Exploring independent interpretation development in young pianists: a case study

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this intrinsic case study was to explore the way in which young, developing pianists approach learning a new work, with specific reference to interpretation. Several studies address issues relating to interpretation but few focus on the younger musician's approach to interpretation. Participants' responses to a specifically designed analytical procedure, based on the twelve structural phenomena (Spencer & Temko:1988) and aimed to enhance the independent development of interpretation, were described. Eight female pianists, aged from 14 – 17 years, attending a secondary school, were interviewed with the purpose of gaining better understanding of their perception of interpretation and the application of their theoretical knowledge. Interviews were followed by three individual piano lessons during which the analytical procedure was applied. The computer-assisted programme, ATLAS.ti was used to code data and identify emerging themes, which were categorised. A post-view, which comprised a second interview and written reflections by participants, enabled the researcher to describe each participant's experience and development throughout the process. Findings revealed that although young, developing musicians needed a considerable amount of guidance from their teachers, they responded positively to a structured and holistic approach. Participants had difficulty to implement their theoretical knowledge practically, but the holistic and structured approach enabled them to make independent interpretative decisions, supplied a method to apply their theoretical knowledge and allowed them to link the structural phenomena in music to implications for interpretation. The implications for education are that teachers have the responsibility to provide their students with explicit instructions regarding an effective practice approach in order to ensure their independent development as interpreters of music.

Die doel van hierdie instrinsieke gevallestudie was om die wyse waarop jong, ontwikkelende pianiste 'n nuwe werk aanleer, met spesifieke verwysing na interpretasie, te ondersoek. Verskeie studies raak aspekte van interpretatise aan, maar min fokus op die benadering van die jong musikant. Deelnemers se reaksie op 'n spesifiek-beplande analitiese prosedure, gebaseer op twaalf strukturele verskynsels (Spencer & Temko:1988) met die doel om die ontwikkeling van onafhanklike interpretasie te bevorder, is beskryf. Agt vroulike deelnemers, tussen 14 – 17 jaar in 'n sekondêre skool, is ondervra met die doel om 'n beter begrip van hul

persepsie van interpretasie en die praktiese toepassing van teoretiese kennis te verkry. Onderhoude is gevolg deur drie individulele klavierlesse waartydens die analitiese prosedure toegepas is. Die rekenaarprogram, ATLAS.ti, is gebruik om temas en kategorieë te identifiseer. ‘n Nabeskouing bestaande uit opvolgonderhoude en refleksies van deelnemers het die navorser in staat gestel om elke deelnemer se ervaring en ontwikkeling gedurende die proses te beskryf. Bevindinge dui daarop dat alhoewel jong, ontwikkelende musikante heelwat leiding van hul onderwysers benodig, hul positief reageer op ‘n gestruktureerde en holistiese benadering. Deelnemers het probleme ondervind om hul teoretiese kennis prakties te implementeer. Die holistiese en gestruktureerde benadering het hulle in staat gestel om onafhanklike besluite ten opsigte van interpretasie te maak, aan hulle ‘n metode verskaf om hul teoretiese kennis prakties te implementeer en hulle te lei om strukturele verskynsels in musiek te verbind met afleidings vir interpretasie. Die implikasies vir die opvoedkunde van musiek is dat onderwysers ‘n verantwoordelikheid het om hul studente in duidelike terme toe te rus met kennis van ‘n holistiese benadering tot effektiewe oefenmetodes, wat sal verseker dat hulle as onafhanklike musici ontwikkel.

Key Terms

Interpretation; South African piano music; independent learning; music analysis; young pianists; musical phenomena; piano practising

Sleutelterme

Interpretasie; Suid-Afrikaanse klaviermusiek; selfstandige leer; musiekanalise; jong pianis; musikale fenomene; klavier oefen

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Title

Exploring Independent Interpretation Development in Young Pianists: a Case Study

1.2 Background Information

In this study, I will investigate teaching-learning processes seeking an understanding of the way in which young, developing pianists approach learning a new work, with specific focus on their approach, responses and personal experience regarding independent interpretation. Maydwell (2007:40) states what is obvious, namely that the sooner students can formulate answers to questions regarding interpretation, the sooner they become independent. My research is centred on an understanding of the development of independent interpretation through musical analysis, rather than through a focus on music notation or piano technique.

In the 1950s, knowledgeable musicians were already disturbed by a deterioration in the quality of music-making and in the ability of young musicians to interpret the expressive contents of music. They complained that music-making was becoming mere technical show without expressiveness. The problem was considered very urgent because young students were found to suffer most from the lack of adequate insight into the expression of the works they were studying (1984. Retrieved on 4 April 2014 at 6.49 pm from http://www.anstendig.org/DeteriorationOfMusic.html.).
Stemming from my experience as a piano teacher, I consider it important to focus on the holistic development of the young pianist and not on the ability to read music notation or on improving posture and technique only. My impression is that learners largely rely on input from their teachers when learning a new work because they do not have the necessary skills to interpret a piece on their own. My concerns regarding the teaching-learning processes of my own learners, clearly stemming from first-hand experience, are addressed in this qualitative research project.

Having been in the teaching profession for more than two decades, I have realised that there is a gap in the application of procedures which address interpretation

during instrumental lessons amongst teachers and learners, as well as a lack of age-appropriate literature and resources to aid teachers in understanding and addressing the question surrounding adequate support in the development of independent interpretation in learners. It is likely that if age-appropriate methods and material focused on independent interpretation were readily accessible to teachers, more teachers would use them and shift their focus to the holistic development of their young learners.

1.2.1 Purpose Statement

The purpose of this intrinsic case study is to describe the experience of eight female, secondary school piano students on aspects of an analytical procedure (see 3.2.1), designed to facilitate the independent development of interpretative skills when learning a new work. The research has been conducted over a period of approximately ten weeks.

In order to achieve the purpose, this study aims to:

- understand the way in which learners approach learning a new work;
- determine learners' knowledge and understanding of structural phenomena relevant to score analysis;
- determine at which point of their practising (during the process of learning a new work) learners start paying attention to aspects of interpretation;
- describe the consequences or changes (if any) in the way learners approach interpreting a new work after being guided through the analytical procedure.

1.2.2 Rationale

Learners' difficulty in developing independent interpretation skills originates from many different sources. Both learners and teachers in government schools in South Africa face a number of challenges which has an impact on instrumental practising and teaching; it inhibits their ability to focus their attention on independent interpretation. From personal experience, I identified the following aspects which may contribute: limited lesson time; administrative workload of teachers and

extracurricular expectations; curriculum requirements and the pressure of examinations; limited age-appropriate resource material (as mentioned above) and the degree of teachers' motivation. Following is a brief discussion of these aspects to add further clarification of the matter.

Due to timetable constraints, individual lesson times are often limited. On average, learners in government schools in South Africa have one thirty-minute lesson per week; therefore, a total of ten lessons per term, with four terms in a year. Limited time is spent on aspects that are important for the independent development of these musicians. It would be ideal if teachers could increase the individual lesson times, but this is seldom within the teacher's power. Restrictive timetables dictate lesson times, and extracurricular and academic expectations regarding other subjects often prevent an increase in lesson times. Learners in specialised music schools often have more time allocated for individual contact with their practical teachers; however, many parents cannot afford the school or transport fees for children to attend these schools. As a result, few children will ever experience these more ideal teaching-learning environments.

One of the reasons for limited time spent with individual learners is the fact that the administrative workload of teachers has increased. According to the findings in a study by Chisholm *et al*. (2005:15), prepared for the Education Labour Relations Council, "...it was clear from discussions with teachers, and from observation that the amount of paperwork is onerous." The more time teachers spend on administration, the less time and energy can be devoted to interaction with learners during the teaching-learning process. If teachers were in a position to specialise in piano teaching only, the problem surrounding administrative workload and insufficient lesson time would be eliminated. This scenario is highly unlikely in government schools where teachers are employed in a full-time position with administrative duties and the responsibility of active involvement in extracurricular activities. Music teachers are usually especially involved in concerts, fund-raising events, productions and other performances.

Curriculum requirements are often the final goal towards which teachers work and learners are often pressurised to produce good results in examinations. In setting the examination as the ultimate goal, the process of independent student development,

and specifically regarding interpretation skills, is often neglected. If curriculum requirements and examinations were not the main focus in schools and if teachers were allowed more flexible timetables, they would find more time to spend on the development of independent interpretation rather than focus exclusively on examination requirements. The conditions involving the teaching of instrumental music in a government school in South Africa, is clearly not ideal, and for that reason, it is even more important to find ways to optimise the limited time available for individual contact with learners.

Additionally, teachers often exclusively rely on examination guidelines and audio recordings produced by examination bodies, rather than explore different ideas of interpretation. Moreover, they have difficulty in finding readily available resource material to help them guide learners through the process of exploring interpretation in order to find their own.

In light of all the above-mentioned challenges, it becomes difficult for teachers to stay motivated and innovative in their teaching. The lack of information that describes the way in which learners approach learning new works with specific focus on interpretation, makes it difficult for teachers to find age-appropriate material to support their young students in this process. Although advanced music students have access to many books and articles to help them become convincing interpreters of music, there is a lack of age-appropriate material which provides guidelines for teachers working with young, developing pianists, especially in the intermediate phase. Daniel & Bowden (2013) report that minimal research focusing specifically on this age group has been done. For the purpose of this study, the term ‘intermediate student’ refers to the stage of development “between beginner and advanced level” as described by Daniel & Bowden (2013:246).

Although some material is available that can help teachers pave the way for independent interpretation among young pianists, most material is theoretical and little research has been done on the way learners respond to the application of these suggestions. It is important to emphasise the possible long-term consequences of this lack of knowledge. Following a literature study focusing on brain functioning and development, Van Niekerk & Van Niekerk (2009:74) conclude that many difficulties

experienced by pianists can be traced back to the initial stages of incorrect or inadequate tuition.

Some advice on correct and adequate tuition of beginners has been published. In her book, *Guidelines for the Young Pianist* (1972), Joan Last[1] discusses a number of topics, including posture, technique, recognising the key, aural work, attention to rhythmic stability, practice methods and thoughts on preparation for examinations and festivals. She devotes only a small section of the book to suggestions on teaching interpretation and states the importance for the young pianist to focus on sound, rather than notes, in order to achieve successful performance (Last, 1972:141). My experience has confirmed that Last, even though not providing extensive guidelines, does focus on an important problem: when young pianists have to learn a new piece on their own, they are indeed mostly concerned with learning the notes and they often neglect to observe the tempo or character indication, phrasing and other score indications such as dynamics and articulation, the title of the work and even the composer. They rely mostly on their teachers for guidance on the interpretation of a piece.

Some guidelines are mentioned by Maydwell (2007:39) who suggests that the teacher and student need to "put the music under a microscope". This recommendation implies the analysis of a piece of music as a basis for understanding how to interpret the work. She suggests that teachers use a checklist which includes observations regarding tempo, dynamics, phrasing, rhythmic patterns, fingering, signs and terms and note names for every new work that is learned, in order to ensure that all details are observed. This will ensure that the student learns to pay attention to score indications from the outset as well as set specific goals towards which to work. Because of the significance of this suggestion as made by Maydwell, the role of score analysis in the enhancement of interpretation is incorporated in the design of the teaching-learning process of the current study, as set out in Chapter 3.

In an insightful article by Blickenstaff (2012), he describes a method which will make performance practice easy and understandable for young pianists. This could be a

[1] Although this book is an older reference, the suggestions made by Last are still useful for the purposes of this section

useful tool to aid the development of interpretative skills. If teachers applied this method, students would participate actively by reflecting on their pieces and recording their observations in their lesson notebooks[2].

Other publications focus on many different aspects of the development of musicians, but confirm a lack of material which applies to the young, developing learner regarding an approach to interpretation. Baker (2012) and Marshall (2012) provide suggestions on improving sight-reading; Pearce (2012) focuses on the importance of rhythmic stability, posture and technical challenges; Cascione (2011) gives advice on the use of the pedal; Van der Westhuizen (2011) explores independent musicianship in the general music class, while Gibbs (2013) briefly discusses certain repertoire suggestions to aid evenness of tone, a clear melodic line, precise articulation, pieces within a five-finger position, hand independence and syncopated rhythms. These matters are, of course, all related to the concerns of this study, but these existing articles do not provide the information that I aim to gather.

In a recent study (Hallam *et al*., 2012) conducted in the United Kingdom, 3,325 music students between the ages of six and nineteen years, studying a variety of instruments, took part in a survey to determine their practice strategies[3]. These are described in terms of planning and motivation, both of which could have a crucial influence on the quality of practising.

Several other articles focusing on interpretation are mostly written with the advanced musician in mind. Marín *et al*. (2012) explore the role of the musical score in instrumental performance practice by analysing the process of learning a new piece of music. There are similarities in the process in which the study was conducted, and the procedures of this proposed study: participants were instrumentalists, interviews were recorded and rating scale questionnaires were completed; however, the focus

[2] Blickenstaff's ideas are discussed in the second chapter of my research report, focusing on his suggestions which support the idea of holistic development and independent interpretation from a young age.

[3] In an earlier publication, Hallam (1995) discusses the professional musician's approach to learning and interpreting new works. She advises that during the initial stages of learning a new piece, students should be encouraged to gain an overview of the entire work which should include structure, phrasing, harmony and dynamics. This is discussed in detail in Chapter 2 of this study.

group was advanced flute students who had been learning the flute for at least ten years.

Kleynhans (2009) discusses the role of the performer as interpreter and intermediary between composer and listener, and Van Wyk's (2008) discussion of piano works by Jeanne Zaidel-Rudolph has meaningful suggestions on interpretation for the advanced musician. Franke (2007) studies the structure and context in orchestral composition of South African composer, Hendrik Hofmeyr, while Doğantan-Dack (2011:247) writes about her interest in the neglected area of research which explores the performer's experience. Her particular interest lies in bodily movements and gestures as a prolegomenon to a phenomenology of the performing body: "To use a well-known distinction in phenomenology, my aim is to understand the contributions of the lived and living body of the performer, with its pulsating inner life and particular point of view, while existing research considers the objective body of performing musicians as something to be investigated with the methods of experimental sciences" (Doğantan-Dack, 2011:247).

From this brief overview of the related literature, it is clear that despite many articles available on interpretation, most are not applicable to young developing pianists who have studied the piano for a few years only. Although there are some guidelines for teachers who teach young developing students, the approach of young musicians when they learn a new work, with specific reference to interpretation, is a neglected area of research.

1.2.3 Relationship between Existing Research and Current Study

My study ties in with existing literature that is concerned with musicians' approach to interpretation; however, it focuses on the young, developing pianist, rather than the advanced musician. The philosophical paradigm of social constructivism is the basis on which this qualitative study is built. According to Creswell (2009:8), this type of research focuses on the complexity of perspectives, relying on the participant's view on a specific area of enquiry. In the current case study, the subjective experience of each participating student is studied; their responses during individual lessons when

guided through the process of analysis and interpretation are analysed and recordings of lessons and semi-structured interviews used to verbalise the process.

Teachers who would like to understand the way in which their students approach learning a new work could benefit from this study. Learners who would like to explore a different approach to the learning of a new work could find this study meaningful. This study can be used as the basis for an action research project, implementing changes and evaluating the success thereof (Rule & John: 2011).

1.3 Research Questions

The primary research question is:

> When learning a new work, how do students respond to and experience the application of aspects of an analytical procedure designed to facilitate the independent development of interpretation?

Secondary questions flow from this primary question:

> When students are guided through the application of an analytical procedure aimed to develop independent interpretation, the following should be considered:
>
> - How do musicians generally approach learning a new work, as described in existing literature?
> - Which themes emerge from the exploration of students' experiences and their responses regarding the development of independent interpretation?
> - How should the data be interpreted in the context of the literature on interpretation?

1.4 Research Method and Approach

1.4.1 Approach

Eight female learners from an English medium government school for girls in Johannesburg, South Africa, will participate in this intrinsic case study. Their age varies between thirteen and seventeen years and their approximate graded music level range from grade 3 to 7. All the learners are receiving formal music training in piano and would have had individual piano lessons for at least two years. The learners have chosen Music as a school subject and are preparing for various formal examinations from several music examination bodies, including the Trinity College of London, the Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music, the University of South Africa or school-related music examinations.

1.4.2 Analytical Procedure

Referring to the analysis of the score and observation of all the detail, Maydwell (2007:39) suggests that “teacher and pupil need to put music under a microscope”. She concludes that students will become independent once they are able to answer questions regarding interpretation without the teacher’s input.

In accordance with Maydwell’s view, learners participating in this case study will be guided through the analytical procedure with the aim to develop a better understanding of how to incorporate aspects related to interpretation in their practising. Learners will be encouraged to draw their own conclusions regarding performance, based on aspects that become clear through the analyses and discussion sessions.

