum may only be a small shaped piece of coloured plastic, but the guitarist is reassured that the desire to be regarded as a good player is demonstrated by its possession. The fear that the Other does not exist – an idolising audience, approving peers etc. – could undermine the guitarist's self belief and confidence. The plectrum is an integral part of a guitarist's musicianship, not just for its use in striking the strings on a guitar, but also as an object which can be invested with meaningful representations of that guitarist's abilities as a musician. The plectrum is a piece of the Real, but its meaning is held in the symbolic relationship between the musician and their musical desires; the split subject and the object cause of desire. This is the Lacanian definition of fantasy.

Driven to play

Although it appears a truism to say that musicians make music because they enjoy it, this is precisely what Žižek is suggesting if we read music to be a master-signifier. Enjoyment is the factor that is missed by positivistic, pragmatic and post-structural educational theorists: it can be read both positively and negatively; is hidden by the screen of fantasy; and has a physical determination in the subject's biology. In his dissection of the 'Graph of Desire' Žižek (1989:87-130) argues that the movement from symptom to sinthome (the successful outcome of analysis) allows the subject to see through the screen of desire. The significance being that fantasy is fuelled by the object cause of desire, a desire for something that is unobtainable because it does not actually exist. If the subject is able to recognise that what they desire is not to be found in others but within themselves then they begin to recognise the object of the drive, the physical sensations of the body. Rather than seeking (and continuously failing to obtain) objects of desire the subject can take pleasure in the pulsing of the

drives, which do not seek a completed resolution to their demands, but rather are self replicating, life affirming processes.

> The opposition between desire and drive consists precisely in the fact that desire is by definition caught in a certain dialectic, it can always turn into its opposite or slide from one object to another, it never aims at what appears to be its object, but always "wants something else." The drive, on the other hand, is inert, it resists being enmeshed in a dialectical movement it circulates around its object, fixed upon the point around which it pulsates. (Žižek 1991:134)

Where better can the objects of the drive be seen than in the pleasure musicians get from playing music? The enjoyment that is felt in musical performance is something that many musicians may try to describe, but caught somewhere between bodily sensations that accompany the adrenaline rush of physical activity and the emotional response to the engagement in meaningful performance, adequate description of the joy of playing music always seems elusive.

> With object a understood as the traumatic experience of jouissance that brings the subject into being in the encounter with the Other's desire, the formula for fantasy suggests that the subject tries to maintain just the right distance from that dangerous desire, delicately balancing the attraction and the repulsion. (Fink 1997:174)

Yet discourses found in music education contexts rarely identify enjoyment as an important criterion to be judged. Engagement, competency, professionalism are all considerations, but has enjoyment been overlooked or is it too elusive to be measurable and therefore is considered to be irrelevant?

Precipitating Musicianship

It is in performance at gigs that many musicians find the pleasure that they seek. Despite the excitement/nervousness they may encounter before performance or the euphoria/exhaustion that often comes afterwards, it is the moment on stage in performance that a focus on the act of performing means linguistic frameworks dissipate, a flow is achieved and a different mental state is entered. Musicians seek to continually repeat this

experience, circling this object that drives them, that of musical performance. Complete satisfaction is never achieved as the moment of performance is timeless but also fleeting.

> the well-known 'sense of unreality' we experience in the presence of certain phenomena can be located precisely at this level: it indicates that the object in question has lost its place in the symbolic universe. (Žižek 1989b:24)

Yet the understanding that a musician may have over what they do can only be conceptualised outside of the moment of performance, either as a set of rules to be followed or as process of self-development and improvement. Identifying with one's own musicianship as a process of finding ways to repeat the performance experience, rather than aspiring to posses the qualities seen in other musicians such as their musical idols, could be seen as an equivalent process to that prescribed by psychoanalysis for the analysand. This would be the sinthomatic 'face of subjectivization, a process of making "one's own" something that was formerly alien.' (Fink 1997:xii)

Taking a psychoanalytic viewpoint of musicianship, requires conceiving of a necessary split between the stimulating physically-bound sensations of the drives and the structuring linguistically-bound formations of desire. The arising tension providing a force of energy that produces and configures the actions of musicians.

> This gap between the bodily depth of the Real and the pseudo-depth of Meaning produced by the Surface, is crucial for any materialist ontology (Žižek 2003 para 14)

Using an analytical system derived from these concepts does not mean an abandonment of other forms of understanding or inquiry, traditional or alternative forms of knowledge, rather it just adds a little something extra. It does not attempt to fix meaning and in fact allows and accounts for its changing forms and differences of interpretation. It does however provide an account of the apparently magical something that happens in the moment of music creation and sharing:

> precisely the One of jouis-sense, of the signifier not yet enchained but still floating freely, permeated with enjoyment: the enjoyment that prevents it from being articulated into a chain. (Žižek 1989b:24)

In this way engaging with Žižek has brought the researcher new insight into how musicians build a sense of identity, use objects such as musical tools and most importantly recognise the enjoyment they take in making music. This brings a complimentary set of understandings to the many approaches to music education, adding a compatibility even where there is an apparent exclusivity, as psychoanalysis does not seek to define the truth of what music is. It does give us some clues, however, to why such definitions appear to be so important to music teachers and how to overcome the problems encountered in such quests. Enjoying the process of making music should be at the centre of any process of developing musicians and their musicianship. There is no right way to be a musician, only the taking ownership of the ways we chose to make music.

Chapter 8 – Music education and desire with Lacan

The writing presented here represents a further attempt to delve deeper in to some of the concepts found in the work of Lacan. Following on from the previous chapter where the relationship between subject and objects was considered and applied to musical contexts, this chapter reveals the thinking and reading of the researcher as he endeavours to find ways that psychoanalysis can be used for the reading of the data that he collected in the observation of popular musicians in rehearsal.

It also represents a realisation that in order to understand better the ideas taken from Žižek it would be vital to also look at the writing by Lacan to which he refers. For the researcher this was new territory, Lacan's writing is dense and involved, there is much commentary that the researcher would not be able to make complete sense of. A decision was made to focus on the key chapters by both Lacan and Žižek on the 'Graph of Desire', using this to devise a model that could be use for the analysis of collected data.

The result is an imperfect and partial interpretation of some psychoanalytical concepts, but also a useful model of how musicians might think about music and their activities that was then applied to a reading of the rehearsal of popular musicians. This analysis is presented in the next chapter.

'Psychoanalysing Musicianship: Identity in 'Che Vuoi?' and the 'Subject Supposed To Know'

Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to set forth the key concepts that the researcher wishes to draw upon from the work of Slavoj Žižek and Jacques Lacan in devising a conception of musicianship using a psychoanalytical approach to culture for use in researching discourse in music education. As a music teacher the researcher is concerned with the progression of his

students into an ever growing confidence and identification with their own musicianship. He wants them to identify with the term musician as this will better help them understand the musical skills and knowledge they are acquiring, as well as the emotional and intellectual models they need to develop to negotiate their musical relationships and performances. Music teachers must encourage their students to take ownership over musical learning and to do this a relationship of trust must be established.

However, the roles of student and teacher are not equivalent each has different expectations, aims and ways of understanding musical learning. I will argue that Lacan's concern with the desire of the analyst is encapsulated in his proposition of 'the subject supposed to know' and that a parallel can be drawn with the aims of the music teacher. To fully explore this relationship it will be necessary to draw on a reading of Lacan's key ideas and the way they can be applied to culture by Žižek in his chapter entitled "Che Vuoi?". The consequences for the way culture is understood from this reading provides insight into the debates in music education on identity of teachers and engagement of learners, it also provides a viewpoint on the role of popular culture and its relationship to hegemony.

The chapter is composed of a number of parallels. The trust placed in the analyst plays a similar role to the trust placed in the teacher. Transference and the dissolution of transference are interpreted into two stages of musicianship. Symptoms are read as musical goals. Žižek's chapter on the 'Graph of Desire' is then drawn upon to develop a model of musicianship. This happens in three parts: identity, identification and beyond identification. Finally, the 'subject supposed to know' is posited as a perspective for the music teacher to enable them to use the model of musicianship that has been developed through the course of this chapter.

The trust placed in the teacher

Trust between a teacher and their student is vital for learning, without the belief that they have a common goal – that of the student

learning with the help of the teacher – it will be difficult for them to communicate with each other or even want to work together. In psychoanalysis trust is also important, but there are two stages to the process: the patient must first trust the analyst to help by revealing the underlying fantasies from which their symptoms originate and then the patient must realise that the analyst does not have the answers, cannot alleviate them of their symptoms. The patient must learn to recognise in themselves the way identity is formed through their symptoms.

Lacan's language in his seminars is a dense transcription of speeches he presented. The following passage illustrates how Lacan felt the identity of the analyst is central to the process of psychoanalysis:

> The aim of my teaching has been and still is the training of analysts. The training of analysts is a subject that is well to the forefront of analytic research. Nevertheless in the analytic literature, its principles are lost sight of. It is clear that in the absence of adequate criteria – since for the psycho-analyst there is no substantial beyond by which to justify his conviction that he is qualified to exercise his function – the substitution can be interpreted in only one way – as simulation.
>
> Yet what he gains is of incalculable value – the trust of the subject as such. He is not God for his patient, so what does this trust signify? Around what does it turn? For him who places the trust, and receives its reward, the question can no doubt be ignored. It cannot be for the psycho-analyst. He should know, in the process through which he guides his patient, what it is around which the movement turns. He must know, to him it must be transmitted, through actual experience, what it is all about. This pivotal point is what I designate under the term the desire of the psycho-analyst. (Lacan 1986: 230-1)

In this passage Lacan describes his assertion that the analyst has a responsibility in his relationship with his patient, that the patient may not be aware of and that is not a focus of traditional psychoanalytic practices. This is the trust that the patient places in the analyst. The patient's reward for placing trust in the analyst is a positive outcome for the patient. But Lacan is asking what does the psychoanalyst gain from the trust being placed in him and how does the psychoanalyst know that he can fulfil the expectation that the patient's trust places upon him?

> When Lacan says that the 'analyst must know, to him it must be transmitted' he is implying that the analyst's job is to get the patient to be honest with him. In placing trust in the analyst, the patient is demanding the analyst must know 'what it is about.' The analyst can only do this if the patient is honest with them. The patient must do the work of healing. (Iyer 2008:13)

A parallel with teaching and learning can be drawn. It is the student who must do the learning. The teacher is the person who the student trusts to guide them through to achieving the stated learning objectives. The student may assume that teaching will be done to them, the teacher will give them knowledge and then they will have learned what they need to know. However, the teacher knows that it is the student who must do the learning, despite the trust placed in the teacher the student must be guided to recognise the skills they possess, or have developed whilst working towards achieving the stated learning objectives.

For example, a current student of the researcher is very serious about becoming a professional musician. He is focused on developing his technique as a drummer, gaining experience of performing live and organising musical events. This is good, he is concentrating on the right activities to develop his musicianship, but he is not yet confident that he has the skills that he needs to be a professional musician. The researcher as his teacher is happy with his progress in developing his musical skills, they will work together on rhythm, on style, on harmony, arranging, composition, critical analysis, planning, budgeting, logistics etc. His teacher believes with application and experience he will be able to build a career as a professional musician.

For him though there is still something fundamental missing, some part to being a musician that he feels he hasn't yet acquired. As he describes it: "I wanna be a heavy player!" The researcher is his teacher, the teacher is supposed to know what he needs to achieve the goals he has set himself. He is expecting his teacher to teach him how to be a better musician, which his teacher can do by encouraging him to continue in the musical activities he currently engages in. To be a "heavy" musician, however, is a term that has

a specific meaning for the researcher's student, one that could be very different from the researcher's understanding of the term.

In this chapter it will be demonstrated how being a teacher is a role to be played for the student and although teachers have a great deal of knowledge to give, if they don't fulfil this role their students may not value or understand what they are learning.

The two stages of musicianship

If the researcher takes from his practice as a further education lecturer teaching music to students aged 16 and over, he is able to draw parallels in the journey he expects his students to be engaged in and the psychoanalytic process. The concern in this context is increasing the students' ability to work independently and synthesise knowledge and skills through practical application. The further education context could be considered a bridge between the initial development of musical skills and the vocational practices of professional musicians.

These musical learners are engaged in a journey from having some experience of performing music to wanting to increase their musicianship with the goal of becoming a working musician. This is not only a journey of increasing technical dexterity, widening repertoire and depth of understanding, it is also a journey of emotion and identification with themselves as musicians. This process of developing musicianship can be read through a psychoanalytic lens to provide useful ways of thinking about musical learning.

> In this way we can also articulate two stages of the psychoanalytic process: interpretation of symptoms — going through fantasy. When we are confronted with the patient's symptoms, we must first interpret them and penetrate through them to the fundamental fantasy as the kernel of enjoyment which is blocking the further movement of interpretation; then we must accomplish the crucial step of going through the fantasy, of obtaining distance from it, of experiencing how the fantasy-formation just masks, fills out a certain void, lack, empty place in the Other. (Žižek 1989: 74)

In psychoanalysis there are two stages to the process before the analyst can say that the patient's treatment is successful. The first is to identify the patient's symptoms and the underlying fantasies that support them. The second part of the process is helping the patient realise that their fantasies are fundamental to how they express their humanity – the instinctive drives that motivate us through both pleasure and fear – their symptoms play an important part in how they understand the world. With this new understanding of the role that fantasy plays in their life the patient can come to control their symptoms using them to draw pleasure from life rather than being dominated by the force of their symptoms.

This understanding can also help musical learners take ownership over their musicianship. They must first identify what they feel it is to be a good musician, in what way they want to improve their musicianship – this in itself is not easy if the musical learner believes that there is a correct way to improve as a musician, that it is simply a matter of being taught this. Then there is the development of technique, knowledge and understanding – these vary widely between different musicians depending on their goals and the contexts they are working in. Professional musicians need to analyse each musical situation and respond appropriately. Confidence in one's own skills and knowledge is an important part of the musicianship of a professional performer, confidence that can only be gained through a process of taking ownership over musical learning.

Having a clear sense of how personal goals and musical experience is evaluated is the first part of taking ownership of musical learning. The second is to come to terms with why musicians enjoy performing, where does the pleasure in performing music come from and why does it cause anxiety in many musicians. Understanding how these feelings inform the musical goals each musician uses to guide their activities solidifies musicianship into a powerful tool for a working musician.

Musical goals as symptoms

A psychoanalytic reading of musicianship would put musical goals in the place of the symptom. The musical goals musicians work towards help them measure the quality of the music they make; it is how they decide whether a piece of music is good or bad. Musical evaluation is a crucial skill for a musician, being able to make creative decisions about the sounds they are making and how to communicate their ideas to other musicians requires an understanding of how the quality of music is decided. Interpreting the ideas of other musicians requires an understanding of how these others decide on the quality of music, as this may be different from the way the musician makes these decisions his or her self. A musician who assumes that the quality of music is decided by a set of rules that exist outside the musicians that use them does not fully comprehend the expressive power that musicians performing together have.

It is in the interaction between musicians where meaningful relationships are created and sonically voiced to an audience. Each musician needs to have an understanding, or schema, that they can refer to when engaging in musical interactions. This helps them draw on the knowledge and skills they have in responding to the situation they are in and the people they are working with. Guided by their musical goals musicians make decisions about how they perform, which personal resources they will use and what they intend to communicate with their actions.

A musician can construct their goals in many different musical, personal and professional ways. The motivation to make music is based both implicitly and explicitly on these goals. Musical goals are like symptoms in that symptoms provide an explanation for inconsistencies in the fantasy that the patient has constructed, whereas musical goals provide potential solutions to deficiencies in a musician's perception of the ideal that they aspire to. Most importantly we can learn from this comparison that it is a musician's goals that provide meaning to their musical activity, a meaning

that helps them make sense of what they do and provides them with the motivation to make music.

> What we must bear in mind here is the radical ontological status of symptom: symptom, conceived as sinthome, is literally our only substance, the only positive support of our being, the only point that gives consistency to the subject. In other words, symptom is the way we — the subjects — 'avoid madness', the way we 'choose something (the symptom-formation) instead of nothing (radical psychotic autism, the destruction of the symbolic universe)' through the binding of our enjoyment to a certain signifying, symbolic formation which assures a minimum of consistency to our being-in-the-world. (ibid: 75)

Musical goals define what a musician wants to achieve – which then constitutes their understanding of musical quality – rather than music possessing an essential set of qualities that are not controlled by the musician. Žižek argues that Lacan's interpretation of the symptom represents a critical shift in the ontology of the subject (musician). Symptoms cannot be eradicated, musicians will never achieve perfection, rather they create meaningful understandings of the self. Musical goals provide purpose to a musician's activity, no matter what that activity is.

Identity, Identification and Beyond

'Symptom' is a psychoanalytic concept that is difficult to define precisely as it exists as a manifestation of difference in the psyche of the subject. In the 'Sublime Object of Ideology' Žižek suggests that the question "Che Vuoi?" – "What is it in me that you desire?" – can help us read through the relationship of the symptom to the subject in Lacan's 'Graph of Desire'. What follows is an attempt to partially summarise Žižek's argument and draw parallels with the identity formation of musicians, whether they are playing the roles of teacher, learner or professional.

There are three stages to the argument put forward by Žižek in Che Vuoi that helps us think through how we as subjects identify with the world around us and what we can learn from the psychoanalytic process. The psychoanalytic language that Žižek uses has specific meanings given by Lacan

that can differ from other psychoanalytic schools and understandings of words in common use. In Lacan the words symbolic, imaginary, real, reality, desire, demand, drive, subject, other and fantasy are used in precise and specific ways. The implications for psychoanalytic practice and philosophical interrogation constitute a significant area of scholarly research (such as Butler et al. 2000 Leader 2014, Evans 2006, Fink 1997) the purpose here is to explain the argument set out by Žižek in his reading of Lacan in as simple terms as possible in order to be able to operationalise them resulting in a conception of musicianship that can be used as a methodological basis for the analysis of music education research.

Žižek makes clear that his reading is an unorthodox one that contradicts Lacan's express intentions of only talking about the clinical practice of psychoanalysis. Taking the work of Lacan and Freud he reads into it a range of other material that contextualises Lacanian ideas into a complex web of European philosophy, particularly Hegel and Marx, and his argument in The Sublime Object of Ideology is placed into a discussion that is dominated by post-structural writers including the deconstructionism of Derrida. Žižek is keen to differentiate aspects of Lacanian thought from these other thinkers as there is a change of perspective and a constancy in approach to ontology not evident elsewhere.

The first part of the Che Vuoi? chapter looks at identity and clarifies the relationship between subjectivity and signification. The question here is how do we give meaning to things and how does the language we use impact on the way we see ourselves? This is not merely a question of reflecting, even though the mirror is an important analogy used by Lacan, it is about how we start thinking and how each individual person has their own understanding of reality that continually grows from the experiences they have from before birth. This part examines the basis of structural thought and the semiotics of Saussure and crucially the post-structural break where the relationship between signifier and signified is seen to be arbitrary.

The second part of the Che Vuoi? chapter looks at identification. Following on from establishing the way a subject forms a picture of reality through the use of master-signifiers, in this part Žižek is concerned with how meaning is structured around the subject's submersion in discourse. The three key concepts here are the split subject, retroversion and the gaze. The split subject is a key Lacanian idea that states the image that each subject has of itself is not an accurate representation of the being doing the thinking. Retroversion is fundamental to Žižek's argument, meaning is placed on our experiences as they happen, but that meaning is unconsciously assumed to have already existed in the signifying phenomena that caused the experience. It is further argued that the gaze in fact constitutes/constructs the image created in the subject's mind, one that is ideologically sublimated, reified into discursive objects to represent the real world.

The third part of the "Che Vuoi?" chapter looks at fantasy. Fantasy is a psychic construction a subject uses to make sense of the world. Fantasy is necessary because the subject is split between the thinking psyche and the image it has of itself. These are designated as Imaginary identification and Symbolic identification, which along with the Real – the unknowable, designating both the outside world and the physical processes of the body – are the three Lacanian registers. Fantasy provides answers to the question "Che Vuoi?" which means "What is it in me that you desire?" Žižek uses this question to make sense of the Lacanian registers and the functions they serve. It is important to understand that the symbolic register is constructed in response an imaginary big Other, it suggests that the subject is always performing to an audience. The symbol of self-identity the subject creates (the person you are talking about when you say "me") is in response to stimuli (signifiers) emanating from the Real of the outside world. The subject assumes they are communications from an Other subject. "What do they want?" and "how do they want me to respond?" are questions the subject asks of itself in an attempt to find meaning in the signifying chain.