With the purpose of designing an age-appropriate procedure to guide learners towards independent interpretation, the analysis model of Spencer & Temko (1988) will be combined with the principles of simultaneous learning as described by Harris (2006:16). The procedure will be designed to progress from the aural experience to an understanding of the structural phenomena upon which music is organised (Spencer & Temko, 1988:vii).

The following structural phenomena as presented by Spencer & Temko (1988:1-31) will be applied for this study: cadence, tonality, tempo, metre, rhythm, dynamics, density, timbre, register, texture and motive. The main structural units indicated by changes in structural phenomena will be added and referred to as the form of a piece. The definitions of the structural phenomena as compiled by Spencer & Temko (1988) are summarised in the table below:

Table 1-1: Definitions of Structural Phenomena (Spencer & Temko, 1988)

Structural Phenomena	**Definition**
Cadence	A point of relative cessation of musical activity
Tonality	The key or mode
Tempo	The speed of the beat
Metre	The organisation of subdivisions within the beat
Rhythm	Note values
Dynamics	Volume
Density	Amount of musical voices
Timbre	Tone colour
Register	The range in which musical events occur
Texture	Melodic relationship between voices
Motive	A prominent melodic or rhythmic event
Form	Main structural units

1.4.3 Role of the Researcher

In this study, the researcher plays various roles and will be responsible for the following:

- Designing the analytical procedure applied by participants when analysing the music, relating the musical phenomena to interpretation.
- Leading the semi-structured interviews.
- Facilitating all learning activities (the researcher is also the piano teacher of the participants).
- Making observation notes during lessons.
- Integrating and analysing all data and describing the responses and experience of students during the research in order to understand the way in which learners approach interpreting a new work when guided through the analytical procedure.
- In 2012, the researcher conducted a pilot study with three participants who would not take part in the current study. The purpose of the pilot study was to identify possible problematic aspects of the teaching-learning process which could be addressed and improved on before the main study commenced.

1.4.4 Data Collection

In a group setting, the researcher will explain to participants the procedure of the three phases comprising this research:

Phase 1 – Interview 1: Pre-view
Phase 2 – Video-recorded lessons
Phase 3 – Interview 2: Post-view

PHASE 1 AND PHASE 3

Participants will take part in two interviews, one of which will serve as a pre-view and conducted before empirical data are collected. The other will serve as a post-view and will be conducted as a conclusion to the process. This will allow the researcher to gain insight into the experience and development of each participant throughout

the research. Data gathering in phase one is *not* meant to function as a pre-test, but as mentioned above, to enhance the understanding of experiences and growth of individual participants.

According to Herbert (2011:15), open-ended interviews allow for a wider and more varied range of response, resulting in rich data which can be used as a starting point for describing the quality of each participant's unique experience during the process.

PHASE 2

Data gathered during video-recorded lessons in phase two will be conducted in three cycles of approximately ten days each. On the first day of each cycle, the participant will receive a new piece to practise. During an individual analysis and discussion session with the researcher, the participant will be prompted to reflect on the interpretation of this piece; the participant will comment on sections of the piece played by the researcher by indicating observations on the score and completing information on a mind-map[4]. Two more individual sessions will follow in approximately ten-day[5] cycles. After each cycle, participants will perform the piece and reflect on their experience and understanding of the interpretation of the piece. These performances will not be assessed by the researcher. The purpose is to ensure that participants set specific goals and work with focused attention towards achieving these. As the teacher of these participants, I have been confident that they would practise more diligently if they knew that the performance was recorded at the end of each cycle.

As the elements of practising and practice strategies form a vital part of this research study, Hallam's article (1995) on approaches to instrumental music practice of experts and novices with specific reference to self-regulated learning, will be considered and activities will be designed to promote self-regulated learning. Self-regulated learning is a proactive process in which case goals are set, appropriate

[4] The format and function of this mind-map are described in detail in Chapter 3 of this research document.

[5] Participants will have approximately ten days to practise the piece and record their approach with regards to interpretation in their practice diaries.

learning strategies are selected, motivation is maintained and self-assessment is encouraged (Zimmerman, 2000). In this study, the cyclical model of self-regulated learning involving three sequential phases will be followed:

- Pre-action: During the first interview, participants will describe their practice strategies and understanding of interpretation.
- Action: During an individual piano lesson and discussion session, participants will be guided through the analytical procedure and be actively involved.
- Post-action: The second interview and written reflections on their understanding and approach will promote self-reflection.

1.4.5 Data Analysis

The response and experience of young, developing pianists, learning a new work and being guided by their teacher through an analytical procedure with independent development of interpretation skills as focus, will be documented and described. Several valuable data-handling procedures are taken into account, like that of Strauss & Corbin (1998:11) who refer to a non-mathematical process of interpretation that enables the researcher to discover concepts and relationships in raw data which are organised into a theoretical explanatory scheme.

Rule & John (2011:98) suggest that the researcher deliberately sets aside his views and observes the case very closely for anything which may have been taken for granted. This requires an inductive approach, in which case reasoning moves from the specific to the general (Rule & John, 2011:98).

Interviews will be transcribed and coded, using the computer software programme ATLAS.ti. Together with the supervisor for this study, the researcher will systematically read and thoroughly work through all transcribed data in order to identify codes. The researcher will then apply the selected codes according to what the data reveal (Henning *et al*., 2004:104). Related codes will be categorised (Henning *et al*., 2004:105) to allow themes to emerge. The researcher will use a personal checklist to facilitate and monitor the process of data analysis.

An observation checklist (Addendum F), adapted from the original model of Van Niekerk (2015:23-26), will be used to analyse video-recorded lessons. For every new

piece that is learned (three pieces per learner), a new checklist will be completed, equalling twenty-four completed checklists. Each structural phenomenon is described as a task, and the response of the learner is recorded and described in terms of the 'lived experience' of the participant. Additional field notes will be included for each lesson.

1.5 Validation Strategies

Rule & John (2011:63) advise case-study researchers to collect data from more than one source, for the purposes of triangulation. This use of multiple sources, methods and other aspects of the study would strengthen the validity (Rule & John, 2011:109).

The researcher will also select at least two experienced piano teachers to judge the accuracy and credibility of her findings. These two teachers will view some recorded video material and have discussions with the researcher which will be used to verify the validity of the researcher's conclusions. The supervisor will play an important role to ensure that findings are accurate and valid.

This structured, guided collection of data will allow for the most reliable and efficient evidence of the way in which learners approach the learning and interpretation of a new work. Furthermore, conclusions can be drawn to indicate how other learners could benefit from this teaching-learning process.

1.6 Limitations, Delimitations and Significance

The results of this study will be affected if students do not co-operate and practise the pieces. Some preventative measures will be taken to monitor this potential obstacle throughout the study:

- Students will keep a practice journal in which they will have to record the practice time for each new work. This will aid students in planning their sessions and setting specific goals.
- Students will make an informed commitment to meet the requirements if they choose to participate in this study.

- The pieces that participants will have to learn will be at a lower graded level than their current graded level. This will eliminate unnecessary technical challenges. As technical competence is not the focus of this study, pieces will be chosen carefully to ensure optimum results.
- The process of recording lessons will take place early in the year, during a non-examination school term, in order to avoid additional academic pressure.
- Final performances will be recorded but not assessed. The purpose of the performance is to ensure that participants practise with a specific goal in mind.

The pieces used in this study will be limited to works by South African composers[6]. Students rarely encounter these works when following the Trinity College of London or the Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music examination syllabi. Previously, when taking practical music examinations offered by The University of South Africa, it was compulsory to play a piece written by a South African composer, but this is no longer a requirement. As a result, young South African musicians are not familiar with works of South African composers and it is highly unlikely that the learners will know the pieces chosen for this study. This will ensure that the results of this study will not be influenced by learners' familiarity with the compositions.

1.7 Ethics Statement

The researcher will complete the necessary documents as stipulated by the Ethical Committee of the North-West University in order to obtain permission to conduct this research. (Ethics number: NWU-00177-14-57)

No participants will be pre-selected for this study. All piano students who attend the school where the research is conducted and who have been taking formal piano lessons for at least two years, will be invited to participate in this study.

[6] Works by South African composers are often neglected in South Africa. Through this study, I hope to contribute to creating awareness of the repertoire, even though this is not an objective of the research. If other teachers considering introducing their students to compositions of South African composers over and above meeting the prescriptions for examinations, their efforts can be based upon reflected practice of which this proposed research process is an example.

Participants will be fully informed of the requirements before participation in the study is approved. No personal information of participants will be disclosed in the final documentation of findings. A letter of consent will be obtained from the parents/guardians of scholars, the principal of the school and the Gauteng Department of Education.

This study will not cause any harm and aims to contribute to the field of Music Education.

CHAPTER 2 – LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to contextualise the research problem in terms of the literature on the teaching-learning processes that were investigated during this study. Existing literature will be reviewed in order to describe approaches followed by musicians when they learn a new work. When learning a new work, every student follows a unique process while interacting with the teacher. In my research and in the following discussion, the focus falls on a specific aspect of these processes of learning new works: the development of independent interpretation.

In order to gain better understanding of this process, the issue will be investigated by exploring the teaching strategies employed to develop interpretation and by studying the practice strategies of musicians (both high-achieving and average musicians) regarding the development of interpretation. From the vast amount of literature available on piano teaching and practising, I will extract information related to my study.

From the literature, it is clear that teachers follow a variety of strategies to teach interpretation. In this chapter, I will firstly consider different opinions, strategies and suggestions regarding the teaching of interpretation. I will reflect on opinions and suggestions but will not represent all views equally. The aim of my discussion is to show how the views expressed in the literature relate to my own views on interpretation, and on learning to interpret. I will specifically show how these views can be incorporated in the approach which I followed during the investigation.

While I was reviewing existing literature, it became clear that it would be challenging to align my experience of my own students with some of the existing research. The challenge stems from the fact that my students are in the intermediate development phase of their careers while a substantial part of what is published concerns advanced musicians. However, the sophisticated strategies used by professional musicians were used as a guide for developing strategies that my students could

follow in order to achieve success. Where necessary, I adapted some procedures during the planning of my teaching-learning process to ensure an approach appropriate to my students' ages. The findings from studies in which high-achieving musicians had participated, also needed to be adjusted and aligned to the specific requirements of the learning phase of my students. The studies which focus on the average musicians were most useful as these represented my students more accurately.

Secondly, literature on the practice strategies of professional and high-achieving, young musicians will be discussed. These strategies were taken into consideration and formed the basis of my approach to encourage the use of effective ways to integrate interpretation in practice strategies.

Thirdly, literature on the practice strategies of average beginner, intermediate and advanced musicians will also be presented in order to identify prominent tendencies.
At the end of the discussions in this chapter, findings from studies on what constitutes an effective practice strategy (as represent by the strategies of professional and high-achieving musicians) will be analysed and compared to findings which represented the general practice strategies of developing musicians (non-professional musicians). I will therefore include results from the two different groups (high-achieving and average musicians with supporting information on average musicians) when designing the teaching-learning process for this study. Later in this report, in Chapter 5, my findings that stem from applying this analytical procedure will allow me to compare the strategies of my students with those described in the literature. The aim of the comparison in Chapter 5 will be to emphasise effective strategies as used by professionals and to encourage students and teachers alike to use these effective strategies as a goal towards which to work.
Lastly, I will describe some useful resources discovered during the literature review. Aspects from each of these resources which support the age and ability of the group of students with whom I worked, have been included in the design of the teaching-learning process I followed during this research.

2.2 Interpretation: A person-centred approach

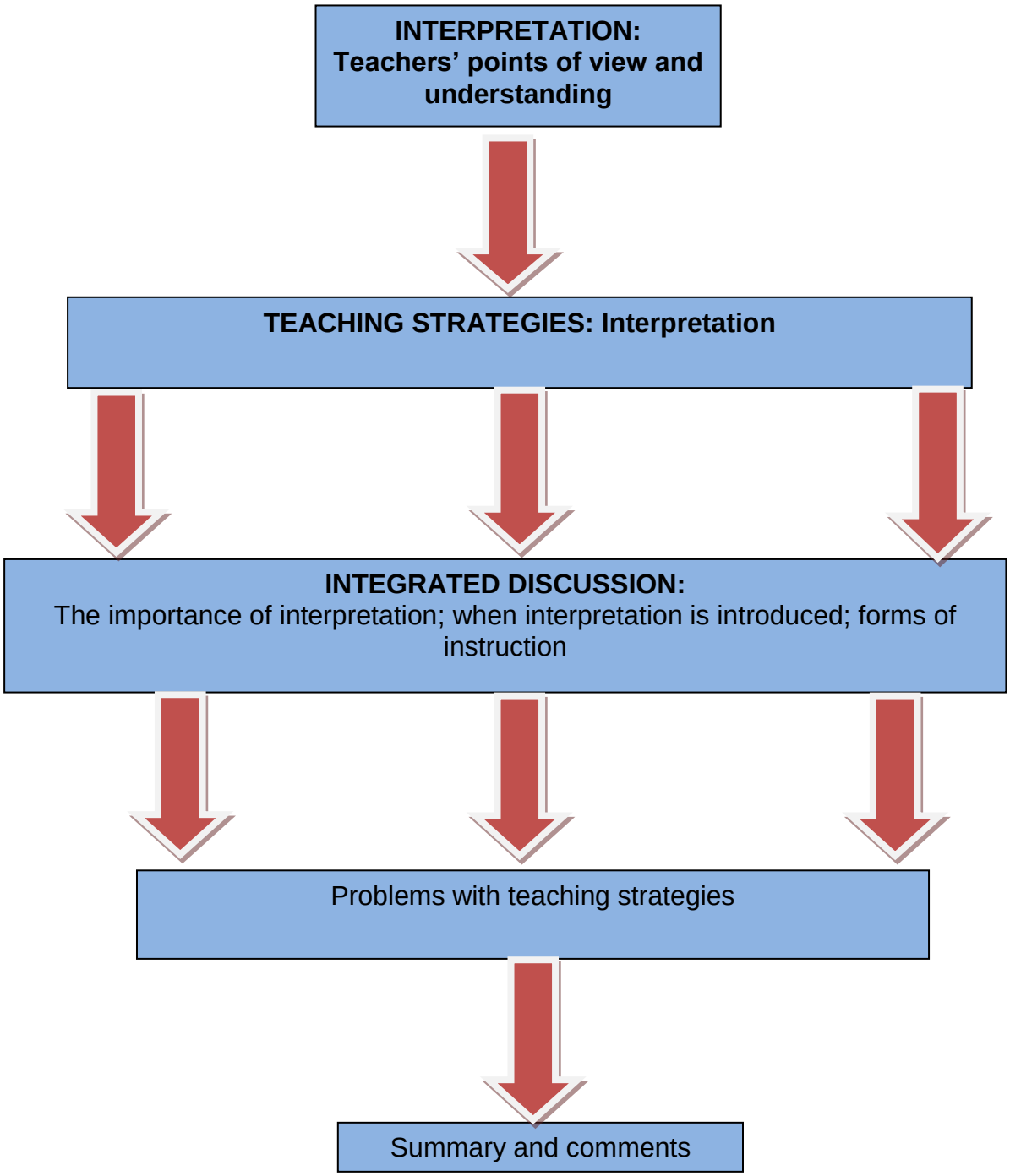
After studying the literature, it became clear that the most effective principle by which to realise the purpose of this study would be a person-centred approach. This person-centred principle formed the basis of the approach I used while designing the teaching-learning process for my research study. According to Rule & John (2011:60), the personal point of view of the research participant should be the main source of information used when trying to understand a certain domain of enquiry. My study is aligned with this because the aim of my study is to develop an understanding of interpretation from the point of view of the participants. It is therefore clear that my approach to interpretation also takes as its foundation the point of view of each of the participants. This will be done by describing and analysing their responses and experiences during the teaching-learning process.

When asked how he viewed interpretation, virtuoso pianist Támas Vásary (Elder, 1978:13) replied that it was the artist's role to sense the emotion, moods and imaginative quality in the music and his duty to communicate that to the audience. The relation between the performer and the listener is also acknowledged by Juslin (2003:276) when he refers to the 'person-dependent' interpretation of the music and the impressions of the listener. Quinto *et al*. (2014:522) agree when describing the communication of emotions to the listener, as a shared goal of the performer and composer, while Palmer (1997:119) describes interpretation as the unique way in which a performer shapes a piece according to his/her own musical ideas.

Quinto *et al*. (2014:505) define interpretation as the way in which the performer manipulates the dynamics, articulation, timing and intonation and adds that this is influenced by the structure of the composition (Quinto *et al*., 2014:521). Interpretation is a complex and multi-faceted field of enquiry (Juslin, 2003:273). For the purpose of this study, only some aspects of interpretation will be discussed, with particular emphasis on how to integrate this as part of an effective practice strategy while working towards musical independence and maturity.

2.3 Teaching Strategies with regard to Interpretation

The following diagram serves as an outline to summarise the discussion of the literature that is presented in this section of my report:



Teachers mostly agree on the importance of spending time on teaching interpretation and expressivity. They have specific views on how to define interpretation and implement different techniques when it comes to teaching interpretation. In this

section of my report, various teaching strategies will be discussed and two main approaches will be highlighted, namely the use of modelling and verbal instruction. Verbal instruction often includes specific questioning techniques and the use of metaphors, and these will be mentioned. Comments from the teachers' and students' perspectives will be incorporated in my discussions, and reasons for supporting or opposing each method will also be investigated. In order to evaluate the information presented in the literature, I will argue that even though teachers apply definite approaches, problems still remain when these are implemented – often too late during the development of the young musician.

The studies that will be discussed were chosen as examples from literature which describe teaching strategies on interpretation, students' perceptions of these strategies and problematic aspects of the implementation of these strategies. At the end of this chapter, findings from these studies will be compared and related to my design of the teaching-learning process which focuses on teaching independent development of interpretation to the young musician.

Some research focuses in particular on the views and actions of teachers with regard to teaching strategies. In a case study by Purser (2005:287), the teaching approaches of six teachers of wind players at a conservatoire are described and compared. Teachers completed questionnaires which prepared them for individual interviews. All six participants agreed that their primary focus was to teach musicality rather than technical display (Purser, 2005:297). I identified the potential conflict between a focus on technique and that of musicality (interpretation); therefore, in my study, repertoire which had to be practised by participants was carefully chosen to minimise any technical difficulties. This was done with the aim to allow students to focus more on interpretation during their practice sessions.

Lauka (2004:45) focuses on instrumental teaching strategies with specific reference to interpretation and expressivity in musical performance. Questionnaires were completed by fifty-one teachers to gain insight into defining interpretation and expressivity and teaching strategies concerning interpretation. Most teachers defined interpretation in terms of achieving a personal expression of the music (Lauka, 2004:49). Findings further highlight that instrumental teachers emphasised the importance of teaching expressivity to students from an early age (Lauka, 2004:47).

Participants ranked expressivity as the most important characteristic of performance (Lauka, 2004:49) and identified “the piece itself” (including all score and character indications) as the most important consideration when teaching with the focus to develop independent interpretation (Lauka, 2004:51). Commenting on the approach followed in teaching interpretation, teachers all agreed that it was important that students received instruction in this area, although they mentioned that students did not always regard this as an important aspect of lessons (Lauka, 2004:51). Furthermore, teachers indicated that students preferred the use of metaphors to modelling methods. I believe that both these methods should be combined during teaching; therefore, I incorporated both approaches in the planning phase of my teaching approach.

When combining insights from teachers in both above-mentioned studies, it seems that teachers generally aim to train their students to become independent interpreters. However, how they set about achieving this goal, has not been made clear. This alerted me to ensure that my teaching-learning process was highly organised and structured, and it also confirmed the importance of my current research. Because the literature is not clear on how to structure the learning process when teaching interpretation, I had conducted a pilot study before this research commenced in order to streamline my procedure for optimum results.

Lauka (2004) reports to have found that although emphasis was laid on giving explicit instructions, those instructions were not clearly defined. Although some teachers stated the importance of setting specific goals for each lesson, others reported that they worked with any material that students brought to lessons (Purser, 2005). Teachers were not able to describe a clear method of approaching interpretation and mentioned that their teaching strategies developed through trial-and-error experimentation (Purser, 2005). It is understandable that each teaching situation and each student is unique which may make it difficult for teachers to define specific procedures; however, it has also become clear to me that there are many successful instrumental teachers whose teaching approaches could be useful resources for others.

Apart from vague teaching strategies, these studies reveal a clear disagreement regarding the preferred method of instruction: most teachers in one study preferred

modelling (Lauka, 2004:52) while almost all teachers in Purser's study opposed this method and instead, preferred the use of verbal instruction (Purser, 2005).

The lack of specification of teaching strategies and the contrasting preference of methods to be used pose a problem for instrumental teachers who would like to learn more about effective teaching methods. It seems that individual teachers have to find their own way to ensure the independent development of their students. If one considers the wealth of knowledge that is held by professional teachers, it is difficult to understand why so little information is available to provide guidelines for aspiring teachers. Purser (2005:297) draws some conclusions on this and states that some professional music teachers are not keen to share their hard-earned philosophies on teaching. Others seem to be insecure and unwilling to share ideas as this could have a negative influence on their perceived status. Another possible reason for the lack of sharing ideas could be that each teacher and student is different and therefore, it would be challenging to propose a teaching method that could work for every unique situation and instrument. I considered this when designing my teaching method. My aim was to generate a teaching method which could be used as a generic method for any instrument. This confirms the importance of the findings of my research when I will describe the experience of eight unique piano students.

Other studies focus in particular on the views and responses of students with regard to their perception of interpretation and the nature of their practice strategies with regard to the development of independent interpretation. Woody (2000:14) questioned forty-six college musicians on how they learned to incorporate expressivity in their interpretation. The participants reported that although they had received some instructions in the form of modelling, verbal methods had predominantly been used. An interesting finding that emerged was that students who had mainly received tuition in the form of modelling, tended to spend significantly more time on interpretation during their practice sessions than students who had mainly received tuition in the form of verbal instructions. Participants reported to have supplemented their practising with critical listening activities (Woody, 2000:21). In my opinion, it is particularly helpful to younger students to have a good aural perception of a piece before they start practising. Therefore, I decided to structure my lesson plans in this study in an interactive way, in which case the pieces were played to the students several times to initiate discussions.

Similar conclusions are drawn in a later study by the same researcher (Woody, 2003) in which the performances of twenty-five university pianists were evaluated. After they had listened to recordings by a professional performer and a digital recording of two excerpts, they were required to imitate these performances. Results are described in terms of the interpretation and expressivity within the performance. It is suggested that goal-orientated planning in terms of interpretation, with specific reference to dynamic and tempo gradation, is crucial to ensure successful expressive performance. Findings also indicate that music educators should focus on giving explicit verbal instructions with regard to interpretation (Woody, 2003:60). To ensure that musicians perform expressively, it is further suggested that it may be beneficial to students to receive tuition through aural modelling, but to respond by verbally explaining their strategies for performance, before playing. This implies that a structured teaching approach is vital for success. I took both these suggestions into account when designing my teaching-learning method. Lessons were designed to be interactive, leaving explicit verbal instructions and discussions interconnected. Furthermore, aural modelling formed a vital part of each lesson as pieces and excerpts of pieces were played to initiate discussions.

Different suggestions are made in a study (Burwell, 2005) that explores the use of effective questioning techniques in order to assist with the independent development of university students. The researcher emphasises the crucial importance of teaching being focused on the independent development of the student, starting from beginners and progressing to advanced levels. Data were gathered through video recordings of individual and group lessons, featuring a variety of instruments. Information from questionnaires and semi-structured interviews was also included. Findings suggest that as students grow musically, they should become increasingly actively involved in their lessons. This process can be enhanced by the use of effective questioning techniques which will encourage students to start making independent decisions regarding interpretation (Burwell, 2005:212). The importance of an age-appropriate approach is also emphasised. Both these suggestions were incorporated in the design of my analytical procedure. The interactive nature of my design required participants to complete written activities and give verbal feedback. The design included the use of certain musical terminology to which these participants would have been exposed during practical or theoretical lessons.

The use of verbal instruction in the form of metaphors is again emphasised in a recent case study (Brenner & Strand, 2013:80). Participants comprised five teachers who specialised in instrumental teaching to young children. Data collected through lesson observation show that teachers used exaggerated physical gestures combined with singing or playing the music as their primary strategy to teach interpretation and expression to young musicians (Brenner & Strand, 2013:86). They also taught through score analysis at an age-appropriate level in order to develop the understanding of interpretation from a young age (Brenner & Strand, 2013:91). These teachers believed that technique should not be isolated but taught in conjunction with interpretation. A holistic approach was emphasised throughout (Brenner & Strand, 2013:94). I followed these indicators in my own teaching by placing strong emphasis on the use of metaphors and used a mind-map to facilitate the analytical procedure.

Apart from describing teaching strategies, some researchers argue that interpretative aspects are often neglected. Woody (2000:17) has found that expressive aspects are often introduced and seriously considered rather late in the development of instrumental students and insists that if these aspects were emphasised earlier, it could be beneficial for the independent development of the young musician. Lauka (2004:53) and Holmes (2005:223) agree that instrumental teachers should emphasise the teaching of expressivity to their students from elementary level.

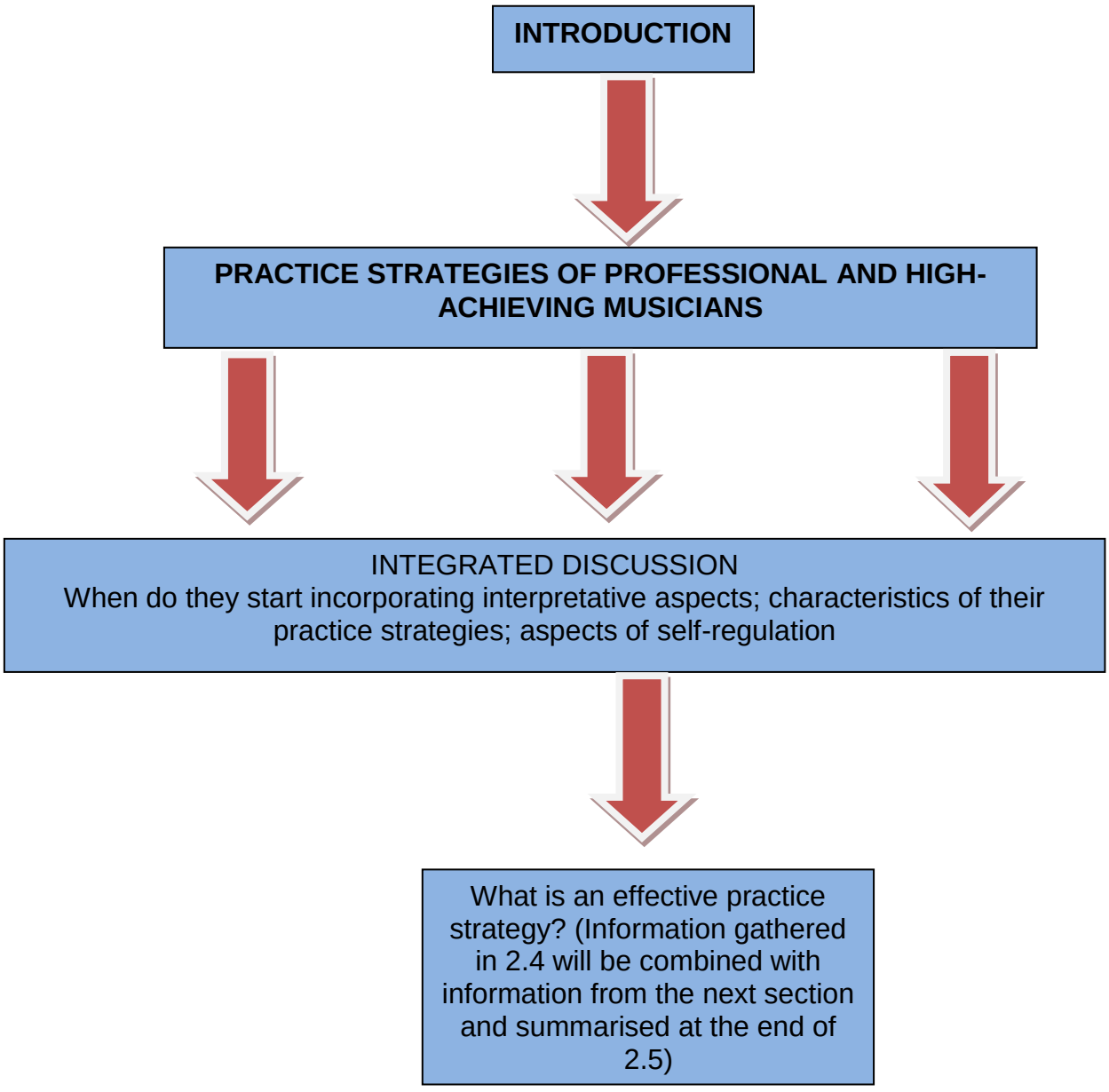
Based on the results of some studies, suggestions have been made to improve teaching strategies relating to interpretation. Hallam (1995:127) encourages teachers to use a holistic approach, analyse the musical composition and attain an overview of the piece during the initial stages of practising. Woody (2000:16) supports this approach when stating that the development of interpretation should be guided by the structural properties of the composition. This implies that teaching strategies should include analysis of the composition with the purpose of guiding students to make interpretative decisions.

Although the teaching of interpretation and musical aspects is clearly a crucial part of lessons, research often suggests that teachers should evaluate their own teaching strategies to review effectiveness. In recent studies focused on teaching strategies,

various contributing factors with regard to interpretation are highlighted. Findings include various suggestions indicating that interpretation should be addressed early on in the young musician's development and effective ways of teaching interpretation should be age-appropriate.

2.4 Effective Practice Strategies of Successful Professional and High-achieving Musicians

The outline of the discussion to follow is represented in the diagram below:



From the studies discussed above, it is evident that instrumental teachers attach great value and importance to teaching that will ensure the independent development of students. However, for these teaching approaches to be successful, it is important also to understand the actions and activities of professional and high-achieving young musicians with regard to interpretation. One important characteristic of a successful performer is the application of effective practice strategies. Many suggestions have been made to assist teachers in guiding students and teaching them how to practise effectively, but having considered all suggestions, can the elements of an effective practice strategy be identified? Furthermore, do young musicians understand and make use of effective strategies in their daily practice routines? In order to clarify these issues, one should consider the practice strategies of successful young and professional musicians.

Hallam (1995:111) offers possible answers to the questions above when she describes how professional musicians approach learning a new work. Twenty-two musicians of various ages and playing a variety of instruments were interviewed. Findings confirm the use of two main kinds of approaches, namely analytical and intuitive. Many participants used analytical strategies or approaches which involved getting an overall view of the composition as a means to make interpretative decisions before practising. This included being familiar with the tempo and identifying difficult passages beforehand. Musicians following this approach also displayed the ability to create an aural representation (Hallam, 1995:127) of the piece before playing it. Some participants preferred an intuitive approach to interpretation, but most of the participants reported a combination of the two approaches (Hallam, 1995:121). This implies that in order to be successful, the musician should have a variety of skills and approaches. The researcher recommends that students must be encouraged to gain an overview of the entire piece before they start practising, and that this should include considerations for interpretation. She strongly advises that the analysis should be accompanied by listening to and discussing different ways of performing the piece (Hallam, 1995:127).

The use of a holistic approach is confirmed in a study that describes the practice procedures of a professional musician (Chaffin & Imreh, 2001:39). This descriptive case study discusses the activities of a concert pianist who reported decision-making activities regarding some basic aspects which included fingering, technical

challenges, the identification of familiar note patterns, interpretative dimensions (including phrasing, pedalling, tempo, dynamics) and performance dimensions (including interpretation and expression). From recorded practice data, it is clear that performance features and dynamics were both considered from the very first practice session (Chaffin & Imreh, 2001:39). Findings show that by using an integrated approach from the outset – incorporating score analysis, consideration of technical aspects and decisions on interpretation – successful performance will be achieved. The teaching-learning process that I designed for this study is an example of an integrated approach that was clearly structured but still allowed for intuitive approaches by my students.

Nielsen (2001:155) reports on the self-regulated practice strategies of two gifted and technically-skilled conservatoire students. Data were gathered from recorded practice sessions and verbal reports during and after each session. Results indicate that students who evaluated their own learning efforts were able to adjust their strategies when necessary, were specific in setting goals and were able to use self-instruction effectively (Nielsen, 2001:159). The researcher argues that the principles of self-regulation are essential for effective learning. In a study conducted a few months later, McPherson & Zimmerman (2002:343) propose that students who followed the cyclical model of self-observation, self-reaction and self-motivation, would learn more effectively. This supports Nielsen's findings and suggestions. The effects of self-regulation and achievement have been investigated by Cremaschi (2012:223) with a control group and an experimental group, both comprising students who enrolled in a beginner piano course. Findings of the groups were compared with specific reference to the use of a practice checklist based on the principles of self-regulation. Students had limited time to practise and this study aimed to find an effective way of maximising time during practice sessions. Data gathered from questionnaires show that the use of a practice checklist may encourage self-regulation and that this may enable students to make adjustments in their approach early on in order to ensure the desired outcome (Cremaschi, 2012:231). As the purpose of my teaching-learning process is to enable students to develop independent musicianship, I incorporated the use of practice diaries in the design of the analytical procedure.