Significantly Žižek makes clear that a successful course of psychoanalysis does not lead to an eradication of all the patient's symptoms, but to a recognition of their underlying causes and an emotional distance sufficient to recognise that the Other does not hold all the answers. The key outcome of the analysis is it empowers the subject who is now able to recognise that the tension caused by the differences between their symbolic identification (ego) and their imaginary identification (dominated by the presence of the big Other) is an integral part of their psyche. The subject can come to recognise the enjoyment that can be found in the construction of meaning through the display of symptoms. Žižek extends this into the field of ideology: cultural phenomena can be read both discursively and as to how 'ideology implies, manipulates, produces a pre-ideological enjoyment structured in fantasy.' (ibid: 125)

I would now like to explore in more detail some of the key features of Žižek's argument that will be useful for placing into a framework where 'subject' is read as 'musician' and in this way develop a more precise terminology that will help simplify and reduce some of the complex theoretical ideas into a working model for understanding musicianship. Dealing with each section at a time – identity (subjectivity and reality); identification (signification and meaning); beyond identification (enjoyment, which cannot be symbolised) – I will draw parallels between the psychoanalytic readings of cultural devises Žižek identifies and terms that relate to the identity of 'musician'.

Part 1 – Identity

The Ideological 'Quilt'

The discursive context in which Žižek's analysis takes place is post-structuralist as it follows on from the argument that the relationship between signifiers and what they signify is not predetermined until the subject imposes meaning on them. We may appear to agree with others

about the meaning of some signifiers – such as the colour green, the word 'green' signifies a colour that we recognise as 'green' – but in fact it is through a social consent that we agree to associate particular signifiers with specific signifieds, this particular word with that specific colour.

So how do signifiers acquire meaning for the subject? This question should be understood in terms of ideology. Before signifiers acquire meaning, they could be said to be free-floating, the subject is aware of the phenomenon they have experienced but have not yet decided what it means. Signifiers can point to each other referring to a central point, but can only be meaningful if they refer to something specific. Signifiers need to be placed in a framework of understanding which can allow the subject to interpret them and decide how to act upon them. This is ideology. Ideological standpoints are determined by which signifiers function as reference points to give meaning to all discourse, shaping the subject's perspective and understanding of their experiences. These 'master-signifiers', described by Lacan as a 'point de capiton', quilt floating signifiers together to provide the subject with a sense of fixed reality that provides them the ability to operate and interact with others.

> The 'quilting' performs the totalization by means of which this free floating of ideological elements is halted, fixed – that is to say, by means of which they become part of the structured network of meaning. (ibid: 87)

But the ideological quilting of master signifiers creates a partial perspective, biased and incapable of recognising meanings that are fixed in different ways. It is not possible, as is sometimes conceived, to live outside of any ideological viewpoint. At an unconscious level the subject needs to take a particular viewpoint on the world in order to survive in it. Yet there will always be a difference between the ideological viewpoint of the subject, the way they understand reality, and the Real, the actual manifest universe outside of the subject's psyche. This difference is the source of tension and energy within the psyche, at the level of enjoyment this energy cannot be symbolised or captured only its force can be felt. Žižek uses descriptivism vs

antidescriptivism to help describe the impact of this force and how the psyche processes it into master-signifiers in order to delimit 'the small other' or 'objet petit a' and make linguistic sense of it by weaving it into signification in the production of meaning. The *'objet petit a'* accounts for the *'pure difference'* (ibid: 99) between the Symbolic and Imaginary constructions of the psyche and the force of the Real, be that phenomenon experienced through discourse, sense perception or the unconscious drives of the psyche.

The 'objet petit a' in the formation of identity

'How do names refer to the objects they denote?' (ibid: 89) is a key question for Žižek in his interrogation of identity. The descriptivist answer is that descriptive features give meaning to a name referring to 'objects in reality in so far as they possess properties designated by the cluster of descriptions.' (ibid.) This is countered by the antidescriptivist answer that names are linked to an object or a set of objects through an act of 'primal baptism' fixing their association even if the descriptive features do not accurately describe the object being named. Names are self-referencing; objects have a name because that is what they are called. A Lacanian reading would take this a step further: both descriptivism and anti-descriptivism require a myth to make them operational: the myth of the 'Other'. Descriptivism presupposes an other who provides the descriptive features of the object being named, anti-descriptivism requires an *'omniscient observer of history'* – but both 'act to restrain the radical contingency of naming – to construct an agency to guarantee its necessity.' (ibid: 95)

Names do not have a fixed relationship to the objects they denote, yet subjects invest energy into naming objects because without names it is difficult to distinguish one thing from another and impossible to communicate with others. In naming objects, the subject assumes an other person to whom they will communicate using these names. It is to others

that we communicate and our imagining of these others is what Lacan calls 'the big Other'. Lacan's Symbolic register denotes the production of meaning that happens when the subject is evaluating objects in relation to what is intended by/being communicated to 'the big Other'.

The big Other is in itself an imaginary construction of the subject, representing in the psyche the other people that the subject believes they are communicating with. If the subject cannot rely on the names they are using the lack of certainty will undermine the coherency of their sense of reality. There is an urgency to the need for some sense of certainty for the subject, a breakdown in the structure of reality would lead to psychosis and an inability to communicate with others and give the body what it needs to survive. This is described by Lacan as libidinal energy, if we fail to take enjoyment into account it is impossible to understand how each individual is more than just a physical mortal body. The 'objet petit a' hides the difference between the real world (fantasy) and the Real (the world that actually exists outside the psyche), this 'pure difference is perceived as Identity exempted from the relational-differential interplay and guaranteeing [the subject's] homogeneity.' (ibid: 99)

Musicians in discourse

If we are to read musician in the place of 'subject' then where might this analysis of identity lead us? For music teachers this is a fundamental question, we are in the business of training musicians and in order to do this we need our students to identify with being a musician. We can describe many facets of being a musician: good sense of rhythm, understanding of harmony, developed technical control, ability to perform with confidence and flare etc. Each is one way of understanding what a musician does and if formalised into a taxonomy can be used to measure the quality of a musician in their musical performance. As a teacher in institutional settings this process constitutes a major part of the researcher's work in helping students gain qualifications to progress onto the next level of education or into work.

This way of describing what a musician is, and therefore evaluating the progress and musicianship of an individual musician, is too simplistic. Like in the descriptivist account the object (musicianship and therefore what it is to be a musician) contains a set of descriptors that the name 'musician' refers to.

The problem is that different musicians may account differently for the reality of being a musician. One ubiquitous example is that of the ability to read musical notation. A vital skill central to the practices of the conservatoire, but paradoxically significantly absent in many popular, community or amateur musicians for whom engagement with music reading skills can be emotionally difficult, notation representing such a powerful symbol of musicianship in social representations of music. Another example perhaps could be seen in the status of a 'Heavy Metal' lead guitarist. There are many discursive constructions that would have an impact on any musician aspiring to perform this role in a band, these may be expectations of their technique, their ability to 'shred' using 'finger tapping' and 'sweep-picking' techniques for example. But there are also non-musical expectations that exist in the signifier 'Heavy Metal lead guitarist', historical and cultural assumptions about what constitutes 'Heavy Metal' music, what appearances and behaviour are acceptable in a 'Heavy Metal' band and the technical prowess the lead guitarist in such a band should possess.

It is easy to conceive of a situation where a musician who is an excellent reader of notation, fails to successfully audition to be in a 'Heavy Metal' band because of a lack of understanding of the cultural and stylistic expectations that are evoked by the name 'Heavy Metal'. Of course this is not to say all 'Heavy Metal' musicians will agree on what constitutes 'Heavy Metal', although the urge to play 'Heavy Metal' is something that does connect them and perhaps differentiates them from our reading musician who failed to present himself as fitting the bill of a 'Heavy Metal lead guitarist'. This may make him a bad musician in terms of 'Heavy Metal' but

when he performs for the local orchestra his skills may be valued as being excellent, he will be seen as being a good musician. Of course the reverse can also be true, if we look at the controversy that Nigel Kennedy created by choosing to dress in a style that was probably more fitting for a Heavy Metal band at his orchestral performances.

Music then has no one set of descriptors that can universally define what music is to all musicians and in this sense it is a master-signifier. Musical signifiers may be connected in many different ways: 'Blues' music exists very much in a repertoire of primary chord relationships with perfect and imperfect cadences dominating the construction of songs. This is one way of describing the relationships of different notes and pitches, which is a way of describing the aural perception of sonic vibrations at different frequencies. The shuffle rhythm is also a key feature of blues music, but not all Blues songs contain a shuffle or indeed cadences. So what makes the Blues what it is? Is it historical or stylistic invention? Why do musicians perceive the vibration of particles as a well established mode of musical performance?

The anti-descriptivist account would say that Blues music was named such in a 'primal baptism' from which point the authenticity of the Blues can be verified through reference to this defining act. For a contemporary musician to claim they are playing the Blues they need to refer to historical precedent, which would lead back (it is assumed) to a formative moment when the Blues was born. Even if this were true the researcher doubts there is anyone still alive now that was there when this happened and even if they were, the researcher doubts they would be believed. What we do have though, that is common heritage in both Blues and Heavy Metal traditions is the myth of Robert Johnson selling his soul to the devil in a contract that guaranteed his musical skills and technical supremacy. This myth, or some form of it, quilts together various and disparate definitions of these musics into an apparently cohesive but impossible to define stylistic and cultural entity. The Devil, rebellion against authority and expressive proficiency are

always somewhere present in Blues and Heavy Metal music serving the function of uniting musicians working in this tradition but also hiding the incompatible differences in the recorded and unrecorded history of the development of these styles of music.

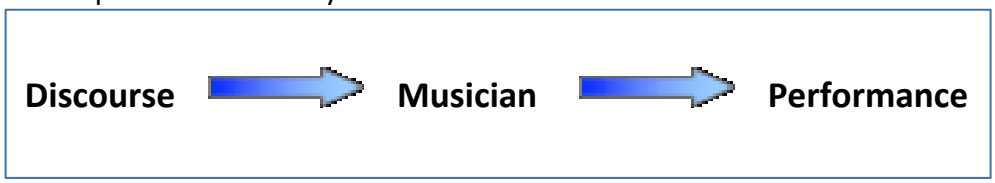


Figure 8: The Musician's Dialogue – Stage 1 (Simple)

Music in this way is a master-signifier, a signifier without a signified, pointing to something in the sonic perceptions that the subject interprets to be music, something more than the vibrations, linguistic descriptors or historical definitions can describe. It is music because we choose to describe it so, but such musician will understand music in different ways depending on their ideological standpoint. The musical and linguistic signifiers they use will be quilted together in different ways to produce meaning. For a classical musician this may be connected to melody and the interpretation of such from notation, for a Heavy Metal guitarist this may be connected to technical proficiency and the right haircut, for a Blues musician it may be the expression of suffering through the performance of simple musical structures. The meaning placed on these signifying chains could be described as discourse, in which case we could match this with our designation of the subject as musician and simple model of musicianship could be drawn thus:

The identity of a musician is defined in discourse and seen through their performance. Depending on the discursive framework – Conservatoire, Heavy Metal or Blues in the above examples – the musician will identify with themselves through different sets of musical and non-musical descriptors. Each musician may use the same names or words in their evaluation of music, such as rhythm, tone or form, but they may mean very different things. Meanings acquired at some point before they are used, in a pre-history that in fact is a presumption of the musician. It does not matter

whether Robert Johnson did or did not sell his soul, only whether the musician aspires to express themselves in a similar way. What a musician believes to constitute good music can be seen in the way they perform, the quality of tone that different musicians seek in their performance will differ between the purity of a violin solo and the aggression of a heavy Metal guitar solo.

There are a couple of things missing from this model though. Firstly, the radical contingency of naming, names are imposed by the subject onto signifiers as if the signifiers had these names before the subject perceived

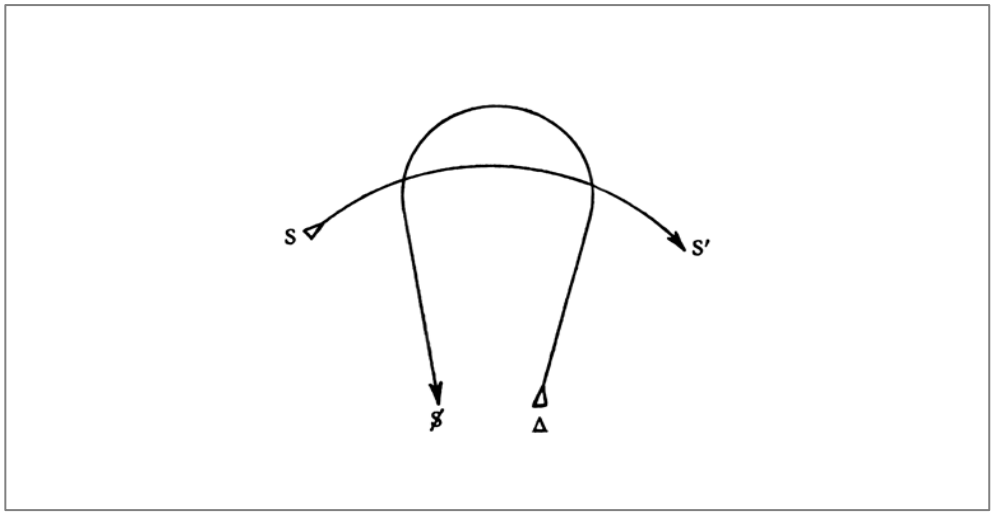


Figure 9: Retroversion in the interpellation of the subject

them. The retroactive creation of meaning is very significant in Lacanian psychoanalysis. Further this model does not give a role for enjoyment in the psyche, it does not describe the motivational factors that draw musicians into performing music. Žižek goes on to discuss these questions in the next part of the chapter on identification.

Part 2 – Identification

The retroactivity of meaning

Lacan's interpretation of the relationship between subject and signifier is a fundamental reworking of Saussure's description of the relation between signs. Key to this is the act of retroversion, which can be ur

es the

subject's interpellation into discourse through a psychic engagement with a signifying chain.

(ibid: 101)

The signifying chain – the line from S to S' – is perceived by the subject and assumed to have meaning, that meaning also places the subject in relation to it and imposes a sense of self-identity onto the subject (interpellation). The subject is represented here as the line between Δ and $. Δ represents the pre-conscious subject (the being doing the thinking), the $ represents the split subject. The subject has become split because there is a difference between the sense of self-identity that has been created and the undetermined actuality of the pre-conscious subject. What is significant is that this sense of self-identity is imposed on the signifying chain (the left side of the graph where the two lines meet) at a point before the subject perceived the signifying chain (on the right). It is important to realise that the chronological order of these events is an unconscious presumption occurring as a psychic process that the subject is not aware of and does not represent a linear order of events over the period of time that the psyche constructs them. Perhaps this is most easily understood if the line from Δ to $ is considered to be the thinking process and the line from s to s' as the subject's perception of the order of events, the thinking happens in the opposite direction to perception of thought process. This act of interpellation is where meaning is created for the subject and it is evident

from this graph that retroversion is central to understanding Lacan's view of the psyche.

Graph 2 – (ibid: 103)

After establishing the retroactivity of the creation of meaning in the psyche (the radical contingency of naming, the interpellation of the subject into discourse) Lacan elaborates on the graph at the 'Level of Identification'. Here the split subject perceives the signifying chain creating a sense of self-identity I(O), which is designated in this way to denote Identification with the 'Other'. The 'Other' appears in this graph at the point at which the

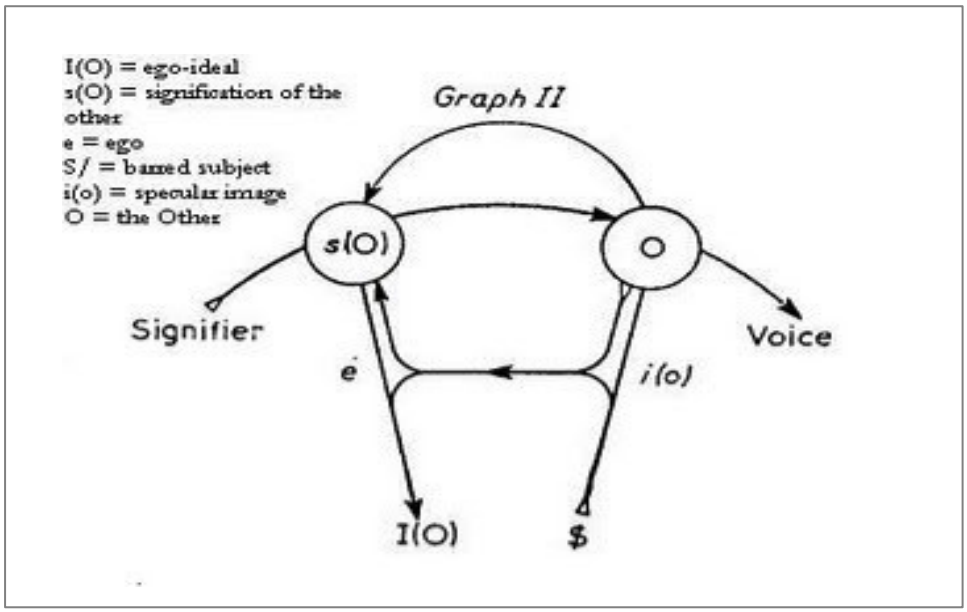


Figure 10: The 'Other' in the formation of Identity

subject initially perceives the signifying chain (the right side intersection), this is because the signifier must come from somewhere outside of the subject, a sense of an other or others is created in the subject and it is in response to this 'Other' that identity is created and meaning imposed on the signifying chain. After this the subject then decides what the 'Other' is intending to signify producing a signified s(O) and imposing meaning on the signifying chain. However, this meaning is seen to have pre-existed before the the subject perceived the signifying chain and so supports the sense of 'Other' that in fact directed the subject to associate the signifier with

signified. It is this assumption – that signifiers have a predetermined signified – which is retroactive. The subject finds that meaning already existed in the signifier despite the fact they could only give it meaning after they perceived it. The subject acts as if their understanding of the world is the way it actually is, however they are actually making it up as they go along...

The gaze and the ego

A significant consequence of Žižek's analysis lies in the concept of the 'gaze'. In the second stage of the Graph of Desire the subject's ego is mirrored in two places, the first is before intersection with the signifying chain i(o), the second at the end of the interpellation of the subject I(O). This first 'ideal ego', 'specular image' or 'imaginary identification' is how the subject perceives itself, identifying with an image of 'what we would like to be.' (ibid: 105) This is distinct from the 'ego ideal', 'identification with the Other' or 'symbolic identification' which denotes how the subject believes others see them. It is from the symbolic perspective of the imagined Other – created by designating a signified onto the signifying chain – that we form our identify. When we describe ourselves the 'me' is in fact the Other of the Other, we feel the gaze of other people looking at us, communicating with us and we formulate words and actions to respond to them. This is symbolic identification – a key aspect of identity formation.

The subject sees the world through the eyes of others looking back at it. The subject's interpellation into discourse defines the way the world is viewed and it is the gaze of the subject that creates the subject's sense of reality. The way we perceive objects is not determined by their internal or essential qualities but by our perceptions, they are created in our gaze.

The power of this gaze can be seen in its manifestation as performatives:

> Performatives are, at their most fundamental, acts of symbolic trust and

> engagement. When I tell someone 'You are my master!' I oblige myself to treat him in a certain way and, in the same move, I oblige him to treat me in a certain way. Lacan's point is that we need this recourse to performativity, to the symbolic engagement, precisely and only in so far as the other whom we confront is not only my mirror-double, someone like me, but also the elusive absolute Other who ultimately remains an unfathomable mystery. (Žižek 2006: 45-46)

In identifying with the 'Other' we are looking upon the world with a set of expectations of what the 'Other' wants from us. We act accordingly obligating a response. If the response does not meet our expectations, then we may be overwhelmed with uncertainty and have to adapt our interpretation of the signifying chain to ensure some coherency in our understanding of reality.

The internal dialogue of musicianship

A model of musicianship that is read through this psychoanalytic perspective must then take account of: the retroactivity in play during the creation of meaning; the different ways in which the musician's perception of who they are comes to form a coherent sense of self-identity; the way each musician's sense of how other musicians (and non-musicians) perceive them, value them as a musician and evaluate the quality of music that they make. The simple model of musicianship drawn in Part One needs to be adapted. The signifying chain giving meaning to the musician's activities is not a straight forward process of discourse being interpreted by the musician leading to their performance. Two key factors are introduced. Musical quality and audience.