In another study involving two experienced solo performers (a cellist and a guitarist) as participants, the concept of effective practising has yet again been investigated

(Holmes, 2005). Semi-structured interviews were conducted to determine how they approached learning a new piece of music, how they integrated auditory, visual and motor imagery, their view on the importance of the structure of the music and how they worked towards memorisation. It was found that interpretative goals always directed their choice of practice strategy (Holmes, 2005:217). This confirms the importance of a holistically-integrated approach and the ability to make independent decisions. From the responses of participants, it is clear that expressive intent has constantly been the aim of the creation of sound and interpretative decisions are based on this principle (Holmes, 2005:233); hence I focused on stimulating expressive intent among my students during the teaching- learning process.

Hultberg (2008) explores similar issues to Holmes (2005), studying the strategies of two advanced guitar students, with specific focus on strategies relating to interpretation (Hultberg, 2008:7). Two complementing strategies were identified, in which case one participant focused on playing through the music in order to gain insight for interpretation and the other focused on analysing the score prior to identifying issues and make interpretation-related decisions before practising (Hultberg, 2008:19). Both these strategies could result in successful interpretation when applied by experienced musicians. I decided to lean more towards the latter as my participants have not yet reached this advanced level and they would benefit more from using an age-appropriate method.

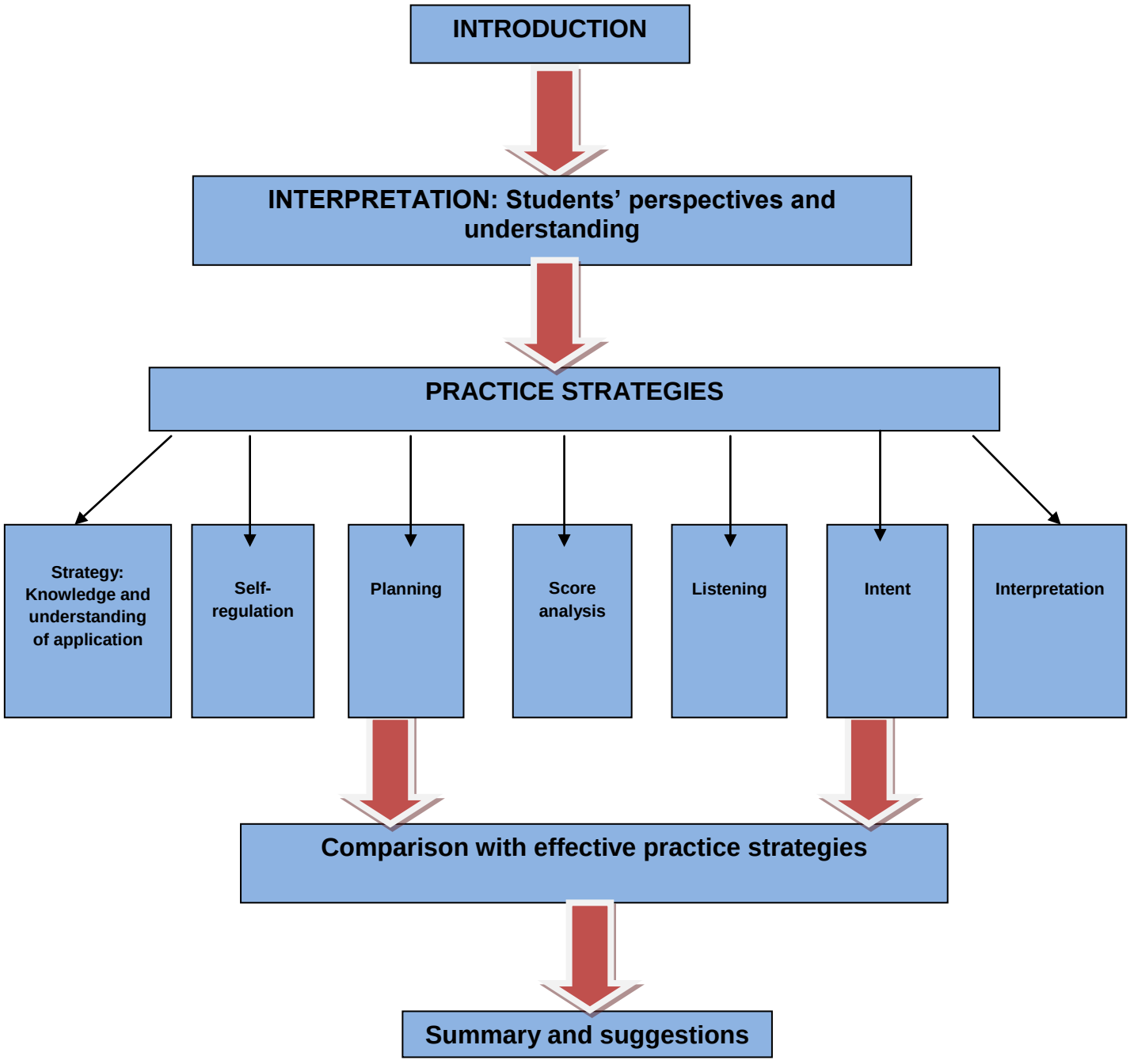
By studying the practice strategies of successful professional performers, much insight can be gained into the characteristics of an effective practice strategy (Chaffin *et al*., 2003:467). Although research suggests that it takes years to build a set of practice skills leading towards musical maturity (McPherson & Renwick, 2001:174) and attain the ability to make independent decisions on interpretation, some studies have shown that even from a very young age, musicians are able to display an array of effective strategies.

In contrast with the aforementioned studies which analyse the practice behaviour of successful adult performers, Bartolome (2009) focuses on the practice strategies of three successful beginner recorder students. Participants were interviewed in order to gain insight into their practice strategies. The strategies of these three high-achieving students reflected the use of self-regulating activities. This included

preparing for practice sessions, planning on what they would focus, identifying and working on challenging sections, focusing on reaching their goals and being specific in describing their methods for approaching difficult material (Bartolome, 2009:47). The researcher suggests that it may be more effective to assign a specific task to a student than to set a time limit for practising. Results show that these students' ability to perform successfully was directly linked to their aural perception of a piece which enabled them to identify and correct mistakes during practice sessions. Purser (2005) agrees that to ensure successful performance, emphasis should be placed on critical self-evaluation and the development of focused listening skills (Purser, 2005:297). The suggestion of critical self-evaluation was incorporated in my study in the form of written self-reflection activities.

2.5 Practice Strategies of Average Student Musicians

The following diagram represents the discussion trail of the section that follows:



In this section, the average student's perspective on aspects of interpretation will be discussed. Although more advanced students are usually able to verbalise their personal understanding of interpretation, the question remains whether they, in fact, apply what they verbalise. The practical application of their verbalised strategies will be reviewed to gain a true understanding of their approaches. This will enable teachers and musicians to evaluate currently used strategies and change ineffective

procedures which hinder the independent development of the student. In order to make such adjustments – to identify defective methods and suggest improvements or alternatives – the practice strategies of average student musicians (not necessarily professional or high-achieving instrumentalists) will be critically reviewed and compared to the effective strategies mentioned earlier in this chapter.

By consulting current literature on practice strategies of variously-aged musicians, problematic approaches will be discussed and compared to effective strategies. Young musicians cannot be expected to apply the mature practice strategies of professional musicians; however, by comparing strategies, ineffective practices can be identified and improved from an early age. This will provide a solid basis for students when they have to deal independently with interpretation as they mature.
I selected nineteen studies which focus on the practice strategies of the average musician in a private studio, school music programme, music college or university.

An overview of these studies is represented in Table 2-1 which includes information on the researchers, dates on which the studies were conducted, the participants and the methods of data collection.

Table 2-1: An Overview of Studies on Practice Strategies

RESEARCHER/S	**DATE**	**PARTICIPANTS**	**DATA COLLECTION**
Bautista *et al*.	2009	215 piano students (8 - 24 years), from 12 intermediate and 10 tertiary institutions.	Written notes by participants.
Burwell & Shipton	2013	8 university level musicians (1 singer and 7 instrumentalists).	Recordings of practice sessions and interviews.
Hallam	2001	55 string players (6 – 18 years).	Recordings of practice sessions and interviews.
Hallam *et al*.	2012	3,325 instrumental players (6 – 19 years).	Self-reported answers from questionnaires.
Hultberg	2002	11 pianists (2 students at intermediate level, 4 more advanced students and 5 teachers).	Comments by participants on aspects of an unmarked score. Recorded performances with assessments. Self-evaluation reports of performances.
Koopman *et al*.	2007	6 conservatoire students and teachers.	Logbooks (practice diaries).
Lane	2006	Undergraduate university students (lower level, upper level and student teachers).	Interviews, recorded performances.

Lindström *et al*.	2003	135 conservatoire students (18 - 43 years): keyboard, plucked strings, bowed strings, woodwind, voice, brass, percussion.	Questionnaires.
Lisboa	2008	3 cellists (9 - 14 years).	Video-recorded practice sessions, performance assessment.
Marín *et al*.	2012	16 college flute students (intermediate and advanced group).	Interviews, questionnaires, observation of practice sessions.
McPherson	2005	157 young musicians (Grade 3 - 4 school level).	Interviews and recorded lessons.
McPherson & Renwick	2001	7 young musicians (7 - 9 years): 2 trumpets, 2 clarinets, 1 flute, 1 saxophone, 1 cornet.	Recorded individual practice sessions in year one and year three of a longitudinal study.
Miksza	2006	40 college brass students (18 – 34 years).	Recordings of two practice sessions, assessment of recorded performances, questionnaires.
Miksza	2007	High school wind players.	Verbal reports by participants, surveys, observations of practice sessions.
Miksza	2011	55 college brass and woodwind students.	Recorded practice sessions, self-reports on practice sessions.
Miksza	2015	28 undergraduate music students.	Performance assessment, recorded practice sessions, questionnaires.
Pitts *et al.*	2000	158 brass and woodwind players (9 - 10 years).	Structured interviews with parents and participants, video-recordings of practice sessions.
Sikes	2013	University string players.	Recorded practice sessions, recorded performances.
Sullivan & Cantwell	1999	53 university students (17 - 45 years).	Time spent reading scores on-line was measured, verbal comments by participants on the way in which they would approach practising the score.

My aim in choosing these studies was to gain insight into the methods used by average students who represent the majority of students. The participants who took part in my study are of similar age and level of musical ability as many of the participants in the studies summarised in Table 2-1. I aimed to gather specific information applicable to my study to assist me with the development of my teaching-learning procedure. I also reviewed studies on advanced musicians because this would give an indication of the potential outcomes of teaching-learning processes, at least for some of my students.

Although some studies focused specifically on younger or specifically on more advanced musicians, there were also studies which included a much wider age range among their participants. This is represented in the following table:

Table 2-2: A Visual Representation of the Age Groups of Participants

APPROXIMATE AGE	**6**	**7**	**8**	**9**	**10**	**11**	**12**	**13**	**14**	**17**	**18**	**19**	**22+**
Pitts *et al.* 2000													
McPherson & Renwick 2001													
Lisboa 2008													
McPherson 2005													
Miksza 2007													
Hallam 2001													
Hallam *et al.* 2012													
Bautista *et al*. 2009													
Lindström *et al*. 2003													
Koopman *et al*. 2007													
Lane 2006													
Marín *et al*. 2012													
Sikes 2013													
Sullivan & Cantwell 1999													
Hultberg 2002													
Burwell & Shipton 2013													
Miksza 2006													
Miksza 2011													
Miksza 2015													

When practice strategies are discussed later in the chapter (2.5.2.1), discussions will begin with observations from studies which focused on young musicians, followed by those on intermediate musicians and conclude with studies on advanced musicians.

2.5.1 Interpretation from the Student's Perspective

Lindström *et al*. (2003) aim to gain insight into music students' perspective on interpretation and expressivity: how they define it, how they practise it and how it is taught to them. Most of the one-hundred-and-thirty-five participants explained their understanding of interpretation as "communicating emotion" (Lindström *et al*., 2003:30). Most students said that they often consciously tried to play with expression when they practised and added that the style of the music was their most important guide when it came to building an interpretation. Secondly, they stated that the piece itself, including score indications, was a guiding factor. Results indicate that as students become technically more proficient, they have more time during their practising to spend on improving their interpretation skills (Lindström *et al*., 2003:35). An interesting finding of this study is that most students prefer the use of metaphor as teaching approach for the development of interpretation.

According to Lindström *et al.*, (2003:33) students reported spending a considerable amount of their practice time working on aspects of interpretation; however, many studies prove the exact opposite (Koopman *et al*., 2007; Burwell & Shipton, 2013; McPherson, 2005; Miksza, 2006; Hallam *et al*., 2012; Lisboa, 2008). It seems that there is a discrepancy between self-reported attention to interpretative aspects (Lindström *et al*., 2003) and the actual attention spent on interpretation during independent practising. This discrepancy is confirmed by Hallam (2001:10) who observed recorded practice sessions and found that although students had some knowledge of effective practice strategies, these were not always applied during their practising. These findings will be discussed in more detail at the end of the next section.

2.5.2 Practice Strategies

The focus of each of the chosen strategies is summarised in Table 2-3:

Table 2-3: A Summary of the Focus of Selected Studies

RESEARCHER/S	**FOCUS OF THE STUDY**
Bautista *et al*. (2009)	Practice strategies: approach to learning a new piece
Burwell & Shipton (2013)	Practice strategies of university musicians
Hallam (2001)	The relationship between practice strategies and expertise
Hallam *et al*. (2012)	The development of practice strategies in young musicians
Hultberg (2008)	Practice strategies: approach to learning a new piece
Koopman *et al*. (2007)	Practice strategies in relation to activities during lessons
Lane (2006)	The student's interpretation of the meaning of the score
Lindström *et al*. (2003)	The student's perspective on and approach to interpretation
Lisboa (2008)	Practice strategies of young musicians
Marín *et al*. (2012)	Intermediate to advanced musicians' approach to learning a new work
McPherson (2005)	Practice strategies when learning a new work
McPherson & Renwick (2001)	Self-regulation and practice strategies
Miksza (2006)	Practice strategies of advanced musicians
Miksza (2007)	Practice strategies of intermediate musicians
Miksza (2015)	Self-regulation and performance achievement
Miksza (2011)	Relation between practice strategies and performance achievement
Pitts *et al.* (2000)	Practice activities of young musicians
Sikes (2013)	The effects of specific practice strategies on performance quality
Sullivan & Cantwell (1999)	Planning behaviours of advanced students when learning a new work

For my project, findings from these studies were examined, integrated and evaluated, and applicable information was extracted to design a structured, age-appropriate analytical procedure for my teaching-learning process.

After due consideration, I consolidated information presented by current literature regarding the practice strategies of successful musicians. The resultant findings culminated in the characteristics of an effective practice strategy as summarised below:

- A holistic approach should be followed throughout (Holmes, 2005:223; Hallam, 1995:127).
- Elements of self-regulated learning are crucial (Bartolome, 2009:49; Nielsen, 2001:159; Purser, 2005:297; McPherson & Zimmerman, 2002:343). These should include the following:
    - Self-evaluation of own learning;
    - The ability to adjust strategies when necessary;
    - Specific goal setting;
    - Effective self-instruction.

- The use of a practice checklist could be valuable in developing self-regulating skills (Cremaschi, 2012:231).
- Deliberate planning, a structured approach and quality of practice are essential (Miksza, 2007:372).
- Score analysis before practising in order to identify issues to be worked on and to make interpretative decisions is required (Sullivan & Cantwell, 1999:263; Ward, 2007:23; Lisboa, 2008:263; Hallam, 1995:127).
- The strengthening of aural perception and development of focused listening skills play an important role (Purser, 2005; Hallam, 2001:10).
- The objective of sound production and interpretative decisions should always be expressive playing (Holmes, 2005:233).
- When learning a new piece, interpretative skills should be practised right from the beginning (Chaffin & Imreh, 2001:39).

From my experience in the field of piano teaching and performing, I am confident that the application of a practice strategy which includes all the above-mentioned aspects

will deliver positive results with regard to performance achievement. Results from the above-tabled studies (Table 2-3) will be discussed according to each of these characteristics:

1. Knowledge of Effective Strategies and Understanding of Application
2. Self-regulation
3. Planning
4. Score Study/Analysis
5. Listening Activities and Aural Perception
6. Intent/Aim of Practising
7. Interpretation

The findings from existing literature relating to each aspect will be discussed in three stages:

A: Young musicians (beginners and approximately primary school age)
B: Intermediate musicians (approximately high school age)
C: Advanced musicians (last year before entering a tertiary institution and university level students)

2.5.2.1 Strategy: Knowledge of effective strategies and understanding of application

YOUNG MUSICIANS

One of the problematic areas when discussing practice strategies is that of the many young musicians who do not have the knowledge of effective practice strategies and even when they do, they often do not know how to apply these in their daily practice routines (Hallam, 2001:20). McPherson & Renwick (2001:184) agree that even though young musicians are often enthusiastic and have the desire to learn, they do not necessarily have the knowledge and ability to apply effective practice strategies. Lisboa (2008:264) investigated this problem, described the practice approach of young musicians and fully supports previous findings (Sullivan & Cantwell, 1999; McPherson & Renwick, 2001; Koopman *et al.,* 2007). Strategies are described as ad hoc and random, with the main focus being on notational level aspects. This focus on

basic aspects of the notation had also been identified in earlier studies and confirmed in later studies (Hallam, 2001:9; Bautista *et al.* 2009:194).

Pitts *et al.* (2000:54) conducted a longitudinal study and reported similar results. No consistent model for practising could be identified after integrating data collected over a three year period. The researcher further found strong relations between these inconsistent strategies and participants with low levels of motivation (Pitts *et al.*, 2000:62).

When teaching young children, I perceive the main aim of practising to be the improvement of performance through positive motivation. If a young musician experiences improvement, levels of enjoyment and self-motivation will increase. From my experience, students who do not know how to practise get frustrated and lose interest, especially when they do not use a structured approach. It is therefore important to assist young musicians to achieve these successes by teaching them how to apply effective practice strategies independently. McPherson (2005:31) echoes this belief and states that the most important factor for musical growth is that students need to be made aware of effective strategies and guided towards the application of these.

According to McPherson (2005:27), students who have acquired both the knowledge of and ability to apply effective practice strategies, will be successful performers. In this study, the researcher categorises practice strategies in terms of two main areas of focus: organisational and improvement. Findings indicate that students who scored higher in performance assessment displayed more advanced practice strategies (McPherson, 2005:27). In agreement, Bautista *et al.* (2009:194) report that the practice strategies of students at a younger age (twelve to fourteen years) mostly reflect the use of a reproductive approach, using the score only as the guiding factor for performance direction.

Lisboa (2008:263) observed the practice sessions of three young cellists and found that although participants had some knowledge of effective practice strategies, none of the them were able to apply these independently. Findings also indicate that they found it difficult to explain their approaches verbally (Lisboa, 2008:260). The researcher argues that this could be due to the lack of explicit instruction from

teachers which may lead to a limited understanding of music and thus hinder the independent development of the young musician (Lisboa, 2008:260).

Another ineffective strategy, playing through a piece several times without correcting errors, has been identified by Hallam (2001:9). Although some participants in this study repeated shorter sections, this was done randomly and without any specific goal in mind. Some participants reported that their strategy was simply to learn one line at a time. The same result has been reported in a longitudinal study over three years (McPherson & Renwick, 2001). Almost all the participants who took part in this study only used the strategy of playing through the music several times for the duration of their practice sessions. Data from practice sessions which were recorded three years later showed that this behaviour had not changed. An additional concern identified, was that many students played through a piece only once before moving on the next one (McPherson & Renwick, 2001:174). A possible explanation for this could be that the length of the pieces had by then increased, but the duration of practice sessions remained the same. Therefore, while students had been able to repeat shorter pieces a number of times before, three years later, they were able to play through the pieces only once.

Further analysis indicates that some students stopped occasionally to correct a mistake, but that there was no consistency or evidence of effective strategies, and practice time was not optimally used (McPherson & Renwick, 2001:175). If this ineffective strategy is not corrected early on, there is a great possibility that these musicians will become demotivated due to a lack of results, especially when the repertoire becomes more challenging. This may ultimately cause some students to give up playing altogether while still in the early stages of learning. These results support my own experiences, discussed above.

It appears that students at a very young age are not yet able to practise effectively on their own and that the need exists for supervised practice sessions, checklists for self-regulation, explicit homework instructions and assistance in the execution of these tasks. Most of these techniques were incorporated in the teaching-learning process that I designed for this study.

INTERMEDIATE MUSICIANS

Young students are in the early development phase of musical growth and therefore it can be expected that practice strategies have not yet been fully developed. However, studies have shown that in many cases, practice-strategy difficulties persist in older students.

Hallam *et al*. (2012:670) found that intermediate students repetitively used the same strategies and struggled to adapt these when repertoire became more demanding. If young musicians continue to use the same methods which might have been effective when they played very easy repertoire, practising will not result in successful performance as the levels of difficulty of repertoire increase. For example, using the method of playing through a four-bar piece numerous times could yield successful results for the beginner musician, but will be ineffective once the length of pieces increases and this will cumulate in poor performance achievement. According to their findings, Hallam *et al*. (2012:670) maintain that the quality of performance is directly related to the use of effective practice strategies.

It is expected that the practice strategies of older musicians (high school learners) would be more consistent and more developed and, indeed, some positive aspects have been reported in some research studies. Marín *et al.* (2012:199) have found the key strategy of intermediate students to be similar to that of young musicians with the main focus on reading activities; however, the intermediate musicians showed the ability to identify challenging passages which required special attention. Evidence of this effective strategy of identifying challenging material on which to focus has also been reported by Miksza (2007:268). This seemingly minor adaption in the practice approach could be one of the most important contributing factors to ensure future success. This is the first step towards efficient use of practice time which will lead to faster results, cultivate motivation and improve performance.

ADVANCED MUSICIANS

It can be assumed that students who have learned an instrument for a number of years would have acquired a variety of skills related to practice strategies.

Hultberg (2002:189) identifies two main approaches used by students to interpret the musical score: reproductive and exploratory. Students who applied the reproductive approach, used the score as the primary document which prescribed how the notes should be played. Students applying the exploratory approach, used the score as a tool to enable them to look for implicit meaning within the frame of interpretation. Consideration of the stylistic period and composer was characteristic of this approach. The researcher found that most participants shifted between the two approaches (Hultberg, 2002:192), although the majority of participants made reproductive statements during their reflections on their own practising strategies (Hultberg, 2002:193). This could be due to the lack of ability to verbalise their approach explicitly. Bautista *et al.* (2009:197) agree to have found that advanced students (22 years and older) used a variety of strategies which included attention to syntactic and psychomotor skills but also added references to analytical and artistic procedures.

These findings imply that effective practice strategies take a long time to develop into a sophisticated set of skills. Although verbal reports from students give some insight regarding their thoughts and procedures, it is important to investigate this issue thoroughly through direct observation.

Miksza (2006:317) studied the practice activities of advanced students through observing recorded individual practice sessions and found that some students had knowledge of a few effective strategies and were able to apply them. These included repetition of sections and slow practising. The researcher concludes that the relationship between performance achievement and proper strategic planning is essential (Miksza, 2006:319) and emphasises that planning plays a more important role than actual time spent (Miksza, 2006:320). The results of effective use of time when practising are demonstrated in the study by Burwell & Shipton (2013) which will be discussed later in this chapter.

Several studies, however, reveal that even though many students had knowledge and skills to execute effective practice strategies, inadequacies remained evident. In contrast to effective strategies mentioned above, Koopman *et al*. (2007:386) report that although students involved in his research at times seemed to know *what* to practise, they did not necessarily understand *how* to apply effective strategies to

obtain the desired results. The researcher reports that the majority of approaches observed during this study could be described as inconsistent, ad hoc and trial-and-error (Koopman *et al*., 2007:386). This is detrimental for Conservatoire musicians whose strategies should have been more sophisticated at this stage of their musical careers.

Recent research confirms that the application of inconsistent methods used by advanced students is not uncommon practice. Burwell & Shipton (2013:329) report that students mostly did not understand how to implement strategies that would ensure effective practice. When students were asked what advice they could give others regarding effective practice strategies, five of the eight participants were not able to answer at all (Burwell & Shipton, 2013:336) while others presented vague responses. Their responses suggested the use of ad hoc unsystematic strategies (Burwell & Shipton, 2013:337) which included the use of meaningless repetition without correcting mistakes, leading to frustration and lack of motivation as no results were achieved (Burwell & Shipton, 2013:343).

It is surprising that so many students persevere to advanced levels in their musical careers despite a seemingly difficult journey. If these problems were identified and rectified at an early stage, many frustrations could be prevented.

In an attempt to promote effective practice strategies, researchers facilitated a practice clinic to assist advanced students in their individual practising (Burwell & Shipton, 2013). Students were supported in planning and executing fifteen-minute practice sessions. Having attended the clinic, students showed a marked improvement in their strategies which included the use of improved systematic approaches, higher levels of focus, efficient use of time and increased enthusiasm (Burwell & Shipton, 2013:337). Although recorded activities showed that some participants were still indecisive and unproductive at times, an improvement had been reported by the second week (Burwell & Shipton, 2013:338). It is not surprising that some participants struggled to implement effective methods immediately as this was not the approach that they usually had followed. It can be assumed that the smooth implementation of new methods will take some time to develop.

It is clear that this practice clinic clarified students' vague understanding of effective practising and provided a structured approach for effective use of time. Results were substantiated by the weblog (created by researchers) on which continued comments were posted by participants, describing how they adapted their previously ineffective strategies (Burwell & Shipton, 2013:340).

Even with such positive results, a more useful contribution could be made to clarify aspects of practice strategies if all problematic factors were categorised. Marín *et al*. (2012) describe such a three-levelled model, categorising all aspects of practising related to the musical score.

In this study, the activities of sixteen flute students who started to learn a new work, were described and all aspects related to the musical score were grouped into the following three levels (Marín *et al*., 2012:199):

1. Notational (includes all symbols in the score: notes, dynamics, rhythm, articulation).

2. Syntactic (includes elements implying relationships between two or more elements of the notational level: melody, accompaniment, chord, phrase, cadence, structure).

3. Artistic (includes all elements not directly presented in the score: knowledge of the composer, style and stylistic period, and aspects related to interpretation).

Information gathered from semi-structured interviews and questionnaires shows that intermediate students focused firstly on reading activities, listening and practising specific passages (Marín *et al*., 2012:201) but later during their practising, they started considering interpretation (Marín *et al*., 2012:202).

A similar contribution has been made by Sullivan & Cantwell (1999:245) who categorise practice strategies on three levels: Lower, mid and upper level. Lower-level strategies include trial-and-error approaches (mostly attention to aspects of notation and technical challenges, ignoring aspects of interpretation); mid-level

strategies include analytical and integration approaches and high-level strategies include attention to interpretation and self-regulation (Sullivan & Cantwell, 1999:253). These levels could be employed to explain the elements of practising strategies to students, and enable them to evaluate and improve their own approaches.

A different approach is taken by Lane (2006). Instead of explaining practice strategies in different levels, the researcher categorises advanced students on three levels of development stages: lower-level undergraduates, upper-level undergraduates and student teachers. The practice strategies of these three groups were compared and findings showed that upper-level undergraduates were able to identify and describe their approaches more explicitly compared to vague comments from lower-level undergraduates (Lane, 2006:224). However, when comparing the comments from all three groups to recorded practice sessions, a discrepancy in verbal reports was evident: what they said they did during practice sessions contradicted their application - what they actually did during practising - (Lane, 2006:226). This strengthens the argument that even though students at all levels have knowledge of effective strategies, they often do not know how to apply these effectively (Burwell & Shipton, 2013:329). Interestingly, the same problem was identified when observing the practice strategies of young students (Hallam, 2001:20), and this proves that even advanced students are often not able to adapt their strategies as they mature.

Sikes (2013) adopted a unique approach when studying practising activities of advanced students. The researcher divided participants into four groups and assigned a specific practice approach to each group to be used for an entire practice session. These included free practice (own choice of strategy); starting slowly and gradually increasing the tempo; repetition of short sections; playing through the whole piece at the indicated metronome tempo (Sikes, 2013:342). Before the study, the researcher asked participants to comment on their strategies and the majority of participants reported that their main strategy was the repetition of short sections. Only 5% of participants reported that they would use a combination of strategies. When performances were assessed at the end of the practice sessions, results showed no marked difference in scores achieved (Sikes, 2013:326). This finding contradicts results from other studies (Miksza, 2007; McPherson, 2005) which indicate that students using the strategy of practising slowly and gradually increasing

the speed, or students who focused of short sections showed marked improvements. Sikes (2013:327) suspects that because participants knew that their practice strategies were being investigated, it is possible that they tried particularly hard to achieve positive outcomes and this could have affected results. This is known as the Hawthorne effect[7].

IMPLICATIONS FOR DESIGNING MY ANALYTICAL PROCEDURE

It seems that intermediate students tend to spend most of their practice time focusing on notational and technical aspects; therefore, I chose the repertoire for the empirical process of my study carefully. I aimed to minimise challenging technical expectations and opted for music that was manageable from a notational and technical perspective. With the focus on interpretation, I designed the procedure in a way that would offer my students a clear understanding of how to work on the required aspects of interpretation independently.

2.5.2.2 Self-regulation

YOUNG MUSICIANS

In my experience, young pupils are often highly motivated and excited to learn to play the piano. To keep these students motivated as the difficulty of repertoire increases, it is important to teach them self-regulation strategies. This will help them to execute homework tasks successfully and will avoid unnecessary frustration.

Pitts *et al*. (2000:57) found that highly motivated students showed high levels of self-regulation, in contrast with less motivated students. One ineffective practice strategy identified was that participants did not always correct mistakes during their individual practice sessions (Pitts *et al*., 2000:60). This could be a result of low levels of self-regulation, or can be indicative of a poor aural perception of the music. McPherson's (2005:28) similar findings show that over 90% of practice time was spent on playing through repertoire without correcting mistakes. It seems that students at this level are

[7] According to Sikes (2013:327) the Hawthorne effect, where participants improve their response due to the fact that they are aware of being observed in a specific area, could have influenced results.

rarely able to recognise and analyse their mistakes (McPherson, 2005:29). Lisboa (2008:260) supports this finding, suggesting that this behaviour is the result of poor self-reflection. Students who recognised their mistakes, attempted to correct them by simply starting from the beginning again. This behaviour should be addressed during practical lessons by giving specific instructions which are easy to understand and to follow independently at home.

INTERMEDIATE MUSICIANS

Many young musicians continue to apply ineffective approaches to practising as they enter the intermediate phase. Pieces are short in length at the foundation stages of learning an instrument and it can be argued that students can achieve results when using the method of repetition during practice sessions. However, the exclusive use of this method could result in complications. Hallam (2001:10) indicates that when applying this approach, young students often did not recognise their mistakes and practised the piece incorrectly during every session; thus, the incorrect note/s became part of their flawed aural perception of the piece. The researcher found that students only started showing some improvement once they had reached Grade 5 level. These students were able to identify difficult sections as their self-regulation skills developed (Hallam, 2001:10). The development of these skills was confirmed in a later study and findings showed that actions by students now included marking difficult sections in the score (Hallam *et al*., 2012:659).

ADVANCED MUSICIANS

Low levels of self-regulation were seen to continue throughout the advanced phase. Koopman *et al*. (2007:390) found that, even among advanced students, little attention was paid to aspects of self-regulation during practical lessons. It may be concluded that aspects of self-regulation will have to receive more focused attention during practical lessons if students are expected to apply these successfully during practising. There are several possible reasons why these aspects are not thoroughly addressed during practical lessons; it is possible that each unique situation presents a specific scenario and teachers often have no choice but to neglect one area in order to focus on another.

Burwell & Shipton (2013) addressed self-regulation by inviting students to critically assess recordings of their own practice sessions. Students were expected to comment on areas in need of improvement. Their observations included comments on tempo fluctuations, inconsistent tone quality and the lack of attention to detail, all of which they had not recognised while practising (Burwell & Shipton, 2013:339). From statements during interviews prior to the practice sessions, it was striking that participants believed that they had made use of effective self-evaluation, only to realise after assessing their own recorded practice sessions, that this was not the case (Burwell & Shipton, 2013:342). Without self-evaluation during the process of learning, weaknesses cannot be identified and improved.

Sullivan & Cantwell (1999:263) partially agree, but report that self-regulated strategies were more evident among students who represented a high-level approach (including attention to artistic aspects of interpretation) to practising. When studying the effects of self-regulation on performance achievement, Miksza (2015:229) reports that participants' performance improved considerably after they received self-regulation instructions, compared to those who did not.