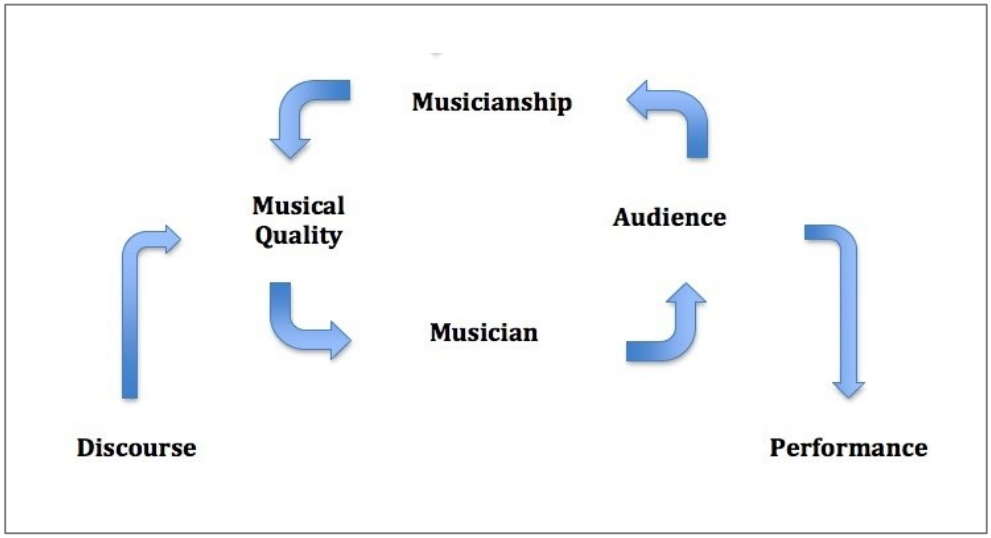


Figure 11: The Musician's Dialogue – Stage 2 (Musical Evaluation)

Earlier in the chapter a discussion of musical goals as symptoms gave some substance to the importance of musical evaluation – the determination of musical qualities that are valued by the musician. The process of making meaning by the subject, the musician deciding what constitutes 'good' or 'bad' music is encapsulated by the term musical quality in our psychoanalytic model of musicianship. The 'Other' from the graph of desire is simplified for our musical contexts as audience. It is to an audience that musical performances take place, but an audience is also conceived as any other person who might be someone with whom the musician wishes to communicate in order further their own musical goals. As with the graph of desire it is important to realise that the audience (Other) depicted in the graph does not represent the actual person(s) to whom the musician performs but only the musician's imagining of their existence. Performance then is intended to denote not only musical performance but any physical act of the musician that is intended to project meaningful signifiers to the world outside of themselves where there are others who can interpret these signifiers. This performance may be in fact words, sounds, gestures, graphic notation etc... In turn these may be perceived by other musicians as discourse at the beginning of a signifying chain in the subjectivity of that musician.

In this model 'Musician' encapsulates and simplifies some of the more complex constructions of the Graph of Desire and its description of subjectivity. The split subject, ideal ego, ego ideal – the person doing the thinking, who they wish to be and how they see themselves are all contained in the term 'Musician'. 'Musician' denotes the subjectivity of any person who identifies with music as an activity they want to engage in. The model represents subjectivity in this way to ensure that it is manageable in the data analysis process conceived as part of this research project as well as communicating theory derived from psychoanalysis to an audience that is not familiar with psychoanalytic terminology. The model still allows for the split subject and a differentiation of the ego in the imaginary and symbolic registers, the consequences of which are denoted in the model as 'Audience' (imaginary) and 'Musical Quality' (symbolic).

Musicianship then comes to complete a psychic process whereby the musician responds to discourse, evaluates their musical goals in relationship to this discourse, places themselves into this relationship, considers the impact on their identity in relation to what their audience want from them, which is then transformed into a performance of actions constituting an attempt to communicate with others. In order to consider the audience's impact on the subject's identity the model denotes a psychic movement from audience back towards musical quality and musician, passing through what is designated 'Musicianship': a structure that designates a sense within the musician that they are a musician; where they take ownership over the discursive structures that shape the quality of music; identify them as a musician; and designate appropriate actions with regard their audience(s). Musicianship is how musicians evaluate musical quality in relation to the audience, it is where they form and develop musical goals, it creates and maintains the criteria by which they make judgements about themselves as musicians – in turn influencing their perceptions of their audience and their allegiance to certain musical values. Retroactivity is built into this model as the arrows indicating psychic movement are not linear assertions of

chronological thinking, but describe how the formation of musical goals are in response to the perception of what the audiences wants from them, rather than an audience just appearing as a result of the musician deciding on musical goals.

Our lead guitarist learnt to play Heavy Metal in anticipation of a future appreciative audience. Good Heavy Metal music can only exist once there is an idea of what Heavy Metal is (or is not), which means others must also have some understanding of what Heavy Metal is. Of course what Heavy Metal actually is can only be decided by our lead guitarist in his imagining and symbolising an audience for Heavy Metal and the stylistic qualities that define the genre of music that he considers to be Heavy Metal. The place of musicianship in this model not only encapsulates and simplifies some of the more difficult issues in discussing subjectivity it also allows for a space in each musician's psyche for a picture to be built of what is important to them as a musician providing an opportunity for them to take ownership over their own music making activities. Yet what is still missing from this picture are the motivational forces that cause musicians to desire to make music. Why musicians want to make music, why they want to share their music with an audience, why they enjoy and become anxious about making music and can only be accounted for by exploring another level of psychic interaction that results from the subject being split within the psyche.

Part 3 – Beyond Identification

‘Che Vuoi?’ and the fantasy of reality

The relation between a musician and his/her audience is not a straightforward one. In differentiating between an imaginary aspect to the ego – i(o) – and a symbolic one – I(O) – Lacan is questioning the way the subject perceives others and creates meaningful language with which to communicate with them. However, Žižek highlights how the psychic movement between perceptions of the other (in the imaginary register) and the signifier of the other – the signified (in the symbolic register) is a process

which is not seamless. The splitting of the subject leaves a psychic energy generated by the difference between the identity that subject has created for themselves in relation to others and their experiences of interacting with others in the ongoing stream of the signifying chain. As the subject experiences phenomena that they interpret as signifiers, they imbue them with meaning producing signifieds in order to understand what the other wants from them in their significations, they feel as if the other is making a demand of them to respond in some way. But the question for the subject is "what does the other want in making this demand of me?" What is signified does not capture the desire of the other, it only indicates a demand for a response. How that response is formulated depends on the subject's ability to imagine the underlying motivation of the other in their attempt to communicate with the subject.

> The only problem is that this 'square of the circle' of interpellation, this circular movement between symbolic and imaginary identification, never comes out without a certain leftover. After every 'quilting' of the signifier's chain which retroactively fixes its meaning, there always remains a certain gap, an opening which is rendered in the third form of the graph by the famous 'Che vuoi?' – 'You're telling me that, but what do you want with it, what are you aiming at?' (Žižek 1989:111)

The incompleteness of the psychic exchange between imaginary and symbolic registers manifests itself in a surplus energy that sits beyond the signifying chain. What the subject wants, their goals, what they are trying to achieve with their actions becomes encapsulated into the question "What does the other want from me? – What is it in me that the other desires?" In order to answer this question the subject creates a fantasy in which they place themselves in relation to this surplus energy that is something more than a meaningful exchange of symbolic actions. Stage 3 of the Graph of Desire articulates this in the question 'Che Vuoi?'.

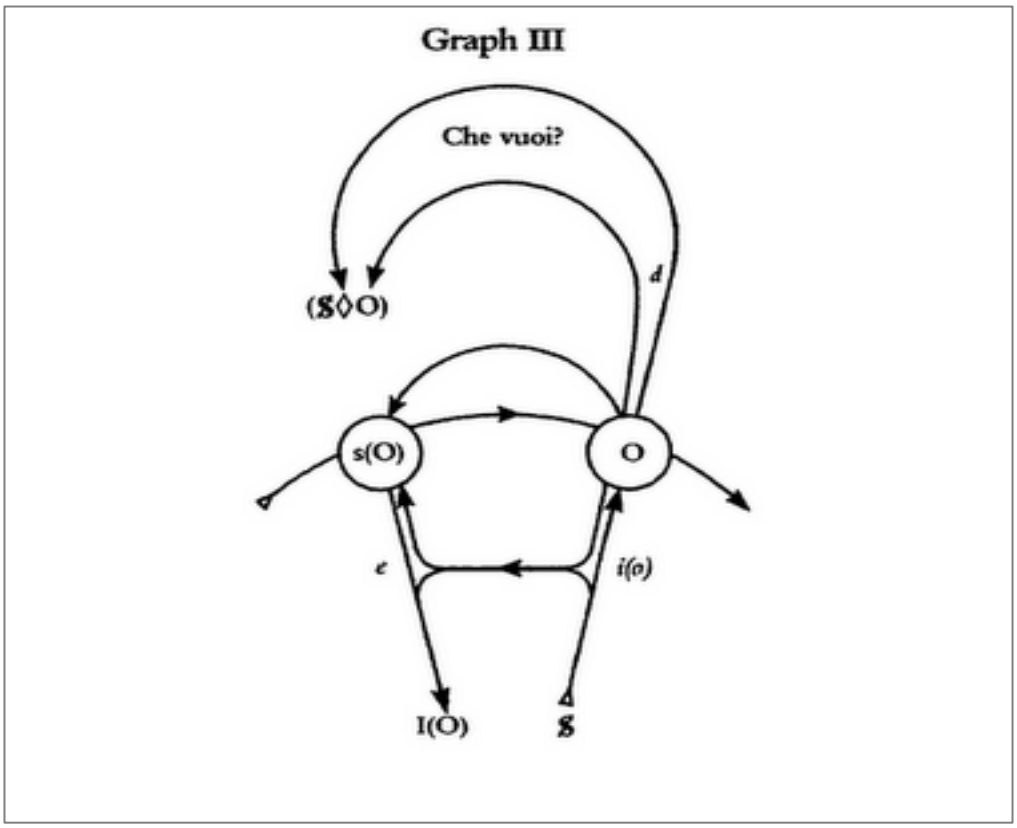


Figure 12: Fantasy responds to the desire of the 'Other'

Graph 3 (ibid:111)

Fantasy, and therefore what the subject perceives to be reality, is inscribed ($◊o) where $ represents the 'split subject' and o the 'object petit a'. The symbol ◊ is used to denote 'in relation to.' The d that emanates upward out from the (big O) Other denotes the 'demand' of the Other that is perceived by the subject to be the reason why they have experienced signifying phenomena.

Fantasy is a construction put together by the subject to understand the world around him/her. It is here that meaning is created from the sensory inputs of the subject's body and related to the subject's previous experiences and the structures of understanding they have built up. It is also the place where reasons are put together to explain the incongruities between the knowledge structures the subject retains and the phenomena

experienced, which need to appear to the subject to be coherent, but will always be to some extent incomplete. This is fundamentally because the subject is split – the image upon which the subject's entire identity has been built is dependant on the interpretations they have made of the phenomena they have experienced over their lifetime, transforming imaginary constructions of themselves into symbolic constructions used to interact with this phenomena (signifiers), being re-interpreted into the imaginary and back into symbolic constructions in an ongoing dialectic with an imaginary other.

> The subject is always fastened, pinned, to a signifier which represents him for the other, and through this pinning he is loaded with a symbolic mandate, he is given a place in the intersubjective network of symbolic relations. The point is that this mandate is ultimately always arbitrary: since its nature is performative, it cannot be accounted for by reference to the 'real' properties and capacities of the subject. (ibid:113)

Fantasy cannot be measured, nor does it exist in a coherent consistent format, yet it allows the subject to believe that its formations are coherent and consistent enough to form a picture of reality that allows them to operate as an active participant in the world around them, 'the ego masks its duplicity; that is, consciousness, in which the ego assures itself an indisputable existence' (Lacan 1977:685). The retroversion of interpellation involves a disavowal or forgetting of the psychic processes that lead to the formation of this reality and fantasy holds together the knowledge and understanding of the world that the subject has formed.

The 'objet petit a' is a device used by Lacan to encapsulate the aspect of fantasy that is being hidden, the part of the subject that appears to be the source of potential incoherency and inconsistency. It is 'the object in subject which resists interpellation' (Žižek 1989:113) those aspects of the subject's picture of the world that do not quite add up or make sense. Fantasy is the place where the subject creates a picture of the world that accounts for, or works around, those aspects of reality it doesn't understand in relation to those parts that it (presumes) it does. The subject wants to understand why

the other is interested in it: *'What does the other want from me? – What is it in me that the other desires? – Che vuoi?*' (ibid:119). Žižek states that the way fantasy functions can be explained through reference to Kant's Critique of Pure Reason as 'an intermediary agency between empirical content and the network of transcendental categories' (ibid).

Fantasy is a place between the Real that is exterior to the subject and the interior machinations of the psyche, it acts as a screen for the desire of the other indicating the point at which the (supposedly) known and unknown meet as well as smoothing over this gap and ameliorating the cut made by the signifying chain that splits the subject (Lacan 1977:679).

Enjoyment and drive

Lacan's completed Graph introduces what Žižek describes as the "*level of enjoyment*" (Žižek 1989:121) which sits above or beyond the "*level of meaning*" where the signifying chain interpellates the subject creating meaning. The demand of the Other leads to the formation of fantasy screening out the role *jouissance* has in the operation of the psyche and introducing two final concepts that parallel and articulate the role of desire in the operation of the psyche. The signifier of 'lack' S(Ø) – the knowledge that the Other does not actually exist but is an imaginary construction – and the 'drives' ($◊D: the split subject in relation to symbolic demand) – where bodily functions manifest themselves in the psyche.

The problem that the level of enjoyment accounts for is: 'what happens when this very field of the signifier's order [level of meaning], of the big Other, is perforated, penetrated by a pre-symbolic (real) stream of enjoyment' (ibid:122). The Other appears to become:

> inconsistent, porous, perforated – the enjoyment is what cannot be symbolised, it's presence in the field of the signifier can be detected only through holes and inconsistencies, so the only possible signifier of enjoyment

is the signifier of the lack in the other, the signifier of it's inconsistency. (ibid)

(Žižek 1989:121)

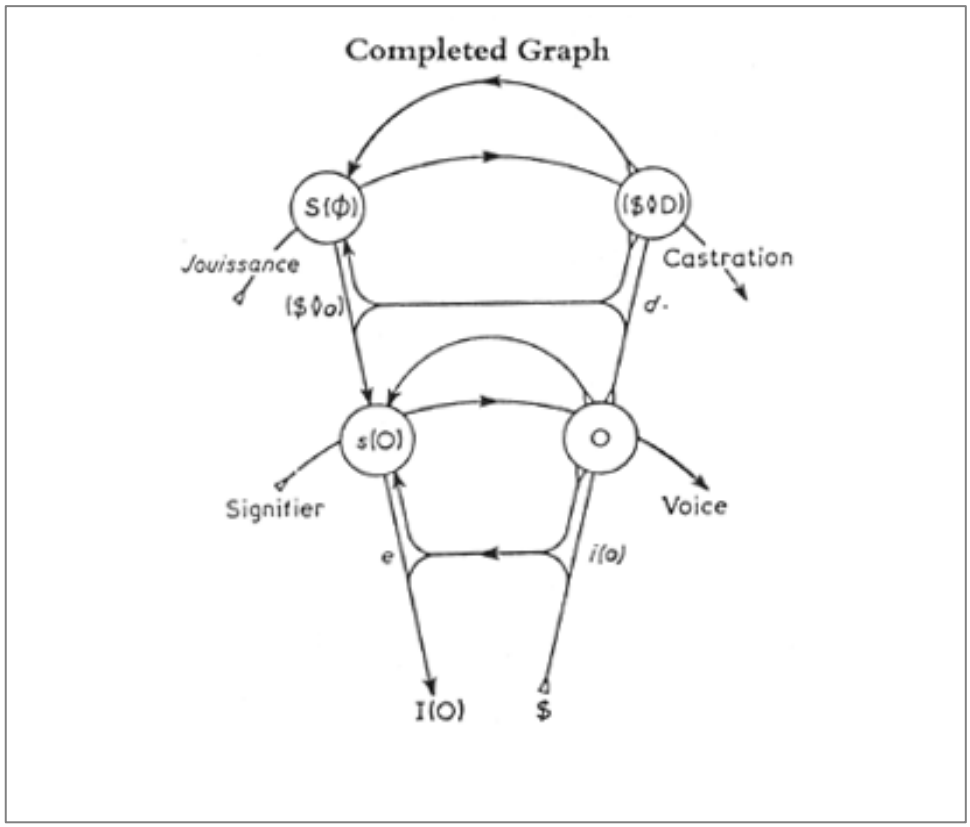


Figure 13: Completed Graph of Desire

There is much debate in the academic literature about the status and meaning of 'lack', 'drives' and '*jouissance*'. These are perhaps the most contentious and influential of concepts that derive from Lacan's work on desire.

'Lack' and the negative connotations with the word are a source of criticism of Lacan's ideas. The researcher intends to here work with it as the signifier that 'there is no Other of the Other' (Lacan 1977:688), a counter-intuitive philosophical turn that both recognises the necessary dualism of the subject's thinking whilst undermining its integrity as a function of truth. Lacan says in reference to fantasy, that his formulation is designed to have a '*multiplicity*' of readings (ibid: 691), each person's fantasy is their own and this is acceptable under his algebra. He confronts the post-structuralist

question 'there is no meta-language that can be spoken' (ibid:688) by asserting that all signifiers are only guaranteed in their very enunciation. This is to say that we each live in our own world; we attempt to communicate with each other but understandings of what is meant is only ever partial. We cannot speak for each other as each of us has a different perception of reality – even if we fool ourselves into thinking everyone else thinks like we do and become confused when others don't use common sense. But really Lacan is asking us to realise that the others we interact with are 'a substance caught in the net of shadow' (ibid:693). Psychoanalysis offers us 'not absolute knowledge but rather the position from which knowledge can reverse truth effects' (ibid:306). We need to believe in the Other in order for us to give meaning to the phenomena we experience and to give us a reason to enunciate statements that guarantee our existence – but this imaginary Other can have no Other as it does not exist outside our psyche – other people may exist (in the Real) but our understanding of them will only ever be partial reflections filtered by fantastic constructions of our own reality.

The 'drive' differentiates Lacan from other branches of psychoanalysis whom he sees as misinterpreting the German 'trieb' into 'instinct'. Instinct implies a conscious experiential knowledge (ibid:680), but drive encapsulates a relation of the psyche to the biological functions of the body which are unconscious and unknown to the subject, manifesting themselves as partial objects in the psyche.

> For isn't it plain to see that the characteristic of being partial, rightly emphasized in objects, is applicable not because these objects are part of a total object, which the body is assumed to be, but because they only partially represent the function that produces them? A common characteristic of these objects as I formulate them is that they have no specular image, in other words, no alterity. This is what allows them to be the "stuff" or, better put, the lining—without, nevertheless, being the flip side—of the very subject people take to be the subject of consciousness. For this subject, who thinks he can accede to himself by designating himself in the statement, is nothing but such an object. (ibid:693)

Here Lacan states that who the subject thinks they are – the person and their body – is not a coherent whole but a collection of imagined objects

formed in an unconscious gestation of biological phenomena. The drive is hidden behind fantasy which interprets these imaginary objects for the subject and they are given substance through Real objects that fill in for the signifier of the lack of the Other. If the subject can recognise that the source of their desire is not in fact the desire of the Other articulated in fantasy objects but the pulsing of the drives then they have been able to '*traverse fantasy*' (Žižek 1989:123) and identify with the sinthome, the enjoyment in repetition, rather than a continuous failure to capture the object of fantasy – the object petit a.

Jouissance on the Graph of Desire is connected to Castration. Žižek describes this as the level of enjoyment, although enjoyment is not an exact translation of the meaning Lacan intended for the word *jouissance*. Enjoyment has very positive connotations in English and *jouissance* in part implies the negative of pain also. *Jouissance* emerges from the tensions arising from different aspects of the psyche of the split subject and manifests itself as a 'signifier not yet enchained but still floating freely, permeated with enjoyment: the enjoyment that prevents it from being articulated into a chain' (Žižek 1989b:24).

> Such a fragment of the signifier, inescapably permeated with mindless enjoyment, is what Lacan, in the last phase of his teaching, called le sinthome: no longer the 'symptom', the coded message to be deciphered by a process of interpretation, but the fragment of a meaningless letter, the reading of which procures an immediate jouis-sense or 'meaning-in-enjoyment'. (ibid:10)

Whilst *jouissance* will continue to be a contentious term it is possible to say that *jouissance* represents an emotional energy and that castration represents the body without this energy – an alienated subject. The castrated subject 'mistakes the Other's demand (D) for the Other's desire (a) in fantasy' (Fink 1997:71).

Ownership and Musicianship

Jouissance is a psychic energy that motivates the subject to act to repeat the physical experiences that the body generates when the subject is active. The feelings created in the psyche may be positive or painful, but their source is a mystery to the subject as these are unconscious manifestations. There is an understanding, sets of knowledge, that the subject has built up to make sense of the biological functions of their body. This knowledge resides in fantasy and the motivational forces that *jouissance* generates are represented as objects that cause desire in the consciousness of the subject. A subject who recognises that they are motivated by the need to satisfy the drives in a repetition of activities that are fulfilling can form an understanding of the objects that cause their desire – recognising that desire is a function of the psyche. However, a subject who does not recognise that the relationship between *jouissance* and the drive is motivating their actions will search for satisfaction in the object cause of desire, believing that being able to satisfy the demand of the other will secure their reality and counteract any uncertainty they have in their actions.