Although it is clear that the ability to apply aspects of self-regulation is essential for an effective practice strategy, results from studies indicate that many advanced musicians have not yet mastered this skill which means that practising potential will not be optimised. This suggested to me that I needed to incorporate self-regulation into the design of my teaching-learning process.

IMPLICATIONS FOR DESIGNING MY ANALYTICAL PROCEDURE

Aspects of self-regulation were incorporated in my teaching-learning process through the use of practice journals. Participants were expected to record their practice times and write reflections on their methods.

2.5.2.3 Planning

YOUNG MUSICIANS

Even from a very young age, teachers can assist their students in the planning of their practice sessions. The importance of planning strategies is described in a longitudinal case study by Pitts *et al*. (2000) when initial data were compared to information recorded twenty months later. Results show that there was an increase in levels of planning by some musicians (Pitts *et al*., 2000:57). Different results emerged when McPherson (2005:17), Lisboa (2008:260) and Hallam (2001:31) observed the practice strategies of young musicians and found their natural tendencies reflected barely any planning methods. Decisions were made spontaneously without a clear goal in mind. Lisboa's longitudinal study (2008:264) includes data which were collected over a five-year period and comparative results show very little evidence of planning or the ability to identify challenging sections. Participants mostly applied the method of repeatedly playing through pieces. Unless young musicians are taught how to plan their practising, it seems that they will revert back to the natural behaviour of meaningless repetition.

INTERMEDIATE MUSICIANS

The importance of effective planning becomes even more invaluable in the intermediate phase of development as students at this level have increasingly more demanding schedules. It will be challenging to keep students motivated if their practising does not yield results.

Miksza (2007:308) compares the implication of good/poor planning on performance achievement and findings indicate that higher performance scores are a direct result of effective strategic planning. This, in itself, should encourage students to set specific goals and work systematically towards improved performances.

As with many other aspects of effective practice strategies, Hallam *et al*. (2012:659) reports to have found that better planning and goal setting improved as expertise developed.

ADVANCED MUSICIANS

Positive development in planning strategies is marked by Sullivan & Cantwell (1999) and Hallam (2001). Hallam (2001:14) reports that more advanced students showed

high levels of planning which included setting specific goals, marking the score and found evidence of the use of a systematic approach. Sullivan & Cantwell (1999:263) agree that students displaying these characteristics used high-level practice strategies.

However, this positive development has not been confirmed in all studies in which advanced musicians participated. Koopman *et al*. (2007:386) report that practice sessions were not well structured and that logbooks (practice journals) reflected vague descriptions of goals. Only one of the six participants who took part in this study was able to give a detailed description of goals which included thoughts on interpretation (Koopman *et al*., 2007:387). Similar findings are reported, indicating students struggled to explain their planning strategies (Burwell & Shipton, 2013:336) and displayed a random approach to practising (Lane, 2006:228). Reports of the use of random approaches used by advanced students are a matter of concern. It is almost impossible to imagine that students at this level will be able to manage the demands of repertoire if they do not have a clear goal in mind.

IMPLICATIONS FOR DESIGNING MY ANALYTICAL PROCEDURE

The use of a mind-map was incorporated in the process to enable students to set specific goals and to plan their approach to interpretation in a structured way.

2.5.2.4 Score study/analysis

In my experience, students benefit from studying the score before they start practising. When studying the score, they will be able to identify exactly on what they need to work and be able to form an idea of the character of the piece. More importantly, they will start considering the interpretation and get an overview of the structure from the outset.

YOUNG MUSICIANS

Young musicians will expand their knowledge and understanding of music by studying a piece before they start playing. By observing basic elements including

metre, key, accidentals, dynamics, tempo and character, problematic material could be identified early on and effective methods can be implemented during the early stages of learning a new work. Mistakes can be avoided, or at least minimised, and students will practise with more focused attention to detail rather than aimlessly repeating entire works.

McPherson & Renwick (2001:174) conducted a longitudinal study and analysed the practice strategies of seven young musicians. They found that less than 2% of the total practice time, calculated over three years, was spent on score study. Having observed the practice strategies of three young musicians, Lisboa's findings (2008:260) support previous results. The researcher reports that none of the participants made any attempt to study the score, not even to observe the key signature before practising commenced. Even during practising, score indications like bowing marks, articulation and accidentals were only noticed after they had played the piece a number of times (Lisboa, 2008:257). The researcher warns that without proper score study, many musical aspects will be overlooked and mistakes could become a permanent part of an unpolished performance (Lisboa, 2008:263). When Hallam (2001:9) observed the practice behaviour of fifty-five young string players, it was noted that a small percentage of participants engaged in some form of activity related to the score. This included reading letter names out loud and clapping rhythms.

INTERMEDIATE MUSICIANS

When Hallam *et al.* (2012) analysed the practice strategies of intermediate students, they expected to find an increase in the use of analytical strategies which included score study; however, they confirm the opposite (Hallam *et al.,* 2012:671).

ADVANCED MUSICIANS

Research reveals that although it is beneficial for students to study the score prior to practising, this is not consistently applied in their independent practice sessions. Results from a case study in which advanced students participated, show that students who took the time to study the score before playing it, reflected more characteristics of high-level strategies (Sullivan & Cantwell, 1999:245). In this study,

the actual duration of time spent to read through a score before performing it was measured. The researchers (Sullivan & Cantwell, 1999:258) indicate that participants who used low-level practice strategies, reported very little attention to score study. Supporting this finding, Bautista *et al.* (2009:195) report that the practice strategies of many advanced musicians reflected little attention to analytical procedures. This implies that low level strategies are still being applied by advanced students.

The practice strategies of professional musicians reflect a holistic approach with attention to detail. According to Marín *et al*. (2012:208), advanced musicians display this high-level approach by studying the score to obtain an overview of the piece before practising commences.

A different approach was taken by Lane (2006) when students were instructed to study a score and comment on their observations. These comments included reference to basic elements such as tempo, metre, key, the identification of difficult sections and getting an overview of the piece (Lane, 2006:222). This information confirms that many observations will be made by students if they study the score before they start practising. Being aware of all these elements, decisions regarding technical and interpretative elements can be made right from the start.

IMPLICATIONS FOR DESIGNING MY ANALYTICAL PROCEDURE

During individual lessons, intense score study was applied. Students had to identify a variety of aspects related to the score. Writing activities and discussions were integrated in an attempt to apply critical thinking skills. This was, indeed, one of the main features of my teaching-learning process and one that was structured to an extent not common in teaching.

2.5.2.5 Listening and aural development

YOUNG MUSICIANS

Although it is obvious that beginner musicians cannot necessarily obtain recordings of the pieces that they play, they can still improve their aural skills and develop the

ability to distinguish between good and poor tone production. Pitts *et al.* (2000:58) report an improvement in tone quality having compared tone production at the end of a three-year study to initial information.

Self-evaluation is dependent on the ability to listen critically. Besides influencing the quality of sound production, a poorly developed set of aural skills can have a negative impact on many aspects of musicianship. Lisboa (2008:243) discusses the implications of poorly developed listening and aural skills. The researcher reports that young musicians who were expected to practise independently often developed an incorrect aural representation of the music which included pitch and rhythmic inaccuracies, and these were then repeatedly practised incorrectly (Lisboa, 2008:260). This could be a result of the fact that most young musicians mostly pay attention to notation, disregarding expression and score indications.

In many cases, the inability to recognise mistakes at this young age, proved to be directly related to a poor aural perception of the repertoire (McPherson, 2005:28). The researcher emphasises the importance of early, quality musical experiences to improve aural skills (McPherson, 2005:30). Strengthening this argument, Hallam (2001:20) deems aural skills a most vital factor, stating that without well-developed aural skills, practising will be ineffective, even with knowledge of effective practice strategies.

Another study conducted in the same year (McPherson & Renwick, 2001:177) shows that many pitch errors in the first year of learning an instrument, were ignored during practice sessions. This, again, is attributed to poor aural perception.

Aural development can be improved in a variety of ways. The more exposure young musicians have to quality music, the better their ‘sound vocabulary’ will develop. When teachers make use of a modelling approach, students will have a better understanding of good tone production. Additionally, Hallam (2001:16) states that aural perception improves when students play more than one instrument.

INTERMEDIATE AND ADVANCED MUSICIANS

According to Miksza (2007:317), high school students reported that they rarely listened to recordings of the repertoire they were playing. Although quality recordings of advanced repertoire are readily available, Marín *et al*. (2012:199) confirm that even more advanced intermediate students in their tenth year of a specialised music programme, (the year before they would enter for a degree in Performance at a tertiary institution) seldom reported listening to recordings of their repertoire.

IMPLICATIONS FOR DESIGNING MY ANALYTICAL PROCEDURE

During the practical lessons, participants in my study listened to several performances of sections of the piece and of the piece as a whole. These listening activities were accompanied by verbal discussions and written activities. The compositions used were all composed by South-African composers. As these compositions were not composed for advanced students for public performance, recordings were not readily available and I had to perform them to my students.

2.5.2.6 Intent/Aim

YOUNG AND INTERMEDIATE MUSICIANS

Pitts *et al*. (2000:54) report that the central aim among students, as observed from the behaviour of young musicians, is to play through the piece from beginning to end, often without correcting mistakes. Lisboa (2008:260), Hallam (2001:9) and Bautista *et al.* (2009:196) all agree with this finding, explaining that this approach involves focusing on the notation of pitch and rhythm only. The problem when using this approach exclusively, is that the goal of performing the piece errorlessly is often not realised because challenging sections are not identified and improved. Instead, young musicians often started right from the beginning when they have made mistakes. Students who took part in this study stated explicitly that their main focus during practising was not on dynamics.

ADVANCED MUSICIANS

In order to ensure polished performances of challenging repertoire, musicians in the advanced stage of learning will need an array of effective strategies. Having practised for many years, one would assume that the goals and intentions of musicians at this level will be clear.

Contradicting evidence, however, emerges from some studies: it was found that advanced students had difficulty in verbalising their practice goals clearly. Having studied their practice behaviours, Koopman *et al*. (2007:386) report that these students spent most of their practising time focusing on technical matters while interpretation was mostly neglected (Koopman *et al*., 2007:387). It is evident that the main focus was on the notational level with the goal to play the music fluently. This showed their focus on the end result and not on the process (Koopman *et al*., 2007:388). Interestingly, when students' practice journals were analysed, it was found that they reported otherwise by stating that their main focus had, indeed, been on interpretation.

Lane (2006) describes advanced musicians' practice strategies in terms of three phases: initial, middle and end. The researcher reports that the intent of their initial stages of practising was mostly to perform with technical security (Lane, 2006:222). Students who showed characteristics of a lower-level approach usually stopped working once the technical aspects had been mastered, in contrast with students who were characterised by an upper-level approach. These students continued practising and focusing on artistic aspects during all three phases (Lane, 2006:223).

IMPLICATIONS FOR ANALYTICAL PROCEDURE DESIGN

Amongst other aspects, participants in my study were expected to comment on the style and character of their pieces. They were regularly urged to refer back to their written comments which recorded their initial impressions on the character of the pieces. The aim was to work towards a performance which matched their descriptions and directed their focus to expressive sound production.

2.5.2.7 Interpretation

From my point of view, interpretation is one of the most problematic areas of practice strategies. This is one of the main reasons why I chose to develop an analytical

procedure which can be used as a tool for the development of independent interpretation. I find that my own students need constant input from me as their teacher and are hesitant to make interpretative decisions on their own. This problem could be the result of various factors, including negligence in the early development phase of the young musician and the lack of a structured approach.
It seems logical to assume that the earlier young musicians are exposed to aspects of interpretation, the more confident they will be when faced with having to make independent decisions in this regard.

Pitts *et al.* (2000) state that most young musicians perceive a piece to be performance ready once the notes are known. This implies that they mainly focus on aspects of notation – pitch and rhythm – and neglect dynamics and the character indications. Lisboa (2008:250) agrees, reporting the same attitude and lack of attention to interpretation and adds that there was hardly any evidence of attention to dynamics, expression (Lisboa, 2008:260) or style (Lisboa, 2008:263). Five years later, when these students' activities were assessed again, approaches continued to include activities which were mostly based on technical aspects while musical aspects were entirely ignored (Lisboa, 2008:264). Hallam (2001:9) identifies similar problems and states that forty-nine of the fifty novice participants in this study showed no activity that could be related to aspects of interpretation. Furthermore, only eight percent of them attempted to apply dynamic variation in their playing (Hallam, 2001:21).

INTERMEDIATE MUSICIANS

The tendency to move away from the exclusive focus on notational aspects is detected when Hallam (2001:21) points out that students started paying more attention to dynamics from Grade 5 level onwards. Hallam *et al*. (2012:659) agree to have found that students started paying more attention to aspects of interpretation as their expertise increased. Marín *et al*. (2012:201) partially support this finding. Their study indicates that though intermediate students did not often pay attention to interpretation, stylistic elements and dynamic indications in the beginning stages of learning a new work; most of them started working on these during the middle and end stages of recorded practice sessions.

ADVANCED MUSICIANS

Problems with interpretation appear to have persisted into this stage. Few studies report on advanced musicians' approaches specifically in terms of attention to interpretation. When researchers observed recorded practice sessions of advanced brass players, it was found that many effective practice strategies were applied, but the activity in which students least often engaged, was variation in dynamics (Miksza, 2006:317).

If advanced students do not consider artistic aspects during their practice sessions, it may be assumed that this will reflect in their performances. One study which measured performance improvement, confirms this assumption. Sikes (2013) conducted a study which involved a pre- and post-test performance. It was found that participants improved well in aspects of rhythm and pitch, but only marginally on artistic levels (Sikes, 2013:325). This direct relation between practice strategies and performance achievement should be a serious consideration for students who strive to improve their performances, and something in which teachers need to train their students.

Students with more sophisticated strategies prove to be more aware of interpretative requirements. Hultberg (2002:189) confirms that musicians who used a purely reproductive approach when learning a new piece, tended to disregard their own interpretation of the music. In contrast with them, musicians using the exploratory approach, relied on their own knowledge and judgement to make interpretative decisions (Hultberg, 2002:190). Further evidence shows that many students focused primarily on other aspects before they made any efforts to improve interpretation. Marín *et al*. (2012:202) report that, similar to intermediate musicians, very few advanced musicians in tertiary institutions paid attention to artistic levels during the beginning stages of learning a new work. They started paying attention to dynamic indications during the middle phase of practising a new work and focused intensely on interpretation only towards the last stage of preparation for performance (Marín *et al.,* 2012:203).

When students viewed their own recorded practice sessions, it was interesting that some of them commented on the lack of attention to interpretation (Burwell & Shipton, 2013:339). This shows that students are often under the impression that they pay attention to certain aspects during their practice sessions, but in reality, they do not. Lane (2006:223) reports to have established this when comparing the verbal comments by participants with recordings of their practice sessions. Most students commented on the style and character of the piece, but at the same time, many did not pay any attention to these when performing and practising the piece. It seems that the style and composer were not a very important consideration for many (Lane, 2006:227). More advanced students in this study did, however, pay more attention to interpretative issues (Lane, 2006:228).

IMPLICATIONS FOR DESIGNING MY ANALYTICAL PROCEDURE

The aim of my analytical procedure was to give students a structured method which could be applied to any repertoire that they would play. By doing this, I anticipated that they would become more confident in making independent decisions regarding interpretation. It was also my intention to help them develop the practice habits that would gradually support their learning of the way in which to pay attention to interpretation.

2.6 Suggested Resources for Developing Independent Interpretation

Numerous studies investigate the practice and teaching strategies with regard to interpretation. Both successful and ineffective practices and strategies can be identified from the literature, but few studies offer potential solutions and very few recommend useful resource material for the young developing student. Although there are many resources and reading material available for the advanced musician with regard to interpretation, the lack of suitable material for the younger musician is problematic.

The lack of age-appropriate resources intended to aid the teacher in incorporating musical analysis as a means to interpretation, has been identified by Ward (2007:21). Her study indicates that although some teachers used analytical techniques during teaching, there was little evidence of a systematic and integrated approach. Ward

developed and tested a resource package for teachers, designed to use as a tool of teaching musical performance aspects. Twelve individual strategies were identified and linked analytically with various aspects of rhythm, structure, technique, composition, accuracy and expression. Specific repertoire was used as examples which could be adapted by teachers (Ward, 2007:25). Five teachers were asked to implement the package if they felt comfortable to do so and were interviewed a few weeks later. Feedback from teachers reflected both positive and negative attitudes. Concerns were raised regarding strategies focusing on the development of harmonic awareness, acceptance of the inclusion of composition and improvisation activities. Appreciation was expressed for the structured approach which still allowed for the adaptation of teachers' individual styles and the possibility of novel teaching ideas (Ward, 2007:30). The researcher promotes the application of score analysis beneficial for the understanding of musical works, and for that reason, all activities were designed to encourage students to become actively involved in their lessons (Ward, 2007:25).