The researcher wishes to use this description of psychic process and designate it as taking ownership. For a musician the pleasure of making music comes from the drive and the physical experience that accompanies their music making activity, they may still work with objects to focus their activities but these objects are not the purpose to which they work towards, merely a medium for understanding and furthering their music making activities. Musicians who see the musical objects they work with as being external to themselves will not have a sense of ownership and may mistake these musical objects as the objective of their activities, thus failing to recognise other activities and objects that will also need to understand in order to engage in self improvement.

Let us go back once more to our Heavy Metal lead guitarist, if he/she believes that the technique of sweep-picking is what is important when assuming the identity of a Heavy Metal lead guitarist then they may focus purely on this technique. In doing this they may fail to recognise other important aspects to a heavy metal guitarists technique, for example building a good sense of timing or developing a sense of harmony. Perhaps the Heavy Metal lead guitarist will recognise that a range of guitar techniques are important and begin to recognise the significance of broader musicianship techniques. In assuming the identity as Heavy Metal lead guitarist he/she is also assuming the identity of musician. Some musicians like to compare technical dexterity and skill in their musical performances, so perhaps our Heavy Metal lead guitarist will not feel they have satisfactorily assumed the identity of a musician unless they can compete for technical prowess in comparison to other Heavy Metal lead guitarists. But these comparisons to other guitarists may only provide temporary satisfaction. Such comparisons are subjective and many of the 'great' musicians are considered so because of what they express through their music rather than pure technique, such expression is much harder to measure than say speed or precision in the performance of musical phrases.

So what is musical expression and why do different people have different ideas of what makes a musician 'great'? According to the Lacanian algebra we have been exploring in this chapter we can seek the answer in one of two places: in the objects of fantasy; or the objects of the drive. If we choose to identify musical expression through the mode of fantasy, we fool ourselves into thinking that we can discover the answer by measuring something in the real world. But reality, Lacan shows us, is a product of fantasy and each person's fantasy will vary from another's. We may be able to define or even prove the essence of musical expression is contained within certain objects, actions or attitudes, but this definition or proof is still only applicable within the parameters that our fantasy allows.

There is cause for great debate and argument amongst musicians in defining and capturing the essence of musical expression in this scenario. However, if we recognise that musical expression is a process of satisfying the drives, for example gaining an adrenaline rush from the excitement of being on stage, then musical expression is no longer a competitive idea, that one musician can possess more of than another. Musical expression becomes a way of describing the feeling we have when experiencing music either as a performer or as the audience of music. We can explain why some people will find one musician's music to be 'great' because they gain some form of feeling from the experience of listening to or watching them perform. This may be because they feel they can relate to the performance they are experiencing or may be because their formation of reality makes certain sonic experiences or performance attitudes more meaningful to them than others, but this will not be because there is something in the 'great' musician's music that contains a great quantity of musical expression that is separate or external to that musician or their audience. It is a perception of each audience member and of other musicians who perceive this 'greatness', even if there are sufficient numbers of others who also perceive this greatness to make an individual believe that what they perceive is true, it is still a product of their fantasy.

To locate musical expression as an object of the drive would provide a fundamentally different reading that on the surface still retains many similarities to one that is caught in fantasy. A musician who takes ownership over their musicianship will still identify some musicians as great musicians and others as not so great, its just that they will be aware that this is a decision that they have made either consciously or unconsciously. They can be comfortable declaring a like for a piece of music that no-one else appears to like, as they can be comfortable liking music that everyone else likes – without being overly concerned that any acceptance or rejection of these tastes by their peers will fundamentally impact on their identity as a musician. Similarly, in developing technical proficiency on their musical

instrument, musical improvement becomes a process of setting goals for oneself and taking satisfaction from working towards their achievement. This may be with the help of others, such as a teacher, but the musical objects they work with will be something they take ownership over, that they will include into their growing sense of musicianship, rather than feeling that these musical objects have to be used because that is what a good musician should do. To take ownership over musical improvement is to have more control and specificity of the goals that have been set, a recognition that the audience for one's music is oneself, and satisfaction from working towards those goals. This is in contrast to a musician who may feel alienated from the musical materials and objects they are working with – caught in a fantasy of what they need to achieve to become a musician, reaching to achieve them, but never quite feeling satisfied even if they achieve the goals have been set.

There is a temptation then to divide musicians into two different categories, those that are alienated from their own musicianship and those that are emancipated through a self-awareness that gives them ownership over their musicianship. This simple dichotomy would not allow for an analysis of a musician's skills or provide any way to gauge progress in musical improvement – a bit like Simon Cowell saying that either you have got 'Talent' or you haven't! Rather it is a musician's relationship to their audience, the other to whom they are performing, that dictates their ability to negotiate objects of fantasy and go beyond identification; to an awareness of the drive and positive interpellation with the signifying chain; and ownership of activities that channel *jouissance* through the psyche. Key to this understanding is the signifier of 'lack' in the other. There may be times whereby a musician takes ownership of their own activities, choosing practice techniques, writing their own songs, applying production methods that are of their own choosing purely because they want to apply themselves in this particular way. But in other circumstances the same musician may feel overwhelmed by the demand of others to adapt their activities in ways

that they don't really understand, but do so to please the desire they perceive others want from them.

> Without this lack in the Other, the Other would be a closed structure and the only possibility open to the subject would be his radical alienation in the Other. So it is precisely this lack in the Other which enables the subject to achieve a kind of 'de-alienation' called by Lacan separation: not in the sense that the subject experiences that now he is separated for ever from the object by the barrier of language, but that the object is separated from the Other itself, that the Other itself 'hasn't got it' hasn't got the final answer … This lack in the Other gives the subject – so to speak – a breathing space, it enables him to avoid the total alienation in the signifier not by filling out his lack but by allowing him to identify himself, his own lack, with the lack in the Other. (Žižek 1989:122)

For this reason the completed model 'The musician's dialogue' does not attempt to capture in its specificity the intricate implications of the interaction between fantasy, drive and lack, instead *jouissance* is simplified to a basic input and output from musicianship as an emotional

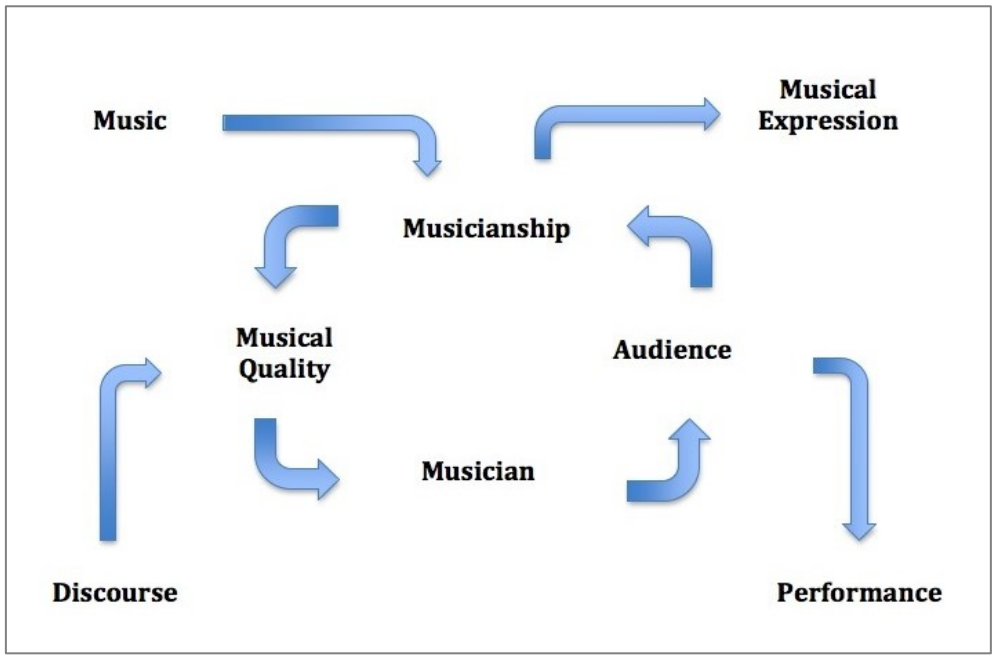


Figure 14: The Musician's Dialogue – Stage 3 (Enjoying Musicianship)

consideration. Fantasy, i.e. the musician's musical reality, and the structures of the psyche with which they identify, is encapsulated as "Musicianship". It is at this point that the level of meaning – with all the signification and

interaction with the world external to the musician – meets the level of enjoyment, where the emotional aspects of a musician's identity, motivation, excitement, satisfaction, disappointment and so on, are found. For each musician their emotional connection with music will be different, much the same as how identity formation varies between subjects, but the frame of reference within the algebra presented by this model is consistent for each. The motivational forces that cause a musician to identify with music, whatever they may look like to each musician is denoted 'Music'. In this way 'Music' is formulated as a master-signifier, without a singular definition and not prescribing any essential element to music, but still being a point of reference from which a symbolic system and linguistic tools can be built for thinking about and communicating with other musicians. It stands in for the signifier of 'lack' providing a space for the musician to engage with their own musical activities, to precipitate ownership and overcome alienation from musical discourse.

Further, the positive outcomes of musical activity in all their multiplicity of experiences are denoted 'Musical Expression': the point at which psychic satisfaction is envisaged and the purpose of musical performance is fulfilled. It is placed at this point on the model to indicate the relationship to the drives, the physical outcomes of musical activity engaged in by the musician. It is important here to recognise the correlation in the Lacanian register of the Real of the two inputs and two outputs to the model. 'Discourse' is the sum total of signifiers a musician encounters in their everyday experiences, but they can only be placed into meaningful relationships through reference to the master-signifier 'Music' however the musician conceives of it. Likewise, 'Performance' indicates the physical actions of the musician but can only have meaning through the musician's intended purpose as an attempt at 'Musical Expression' whatever results are actually produced in the musician's biology and their psychic manifestations.

Now it is possible to separate meaning from enjoyment in musicianship. All the activities that musicians engage in can be understood and described from the socio-cultural environments that they operate in, defined by their musical goals and their relationship to their audience, observing their performance and interpreting their meaning. But underlying and constituting these practices, frameworks and value judgements is an unmeasurable motivational factor that is processed at an unconscious level but with a clear impact on the musician's sense of success in their musical activity. Enjoyment is fundamental to the activities of musicians, but because it is unmeasurable and elusive in its definition it is easy to overlook. Instead discursive objects can come to dominate and alienate musicians from the activities they engage in and any attempt at self-improvement.

The music teacher and the subject supposed to know

What does this say for music teachers, how can it help them understand what they do and does this mean a radical change in the methods that they use to teach their students? Drawing on the discussion above it is possible to say that under the model proposed by the researcher that much of the practice that music teachers engage in does not need to change, the traditions and frameworks that already exist, such as that of the conservatoire, are appropriate in their contexts and each music teacher will apply pedagogic methods that they have developed in tandem with the traditions with which they are familiar. This model of 'The Musicians Dialogue' does caution music teachers to be aware that whilst these methods and frameworks may provide meaning to the teacher's musical activities, the motivation for the use of these methods in the classroom may not be understood by each of their students. Further the rightness or wrongness of each students' performance and engagement is determined in its totality by the method or framework being applied, there is no absolute right or wrong way to make, learn or teach music, such value judgements are entirely dependant on context and predispositions of the teacher and student.

The model, following Žižek, does advocate an additional consideration outside of the linguistic frameworks that constitute music pedagogies – one that is present in the practice of many music teachers, but often suppressed or demoted as less relevant than the achievement of goals constituted by the discursive frameworks within which they are working – that musical learning should be fun. Enjoyment (pleasure and pain) is not a side product of musical learning but the fundamental motivating force of all musicians underpinning the actions of musical learners and teachers, providing opportunities to understand how and why each musician values their own musicianship and progress in musical improvement.

If we return to the issue of trust discussed at the beginning of this chapter, we can identify the implications of this model when applied to the music classroom. For who is the audience of the music student but the music teacher. It is in response to the music teacher that students measure their improvement, it is the music teacher that the student trusts to guide them in their learning, the music teacher plays a performative role for their students that of the *'subject supposed to know'*. From this Lacanian analysis the teacher can be seen to perform a role for the student. Both student and teacher engage in symbolic exchanges with each viewing the others' actions as a reflection of their own identity, someone who it is expected will recognise the others assumed identity. The fear that the other will not recognise or be fully convinced by the identity the subject is assuming introduces an uncertainty, an imperfection, to the performance that is central to understanding the need for a fixed language. A subjective exchange that in fact can only be traced back as far as the master signifiers that initially created the relationship.

Gregory Jay in his essay 'The Subject of Pedagogy: Lessons in Psychoanalysis and Politics' writes:

> It would be ludicrous, it seems, to suggest that Lacan's work could be of any use in devising a philosophy or praxis of teaching, presuming that pedagogy requires, first of all, an instructor certain of his subject. This requirement

> evidences what Lacan calls the demand for the "subject who is supposed to know", a demand every teacher has felt in the classroom (a space, in fact, constituted by this demand). (Jay 1987:786)

Jay states that symbolic demand and impetus to fulfil the desire of the other is placed as central to the activities of the classroom. He states that there is a significant conclusion to understanding the role of teacher as the 'subject supposed to know' of their students.

> If pedagogy simply transmits knowledge units, then it never questions these unconscious epistemological and political discourses, and so never enables the student to understand them or what they cannot themselves comprehend. A pedagogy of the unconscious must dislocate fixed desires rather than feed us what we think we want to know. (Ibid:790)

The student is not an empirical object that a teacher can blindly apply educational theory to; the teacher is performing an important role in the students learning. Whilst the teacher must be prepared to negotiate and reduce any differences in their relationship with the student by exploiting any commonalities that exist, they must recognise that the student will always see the teacher as different. That whatever aims the student has for achieving mastery in their discipline, they believe that the teacher has access to knowledge and an understanding of skill development that they can learn and develop from. The student is allowed to imagine that they may come closer to achieving the understanding of the discipline they are aiming for through their relationship with the teacher. There is deference to the teacher's authority; they are the 'subject supposed to know'. This provides us with an opportunity to recognize the symbiotic relationship between teacher and student. It is a dependant relationship, but also one in which there is an uneven distribution of power. The student expects to acquire a skill through the teacher's instruction. The teacher understands that in order to acquire that skill the student will need to learn to associate the activities involved in the acquisition of that skill with their own identity, rather than associating it with something that the teacher does. The teacher understands that it is their job to guide the student through this process. Lars Iyer, in a critique of Richard Middleton's 'Voicing the Popular'

(Middleton, 2006) explains this crucial aspect of the relationship between the psychoanalyst and their patient:

> It is the patient who must be prepared to do the analytical work. It is the analyst's role to maintain the focus of this work even against the analysand's explicit wishes. (Iyer, 2008:13)

There is a further implication to this relationship; that the nature of what is to be learnt, the activities that need to be engaged in order to acquire the skills and knowledge that initiated the relationship, is specific to that relationship. Even if a student expects to engage in the same activities as others who have acquired the same skill, or there is a prescriptive syllabus or set of predetermined tasks, still the student's experience of learning those skills will be particular to them alone. The student must take ownership over his or her own learning. In this sense the music teacher's job is to encourage the music student to develop a sense of independence in their identity as a musician.

In the context of the diversity of styles of music that may be found in the British classroom a non-essentialised conception of musicianship can help us account for cultural difference and the teacher is able find a role in facilitating the learning of students from a range of different backgrounds, familiar or unfamiliar. Not defining for the student what they must learn, but providing an 'other' against which the student may go about exploring their identity as a learner and a musician.

> Culture, for Lacan, is the effect of the differentiation of the signifier, the distribution of which permits the construction of identities. The individual always finds itself enmeshed in the symbolic dimension, the trans-subjective field of signifiers which are held together in a system of differential relations, none of which can appear in isolation. These relations account for the way meaning is produced. (Iyer 2008:8)

This does not discount the knowledge and skills of the teacher, nor the value of a syllabus, nor the different traditions of music that influence musicians. Jay articulates this in his discussion of a Lacanian conception of the teaching of English Literature:

> A classroom exercise in which the specific values of disparate interpretive frameworks are tested does not lead to an ultimately homogeneous total interpretation offering "the" meaning of the work, or to a vacuous relativism in which all meanings are equal. Instead we can teach the "partiality" of knowledge-its incompleteness and its dependency on values. Such a lesson places the demand for criticism on the interpreter, and it answers the call to responsibility itself by disclosing the pedagogical unconscious as a structure of investments-an ideological discourse, if you will which both enables and restricts verbal or written expression. (Jay 1987:790)

The teacher should respond to the student's requests for knowledge, always insisting that the student should take that knowledge and critique it for their own use. The student should be encouraged to question the knowledge they are given. Against the student's expectations the teacher must insist that they think for themselves, that they do not trust the teacher to have the right answers.

In the third part of this thesis 'The Musicians Dialogue' is used to analyse the language used by popular musicians in rehearsal (Chapter 9), and a greater focus on enjoyment in the music education is advocated for as part of the final conclusions for the research project (Chapter 10).

Part 3 – Analysis and Discussion

How musicians think about themselves and understand their music making activities has been the focus of this research project. The data that has been collected and the development of analytical tools were designed to find ways to read the actions of popular musicians with a psychoanalytical lens. Part three focuses on the use of some of these ideas in an educational context. How these ideas can be used to provide interpretation of musicians working together is exemplified in Chapter 9 that defines and applies the nodes from 'The Musicians Dialogue' developed in Part two, systematically applying the developed model of musicianship as a framework for analysing the data collected.

Chapter 10 summarises each chapter, evaluates the outcomes from the project and considers possible ways ideas in this thesis might be further developed and applied to popular music education practice. It revisits the trust between teachers and students and the concept of the *subject supposed to know* as it might apply to music teachers, and provides an account of how the concept of *jouissance* might allow a reconsideration of enjoyment as an important factor in the design and delivery of popular music education.

Chapter 9 - The Curious Case of the Musical Rehearsal

Introduction

The increasing relevance of popular music to academic research is significant in the way it operationalises concepts of culture, inclusivity and subjectivity in educational practice (Chapter 2). Since Lucy Green published her influential book *How Popular Musicians Learn* (2002) research on music education has increasingly focused on differences between formal and informal music learning practices and the way this shapes the identity of musicians, music learners and music teachers. Much of this research builds on empirical data that examines how music learners engage with popular music and how teachers respond to the new practices that teaching popular music involves (McPherson & Welch 2012; Hallam, Cross & Thaut 2008; Welch et al. 2004). Philosophical ideas from educational theory and cultural studies are also being explored to find models of thinking and methods of practice that are congruent with the multiculturalism that is a dominant theme in contemporary British society (Bowman & Frega 2012; Jorgenson 2011; Regelski & Gates 2009)

The research conducted here intends to contribute to these debates through an examination of the practices of popular musicians. Through the recording and analysis of the discourses employed during the rehearsal of musical material by professional musicians, a consideration of the possible contribution that cultural constructs taken from Žižek's (1989) reading of popular culture and Lacanian psychoanalysis can be used to interpret many of the dichotomies evident in the research on popular music education (Chapter 7).

By focusing on musicianship as it is exhibited in rehearsal contexts, it is argued that music can be viewed as a master signifier (Lacan 2001; Butler 2005), delineating music as a reified concept that condenses a diversity of phenomenon into a unified linguistic construction, in order to bring them

into social discourse and interpellate the activities of music makers and listeners (Chapter 8). Understanding musicianship in this way provides opportunities to tackle oppositional perspectives in music education without attempting to essentialise music as a definable absolute. Dichotomies such as: the difference between formal and informal learning; discrete assumptions of subcultural style and identity; the agency of the teacher versus student centred pedagogy; and the differences between music in and out of the classroom (Chapter 3).

It is proposed that the deployment of the Lacanian concept of the 'subject-supposed-to-know' (Žižek 2006; Lacan 2004) can form the basis of a model of music teaching that embraces this role as performative without neglecting or undermining a sense of expertise, mastery or tradition that is a key concern of current literature on music education (Chapter 8). It is suggested that such a perspective may help music teachers cope with the demands of an increasingly commercialised landscape and the regulatory discourses that are pervasive throughout the music education industry (Chapter 3).

Problem and Hypothesis

> What happens when a group of 13- and 14-year olds are told they can go into a room with several of their own CDs, a CD player, a selection of instruments, and copy a chosen song in any way they wish? All of the teachers, myself and the other project team members included, were apprehensive. But we have been consistently and pleasantly surprised. (Green 2006:107)

This research project was designed to investigate the language popular musicians use when they are learning and consider the ways in which it may be used to inform the delivery of music curriculum. The quote from Green illustrates the key themes arising in this research. Firstly, it considers the 'other' music, popular music, in opposition to classical music which is influential in the literature in music education. In placing popular music in an oppositional relationship Green effectively makes an argument that the methods of learning in popular music are different from those

employed to teach classical music. She describes the difference between them as formal music education and informal music learning practices. Whilst this has created the space for discussion about how popular musicians learn it has also created a question about comparisons and adaptions that music teachers have to make if they are to adopt informal music learning into their curriculum. It asks questions of the nature of musical learning, its measurement and expectations placed upon music students.