(Brook, 2015:38) tested the effectiveness of an online tool to support students to become more independent and self-regulated. Questionnaires, interviews, lesson observations and portfolio data were used to gather information. Findings indicate that this interactive tool could assist students in setting and describing specific goals and enable teachers to post students' homework and comment on their playing during lessons. Students found that this online facility motivated them to achieve their goals (Brook, 2015:41).

Blickenstaff (2012) wrote a short article on ideas that he uses in his own teaching. He identifies some common aspects related to stylistic interpretation and states that without norms for styles, interpretation would be almost an impossible task (Blickenstaff, 2012:34). He suggests that certain norms are consistent in all compositions and explains how he teaches his students to identify these norms, a practice which he refers to as 'the rules of thumb'. Students have a specific sheet in their notebooks where they write the principles of interpretation as they are discovered. The 'rules of thumb' include suggestions and rules for phrasing, dynamic implications of phrases, rhythm, harmonic progression, structure, melody, accompaniment and considerations for specific style periods. What makes this method especially useful is the fact that complex concepts of interpretation and style

are simplified to a level that will easily be understood by the young developing musician.

In this chapter, existing literature was reviewed to describe the following:

- Teaching strategies with regard to interpretation;
- Effective practice strategies of successful professional and high-achieving musicians;
- Practice strategies of averages musicians;
- Suggested resources;
- Suggested resources for developing independent interpretation.

All aspects previously discussed were taken into account when designing the analytical procedure for the purpose of this study. Additionally, the principles of simultaneous learning as proposed by Harris (2006:16), combined with the analysis method as proposed by Spencer & Temko (1988) were also used as basis for the design.

In the next chapter, the analytical procedure and the application thereof will be described in detail.

CHAPTER 3: TEACHING-LEARNING PROCESS AND DATA COLLECTION

In this chapter, information regarding the research method and paradigm is presented. The structure and application of the analytical procedure are explained, followed by a detailed description of the process of data collection.

3.1 Research Design

I chose to use a qualitative approach for this study as the nature of this approach is to describe a specific research problem (Creswell, 2009:98). Creswell (2009:175) identifies the characteristics of a qualitative approach as follows:

- Participants' behaviour is studied in their natural setting;
- The researcher plays a key role in the data collection process;
- Data are collected from multiple sources
- The process of inductive data analysis is applied;
- The participants' experience or perspective is the focus;
- Data are interpreted by the researcher.

All the above-mentioned characteristics are applicable to the current study of which the aim is to describe the experience of participants of the application of a specifically designed analytical procedure to facilitate independent development of interpretation. Their experience is studied in a natural setting; the researcher collects all the data from multiple sources; inductive data analysis is applied; the focus is the experience of the participant and the role of the researcher is to interpret the data and describe the process.

The approach of enquiry takes the form of a case study based in the social constructivist's paradigm. While acknowledging the extensive roots of this worldview, Creswell's description (2009:8) which summarises the essence of this paradigm as an individual's quest to understand the world in which they live, will be used as a guide for interpreting data. The focus is on the variety and complexity of perspectives from the participant's viewpoint.

In light of the purpose of this study, it was crucial to structure the teaching-learning process in such a way that participants would be actively involved and given every opportunity to present their personal experience throughout the process.

3.2 Teaching-learning Process

The researcher planned the teaching-learning process carefully to ensure the design of an age-appropriate and structured approach which would lay the foundation for an optimum teaching-learning experience.

The focus of the study, as well as the information which was presented by reviewing the literature (Chapter 2), was taken into account when designing the analytical procedure. Ward (2007:21) has identified the problem of a lack of age-appropriate resources to help the teacher incorporate musical analysis as a means to teach interpretation, and Hallam (2001:20) has noted that young musicians seldom have knowledge of effective strategies which include focusing on interpretation. She suggests that young musicians need a structured plan which they can understand and implement during their practising. The age of participants was, therefore, carefully considered in order to ensure that the procedure was easy to understand and to apply. Bonneville-Roussy & Bouffard (2015:699) state that the quality of practising is directly related to the self-regulated behaviour of students, therefore, in addition, the analytical procedure required students to set specific goals and apply self-regulation, in order to ensure that quality practising takes place. Activities for this structured approach were designed to maximise student involvement during the lessons.

3.2.1 The Analytical Procedure followed in this Study

The analytical procedure is a combination of the analysis model of Spencer & Temko (1988) and of the principles of simultaneous learning as described by Harris (2006). According to Harris (2006:11), the first principle of simultaneous learning is that information is processed and understood through making connections. The role of the teacher is to clarify these connections for the learner. As part of a teaching approach, Harris (2006:15) refers to the ‘ingredients of a piece’ which include the

key, time signature, important rhythmic patterns, dynamics, articulation, character and technical markings (Harris: 2006:16).

Many of these 'ingredients' correspond with the structural phenomena that Spencer & Temko (1988:1-31) discuss, although the latter presents a more comprehensive list. Therefore, I used the structural phenomena presented by Spencer & Temko (1988) which include cadence, tonality, tempo, metre, rhythm, dynamics, density, timbre, register, texture, motive and form – to design a mind-map (Addendum A), representing the 'ingredients' for each piece, as part of the analytical procedure. The function and application of this mind-map are discussed in detail later in this chapter. Definitions of the structural phenomena according to Spencer & Temko (1988) have been presented in Chapter 1.

The aim of the analytical procedure was to help learners gain better understanding of interpretation as they started learning a new work, by giving them a structured plan to follow during their independent practising. In order to design the best possible procedure, a number of suggestions which emerged from reviewing the literature on interpretation and practice strategies, were taken into consideration. These suggestions are summarised in the table below:

Table 3-1: A Summary of Teaching and Practice Suggestions in order to Develop Interpretation

Researcher/s	Suggestions	Key ideas/words
Hallam (1995)	Students should gain an overview of the piece before practising commences; they should consider aspects related to interpretation from the outset of learning a new piece; analysis should be accompanied by critical listening activities.	Holistic approach; analysis; interpretation; critical listening.
Chaffin & Imreh (2001)	Students should use an integrated approach from the outset which includes score analysis and attention to aspects of interpretation.	Integrated approach; analysis; interpretation.
Holmes (2005)	Expressive intent should be the aim of the creation of sound and guide interpretative decisions.	Expression; interpretation.
Hultberg (2008)	Students should analyse the score before practising in order to make interpretative	Analysis, interpretation.

	decisions; the approach should be age-appropriate.	
Purser (2005)	Critical self-evaluation should be emphasised; focused listening skills must be developed; specific goals must be set.	Self-evaluation; self-regulation; critical listening; planning which involves setting goals.
Cremaschi (2012)	Self-regulation is encouraged and the use of a practice checklist is advised.	Self-regulation; practice checklist.
Miksza (2006)	Students should plan their practice sessions with care.	Planning; structured approach.

Suggestions incorporated in the design of the analytical procedure are as follows:

1. A holistic approach which integrates aspects of analysis and interpretation. Participants are actively involved throughout the process.
2. The integration of score analysis and critical listening activities which include making interpretative decisions from the outset.
3. The expressive intent of sound production is stimulated throughout the process.
4. Participants evaluate their practice strategies by reflecting on their experience and success. They set specific goals towards which they work when practising independently.
5. Participants use a practice diary to record practice times. Self-regulations in the form of written reflections are included in practice journals.
6. It provides participants with a structured approach to their practising, focusing on the development of independent interpretation.

3.2.2 Application of the Analytical Procedure

Each lesson was structured in terms of a specific order of activities. These activities included score analysis prior to listening to a performance of the piece; written activities which focused on aspects of interpretation and written reflections which served a self-regulating purpose. A description follows on how each lesson unfolded: Participants first completed a worksheet (Addendum D) commenting on the title, composer and stylistic period of each piece. Score study with the purpose of

determining their performance in terms of 'audiation'[8] of the music followed. Written activities reflected their primary focus when studying the score. Explicit instructions were given as they were asked to comment on their understanding of the relation between the title and presumed character of the piece. From this point forward, score study was integrated with critical listening activities and discussions regarding the interpretation of the music. The approach was motivated by a study concerned with aural modelling, conducted by Woody (2003:60) who encourages teachers to combine aural modelling with explicit verbal instructions to ensure successful expressive performances. It must be emphasised that the aim of using this approach in the current study was not to expect participants to merely replicate a given performance. The teaching-learning process ensured that students participate in discussions and listen to a variety of ways in which to perform a piece, before making interpretative decisions.

At this stage of the procedure, participants knew what the piece sounded like and lessons proceeded with them completing aspects of the mind-map (as described in 3.2.1). These activities included discussions, listening and writing activities structured around the structural phenomena of the piece. The purpose of analysing the score was primarily focused on guiding participants towards making decisions concerning interpretation by understanding the function of the structural phenomena of each piece. This was achieved by applying another suggestion by Harris (2006). He emphasises the importance of instructing students imaginatively (Harris, 2006:31) and suggests that instructions could be started with using the words "play as if", followed by an imaginative description (2006:41). This principle was also incorporated in the design of the mind-map. As part of written activities, participants had to complete the 'play-as-if' section of the mind-map[9]. To encourage participants, a comprehensive list of descriptive words was supplied and participants were encouraged to add their own (see Addendum E). The value of descriptive language is emphasised by Holmes (2005:233) in a case study involving two professional musicians; the researcher accentuates the notion that expressive intent should

[8] Audiation is a term as coined by Gordon (1980:7) and defined as follows: "If you hear musical sound and give meaning to what you see"; in other words, when one 'hears' music seen in notation, without it being performed.

[9] During a pilot study in 2012, the researcher originally used the words 'performance implications', but changed them to 'play as if' as suggested by Harris (2006), as this proved to be more easily understood by participants.

always be the aim of the creation of sound. Harris (2006:37) affirms that expressive playing can be improved by using suitable verbal descriptions of images.

All of the above-mentioned suggestions were incorporated and each one of the structural phenomena was discussed as described in the example of a discussion on cadences below:

The score was studied in order to determine the occurrence of cadences. The music was then played to confirm the occurrence of cadences and participants were encouraged to use descriptive words to describe the character or performance implications of each cadence in the context of the character of the piece. The intention was that students understood that not all perfect cadences would be interpreted with the same intention: a final cadence marked *forte* at the end of a piece might be played 'as if assertive', but a final cadence at the end of another, marked *piano*, might be played 'as if dying away'.

Participants were guided through this process, each lesson with a reduced amount of input from the teacher, encouraging them to be increasingly independent in making interpretative decisions. A total of twenty-four lessons (three lessons per participant) were video recorded, following this procedure.

Each lesson-cycle culminated in a performance of the piece after approximately two weeks of practising[10]. It is important to note that these performances were not assessed by the researcher as the purpose of this study was not to measure performance achievement. Participants were not informed of the purpose of the performance which was video recorded; however, the reason for including these performances was to encourage participants to set specific goals and prepare adequately to achieve them.

[10] During the pilot study in 2012, the researcher allowed only one week of practising prior to the performance, but realised that it was not enough time for some participants and therefore changed the duration to approximately two weeks.

3.3 Data Collection Method

3.3.1 Participants

Eight female learners from an English medium government school for girls in Johannesburg, South Africa, participated in this intrinsic case study. Their age varied between thirteen and seventeen years and their approximate graded music level ranged from Grade 3 to 7. All the learners are currently receiving formal music training in piano and have had individual piano lessons for at least two years. The learners take Music as a school subject and are preparing for various formal examinations, including that of Trinity College of London, the Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music, the University of South Africa or school-related examinations.

All piano students at this school who take Music as a school subject and have been learning for two years or more were invited to take part in this study. Nine learners initially opted to participate in this study, but one learner was unable to complete the process. Data initially gathered from this participant was not taken into account when data were analysed.

Data were collected in three phases:

Phase 1: Interview 1 (Pre-view)
Phase 2: Video-recorded lessons
Phase 3: Interview 2 (Post-view) and written reflections on the process

In Chapter 4, data will be analysed in the same three phases.

3.3.2 Materials

3.3.2.1 Pieces

The University of South Africa has been publishing music examination books for many years, which include compositions by South African composers. The

researcher studied pieces in piano examination publications from the last five decades to choose pieces to be used during this study. A total of nine suitable piano pieces were eventually sourced.

Factors considered when choosing the repertoire were that participants had approximately only ten days to two weeks to practise the pieces; thus, the length of pieces was considered. Additionally, only music by South African composers was used during the lessons. The reason for this is that the students would not be familiar with most of these pieces. Students at English medium schools often choose to play examinations from Trinity College of London or Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music, which do not include compositions by South African composers. Furthermore, technically demanding pieces with complicated rhythmic challenges were avoided as this was not the focus of this study and could have a negative influence on the practising process. A list of the chosen repertoire and reasons for its suitability follow in Table 3-2 below:

Table 3-2: A list of the Chosen Repertoire and Reasons for Suitability

NAME OF PIECE	COMPOSER	GRADED LEVEL	REASONS FOR SUITABILITY	NUMBER OF TIMES USED IN THIS STUDY
Tokkelossie	Alexander Johnson	Pre-Grade 1	Detailed dynamic indications Easily recognisable cadences Variety of articulation Easily recognisable form Easily identifiable texture	Participant 9 (Rita) – lesson 1
Snippy and Trippy Mouse	Joubero Malherbe	Pre-Grade 1	Varied articulation Detailed dynamic indications Changes in tempo Easily recognisable form	Participant 9 (Rita) – lesson 3
Caleb, little Pug	Diane Coutts	Pre-Grade 1	Detailed dynamic indications Variety of texture Register changes Variety of moods Easily recognisable form Variety of articulation	Participant 2 (Gabby) – lesson 3 Participant 9 (Rita) – lesson 2
Sunset	Pierre Malan	Grade 1	Descriptive title Slow tempo Cantabile and legato melody line Change in texture Easily identifiable cadences	Participant 4 (Hannah) – lesson 2
Lament	John Roos	Grade 2	Descriptive title Syncopated rhythms Variety of texture Detailed dynamic indications Detailed pedal markings	Participant 3 (Mia) – lesson 1 Participant 4 (Hannah) – lesson 1 Participant 5 (Leila) – lesson 1
Hessie se Witperd	Chris Lamprecht	Grade 2	Descriptive title Syncopated rhythm Ornamented melody Register change Easily identifiable cadences Ternary form (with *Da Capo* indication) Varied texture	Participant 3 (Mia) – lesson 3 Participant 8 (Annie) – lesson 1

Waterpoel	Hennie Joubert	Grade 3	Descriptive title Register change Detailed performance directions Varied texture Easily recognisable form	Participant 2 (Gabby) – lesson 2 Participant 3 (Mia) – lesson 2 Participant 4 (Hannah) – lesson 3 Participant 5 (Leila) – lesson 2 Participant 6 (Lynn) – lesson 2 Participant 7 (Hayley) – lesson 2 Participant 8 (Annie) – lesson 2
Dwarsoor Vaal-en Grootrivier	Marthie Driessen	Grade 3	Descriptive title Register changes Varied texture Easily identifiable cadences Detailed score indications	Participant 2 (Gabby) – lesson 1 Participant 6 (Lynn) – lesson 1 Participant 7 (Hayley) – lesson 1
Hansie slim	Gerhardus Koornof	Grade 3	Varied articulation Ternary form Changing time signature Easily identifiable cadences Rhythmic motives	Participant 5 (Leila) – lesson 3 Participant 6 (Lynn) – lesson 3 Participant 7 (Hayley) – lesson 3 Participant 8 (Annie) – lesson 3

After selection, in preparation for the practical lessons, the researcher analysed all the pieces according to the adapted analysis model of Spencer & Temko (1988).

3.3.2.2 Interviews

Rule & John (2011:64) provide a list of guidelines that was considered while preparing for the interviews. To ensure that participants were relaxed, interviews were conducted and recorded in the natural setting of their music classroom at school where they feel comfortable and at ease. Before video recording the interviews, the purpose of the interview was explained to each participant. As the researcher is well known to the participants and teaches them music as part of the school curriculum, it was easy to follow a conversational approach.

Each participant was interviewed twice; once before practical lessons commenced and once at the end of the eight-week cycle. The average length of the interviews was between eight and three minutes respectively. The first semi-structured interviews served as pre-views to the purpose of determining each participant's current understanding of interpretation and her approach to learning a new piece of music. She was asked to describe her practice strategies and probed to elaborate on the way in which she incorporated interpretation.

A set of field questions were used to initiate discussions. As conversations developed, further questions which arose were addressed in an attempt to gain insight into the participants' understanding of relevant topics.