A second theme arises when considering the intended aims of the music education curriculum. There are the intellectual, creative and leisure benefits to participating in musical activity but there is also progression into independent and professional employment that music students are also being trained in, defining the learning outcomes for the syllabi that many teachers work to. What comparisons can be made with the way professional popular musicians work, do they use formal or informal language in the way they communicate in rehearsal?

A third theme is one of surprise. Why were Green and her fellow teachers apprehensive and surprised, what expectations did they have when they left their music students alone to learn together? The question of identity, how music teachers identify with their students and how they believe their students identify with them as musicians and teachers becomes important. Detractors of Green's advocacy of informal learning in the classroom complain of the disappearing teacher, the teacher’s agency is undermined by student-centred, multicultural initiatives in education. The teacher's expertise is de-valued, uncertainty and anxiety is increased in the teacher.

The hypothesis for this research project is: that the distinctions between formal and informal learning are not clear in the rehearsals of popular musicians and that the language that is used is a combination of borrowed, corrupted and invented terms that only partially convey the

musical desires of the participants in rehearsal; that musicians will often fail to communicate effectively through language, but will use verbalisations of musical meaning and the musical performance of their ideas to achieve an acceptable compromise in meeting the intended learning outcomes of the rehearsal; and that uncertainty and anxiety are significant aspects of a performing musicians psyche and a process of continual reassurance and contestation of shared language is necessary for rehearsal to take place.

This thesis argues that such uncertainty and anxiety should be recognised and embraced by music teachers and put to work in transforming of music students into confident musicians.

Context of the research project

There are three particular environments in which this research considers music education discourse as relevant: the music classroom; the music rehearsal; the music industry. Educational institutions exist to formalise the learning process and provide qualifications that validate the skills and knowledge students have acquired in their studies. However, the conflict in apparent purposes, mechanisms and resources promoted by different agents manifests itself in complex relationships between educational institutions and the educational processes that they are engaged in.

The socio-cultural focus of this thesis is constructed from an engagement with research methodologies that aim to disrupt assumptions that may exclude different ways of knowing. The researcher is particularly interested in the impact that the product of qualitative research has on the enactments of policy and conceptions of professionalism as experienced by music teachers. He has been responsible for delivering and designing academic curriculum in his department for fifteen years. Through the research and contextual units delivered on pre-degree and degree level programmes in Popular Music Performance, Production and Management, he has been able to encourage students to creatively engage with

methodological concepts that enable them to articulate themselves and discover new ways of being creative.

The researcher's identity as a musician has engaged him in a wide variety of working conditions giving him experience of teaching and learning in contrasting contexts in the UK, from industry based and professional environments to amateur and community based projects. The core work being as a lecturer is delivering QCF Level 2 & 3 (KS4 & KS5) programmes to the 16-19 sector and QCF Level 4 & 5 higher education programmes to adults. As a sector of the British education system that is responsible for much of the development of school leavers, access into the university system, training of skilled professionals, supporting of life-long learning, recreational and well-being development, the demand on workers in further education is to be flexible and responsive to the needs of individuals and the cohesiveness of differing cultural and social institutions. The researcher's personal and working life as a musician working across multi-cultural environments means he has a good understanding of the different working practices in different areas of the music industry.

Development of nodes for analysis

In Chapter 7 the relationship of the subject to the object was explored. In Chapter 8 it is possible to see that this process in the psyche takes place at the level of enjoyment in the Graph Of Desire (Illustration 6). Enjoyment then is a subliminal reflection of the psychic process of identification. The model of musicianship developed through chapter 8 is here used to analyse the dialogues of musicians as they rehearse. It is easier at the level of identification to see the signifying relationships of words to the objects they are intended to represent and this is why The Musician's Dialogue (Illustration 7) is more explicit in its nodal imitation of identification in the graph of desire. **Discourse, Musical Quality, Audience** and **Performance** all directly replicate the symbols for *Signifier, s(O), O* and *Voice*. **Musician** simplifies and reunites the *split subject* in a way that loses some of

the subtlety and important nuance, but allows for discussion of the implications of the split subject without explicitly acknowledging its existence.

This is a specific compromise taken in order to construct a theory that is operable in everyday teaching contexts where time for philosophic discussion of psychoanalysis and its usefulness to musicians is not always available. To be able to differentiate between the imaginary construction of

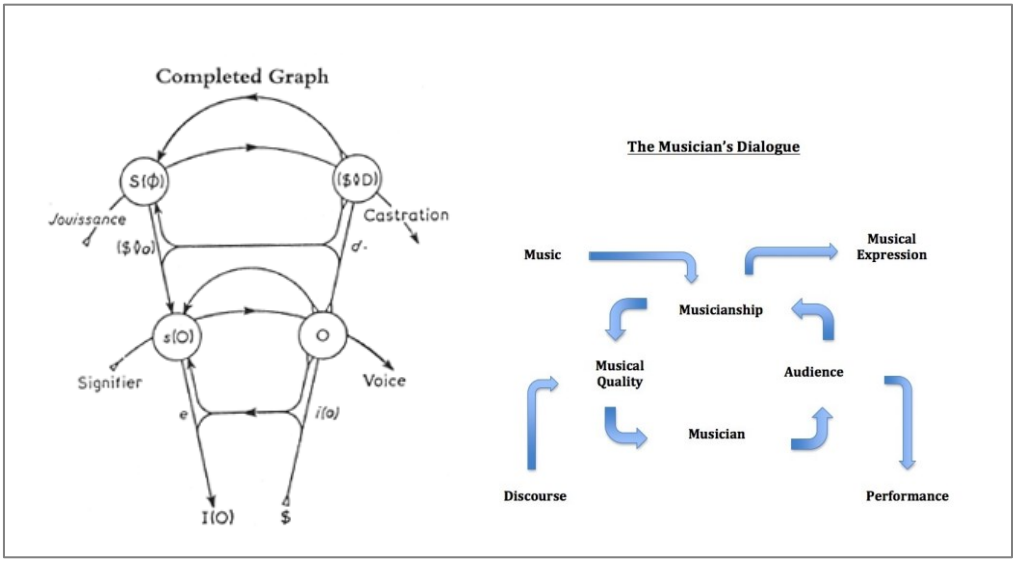


Figure 15: Graph and Dialogue

the big Other and the presence of the symbolic in the qualities subjectively ascribed to things is sufficient to transcribe a significant message from Lacan's psychoanalytic work into a lexicon that can be used by music teachers. To understand the big Other as Audience creates a linguistic association for musicians between an explicit other to whom they perform their music and the subtler psychoanalytic proposition that every social interaction involves a subject/audience relationship. The musician's perception of their various audiences, like the subject's perception of its Other, defines the musician's existence. Musicianship comes into being through the identification with a musical audience, the subsequent desire to perform to them - and be good at it. This parallels the interpellation of the subject when it comes into contact with the signifier that is presumed to contain meanings sent from some Other demanding a response.

Identification creates meaning for the subject, drawing a real world for the subject to interact with. If the subject believes themselves to be a musician because of a desire evoked by musical sound, then this is where a person's identity as a musician is formed and developed.

However, the function of fantasy in Lacanian psychoanalysis, and the advocacy for a transference of the subject's identification with the object of desire to the object of the drive at the level of enjoyment, also must be considered. What is hidden, disavowed, or screened, by fantasy is the way that the psyche endows meaning in objects. Physical objects and emotional impulses that appear from the register of the Real are translated into reality for the subject in its relationship to desire – those aspects of reality that can't be fully understood are sought after in the belief satisfaction will be possible once a complete understanding has been achieved. But it will never be possible to understand oneself completely, ultimately the search for truth will be in vain (see chapter 3). Music provides for a good analogy: the difference between music and noise is a subjective one, each musician has different tastes and influences. There is no universal set of criteria by which all music can be judged. Any fixed values ascribed to particular musical properties are constructed by the musician him/herself and do not exist in a world external to the subject, the vibration of molecules that can be symbolised as musical sound are merely emanations from the Real.

In The Musician's dialogue the node **Music** is used to represent the libidinal input to the psyche, the node **Musicianship** is used to capture, and again simplify, the complex machinations of fantasy as it mediates the **Musician**'s understanding of him/herself. *Desire* is, though, only a manifestation in fantasy of the deeper psychic movement of the *Drives* where the subject's biological self impacts on the psyche before meaning is constructed. **Musical Expression** is the final node in the musician's dialogue that then represents the repetition of the drives and the motivational force that musicians feel that makes them want to continue to make music in

order to serve their own musicianship. Music may be the object that gives meaning to a musician's activities, but there is no point in trying to define it. Rather it is more productive to try to understand how musicians use music to express themselves.

Data Collection

The data collection process took place over the period of the researcher's study for his doctorate. As well as the primary data analysed here the research is complemented by a range of smaller case studies undertaken to explore issues important to the researcher and help him define the remit of the research project. Although this thesis has a strong emphasis on theory the questions asked by it are born from the researcher's practice as a music teacher and so the project was designed to capture musicians learning. In simple terms it was intended to provide examples of the different ways that musicians might go about learning, not to create a definitive list of methods, but to demonstrate a diversity and contrast in approaches that might not be accounted for in traditional music curricula.

The researcher has moved through several iterations of enquiry before engaging in the collection and analysis of the data in this chapter, these include: an investigation into music theory as perceived by music students and teachers; a survey of trainee music teachers as to what they consider important in their future role in comparison to predominant themes found in curricula; a multi-modal assessment of the perceptions of technology in the music classroom; and various recordings of musicians rehearsing and instrumental lessons. Observing and reflecting on musicians learning and rehearsing led the researcher to further developing the focus on musicians in rehearsal. If, in the music classroom students are being trained to make music as professional musicians in the 'real world' do, then it would be useful to observe how 'real world' musicians make music and this can best be seen in the process of rehearsal.

The researcher works as a professional musician outside of his teaching work and frequently audio records the rehearsals he is in for the purposes of remembering and revising work in advance of performances. It was therefore a matter of selecting and transcribing a selection of these rehearsals in preparation for coding and analysis. It was important to ensure that the data set was of a manageable size for the remit of the project, therefore the dialogue of musicians was selected during the rehearsal of one song from four different rehearsals. Each rehearsal was in a different context for different performances, with different groups of musicians performing different styles of music. None of the rehearsals took place in a formal context, although linguistic tools that might be considered formal do appear in these rehearsals. The four rehearsals presented as data here are:

Case 1: All The Things You Are – Jazz Trio

Three musicians who are working through Jazz standards, using lead sheets which provide melody and chords to be improvised over. The rehearsal takes place in the trumpet player's front room.

Case 2: Is This Love? – Roots Reggae Function Band

An ensemble of eight musicians playing covers of well known Reggae songs in preparation for a performance in a village hall. The rehearsal takes place in another musician's living room that is hired out to local bands at a low rate.

Case 3: You Are My Emperor – R 'n' B Vocalist

A rehearsal of five musicians preparing for a live performance of original music produced electronically to be performed at a festival. The rehearsal takes place in a youth centre where the female singer's manager works.

Case 4: You Know How I Feel – Singer Songwriter

Five musicians preparing for a showcase of original material used to promote a collection of fine art. Commercial rehearsal facilities are used.

Data Preparation

The process of preparing the data was as follows:

- Recording: using stereo microphone and portable minidisk recorder;
- Transfer: to audio wav in Cubase. Compiling several minidisks over the duration of rehearsal into a chronological account;
- Format: convert to mp3 in appropriate size files, dividing and labelling systematically;
- Scan and select: Listen through taking rough notes deciding a portion to sample, preferably centred around one song being rehearsed;
- Transcribe: selected section into word, annotating musical interludes providing commentary and allocating speech to individuals labelled as B: Bass player D: Drummer etc.;
- 1st coding: read through deciding on themes that can be articulated in the data, creating an initial framework for encoding. Producing labels for coding;
- Import to Nvivo: create case file and tree nodes. Code transcript;
- Reflect on information produced.

The development of the model used to analyse the data evolved over a period of time following several different explorations of potential coding approaches including open coding – where nodes are produced directly from looking at the data, and axial coding – where terms from theory are used and applied. A number of models were developed to identify useful ways of articulating themes important to the researcher, but only after thorough engagement with Lacan's *'Graph of Desire'* did the researcher design *'The Musician's Dialogue'* for the purposes of analysing this data.

Data Analysis – Explanation of Nodes

The dialogue of musicians from the rehearsal of four different songs is analysed using axial coding derived from a reading of Lacanian psychoanalysis. The writer used the underlying psychoanalytic conceptions of the 'Graph of Desire' and his own advocacy of this psychoanalytic model of musicianship to use these terms as points of interpretation in the reading of the data collected. The following eight nodes are used to explore how musicians interact and communicate with each other in order to create a particular understanding of how musicianship can be read in educational contexts.

There can be no direct measurable link between the utterances of musicians and the nodes presented here as a construction of psychic operation in each of the musicians involved. Psychoanalysis is not a science and this reading of four cases of musicians rehearsing is intended to contribute to a qualitative body of knowledge of how musicians learn. Each node is given a brief introduction here in order to facilitate the reader in following the writer's interpretation of the psychoanalytic model into a model of musicianship and then as an analytic tool. As each node does not represent discreet moments of operation of the psyche nor linear relationships, such a model can only isolate varying aspects of the psyche for the the purpose of providing clarity for the analyst and reader when thinking through potential outcomes of any such analysis. The development of the model of musicianship is discussed and presented in chapter 8, its potential uses for analysis will be explored in this chapter exemplified in the data presented below.

Discourse – Descriptive

This node is enacted to identify linguistic constructs that each musician uses to describe the music they make and the world around them. These may be formalised specific symbols of physical objects and actions or attempts to connate meaning in less direct ways.

The way musicians understand themselves and the world around them is structured by the language they use to process thoughts and communicate with others. When a musician hears, sees, feels (indeed tastes or smells) that sensation is interpreted in the psyche to have some association with its originating source – in the case of the spoken word this would be the other person doing the speaking.

This node represents what each musician thinks the meaning is of the sensations they experience, what they perceive to be reality. The way musicians describe what they perceive points back to how they understand music and themselves as musicians. The personal, cultural and stylistic idiosyncrasies of each individual musician are manifest in the discourses they employ when communicating with others. It is their understanding of the world outside of themselves.

Musical Quality – Value

This node is used to identify where musicians make value judgements about the quality of music being produced and the standards to which they believe should be attained during the rehearsal. This process of imposing value onto sonic and other types of sensations is hidden behind a presumption that the meanings attributed by the value judgement already existed and are inherent in the discourse from which they appear. The value a musician places in their musical and non-musical encounters is heavily influenced by their own sense of musicianship and therefore audience, self-identity and motivational factors in the rehearsal. Meaning is produced and acted upon as if it were real, outside of the musicians control, but meaning is actually constructed by that musician and is formative of their own subjectivity.

Musician – Subjectivity

This node captures each musicians sense of self, it is who they think they are and gives each musician a role to play by creating a sense of 'me' and 'everything else'.

Audience – Other

This node represents the way each musician is affected by their sense of who their audience is. This does not just mean the people that turn up at a gig to watch them perform, but the recipients of any of their actions. The anticipation of their audiences' response is an important aspect of their decision making process. The important question 'what does the other want from me?' is formative of how they feel about themselves as a musician. It is the relationship of the musician to the audience they perceive, that constructs their identity and place as a musician.

Performance – Action

This node can be seen as the output of the psychic process whereby the musician acts in order to fulfil an intent to communicate with another. There are several levels at which a musician can be seen to be performing a role for a preconceived audience, most obviously in the execution of instrumental technique at a gig, but also as a team-member with a musical ensemble, an entertainer to paying customers, a creative person in social contexts, an expert for anyone whom may want to learn from them and so on.

Performance then can be used in a narrow musical sense or as an all encompassing term for the physical movements of the musician's body. This is the only node that can be directly observed, the actual words spoken by each musician are a performance, this node is employed when a musician indicates that there is something to be done or has been done that is consequential to the topic of their conversation, in these cases the rehearsal of music for purposes of improving ensemble performance.

Music – Motivation

This node points towards suggestions by musicians of the motivation behind their actions. These suggestions are never really precise, they may refer to something specific, but there is always an inference of something more that makes that thing special. Music is the master-signifier which

through association gives meaning to everything that is referred to as 'musical', it is the source of musical meaning but has no inherent properties in itself.

Musicianship – Ownership

This node is key to the model put forward. A musician's sense of their own musicianship will define their fulfilment and continuing activity in this role. It is proposed here that it is not the value judgement - of what constitutes good or bad music - that is fundamental to a musician's identity, but rather whether they feel they have ownership of how they make music. If they identify with music as something they want to do, and in their own terms, then they will engage with music with enthusiasm and passion. However, alienation from the structures and discourses with which they understand music leads to disengagement and a conflict between what they want to achieve and what they feel they should be doing.

Musical Expression – Enjoyment

This node represents the drive musicians feel to make music, it is the emotional output of a musician's activities and is what the musician seeks in making music. Musical expression may be defined in very vague terms although these are very familiar moments of joy, frustration and realisation of achievement.

Using the data to analyse nodes

Coding of data in Nvivo, a software package for qualitative analysis, is a way of identifying patterns, connections and finding alternative readings. The remainder of this chapter works through each node looking to exemplify each node through a few selected references from each rehearsal.

Each statement is referenced using a short code: Jazz Trio (JT); Roots Reggae Function Band (RR); R 'n' B Vocalist (RB); Singer Songwriter (SS). So for example:

<Internals\\Jazz Trio> Reference 5 = JT5;

<Internals\\R'n'B> Reference 29 = RB29;

<Internals\\Roots Reggae> Reference 1 = RR1;

<Internals\\Singer Songwriter> Reference 148 = SS148

Each musician is referred to by the initial of their instrument: D = drummer, G = guitarist, K = keyboard player. Each rehearsal involves different musicians therefore the drummer in each of the rehearsals is a different musician. The exception to this is the bass player in all the rehearsals, this is the researcher, which is obvious in a few places in the data and should be taken into consideration when reading this analysis. Where there is more than one singer, they are referred to as male singer M and female singer F.

Node: Discourse

Descriptive - Discourse

There are several levels at which this node can be applied. Such as naming words:

B: yeah, I'm used to playing this in a different key on the guitar (JT5)

Here the word 'guitar' specifically names the musical instrument being referred to; 'key' refers to a convention that orders musical sounds into a language musicians use to communicate with; 'playing' is the activity of making musical sound. B refers to himself when he says 'I'm used to', he also refers to his own activities commenting on the difference between previous experiences and current ones. Each one is a component of language that is intended to refer to something specific, these may be nouns but also other forms of grammar that refer to things in the world and people's activities.

These descriptive words can rely on a presupposed understanding, such as

can be found in the language used between musicians - terms that have referential meanings that non-musicians may not understand. Music teachers may refer to this as technical language or music theory and this common language reassures musicians that they will be able to communicate with clarity to each other.

S: the chorus and the bridge (RB29)

In this example 'chorus' and 'bridge' appear to refer to specific parts of the song being rehearsed, but this language whilst appearing to be definitive can be revealed not to provide certainty. The word 'quavers' is a specific and measurable musical term but in the following example it is used as an attempt to communicate meaning in a fashion for which the word 'quavers' is obviously insufficient.

M: as, as a, as in like a beat without er without erm (strums) pulse of like quavers, try doing it as in erm (M and D play) I think that would probably fit more you know (D plays) I think that's what it is it's the pulse of the... (SS148)

It is also common for musicians to use descriptive terms that are: less particular; ambiguous; can be taken to mean a variety of things; or are non-linguistic verbalisations that may be onomatopoeic or otherwise. In the following sequence musicians use numbering and verbalisations in order to determine the drum roll at the beginning of the song.

G: 2 3 4 5 der…(D is playing along) G: 12345 der…
M: dada dada dada dada da der…
B: and of the 1
M: start with your left hand
B: 1&2&3&4&1
M: start with your left …

M: that's it, so now that you start with

G: I think it's a count of 2, 1 2 3 4 5 & 1 2 tuka tuka think that's the count

M: denananana (G Plays riff)

M: does that twice dunnit

M: does that twice

G: yes, that was it

(RR1-12)

How ever musicians choose to name their activities and the level of specificity with which they attempt to communicate, or the certainty with which they employ language, it is this language that indicates the musicians understanding of the world around them and the music they want to make. Discourse then can be seen to be the language that musicians use to describe the world, but is also the way that they understand the world and is the medium through which they experience the world.

Node: Musical Quality

Value - Musical Quality

In a simplistic way the value of something is whether a musician thinks it is good or bad. Does it contribute towards what they want to achieve or is it detrimental to the image of the musician they aspire towards being. This can manifest itself in exuberant outbursts of enthusiasm:

B: I love it I love it his lines are great aren't they (RB8)

or in a negativity that reflects back on the musician and their sense of performance:

M: how've I got that wrong (SS6)

For the music teacher it is important that they are able to elicit from their students more detailed critiques of performance than merely the words 'good' or 'bad', such explanation is often rooted with clear connotations of either good or bad and this sense of value or quality can be detected without the specific determinant.

> *M: yeah so twice, it just sounds better it's a bit more clearer I think bit more each section (SS66)*

> *D: its just the kind of drum beats that drummers like to play you know [laughs] (RB11)*

In these two examples there is an association with what musicians 'like' – whether that be a musical type or style, or with a sense of clarity and definition. Implicitly there is also supposed the opposite, that a lack of clarity or other types of beats are not enjoyable and make for bad music. These musicians are seeking to make their music making activities better and more enjoyable. There are assumptions here that give the appearance: that clarity makes better music; and that enjoying what you play will lead to a better sound. The researcher doesn't wish to disagree with these assumptions, but it is important to recognise that these associations are not necessarily 'true' in all cases.

Many of these assumptions are embedded within the stylistic discourse, which may help musicians working within common genres communicate more easily. The fairly formal Jazz Trio are preparing to play standards and are working to conventions common to many Jazz performances.

> *K: a break, there's a two bar break so so so obviously you can only play it once anyway cause it's a long tune (JT27)*

Here because the Melody lasts for 32 bars the keyboard player suggests that they only play it once before the musicians take their solos. Often on shorter tunes the melody ('head') can be played more than once before solos are performed. It is the keyboard players use of the word 'obviously' and the repetition of the word 'so' that emphasises the explicitness of the assumption. By the very act of making this assumption explicit, though, the keyboard player is displaying his own uncertainty on the matter. It is a statement that awaits confirmation – an agreement that they are following the stylistic convention correctly.

In the R'n'B rehearsal the language used is a little more ambiguous. What is intended in the following examples can be deciphered by a musician experienced in working with a range of different styles, but may mystify less experienced or non-musicians:

> *K: it would be good for the chorus to be a bit straighter wouldn't it (RB33)*

> *K: its got loads its quite jerky in the verse though which is cool then in the chorus we can go dom dom [singing drum part] you know its like erm still straight (RB35)*

'Straight' is a reference to how the 'beat' or 'pulse' of music is felt or measured. When music is straight the time between each beat is equal. Music that is 'swung' has an uneven distance between the first (strong) beat and second (weak) beat. The extent of this distance may be called the swing, skip, shuffle, step, groove and so on. The use of the word 'jerky' is quite creative: describing extreme and uneven movement. The contrast from the Jazz Trio is that the R'n'B musicians are listening to an original track programmed on a computer and are attempting to translate this into a live performance context, the Jazz Trio are working with recollections and prepared lead sheets to meet a predefined set of expectations based on

many previous performances by many other musicians.

In the Roots Reggae rehearsal, the musicians have another way of expressing musical quality that may reflect less engagement in formal musical structures or conventions found in Jazz music or educational settings of the other rehearsals:

> *M: its easy (RR41)*

The Reggae musicians are very expressive. The Male Singer seems to be quite upset by how the song they are trying to copy has been produced, the guitarist appears to like the structure to the song and insists that the band copy it exactly. The male singer seems to believe it is impossible.

> *M: just a bit out init, they've done that in the edit anyway, they've cut it up, cut that out and dropped it in the edit.*
> *M: There's no way (inaudible comment from others) that is the way it was wrote*
> *G: oh its great though*
> *M: am I right*
> *G: its good though*
> *M: they will have chopped that in the fucking studio boy I tell ya and truncated it, bullshit*
> *G: that's the one that's bang on that's exactly what we're gonna do, about that*
> *(RR47-53)*

We don't learn from this exchange whether the original track was in fact cut up in the studio, whether this makes it any better or worse a song because of it, or whether the Reggae musicians managed to play it 'bang on'. But we can see that each of these musicians has a relationship to the music they are playing and that the success they feel in performing this music is a reflection

on how they feel about themselves as musicians. The perceived quality of the music produced is a measurement of how good each musician feels about themselves and this can be expressed in both positive and negative ways. Above the singer expresses reservation about the authenticity of the performance in a defence against his possible failure to replicate it, the guitarist expresses a determined enthusiasm again in a defence against his own possible failure.

Node: Musician

Subjectivity - Musician

The sense that each person has that they are an individual thinking being is often referred to as their subjectivity. As this thesis is concerned with musicians the node Musician is synonymous with subjectivity and it is in this way that a psychoanalytic model of musicianship has been built. It is this assumption that each musician has a picture of themselves as a musician that indicates the relevance of this model to any persons. Anyone who does not see themselves as a musician, has no desire to make music and does not participate in music-making activities could not be described by this model – although were they to identify with another type of activity then it may be possible to adapt the model (actors, artists, airline pilots, archaeologists or perhaps teachers?)

It is easy to detect this node in the data with the musicians often stating 'I' or 'me':

G: because the bass player was with me (RR22)

F: am I singing now (RR33)

K: (plays a chord) how about if I did that (SS30)

M: do that again one more time all the way through, erm you're coming in with me aren't you (SS47)

But there is something subtler to be picked up here that is at the root of the psychoanalytic tradition upon which this model draws. The 'split subject' is a term Lacan used to define the difference between the image a person has of themselves and the reality of what they experience (see chapter 8). It is possible to identify this subtle difference in the data. The keyboard player in the following example could work out how to play the musical part exactly – in an ideal world, with a bit more time, when he is more relaxed – but he can't do it in this particular instance. He identifies with the image of himself as a musician who is capable of playing the part exactly, but the reality of his experience at this moment in time is that he is not capable of playing the part.

K: I can work it out out exactly though not now but you know (RB5)

There is incongruence between the ideal to which he aspires, an ideal that he believes represents him, and the effectiveness of his agency in the situation. Similarly, in the Roots Reggae rehearsal the female singer is not sure whether she is singing now.

F: am I singing now (RR33)

As she is asking the question we can assume that she is not singing at that particular moment, she is asking if she should be singing now, whether she should begin singing. She is not sure if what she is doing now is what her ideal self would be doing. The answer to her question is to be answered by one of the other musicians at the rehearsal, but she is clearly aware that there may be some difference between what she should be doing and what

she is doing.

In the model used here the split subject is simplified into the term 'Musician' to represent the subjective identification with music of the person we are describing as a musician. Although it is simplified here, the split subject is fundamental to understanding psychoanalysis and its effects can be seen in the symmetry of the musician's dialogue with the nodes on the left of the diagram caught in representation, symbolism and fantasy and the nodes on the right designating the imaginary machinations of the psyche. Perhaps this is better expressed by a musician who realises that there is often a difference between his own expectations of what he can achieve and the reality of his actual performance skills:

M: how've I got that wrong (SS5)

The male singer presents an image of himself as a musician that would get it right, but his imaginary interpretation of his performance is that he got it wrong. This example of a musician being reflective shows how musicians can work to refine their expectations and consequently improve the quality of their musical learning.

Node: Audience

Other - Audience

What is noticeable about the data in the node *Other - Audience* is that despite all the musicians actively rehearsing for a gig in which their primary job will be to entertain an audience, there is no explicit mention of this musical audience throughout the data. Yet the data has been coded heavily for this node. A musician's musical audience is ultimately the focus of their activities, there is no musical performance without an audience for that performance. This relationship between musician and audience then is like

the relationship between the subject and the other. When a subject speaks they do so with an intended audience – the other to whom they are speaking – and this is also the case for the musicians who are speaking in the rehearsal data presented here.

Sometimes their speech is clearly directed at another musician in the rehearsal:

> *T: what do you reckon? (JT41)*

Sometimes what they are saying implies an awareness of the future musical audience for whom they are rehearsing. This is the case in the following extract where the word 'arrangements' not only refers to the way the musical piece should be structured but also implies such structure should be created in such a way that considers the future musical audience and how they will receive the performance. A well arranged piece of music will be more enjoyable for any future musical audience.

> *K: each time we play. So its like the little thing, the arrangements you know the break for the solo (JT55)*

In a Lacanian understanding the Other to whom the subject addresses themselves is a construction of the subject's imaginary interaction with the signifier (Discourse and Musical Quality in the Musician's Dialogue). The sense of an other to whom each musician addresses themselves fulfils the purpose of reassuring the musician that what they are saying has some meaning, the expectation of a response is important as a coherent response will confirm that the musician is indeed acting as a musician should. The musician has an understanding of how the rehearsal is progressing, this reflects their understanding of the reality of their life as a musician, which contains sets of expectations about what constitutes good quality music and what is not such good quality. Interactions that fit within these expectations

reassure that their identity as a good musician is well founded. But interactions that do not fit expectations can disturb a sense of coherent reality. Misunderstandings and mistakes can perhaps be accounted for without great disturbance of the picture of musicianship the musician has built for themselves. There is always though a sense of uncertainty, the potential at any moment that an interaction may occur that reveals some underlying truth that the musician is in fact deluded in their understanding and control of their own musicianship.

K: yeah, its alright, I got a few hits on my myspace now (JT107)

Here the keyboard player reassures himself, he has a musical audience evidenced by hits on myspace. Of course this is part of a light hearted exchange with the bass player who is in fact the primary audience for this statement. The keyboard player needs to tell the bass player he is a musician and he does have an audience. Why does he do this? The bass player knows the keyboard player is a musician, they are in a musical rehearsal together – this statement is not intended to prove anything to the bass player, but is in fact the keyboard player reassuring himself that 'it's alright.'

For Žižek the question 'what does the other want from me?' is key to understanding subjectivity. When another musician communicates something to me, I ask myself 'what are they trying to say and how should I respond?' Often musicians do not communicate clearly and so the data contains a fair amount of musicians asking for a message to be communicated again, such as:

G: what (RR126)

or often what is sought after is worked towards in exchanges that move towards some sense of the intended goal:

K: so you can turn it just a bit so it's a bit more livey you know (RB86)

'Livey' is the keyboard player's way of saying that the playing should be done in such a way to consider the future musical audience during the live performance. 'Turn' is more ambiguous and is a reference to the phrasing which the other musician uses in their playing. The keyboard player wants the musical performance to change and improve in some way without being specific about the exact requirements of what he would like to be played. How he wants the other musician to react to this statement is not clear, nor is it meant to be, again the keyboard player is reflecting on how the musical performance reflects on his own musicianship through an (imaginary) interaction with an other musician. If he was certain what he meant, he may not have needed to seek additional reassurance through completing the instruction with 'you know.'

Musicians will also reject the assertions that they imagine come from the other. The male reggae singer who protests about the arrangement found on the recording being listened to does not like what the other of the record is asking of him. Should the musicians imitate the recording exactly and would a failure to be able to do so demonstrate inadequacy on behalf of these musicians?

M: There's no way (inaudible comment from others) that is the way it was wrote (RR133)

Here he is saying the recording itself is inauthentic, the original artist did not play it like that and so it's not fair that the recording demands that he performs in this way too. But of course the 'other' of the record is not an actual person who can make judgements about the male singer's ability or otherwise to replicate the sound that emanates from it. Neither is it possible to conclude that the future musical audience for his performance will be in a position to, or have the inclination, make a judgement on the accuracy of

his performance in reproducing what is on this recording. The male singer's strong reaction tells the reader of that musician's subjectivity and uncertainty about his own musicianship in a way that runs directly opposite to the certainty with which the statement is made.

The self consciousness of musicians in rehearsal is evident then in what they say and how they interact. Perhaps more confident musicians are more aware that they place themselves in the reality of the rehearsal and are careful to build a picture of their place in the expectations of the other musicians they are working with.

> *O: is that alright then*
> *F: yeah that's alright just as long as you can hear me, yeah*
> *(G is playing, talking is inaudible) which other one did you do, is that the first one you done*
> *(RR171-172)*

The above exchange, not only shows such an interaction of explicit reassurance, but also sets out to define some parameters within which the musicians are working – appropriate volume levels and choice of repertoire. Below the guitarist is building a sense of collectivity for himself, within the reality of the musical ensemble he is working in, and the musical listening skills that denote the good quality musicians that he believes he is in the company of:

> *G: maybe we're just more around, we're just more aware of the riff of the (K plays some notes) cleaner (SS221)*

Other - Audience is not an easy node to grapple with, but understanding the role an audience has on the formation of the identity of a musician is central to a psychoanalytical approach to musicianship. Whether the audience is explicitly recognised or implied in speech, whether it is a future musical

audience or just the other to whom the musician is addressing themselves at that particular moment, the other/audience is an imaginary construction that creates and reinforces an identity as musician for the subject. There may actually be another musician (or a real future musical audience) to whom each musician is performing, but they can only ever be known through the signifying chain – the sense of discourse in interactions – as they are constructed into meaning (musical qualities) in relation to the musician's sense of self.

Node: Performance

Action - Performance

Of all the nodes used in this analysis *Action - Performance* is the easiest to understand. It represents the actual actions that musicians perform, or their act of describing them. Like *Other - Audience* or *Description - Discourse* this node can be read at several different levels: the explicit act of performing to a musical audience; the descriptions musicians make about the act of performing; the act of speaking, singing or making a musical sound; the perceivable outcome of psychic processes that can only be guessed at by the sounds or movements of the musician.

There are those occasions where a specific action is explicitly requested: the bass player asks for the amp to be moved, the keyboard player counts in ready for the musicians to begin playing, the male vocalist telling the drummer which hand to play a drum roll. In the case of the R'n'B keyboard player, he suggests the bass player use a specific technique of using the volume dial on the bass guitar to fade in his notes. It is a technique that can imitate the slow attack of a note played on a cello, 'cello it' is an informal phrase that is only meaningful to musicians that have used the technique before.

B: can you lean it to me just a touch more (JT1)

K: 1, 2, 1234 (JT4)

M: start with your left hand (RR4)

K: cello it (RB7)

The verbalisations of these musicians are actions in themselves whether in words musical sounds or other less conscious enunciations:

B: (sings) be da do (plays a note) (JT16)

K: ked um ke [singing drum part] (RB25)

B: hmm (RB3)

D: ee oo ee oo (RB8)

It's not clear if the drummer is making a musical or non-musical sound here. Whether he intends to convey a musical meaning is made harder for the reader as it is a transcription produced by the researcher demonstrating a level of ambiguity both in the interpretation of the transcription as data and in the actions of musicians represented in the data. Perhaps the reader will have the opportunity to listen to the original recordings, but in the absence of this the researcher has tried where possible to indicate during the transcription process those moments when musicians are trying to convey musical ideas through verbalisation. The sound that the drummer made was also ambiguous to the researcher and the letters assembled in the data present very little information about what may have been intended or how the utterance may have sounded.

The ambiguity of interactions between musicians is important to recognise. There is often an inherent lack of certainty in musicians in how best to communicate to, or understand the communications of, other musicians and how to perform on their instrument to create the sounds they envisage, both individually and in collective settings. To work with other musicians there must be an assumption of shared musical goals, even if it takes the process of rehearsal to align these through performance, discussion and repetition of performance. Formalised musical language is used to provide a sense of certainty, but is insufficient in itself to make an effective rehearsal. Even in the most formal of ensembles musical performance will consolidate any language used in the preparation for performance. In the rehearsals of the popular musicians that are covered in this research there is use of formal language to convey musical meaning. These uses are not specific enough to remove uncertainty, there is a need either for affirmation from another, reassurance from a stylistic context or reinforcement with musical performance.

K: see where the vocals need to go (RB14)

B: is there a particular line, there always is with the Marley (RR11)

M: bom bom bom bom bom bom (B plays it) bom bom bom bom bom bom 5 6 7 8 (RR38)

F: check mic check 1 2 (RR60)

In the above the keyboard player will need the vocalist to confirm that she does know where her singing should sit within the arrangement he proposes; the bass player expects that the Bob Marley song he is learning will require him to play a specific bass-line, rather than to create one that he feels is appropriate; the male singer first sings the bass-line he wants the bass player to play, then he counts him in (however musicians rarely count

in 5 6 7 8 this is more often used by dancers giving us an indication that the male singer may have more experience in this field). Musicians will count in 1 2 3 4 but this is not what the female singer is doing, she is testing if the microphone works – the convention here is to say 1 2 testing so that percussive consonants can be accounted for by the sound engineer.

In the singer songwriter rehearsal there are some good examples of musicians giving directions to other musicians implicitly referring to conventions relating to the arrangement of songs. “The top” means the beginning of the song, and a “fake ending” is a commonly used technique to enhance the enjoyment of a musical audience by giving them the impression that the song is about to end, then building the tension with a reprise of one part of the the song before actually finishing the performance. In the last of the below examples the male singer does not use any specific or formal language, he wants another musician to cue him at the appropriate point in the arrangement.

> *M: I’m happy with that, I’ll play from the top (SS1)*
>
> *G: so are we doing, what we doing, are we doing we doing a fake ending (SS5)*
>
> *M: so your just gonna have to shout at me, which which is what (starts playing) (SS14)*

Later in the singer songwriter rehearsal there is further evidence of negotiation between musicians where formal language is not used. Instead, the actions of musical performance (either instrumental or verbalisation); using non-specific language; providing musical direction; and reference to musical performance, are all part of the performance of these musicians in this rehearsal.

M: what you playing (M, G and K all trying a chord) yeah we're all playing down there aren't we

M: what about you playing (plays chord) oh you're not up there are you

M: play me what you were playing before anyway (K plays some notes) no no the bit

M: that bit when you come back in after the (strums) that bit I want you to go (sings) do do do dum do di do di do dum

M: yeah play what you're playing here

K: I don't play anything

K: show me what you mean (laughs)

(SS23-29)

D: (inaudible) my hands already told me to move I couldn't stop em (more laughter) (SS35)

M: it just looks like I am, I'm just muting it (SS55)

D: do it again and I'll do what I did (SS78)

Node: *Music*

Motivation - Music

The preceding nodes refer to discourse as they are experienced by musicians, how they identify with the world through making meaning from signifiers by interpreting them as messages from other musicians and non-musicians, as well as the actions that they undertake in response to these meanings thus participating in the discourses they perceive.

The node *Motivation - Music* relates to enjoyment: more specifically the contribution to their sense of musicianship that the psychic tension between

what the musician imagines the outcome of their music-making activity is and their actual experiences of making music. As this tension can only be understood and given value to the musician through the meaningful discourse of musical quality it is difficult to identify it directly in the data. As we are taking music to be a master-signifier in the analysis of this data we can, without attempting to define specifically how enjoyment (and other associated emotions) is being experienced by the musician, locate the motivation to make music being represented by symbolic descriptions of music in an abstracted form. Each musician will have their own definition of music and many may struggle to be precise, but however they define music they all adopt it as the important force behind their music making activities, placing value judgements onto signifiers associated with music and forming an identity as a musician in relation to it.

What does the musician want? What do other musicians want of them? Why do they act in the way that they do? What do they expect to get from their music making activities? These are questions that are brought to prominence when using this model of musicianship. The node *Motivation - Music* helps the reader ask some of these questions and though it is impossible to be definitive in suggesting answers, the purpose is to insist that the motivation and sense of self expression (considered by the node *Enjoyment - Musical Expression*) musicians feel should be a significant aspect of any analysis.

The bass player below clearly makes a judgement of some sort about the difference between good and bad 'moments' in the performance just given by the Jazz trio as they rehearsed 'All The Things You Are', the word 'rough' being an analogy with a physical surface that is not 'smooth'. When we ask why he may have stated this it is possible to suggest that this may also pertain to his aims, that is he wants to have good moments and give a smooth performance, that he as an individual musician and the collective that is the Jazz Trio are rehearsing to iron out the performance (continuing

the analogy). The audience to whom he is speaking here is though – not some potential musical audience that any future performance this rehearsal is preparing for – but the other musicians that comprise the Jazz Trio. His statement perhaps speaks of an insecurity, that the other musicians might think his playing was too rough, that he lacks the skills to be a good musician – to be playing in the Jazz Trio – as if his very being is at stake. Maybe though he is reassuring one of the other musicians, that their playing is not too rough, that their performance is good enough for the Jazz Trio. The Keyboard player has a similar tone of reassurance and sense of improvement that also points to an uncertainty at the root of his identity as a musician.

> *B: there was some rough moments, but there was some good moments as well (JT24)*

> *K: yeah, yeah, it's not an easy tune at all mate, better than last week anyway (JT27)*

In the R'n'B Vocalist's rehearsal there is a similar, if opposite, example of musicians attempting to reassure themselves and each other that what they are doing is good despite not being totally sure if it is. The drummer tells the others that he enjoys playing the same kind of drum beats that 'drummers' like to play. It's not clear if he is including himself in the reference to drummers or justifying his interest in playing the drum beat by stating that he is a drummer, but it is a tautology that is revealing. His awareness of the non-statement he has just given is reinforced by a laugh, psychic energy that exceeds the motivation behind his statement and produces an involuntary giggle. Similarly, the keyboard player is 'up for it', reinforced with a 'yeah' and an 'anyway'. This enthusiasm says that he is willing to play the song, whether it is a good choice or not. It is an over-identification with the choice of song, which again hides or defends against the uncertainty that it might not be a good choice.

D: it's just the kind of drum beats that drummers like to play you know [laughs] (RB5)

K: I'm up for it yeah anyway (RB6)

This apparent contradiction in the statements of musicians – positivity underpinned with either uncertainty or an overconfident statement that takes possession of an object they want to be identified with – gives voice to the tension within the Lacanian split subject that which he named *jouissance*. Pleasure in pain is one way that this has been described, it is common to hear musicians reveal this with statements that display an excessively strong positivity countered by a suggestions of problems, difficulties and insecurities. Stronger, more experienced musicians often feel more comfortable and relaxed in rehearsal environments, statements that they make to this effect tend to be less exaggerated.

These statements that reveal uncertainty and insecurity of the identity of musicians can also help us understand the fundamental retroactivity at work in any analysis based on Lacan's work: there is an indefinable psychic energy at work, not readable by researchers or consciously enacted by musicians, but its presence is felt and needs to be expressed. In order to work with it and try to channel it constructively it is associated with various musical objects – perhaps a 'hard tune', a smooth performance, a drum beat, or the sense of enjoyment a laugh portrays. As these various objects are so different a commonality is perceived within them, something that gives them musicality. 'Music' is read as a 'master-signifier' holding together the musician's sense of what they are aiming for and motivated by, it is an abstract term that can be used as a starting place for certainty in defining good and bad approaches to their activities as musicians. Retroactivity is at work here because the master-signifier is used to explain how musicians are defined by music, but it is the musicians who first place musicality onto objects then presume that this musicality is inherent within their chosen

objects, before they as musicians encountered them.

There are other ways that musicians' motivation to express themselves are revealed by a statement that also disguises, although the following examples may be more obvious to the reader, it might also be possible to analyse them without the benefit of psychoanalysis. There is the obvious, lets play the song again whilst we are waiting, the confused 'what am I doing', the it wasn't me (it was my hands) and the revealing of musical fantasy 'it must be in my head'.

> *M: well let's go it again from there cos we got time while people are coming (RR16)*
>
> *M: (inaudible talking) what's going on, what am I doing (SS1)*
>
> *D: (inaudible) my hands already told me to move I couldn't stop em (more laughter) (SS11)*
>
> *M: that's alright with me (band stops playing) it must be my head (SS23)*

Each presumes that there are things that involve making music in a right or wrong way, that move to fill a void of uncertainty, that if spoken or if remained unspoken for long enough, may undermine the identity each of the musicians have built for themselves. They are motivated by psychic energy or tension that motivates their actions and they are happy to describe as musical.

Node: Musicianship

Ownership - Musicianship

Evidence of statements pertaining to ownership are signs of a confident musician. It shows that despite a level of uncertainty about the meaning of discursive objects and desire for recognition by others, music is something that is defined by each musician and they can assume control over their own music-making activities if they feel they have the authority to do so. A 'talent' based approach to music creates a divide between those who have 'it' and those that do not. Similarly, to try and define what makes some musicians 'great' and others not means that those musicians who perceive themselves to be on one side of these dichotomies will have difficulty learning to be better musicians. Either they may feel they are not talented musicians, which will alienate them from their own music making activities or they may feel they are talented musicians, in which case they will find it difficult to honestly reflect and therefore improve on their music making activities. The model of musicianship presented here advocates the potential for any person who has the desire to make music to learn to be better musicians and find a sense of satisfaction in the music they make by taking ownership of what they do. To become familiar with a broad range of musical objects, so they can express themselves and communicate to other musicians is the first stage of this process, the second is to understand that those objects do not contain their own meanings but are defined by the goals each musician sets themselves. A sense of satisfaction comes from repeating musical experiences that reaffirm a question musicians continually ask themselves: what does my musical audience want from me? Of course the answer is as clear or as vague as the musicians own understanding of their musical motivation.

It is rare to hear statements from musicians that they feel alienated from the music they make; they will find ways to hide this feeling (as discussed with the node *Motivation – Music)*. This is something only expressed by people who feel resentful that they are being forced to do something they don't want to do such as children at school who do not enjoy their music classes. It is not that unusual however to hear musicians state that they like to make

music 'my way', to describe their music making with collective pronouns, present an analysis of a situation or a synthesis of ideas. Different contexts will affect musicians' feelings and judgement, and it is not the intention of this thesis to say that there are confident musicians and there are musicians that are not confident, rather all musicians have moments when they have confidence in their own musicianship. It is the development of skills, experience and self-reflection that helps increase the frequency and consistency of these moments. In the data these moments can be evidenced.

> *G: shall we leave this because it is a real bastard and we don't know it (RR2)*

> *D: are we doing it just the once or are we going to the original, to the end of the section (RR12)*

In the roots reggae rehearsal both the guitarist and the drummer show an awareness of the difference between what is performed in the original and the choice they have in how they engage with, imitate or adapt that performance for themselves. The guitarist gives two reasons that the band should not try this particular piece, later the drummer tries to clarify if the band will choose to adapt the end of the song or emulate the recording. In the Jazz Trio the Keyboard player expresses a certainty about the quality of their choice of song to rehearse, but this is qualified with a very ambiguous 'on a certain level' that implies a particular knowledge and understanding without providing any sense of the criteria that he is using. The bass player seems very confident about the number of songs that take an hour to perform, he says he knows this from his experience of performing, but again when he says 'thereabouts' he is giving himself some room for error in his statement.

> *K: we were just looking at er all the things you are, that's the right*

tune on a certain level (JT1)

B: doesn't matter which bands I play with, what kind of tunes we are doing, always eight songs is an hour, thereabouts… (JT15)

It is very noticeable in this node that only the keyboard player and the bass player in the R'n'B rehearsal make statements that have been coded as *Ownership - Musicianship*. Below they make reference to other musicians, phrasing and texture. This is probably best explained by the fact these musicians are older more experienced musicians than the younger and less experienced guitarist and singer.

K: yeah I suppose we can just do that 'sa bit Stuart Copeland innit tu ka tu kis [singing drum part] (RB2)

B: I can't decide if I want to play it stiff or if I want to play it smoothly (RB3)

M: no I think you're you're just doing what's transposed I think and then me n G are doing what we came up with earlier so its just a matter of not being able to hear it together (SS20)

M: put a little bit of overdrive on and take the delay off (SS43)

Conversely the male singer songwriter assembled a band of friends that most of which he had worked with as peers on his music degree. Not only is there a balance of contributions by all members of the band but the language tends to include more technical references and clearer sense of one person being the musical director than the other rehearsals.

Node: Musical Expression

Enjoyment - Musical Expression

Music is fun and this node allows us to express this. It represents the sense of satisfaction that drives musicians to continuously repeat the experience of making music. They may feel this in many ways, but as with *jouissance* this is not just about pleasure but can be mixed with difficulty and frustration. There is lots of laughter in the singer songwriter rehearsal.

> *(everyone laughs)*
> *M: no no (laughs)*
> *M & D: again (laugh)*
> *K: show me what you mean (laughs)*
> *B: I'm (inaudible) (laughs)*
> *G: ah it was a trick, (laughter)*
> *M: ok (starts playing) that was hilarious*
> *(SS2-8)*

The bass player knows that he wants to play a solo on "All the Things You Are", that he enjoys playing the bass lines written by the R'n'B vocalist's producer and the keyboard player is delighted when he works out how to play his part in a way that excites him.

> *B: I'll definitely have one on that one anyway (JT18)*
> *B: I love it I love it his lines are great aren't they (RB 16)*
> *K: that's where it sits innit [laughs] cool hm love it (RB3)*

There are other moments when musicians take pleasure in the difficulty they encounter in trying to perform particular songs or musical parts.

> *D: tricky haha (RB6)*

K: its not an easy tune you know, its not easy you know(JT36)

The male reggae singer also expresses his opinion freely and with enthusiasm, this may not be considered to be a statement of enjoyment, but is clearly a result of psychic tension reflecting his own musicianship and relationship to other musicians around him.

M: take your time G fucking hell you're like a bull in the china shop innit (RR29)

M: trust me, can I try your microphone cos this is peaking and I don't like it peaking (RR43)

Enjoyment - Musical Expression, like the other nodes *Ownership - Musicianship* and *Motivation - Music* that relate to *jouissance*, are not easily captured. They occur in the musician's psyche hidden behind the meanings created when a musician makes judgements about musical quality and what their audience wants from them. If a musician takes ownership over their music they make, their goals and the way they think about music, then their sense of musical expression can validate any statement they may make justifying how they choose to perform.

Chapter 10 – Conclusions

Overview

Through the course of this thesis there have been a range of different approaches to researching the work of popular musicians and music teachers. It has explored different ways that music is valued, the different tools that musicians use and the different purposes with which people engage in music making. What has given direction and focus to these research activities has been the ongoing practice of the researcher as a working music teacher and professional popular musician, in which he has sought to find better methods for helping his students improve their musicianship and develop how they articulate what they wish to express with their music making activities.

The research project has been designed to contribute to the ongoing debates in music education that advocate for an inclusive and multicultural approach to music education. There are two specific conclusions that the researcher would like to convey to readers interested in the project presented in the thesis:

- a focus on language can help musicians design curricula that use pluralist models to evaluate musical frameworks;
- a focus on enjoyment can help create musical curricula that proactively seeks to avoid the alienation of music students from their music making activities.

By choosing to use the term musicianship to explore the thinking that leads people to consider themselves to be musicians, and the ways they frame their music making activities, the researcher has provided a reading of music education through a lens shaped by an engagement with Lacanian psychoanalysis. The difficult term *jouissance* (a tension in the psyche that is experienced as both pleasure and pain) and the way subjectivity is formed as a response to a sense of there being an other, have been interpreted into

a model that reflects the implications of these ideas, but also uses language with which musicians often use to describe what they do. This results in recommendations that embrace current and emerging approaches to music education but insists on the importance of ownership - that music students are able to identify with what they do as part of their growing musicianship and desire to express themselves through their music. The key tenant of music education as advocated here is that music is fun.

Contexts

The aims of the researcher have always revolved around genres, styles and associated cultures that are often described as popular music. They are defined in this way, not because they discretely fit into any particular definition of the popular, but to distinguish them from other traditions of music and most specifically to place them into opposition with the conservatoire tradition. The techniques developed for classical music students, their methods and goals, can be very different from the ways in which people make popular music. Normative assumptions about music sitting within the conservatoire tradition give rise to the need to term many other music cultures as popular music. This is a discourse that operates at both an explicit level and has many implications for implicit meaning created by the language used to describe music in wider society and in the music classroom that is the concern of this research project.

The research started with an interest in the role that music theory plays in the lives of musicians, the extent to which it defines our activities and the different ways it impacts on how music learning is perceived. Despite popular music styles often having very different structures or methods from classical music, the music theory that has evolved in the conservatoire is still considered to be an important part of the training of popular musicians. Familiarity with score notation is seen to be fundamental to understanding how music works and the ability to read music a vital skill for musicians. Many popular musicians though rely on many other

techniques and have different understandings of what should be valued in the music they make. To draw out some of these distinctions the literature on music education discusses the differences between formal music learning and informal music learning techniques. The researcher felt the need to problematise this relationship, identifying the dichotomy contained in this perspective and asking the question of how we might come to know what the right or wrong ways to do popular music education are, if there are many different cultures and traditions encapsulated by the term popular.

The environment that the researcher works in has had a pivotal impact on the project. Being from and trained in a popular music background, he became a teacher working primarily in non-compulsory contexts. This further differentiates his perspective from that of many other writers on music education who are based in schools where all pupils may be participating in musical activities, but many of whom do not intend to pursue music as a future career. In the further education college that was his main employment, as well as in the many other community workshops, private tuition and higher education contexts he experienced, the music students the researcher encountered all had a sense of wanting to be musicians. Each of these contexts were also essentially voluntary, his students were making an active choice to study music and so were developing a sense of their musicianship – their ability to express themselves musically – rather than a perhaps more passive sense of general musicality. This has allowed the researcher a wider and more relaxed approach to curriculum design than may be possible in compulsory contexts. His music students' initial engagement with the subject matter perhaps could be assumed more readily and so there is more concern with student centred activities and space for experimentation with musical ideas and approaches.

As a working musician, the researcher also was concerned that the work of popular musicians was represented in any model of musicianship that might be used in learning environments that work explicitly with

popular music. His experience of the diversity of the working methods, attitudes and motivations of popular musicians meant that he felt it was important to bring his experiences into the research process. The participant research approach to data collection and analysis seemed relevant, especially as the research project was intended to produce results that were beneficial to music teachers and learners, goals central to other writers in the field of music education engaged in action research. The researcher was an active participant in all the activities recorded in this thesis, giving him an intimate view of each environment and the ability to reflect on any analysis done on an ongoing basis. It provides only a singular perspective in this respect and therefore only seeks to offer possible interpretations. A model of musicianship has been suggested as a tool to allow other music teachers to draw on their own experiences when working with their students and to allow them to find an alternative viewpoint to understand the activities of their students.

Deciding to use psychoanalysis as an analytic tool had significant consequences for the project. The direction changed significantly as exploring ideas raised became as relevant as the data collected. A heuristic approach resulted in many visitations of the musical environments and materials the project was focused on, each with slightly different frameworks as the researchers understanding of psychoanalytical concepts evolved.

The project initially started by looking to justify the place of contemporary styles and alternative cultures in music curriculum. It wished to argue against the reification of particular traditions to the exclusion of other musical cultures. There was a desire to find ways to recognise the difference between musical tools and musical goals, to guard against the predominance of instrumental approaches to musical learning. As the project evolved these aims, whilst still relevant, have grown in response to the engagement with psychoanalysis. It has provided ways to recognise how

musicians project an identity that seeks to hide a fear of uncertainty over how music should be valued and how musical qualities can be measured. The role music teachers play for their students is highlighted: the perspective and needs of music students are different to the objectives of music teachers who fulfil the part of an other supposed to know, encouraging an eventual transformation of their students' sense of ownership over their musicianship. The project has also sought to argue that enjoyment and musical expression need to be elevated to a key consideration in the design of music curriculum.

Musicianship

The formation of identity has been a central concern of this thesis, how a musician's subjectivity is affected when they take on the identity of teacher. As a music teacher, the researcher is aware that a musician already has a relationship with music that is a subjective identification. The exploration of musicianship has been useful in developing an understanding of how music teachers' identities are formed. Lacan's 'object cause of desire' has an important function in the process of identification. The role of 'music' as master-signifier was the key element in establishing the model of musicianship that has been used to analyse the language of musicians in rehearsal.

What Lacan offers is the opportunity to look at the term music using a non-essentialist discourse, but still fulfils the structural role required when making judgments of quality. Using a Lacanian framework, it is possible to describe a musician's subjectivity, how they see themselves, how they identify with other people and the world around them, as constructed through the use of the master-signifier (the object cause of desire, the objet petit a). A musician is someone who identifies with the master-signifier 'music' as a meaningful part of their identity. But, and this is the crucial point, each musician will identify with 'music' in a different way. Definitions of what constitutes good or bad 'music', the meaning of any one piece of music

or performance, the authenticity or relevance of musical cultures and activities are contested, with each musician having their own opinion. It is never possible to fully describe the essential quality of a master-signifier. Although master-signifiers are always referred to as a something that really exists; they are actually empty of meaning.

As musicians we construct this master signifier that we call 'music' to describe what we do. It provides a coherent and stable concept that encompasses a very wide range of disparate activities. When we are making music we are performing the role of a musician, we expect others to respond to us as musicians and act accordingly. Yet as we each have our own set of activities that we associate with musicianship, each of us will play the role of musician differently. Despite this we all agree that we are making music and may therefore believe that all musicians should share the same conception of what good music is, even though quite clearly we don't.

The fundamental question of musicianship is: What makes a musician a musician? How does a human subject identify with the term 'musician'? We could look at a range of examples of musicians and ask what they have in common. We could ask musicians to tell us what are the most important aspects to being a musician or what skills and attributes they need. We could try and decide what the essence of musicianship is.

But there are different facets to being a musician, different styles and traditions of music (such as Jazz, Hiphop, Heavy Metal, Brass Bands, Symphony Orchestras, Choirs, Rappers, Chamber Music, Barbershop Quartets etc.) each with their own associated cultures, techniques and contexts. There are different instrumental and technological skills required for different musicians depending on their role in the music making process. A rhythm section player will need to focus on different aspects of music to a singer or soloist. DJs who scratch will develop technique in different ways to a djembe player. Conductors or dance music producers will make music in ways that may be difficult to define using criteria designed to assess the

developing instrumental techniques of a piano or guitar player. Theoretical understandings and technical skills will vary in emphasis, the ability: to listen; to read; to improvise; to compose; to perform; to analyse; to work independently; to work collaboratively. There are different environments and reasons for making music: to dance to; to appreciate; to convey meaning; to express emotion; to demonstrate technique; for enjoyment and so on.

There are numerous different ways to conceive a musician's purpose and appropriate constitution. Each musician will have their own context that informs the kind of musician they are. Many musicians will have common understandings of what they do. If a group of musicians are from similar cultural backgrounds, are interested or trained in the same musical traditions, then they may have such commonality in their perceptions of who they are as musicians that they may believe they conceive of musicianship in the same way.

But musicians disagree frequently. Particularly whilst rehearsing. A rehearsal is a process that is designed to prepare a group of musicians for an ensemble performance. To do this they need to coordinate what they are playing so that it sounds to an audience like the music they are hearing is created by one source – the band. It is important it does not sound like what is in fact a number of different musicians making a number of different sounds each with their own instrument. In order to achieve an appropriate level of apparent coherence to an audience, the musicians must be in agreement on some crucial aspects of the music they are playing. Particularly how it begins and ends. The shared vision of music that is performed by a musical ensemble does not exist before rehearsal, each musician may have their own idea of how the music should sound, but it will not be identical to the other musicians in the band, even if they are imitating a recording or following a score. The shared vision of music that is required for a coherent performance is constructed during the rehearsal. The purpose

of the rehearsal is to provide an environment where each musician's vision of the music is literally played out, compared and adapted to create a coordinated sound.

What is required is a musical director, someone to coordinate the rehearsal and lead the band during the performance. Musical directors are evident in all forms of ensemble performance. In some contexts they take a formal role, such as the conductor of an orchestra or the lead player in a big band. In many other contexts the musical director is less obvious. Yet there will always be someone taking the lead and making decisions, this may be one member of the ensemble who remains the predominant figure throughout the rehearsal, or more commonly different members assuming the role as proactive participants at different points during the rehearsal. Without the decisiveness of a musical director rehearsals will deviate from their fundamental purpose – preparing the group of musicians for a coherent performance to an audience.

Similarly, the teacher has a role to play, which is to direct the students in their learning. Students expect to be taught and the teacher must perform that role. It is the sense of performance in teaching that allows for parallels to be drawn between music and education. Both utilise a master signifier, 'music' or 'teaching', to perform a role in a social interaction with others. We expect others to have an understanding of what we mean when we use these master signifiers to define our activities and successful social interaction depends on agreement over the common language we use. If we begin to compare what musicians actually do when they are playing, as happens in rehearsal, we quickly realise that each musician has a different idea of what good music is but expects the others to share their own conception. Different teachers will also vary in their beliefs on what constitutes good teaching.

Seeing the student as other allows for an exploration of the performance of teaching, playing a role for the student, who themselves see

the teacher as other. In recognising that the teacher is the *other supposed to know* for the student it is possible to construct an agentic role for the teacher, encouraging the student to grow and take ownership over their learning. A Lacanian framework resists forms of pedagogy that avoid discussion of the dynamic and emotional character of the student, which see students as people to whom knowledge is to be delivered.

It is also possible to see the teacher as being on the other side of such a relationship: the wider institutional contexts that also make demands on the teachers to perform in particular ways. The managerial discourses that educational managers use as tools in their relationships with teachers may also be open to a cultural interpretation through Lacan. It is possible to begin to understand how the teacher can be seen as a definable unit of resource, one that is not to be trusted to fully account for themselves in auditable terms. If we as teachers understand ourselves to be objects in this discourse, as the *other not supposed to know*, perhaps this can help us negotiate our relations with our managers, in similar ways that we may negotiate with our students.

Psychoanalysis and music education

The shift of emphasis away from truthful, universally fixed definitions of music education towards an understanding of different conceptualisations of musicianship requires a consideration of the motivation of musicians. How they feel about their music-making activities and why they choose their musical goals defines their understanding of what it is to be a musician. The researcher looked at methodological debates within the field of music education and wider philosophical debates concerning popular culture, deciding to engage at a deeper level with psychoanalysis as expounded by the writing of Slavoj Žižek who highlights the important role of energy in the psyche as an additional element in understanding discourse and the way subjects identify with the objects they use. In explaining Jacques Lacan's 'Graph of Desire', we have seen how

psychoanalysis reveals a hidden level of enjoyment that sits behind the more evident level of identification at work in the interpellation of the subject – how subjectivity is formed in relation to language and is driven by *jouissance*. The pleasure and pain of music-making and the striving towards musical goals is encapsulated in a model of musicianship inspired by Lacan's 'Graph of Desire', created by the researcher and named 'The Musician's Dialogue'. This model is subsequently used to analyse the data collected and explore the language used by popular musicians in rehearsal.

There are two key aspects of this model that must be understood to recognise the distinctiveness of a psychoanalytic perspective in the analysis of musical activity. The first is the master-signifier, the second the role of the 'Other' in the formation of identity. In this thesis has been argued that 'music' can be seen as a master-signifier, a linguistic tool that provides the source origin for all meaning that other music related words, conceptions – signifiers – point towards. The word 'music' helps musicians stitch together a coherent sense of musicianship, musical meaning and a set of descriptions that define the quality of musical properties (what the difference is between good music and bad music). However, master-signifiers themselves do not have inherent meaning, they cover over an absence of meaning, hiding the self-constructed nature of the meanings created by the subject. There is no truthful, universally fixed, external definition of what music is or should be. It is for each musician to create their own set of understandings of what music is and in doing so create their own sense of musicianship and identity as a musician. In 'The Musician's Dialogue' this is represented by the node 'Music' as an input into the node 'Musicianship'.

The role of the 'Other' in the formation of subjectivity is probably the most difficult aspect of using a psychoanalytic frame, it is a counter intuitive conception that proposes our sense of reality is in fact a fantasy based on the retroactive creation of meaning in the psyche. The signifying chain is seen as a request from an 'Other' for a response, subjectivity is formed as a

response, it is contemplated and performed. But the 'Other' perceived in the psyche is imaginary, it is only given substance through a symbolic interpellation. To defend against a possible realisation that this 'Other' is a construction the psyche deludes itself into believing that the signifying chain contained these meanings before it perceived them, thus giving solidity to the sense of self that it has (and needs to survive), to the material world it inhabits and to the social relations that constitutes its cultural realities. Žižek encapsulates this in his discussion of the term 'Che Vuoi?' – 'What is it in me that the other desires?' – and can be seen in stage 3 of the construction of Lacan's 'Graph of Desire'.

These operations that are a part of the functioning of the psyche result in a difference between the way a musician identifies with themselves - their expectations of the results of their music-making activities and their communication with other musicians - and how they need to continually adapt this identification to the ever changing signifiers they perceive but can never fully fix into a complete understanding of what music is. In striving towards becoming the musician they imagine themselves to be any discrepancies or failure to achieve these goals will lead to a lack of satisfaction and disappointment with the identity they maintain of themselves. There is a tension that sits in the psyche, which is fundamental to its operation. Musicians may feel a level of uncertainty as to how to fulfil the sense of musicianship they aspire to. A fear of uncertainty manifests itself as a symptom, a lack of achievement of the musical goals they have set themselves, something lacking in their own musicianship. The may feel anxious to fill that gap and overcome their problems, to seek full satisfaction in their identity as a musician. But this is not possible, there will always be a gap between how they understand themselves in language and the pre-linguistic operations of the psyche that they will never be conscious of.

The purpose of psychoanalytic treatment is to traverse the fantasy, for the subject to recognise that complete satisfaction can never be achieved

and to embrace the ongoing process of striving towards, and reconfiguring, their goals. Lacan described this process as a move from symptoms to sinthomes. For musicians, both cases can be seen as having and striving towards musical goals, but in the case of the sinthome there is no expectation that in achieving their musical goals they will be fully satisfied, the process is merely an excuse to continue to engage in the activities of music-making from which they derive pleasure. In 'The Musician's Dialogue' this is represented by the node 'Musical Expression' and is an output of 'Musicianship'.

Implications

There are a number of ways this psychoanalytic perspective on musicianship may be useful to music teachers as it takes account of:

- how they see themselves and have confidence in their own knowledge and skill sets;
- how they understand the role they play for their students and how they value the trust their students place in them;
- how they might negotiate the various conflicting discourses encountered as someone who does music education, the demands placed on them and the sense of enjoyment that needs to be maintained in all music making activities.

When dealing with a curriculum that embraces a multi-cultural approach to music education teachers will be dealing with a wide variety of musical cultures and genres of music. Each music teacher will themselves have their own strengths allied to musical cultures they are familiar with and will also encounter styles that involve unfamiliar working methods, histories and values.

A symptom of this situation may be an uncertainty over how to educate students about styles with which the teacher does not hold a high level of expertise. This may manifest as an anxiousness about how students may respond to class materials and learning techniques or as a fear of being undermined by students that have more experience of the associated

culture and familiarity with the musical style. However, a teacher who takes ownership over their musicianship may recognise the potential for alienation in these situations. They can prepare strategies to embrace the contribution students may make, bringing additional knowledge and perspectives to the learning environment.

Designing the curriculum to encourage such contributions would involve creating frameworks for identifying, comparing and contrasting different stylistic and technical tools, but allow for the actual styles and their associated devices to be varied depending on the students in the class and the focus of the teacher's musical goals. Understanding music to be a master-signifier is key to recognising and being confident in allowing there to be no permanently fixed stylistic point of reference, different markers of musical quality can be stitched and unstitched into musical meaning dependant on the audience and discourse in each situation. A music teacher who enjoys designing and delivering a multicultural curriculum, despite the level of challenge and potential uncertainty, could be said to be approaching their teaching sinthomatically.

Another key feature of psychoanalysis is the subject's relation to others. Lacan discusses the value of the relationship between the analyst and analysand (patient). It is clear what the analysand takes from the relationship, they believe they will benefit from the course of analysis and place a trust in their analyst who is their *other supposed to know*. However, Lacan says that he is interested in the benefit for the analyst, what do they hope for from the analytic process, what do they desire? They want a successful outcome which will involve the analysand 'traversing the fantasy', understanding how their symptoms structure their very reality and coming to terms with the imperfections in their lives.

For music teachers this role of an *other supposed to know* may be useful in thinking about how they help their students. The student will initially expect the teacher as *other supposed to know* to be an expert in

what they want to learn and to play this role for them. Indeed, there is much knowledge and many methods for developing musical skill that a teacher can instruct their students in. But ultimately, if musicians want to progress they need to be aware of the ways they set their musical goals, take ownership over their own learning processes and engage in the activities that will help them achieve these goals. The music teacher must encourage their students to question the authority initially demanded as they enter in to formal educational relations, becoming independent learners and musicians capable of working in professional contexts.

For the researcher the most significant outcome of a psychoanalytic reading of music education is the focus on enjoyment. Music is fun, although the sense of enjoyment can often be overshadowed by the many discourses and situations that can make learning about music feel like a dogmatic and alienating set of exercises. Psychoanalysis provides a framework within which enjoyment can be a central focus of the learning process, putting into perspective and providing a meaningful role for the application of techniques and accumulation of knowledge. Further if it is acknowledged that there is no right way to teach music, deliver the perfect lesson or performance, then pleasure can be taken in negotiating with students, helping them develop their skills and understanding. The concept of *jouissance* does not just imply pleasure though, it also implies pain – it is the energy in the psyche caused by tension between who we think we are and the way we form our sense of reality around us. For musicians this means recognising that to improve we must work at it, that performance brings anxiety as well as joy and that at times we will not be happy with what we achieve.

Finally, we can ask what role do others play for us, what do we believe they expect from us and how do we attempt to fulfil these roles. Our students, colleagues and managers all have expectations of us, they may or may not place trust in how we perform our roles, but does this reflect an

excess of strengths and deficiencies in our abilities? Or do we as musicians take ownership of our own musicianship, recognising how we can create different frameworks for negotiating our own goals, adapting to different situations and enjoying the processes of making music and helping others learn.

Key learning

There are a number of issues that can be taken from the research in this thesis that may contribute to the ongoing development and understanding of the place of music education in society and the roles of various stakeholders involved in shaping the activities in music classrooms.

Teachers

For music teachers there are a range of key elements that the researcher seeks to emphasise. The first is to recognise that the teacher has a role to play for their students, that learning is a product of interaction between students and teachers. The aim for music teachers is for their students to develop a sense of their own musicianship, an ability to value music and evaluate their own progress with increasing degrees of independence. In order to facilitate this process first a relationship of trust must be built and this means being an 'expert' in the eyes of the student - being the 'other supposed to know'. Once this relationship has been established students should be encouraged to consider their own musical skills, background and understanding of what they want to achieve, setting clear musical goals and negotiating the differences between their own perspectives and that of others who make music.

The clear implication that follows is that there is no one way to make music correctly. That the diversity of musicians, musical cultures, musical traditions and musical styles do not sit in discrete categories in which one either belongs or does not belong. Each musician has their own musical culture, which is a combination of ideas received from others and ideas evolved for oneself. This thesis has advocated the 'taking ownership' of

musicianship, overcoming a sense of alienation that can exist when musical goals and language appear to belong to a tradition or method that is somehow outside the activities of a musician's own experience. Once a strong sense is established of what a musician's stylistic and cultural knowledge is and a confidence develops that these are valid forms of musical expression, that the musician can find their own voice, then it is far easier to encounter musical tastes, opinions and approaches to music making that are less familiar.

For us as music teachers this means that we do not need to know everything, that to teach others one does not need to be a master of all styles and techniques and that we can embrace the new and different ideas our students may bring to the classroom. We can celebrate the cultural diversity of our classroom and enjoy the challenge of working with other musicians, learning from them as they learn from us. We do not need to fear the uncertainty that the contemporary music classroom holds as each new student brings new ideas and approaches, they do not undermine our expertise but enhance it further.

Finally, it is important to recognise the significance of the frameworks we use as musicians and music teachers. We do have to measure progress, reward achievement and identify successful efficient techniques for improving musicianship. Many of the frameworks we already use in the classroom are very effective and should be continued to be applied as we see appropriate or are required of us by institutional curriculum and policy. But we must also be weary of the impact these frameworks can have on our students, where they do not understand them or find them difficult we must address how to ensure they remain engaged in musical learning. This means placing enjoyment at the centre of our considerations, music education must address our students' musical goals and recognise their ambitions to express themselves musically.

To do this we must realise that no one thinking frame for conceiving, designing and measuring music education can work for all situations. There is no right way. There are methods, preconceptions, devices and attitudes that work for each of us and we need to be clear with ourselves what these are and why, but we should also proactively engage in seeking to understand the perspectives of others, some of which may appear completely alien to us and more significantly some of which appear to be exactly the same. This is the conceit of language, it is a necessary tool to provide commonality for the purposes of communication, but it at the same time hides the unique psychic structure of reality each of us has created as we develop as subjects. Each musician has their own musicianship, which is either structured around a sense of a universal permanent complete musicianship that we always fit to achieve as it is external to us; or an ongoing sense of contingent knowledge that whilst never provides us with a sense of resolution to our desire to be satisfied does continue to drive us to engage in the act of making music and the enjoyment that comes from musical expression.

Students

For music students, and all musicians who wish to improve their music making activities, the differentiation of objects in the psyche explored in detail in this thesis is of most use. Objects of desire - the things we aspire to, such as our musical idols - have the purpose of creating meaning to our musical activity, providing context and common language to work with other musicians. These musical goals are an important part of motivating our activities, finding techniques for instrumental performance, developing a sense of culture and taste, engaging in music-making communities and so on. The problem comes if we fixate on these objects of desire and are disappointed when we aren't quite capable of replicating that which we envisioned or do achieve these goals only to find they still have not completed us as musicians!

Rather than becoming disillusioned or disappointed with ourselves we should recognise that these musical goals are devices that the psyche uses to draw us in to activities that we find enjoyable, even if they also include difficult and painful experiences along with the pleasurable ones. Behind the objects of desire, often out of reach of our conscious understanding are the objects that circle the drive. This perhaps is best expressed for musicians as the physical and emotional consequences of music-making, performing, composing - creating music is fun and that is why we do it. We need musical goals to structure and motivate us, but the enjoyment of music making is central to our engagement in the process.

It is also very important to recognise the third type of object discussed in this thesis, technically termed 'the object that stands in for the Real' or the fear of the absence of the other, Lacan's infamous conception of 'lack', which in this thesis are denoted as 'tools'. In order to engage in music making we use tools in the physical world to generate sound and manage our music making. The clearest examples are the plectrum used by the Heavy Metal guitarist that aspires to be like Jimi Hendrix, or the potentiometer on an amplifier that goes to eleven causing a failure of communication for Marty and Nigel in 'This is Spinal Tap', but also includes any tool for music-making or learning such as a diagram of the cycle of fifths, the software programmes such as Serato that allow us to 'scratch' mp3s like they are vinyl records or the notated score of a composition or perhaps the assignment brief that tells us what evidence we need to present to achieve a particular grade.

Each tool can seem so important that the whole purpose of being musician is somehow tied to complete mastery of that particular object, the technique and knowledge that it represents. But each tool has its own purpose, it is designed to achieve a particular goal, to remind us and structure our activities, to reassure us that we are making progress in our musical learning. We must not let our musical tools dominate us, they are

inanimate objects, or concepts that we reify, they cannot express anything without us as musicians giving life to them. Learning to read music, to harmonise the melodic minor scale, to use side-chain compression, to play blast beats, to beat match, to understand how to use condenser microphones etc. are all discrete individual aspects of musical knowledge that will be more useful to some musicians than others. Once we recognise what we want to express as a musician and how we are going to attempt that, then we can choose which of the many different musical tools that potentially lie at our disposal are relevant to us and the extent to which we want to apply ourselves to the mastery of them.

Policy makers

For policy makers there is one key question: What is the place of enjoyment in music curriculum? In order for students to be engaged in learning and music making they must feel they are getting something from the process. The research detailed in this thesis has examined in detail the language used by popular musicians and considered how the language used in music learning environments can become enmeshed in ideas of truthfulness, correct methods and authenticity that externalises the value judgements we make about what constitutes good music and good music education, dividing and classifying music making activities into discrete traditions, cultures and techniques. Yet the psychoanalytic perspective questions these boundaries - not by undermining or invalidating those ideas that already exist - but by adding a little something extra to the equation, that of enjoyment. It asks how we create meaning in our music making, what motivates us to make music in the ways that we do and ultimately this thesis contributes to the question of what the purpose of music education is.

By focusing on identity formation in the psyche, the question of enjoyment allows us to take a new perspective on musicianship that is open-ended, allows for multi-cultural manifestations of the frameworks we use to do music education and focuses on the relationship between music student

and music teacher. Music teachers may still be gatekeepers of particular cultural and stylistic understandings of music, but our music students can also have confidence that the knowledge, skills and cultural understandings that they posses are also valid territory for musical expression. Adapting to contemporary demands on music education may be better served by a focus on the question of enjoyment, rather than a quest to define or work towards permanently fixed conceptions of the right ways to learn about and make music.

Researchers

Whilst the research in this thesis focuses on popular music education it also speaks to the wider field of education theory and researchers from other disciplines may take the work here as an example from the creative arts of inquiry into teacher identity, student engagement and multicultural education. The key contribution of the psychoanalytic perspective applied here is the focus on the role the teacher plays for the student: how they structure learning to build trust and then help build confidence in their students' own ability to plan and reflect on their learning goals. For music students this means recognising and taking ownership over their musicianship. This conception of teacher identity relies on the idea that ‘music' is a 'master-signifier’, a word that all other music related language refers back to provide meaning, but a word that in itself points to no one clearly definable set of meanings. Each person has their own understanding of what music is and there is no recourse to an external referent that can prove one persons conception to be more valid than another persons, thus moving the emphasis of inquiry from what is the right or best way to do music education to the reasons why music educators and music students choose particular ways and methods for describing what they do.

In the same way that musicianship can be used as a term to encapsulate a non-essentialised definition what it is to be a musician, similarly words such as art, dance, maths or science could be equally viewed

as master-signifiers, helping teachers of those disciplines to contemplate their identity and the role they play for their students. Indeed, with the question of teacher identity 'learning' can also be seen as a master-signifier, each teacher will have different sets of experiences that lead to different understandings of what learning is, yet the word 'learning' gives the sense that there is a coherent and definite thing that exists external to the people that teach. Perhaps a more useful perspective would see the term 'learning' as a tool for communication between teachers and with learners, a way to better understand how and why we go about teaching in the ways that we do.

The framework within which psychoanalytic thinking about learning has happened in this research project is that of popular music education. By observing popular musicians at work and conducting research in learning environments this thesis provides specific examples of how language is used both in professional and educational contexts. Further it demonstrates effective participant research methods where the researcher is fully engaged in improving his own practice and the research has evolved through a reflexive and heuristic process.

International audience

The research in this thesis represents the specific experiences of a music teacher working in a large urban metropolitan area of the United Kingdom. Issues of inclusivity and multiculturalism are significant in this context, but the researcher has had to deal with fundamental questions of what music is and how music teachers operate that would be relevant in other contexts. The psychoanalytic ideas drawn upon in this thesis sit in a continental tradition of philosophy that places an emphasis on the ways in which language constructs our understanding of the world. As such methods that attempt to measure what actually happens in the world are of limited use. They may provide evidence of particular cases, producing artefacts that can be contemplated and analysed, but each case is only an example of a

particular circumstance and does not disprove other possible interpretations and ways of understanding the world. In the preliminary research there is some use of quantitative methods, but these were not as fruitful as the qualitative research conducted - that whilst it does not provide the possibility for extending into generalised assertions about the nature of musical learning, does tell stories about what works for particular musicians in particular moments.

The analysis of language used by popular musicians in rehearsal should give insight into the different ways different musicians use language, with a mix of formal and informal musical cultures, creative and received terminology used. More significantly, using a psychoanalytic framework has allowed the researcher to postulate theories as to the motivations for the actions observed in the language of these musicians. Not only does this demonstrate a diversity at the heart of popular music, but also is suggestive of possible ways to read the interactions of music students and adapt curriculum and delivery in the process. Understanding how and why our students respond to our teaching in the way that they do must surely be as useful as trying to define a methodology and rational for music education that works in all contexts and defines beyond the control of music teachers and music learners what constitutes good music.

The psychoanalytic perspective also works at the root of questions of music teacher identity, how musicians cope with becoming teachers, what demands they feel they need to respond to, how they need to reflect on their own musicianship as they guide other musical learners. These are all issues that can only be addressed by inquiring into the ways we frame our thinking, the operation of the psyche, the way we use language to understand the world around us and communicate with each other. Psychoanalytic inquiry does not replace or refute theories that describe behaviours or suggest models of effective practice, it adds a new question of why we are motivated to describe and model music education in

particular ways, attempting to reveal the purposes of the tools and processes we choose to engage with. If music education is to engage students, then it should be fun and the simple question of the place of enjoyment in the music curriculum should be considered.

Conclusion

This research project has been a long and tremendously rewarding process for the researcher, informing his teaching and developing his sense of musicianship. As a piece of action/participant research it has been effective in improving the way he facilitates the learning of his students, designs curriculum materials, supports his colleagues and articulates understandings of inclusive multicultural music education. It has also provided many ways in which abstract philosophical theories can be actualised into everyday situations.

It is hoped that opportunities will arise following this research project for some of the ideas to be communicated to a wider audience of music teachers. It may be of benefit or reassurance to trainee music teachers to reconsider the purposes of music education from a framework of enjoyment and to devise strategies for working in multicultural classrooms by understanding music to be a master-signifier.

The researcher would like to continue to apply these ideas to curriculum design, to devise materials for music education contexts and to create examples for music teachers to use. Here an advocacy for emerging musical styles, for equity of status for under-represented cultures and for an open-mindedness towards the views and attitudes of musical learners is paramount. The researcher seeks to demonstrate the commonalities between music traditions, whilst also celebrating and enjoying their differences.

The theoretical implications of a psychoanalytic reading on music education have only barely been touched upon in this thesis. Further

investigation and reading is warranted by the reader, especially as the interpretations given here are based on a necessarily narrow reading of the debates. The work of Slavoj Žižek has evolved significantly and is the focus of many contentious debates. Similarly, there are many nuances and differences advocated by other writers who draw on similar influences that should be taken into consideration in any future investigations. This would also mean a more thorough review of the ideas of Lacan, Freud and Hegel among others. The researcher would intend to start with developing a deeper understanding of Lacan's writing on the drive and the Real as there are elements of this part of his work that still feel very unfamiliar.

Music in all its forms can be a fulfilling and satisfying discipline. It is vital that for all the diverse discourses that invoke music and define the quality of the musical experience, enjoyment of music is remembered to be a human experience. How we think and feel about music, how we use music to interact with each other, and how we use music to frame our own identity - our own sense of being and purpose - is fundamental to reasons we make music. For all the different frameworks we may choose to help us understand our music making, to measure our progress and to set ourselves new goals, it is essential that we place at the centre of each the idea that music is fun.

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