Outline of the First Semi-structured Interview

Observing first impressions on learning a new piece:

> *We are going to discuss your experience when you have to learn a new piece. Describe the first thing that comes to mind.*

Observing practice strategies: (information was analysed to determine their understanding and approach to interpretation as part of their practice strategies):

> *How do you start?*
>
> *Do you study the score before you play?*

Do you practise short sections or play through the whole piece?

Do you correct mistakes immediately?

Examining interpretation: (score analysis, observation of detail and aural perception):

Do you listen to recordings of your pieces? (To gain insight and discern on what they focus on when listening; whether they strengthen their aural perception which will enable them to detect mistakes while practising; whether they critically evaluate different interpretations of repertoire.)

Do you rely mostly on your teacher to 'tell you what to do'?

Do you observe the title, composer and stylistic period?

Do you pay attention to score indications during practising? (Dynamics and other score indications.)

Establishing attitude to learning a new piece:

Describe how you feel (positive and/or negative) when your teacher gives you a new piece and you have to start practising it.

The second semi-structured interview was conducted after the three practical lessons had been completed. Participants were asked to reflect on their experience of the analytical procedure as applied during practical lessons. Questions were included to examine their understanding and approach to interpretation after having completed this process; thus, it served as a post-view.

Outline of the Second Semi-structured Interview

Evaluating participants' experience:

Describe your experience of the three practical lessons. (Positive and/or negative.)

Evaluating aptness of repertoire:

Did you know any of the composers?

Did you enjoy playing the pieces?

Evaluating the efficacy of the process:

Was there anything specific that you found helpful? Tell me what and why?

Can you apply the principles of this process to piano playing only, or also to other aspects of music? Explain. (This refers to their history and/or harmony class.)

Evaluating the effect on practice strategies:

Will this change the way you practise in future? How?

Examining the effect on interpretation:

Do you understand interpretation better? Explain.

Evaluating the suitability of the process:

Did you find anything particularly difficult?

3.3.2.3 Practice Journals

Eight practice journals were collected at the end of the eight-week cycle. Each journal contained materials from each lesson cycle (three per participant) which included:

- The score, notated by the participants.
- A list of descriptive words which was used during each lesson (Addendum E).
- A completed worksheet: 'Exploring my piece' (Addendum D). This included written notes on the title, composer, stylistic period and character of the piece, taken by participants when studying the score and listening to a performance of the piece.
- A record of actual practice times (Addendum B). It should be noted that this information was not included in the data analysis process. The purpose of recording practice times was to encourage participants to plan their practice sessions and to keep a record for self-evaluation purposes.

- Written reflections of participants, assessing the extent to which they achieved their goals (Addendum C). This served as an exercise in self-regulation and was analysed as part of the post-view.
- ‘Ingredients’ mind-map (Addendum A).

In this chapter, the following aspects were described:

- The research design,
- The teaching-learning process and the application thereof,
- The data collection methods which describes the participants and materials used.

In the following chapter, a detailed report is presented to describe the way in which raw data were organised and analysed in order to best answer the primary and secondary research questions.

CHAPTER 4: FINDINGS

4.1 Introduction

In this chapter, by reporting on the results of various data collection procedures, I will aim to answer the primary research question, namely:

> When learning a new work, how do students respond to and experience the application of an analytical procedure designed to facilitate the independent development of interpretation?

In order to answer this question, evidence which was gathered throughout the entire study will be analysed to describe the following:

- How did participants approach learning a new work prior to the analytical procedure and did their approach change during the process?
- With specific reference to their development from the first to the third lesson, how did participants respond to and experience the application of the analytical procedure?
- How did the participants' understanding of interpretation develop throughout the process of the application of the analytical procedure?

Data were gathered in three phases over a period of approximately ten weeks, as illustrated in the table below:

Table 4-1: Events Time-frame Showing the Three Phases of Data Collection

EVENTS TIMELINE	APPROXIMATELY TEN DAYS	APPROXIMATELY EIGHT WEEKS	APPROXIMATELY ONE WEEK
Data instruments	PHASE 1 Interview 1 (Pre-view).	PHASE 2 Three video-recorded lessons for each participant; practice journals which included mind-maps for each lesson; field notes; observation checklists.	PHASE 3 Interview 2 (Post-view) and written reflections in practice journals.
Reporting method	Codes, themes, categories with the computer-assisted programme ATLAS.ti.	Illustration of the development during the three recorded lessons.	Codes, themes, categories with the computer-assisted programme ATLAS.ti.

During Phase 1, each participant participated in a semi-structured interview. The researcher purposefully did not explain to the participants that the focus of the study was on interpretation. The reason for this was to obtain the most truthful perspective possible from each participant, without influencing them in any way; participants are learners in the researcher's music class at school and always eager to please and 'give the correct answers'. The purpose of the first interview was to gain a pre-view of each participant's current approach to learning a new work.

Phase 2 took place over a period of approximately eight weeks. There was an overlap in events occurring during Phase 1 and Phase 2 as individual participants started the process on different dates. While some participants were still being interviewed, others had already started their first lesson. The second phase continued until all participants had received three lessons. During these video-recorded lessons, participants completed a variety of written activities and participated in verbal discussions with the researcher. They also reflected on their approach after each lesson by reporting their thoughts in their practice journals. An observation checklist was used by the researcher to analyse video-recorded lessons, and field notes were kept up to date throughout the process.

The last phase of data collection constituted a second interview which served as a post-view. Participants reflected on the process and were prompted to reflect on their understanding of aspects discussed during the first interview. Information gathered through this interview was analysed to gain an overview of each participants' unique experience and their development throughout the process. Comparing information from the two interviews enabled the researcher to describe the process and highlight areas of growth.

4.2 Phase 1 – Interview 1: Pre-view

When analysing the verbal responses of participants as recorded during the first interview, it became clear that the process of learning a new work was a complex and unique experience for each individual. The most effective way for me to gain an understanding of their approaches to learning a new work was to identify common

themes which were then categorised. The computer programme ATLAS.ti was used during the coding process of the first interview.

Table 4-2: Summary of Categories and Themes for Interview 1

CATEGORY	**THEMES**
APPROACH when learning a new work	Interpretation Practice strategies
ATTITUDE when learning a new work	Positive Negative
AUDITORY activities when learning a new work	Listening to recordings Audiation

Participants' verbal comments which represent their approach to learning a new work, their attitude when having to learn a new work and their activities when learning a new work, will be discussed in Phase 1, as outlined in Table 4-2.

4.2.1 Category 1: Approach when Learning a New Work

According to the Oxford dictionary (Oxford Dictionary and Thesaurus, 2009:41) the first category, 'approach', can be defined as "a way of dealing with a situation or a problem": an approach including the use of specific tactics. Participants' responses which referred to their way of dealing with learning a new piece, will be presented in two themes under the category 'approach'. Firstly, their approach to learning will be described with specific reference to their understanding and their application of aspects related to interpretation. Secondly, their tactics, which are represented by their practice strategies, will be discussed.

Table 4-3: Descriptions of Themes from Category 1 and Related Themes

CATEGORY 1: APPROACH		
THEME	**DESCRIPTION**	**EXEMPLAR QUOTE**
1. Interpretation	Their understanding of interpretation which included comments on the composer, stylistic period and character. The extent to which they make independent decisions regarding interpretation. Attention to score indications.	Annie: "... basically the history of the music, the composer, what form is it in, the period, the dynamics used ...." Researcher: "Do you rely mostly on your teacher?" Lynn: "Yes, definitely." Rita: "... if here's Italian [terminology] ... if it says legato, staccato, fortissimo ... pianissimo ... crescendo, decrescendo ...."
2. Practice strategies	Low-level: Ineffective strategies. Mid-level: Includes score study activities. High level: Includes effective strategies and attention to interpretation.	Lynn: "I just want to learn those notes ...." Leila: "[will study the score before practising] ... I'll just like sit and see if there's stuff I must watch out for ...." Mia: "I'd listen to the recording twice, I'd listen to the pace... then the articulation ... the dynamics ... do they speed up ... maybe if it's forte do they get extra loud and play faster to emphasise the emotion of the piece ...."

It must be noted that the exemplar quotes in the table above were chosen specifically as they provide the best representation of the description of each category. These quotes will be used again later in this document when a specific pattern in the data is discussed.

4.2.1.1 Interpretation

From the analysis of verbal discussions, it was clear that for several participants, interpretation was not easily definable. Due to this lack of clarity, many aspects relating to interpretation were neglected in their discussions and their practical sessions at the piano.

When participants were asked to explain their understanding of interpretation, a few seemed to have rough ideas and were able to describe this in terms of the stylistic period and composer; however, their answers were often vague and inconsistent.

Hayley showed a measure of understanding but found it difficult to verbalise this explicitly; however, she was aware that she should aim to communicate a certain character through her performance:

> Hayley: “The way the music is written kind of helps me work out how its character is supposed to sound.”

Lynn was very honest about her confusion:

> Lynn: “Sometimes I play through it and then I don’t know what I’m doing ... I just fill it in and hope it was meant to be ....”

Lynn explained that her understanding of interpretation was mostly based on realising score indications, for example, dynamics, but she was not confident that her independent decisions were acceptable.

In cases when participants found it difficult to define their understanding of interpretation, they were prompted to comment on their consideration of the composer and stylistic period. Some participants regarded this as important factors to

consider. Annie was able to identify several important factors which played a role in making interpretive decisions:

> Annie: “Basically, the history of the music, the composer, what form is it in, the period, the dynamics ... if it is a certain composer, that composer normally has a certain style.”

Although she referred to these aspects when describing her understanding of interpretation, she admitted that she only ‘sometimes’ looked at the composer, and was uncertain of the composer of pieces that she was currently practising. This implies that even though some participants are able to describe their understanding of interpretation, they do not necessarily apply this knowledge when learning a new work.

Although some participants mentioned paying attention to some aspects of interpretation during their practising, comments were sparse. Leila reported that she would only start thinking of the “feeling of the piece” once she had learned the notes. Mia deemed the title as a key indicator for interpretation while Hayley stated that she did not look at the title at all, but did consider the stylistic period.

Hannah and Leila agreed to the importance of the composer and Leila stated that “each composer has [his] own characteristics”:

> Leila: “Sometimes I look at the title and who composed it because each composer like has their own characteristics so if I know who the composer is, maybe I’ll know what kind of characteristics the piece should have, so that would help to play to the piece.”

Mia was very excited to share her thoughts and explained that the title of a piece played a crucial role in her interpretation:

> Mia: “Yes, it [the title] does [play an important role] ... because you know ma’am, a title of a book, it sort of in a way gives the story away, I feel like that about like the title of a piece. Also like if it’s in ... Italian or something, it would make me curious ... if it was written by this person and that person ... for instance Bach ... like the status he had in his life; it was sort of represented in his music ... I also try and look up (research).”

During interviews, discussions were initiated by prompting participants to think of current repertoire that they are playing. Participants often demonstrated uncertainty regarding the stylistic period and the composer. Several participants seemed to make very little or no connection between the title, period, style, composer and the role of these for interpretation.

Hannah and Leila both stated that the composer of a piece played an important role and related this to the stylistic period:

Hannah: "... because you have to play it the way the composer wants you to."
Leila: "Each composer has its own characteristics."

Some participants were unable to name the composer or identify the stylistic period of pieces that they were currently learning. Furthermore, even when they did consider these aspects, they did not often regard them as important factors which would influence their performance:

Hayley:	"No, the title of the piece doesn't really influence how I'm playing it ... I only work with the notes when I start."
Interviewer:	"Do you usually check what the title of a piece is?"
Lynn:	"No."
Interviewer:	"Do you check which stylistic period it comes from?"
Lynn:	"No ... I just want to learn those notes...."
Rita:	"If I like the piece, then I look at the composer and I try to research them and what they're about, but then, if I don't, [I] just leave it alone."
Interviewer:	"... and the title of a piece?"
Rita:	"Yes, I do look at that."
Interviewer:	"Does that influence the way you play it?"
Rita:	"No."

Two participants stated outright that they did not consider the composer or stylistic period at all when learning a new piece. The more advanced student of the two responded with a guilty smile, as if admitting that she knew she ought to do this.

When the conversations turned to current repertoire on which participants were working, it was clear that knowing (about) the style and period was not a priority when learning a new work. When asked who the composer of a current piece was, Annie replied, “Isn’t it Bach?” and was not able to state the stylistic period as she was not sure of the composer. Lynn gave a similar response: “Chopin? I think it’s Romantic.”

Comments pertaining to interpretation which included thoughts on the character of the music were sparse. Lynn mentioned that she would think in terms of the character “fairy princess ... light and playful”, but Hayley stated that she did not consider the idea that “the music was telling a story”.

Part of being a successful musician depends on the ability to make independent decisions regarding interpretation. In the next few paragraphs, I will discuss the extent to which participants made independent decisions regarding interpretation.
Most participants still relied predominantly on their teacher in this regard. The reason for this could be that they lacked a clear understanding and maturity to make independent decisions:

> Lynn: “I’d feel like there just meant to be like a *crescendo* or *decrescendo* somewhere in the piece and then I just fill it in and then hope that like, it was meant to be.”
> Annie: “I mostly rely on you [her piano teacher].”

Hayley reported that she would, at times, attempt to make her own decisions, but would mostly follow her teacher’s guidance. Lynn had a very strong student-mentor perception and stated that “I’ve had very good teachers, so I’ve never like had a reason to doubt them.” Importantly, with this statement she implied that she saw no reason to make her own decisions regarding the interpretation of a piece.

The last theme in this category involves the way in which participants interpreted indications in the score. Participants seemed confident about learning the notes and interpreting obvious score indications by themselves, but felt dependent on their teacher for advice on interpreting the piece. Although it was notable that most participants mentioned observing the score indications, they were not concerned with these during the initial stages of learning a new piece. They primarily aimed to practise a piece until they were able to play it fluently, before attempting to consider score indications, let alone pay attention to any aspects of interpretation. Only Rita commented that she would pay attention to dynamic indications from the start, while still in the early phase of learning the notes.

When asked to state during which stage of their practising they started observing score indications, the following statements were made:

Annie:	"... and only afterward [after learning the notes] dynamics."
Gabby:	"... when I know the piece well, I add dynamics."
Hannah:	"After I'm done learning, then I'll add dynamics."
Hayley:	"I only work with the notes when I start."
Leila:	"I incorporate that once I am confident with the notes."
Lynn:	"... after I've learned the notes."

It was concerning that several of the more advanced participants seemed to be entirely focused on notational aspects when learning a new work. They made few independent decisions regarding interpretation, relied mostly, and in some cases entirely on the teacher to guide them.

Mia:	"I sometimes try to put dynamics in."
Annie:	"I mostly rely on my teacher."
Lynn:	"... I've never really thought of it myself, so it's almost like somebody has to give me the picture and then I see it."
Hannah:	"The teacher kind of helps me with certain parts."

In summary, and in preview of my discussions in the next chapter, I am of the opinion that the implications of participants' inability to define their understanding of interpretation and lack of applying their theoretical knowledge in practice will most likely have a negative influence on their quality of practising. If these ineffective methods are not addressed and adjusted, it is highly unlikely that they will develop into independent interpreters of music. The next section reports on their practice strategies.

4.2.1.2 Practice Strategies

The reason for discussing the practice strategies of participants is to determine to what extent they incorporate aspects relating to interpretation in their approach. In order to do this, practice strategies, as described by the participants, will be explained according to the three-levelled model as proposed by Sullivan & Cantwell (1999:245). I discuss the findings in this way in order to determine if and how aspects of interpretation are incorporated or neglected in participants' strategies.

Table 4-4: Practice Strategies: Three-levelled Model (Sullivan & Cantwell, 1999)

STRATEGY	**DESCRIPTION**
Low-level	Trial-and-error approach. Ad hoc approach which includes poor planning. Focus is mostly on aspects of notation. Low levels of self-regulation.
Mid-level	Analytical activities which include: identification of the structure of the piece, integration of concepts, for example, recognising a melody and an accompaniment.
High-level	Includes attention to interpretation which includes: comments on the stylistic period, composer, character, emotion and expression. Self-regulation. Planning and structured approach.

During interviews, participants were encouraged to describe their strategies in as much detail as possible. The analysis revealed that participants used a variety of

strategies when learning a new piece. Although strategies from all three levels were represented, they were not equally weighted.

Low-level Strategies

A practice strategy which represents as a low-level strategy is characterised by ad hoc activities, based on trial-and-error actions, and primarily focuses on the notational aspects of the score.

Some responses from participants represented the use of an ad hoc and inconsistent approach. Comments implied that participants did not plan their practising thoroughly and did not set goals for daily or weekly practice sessions:

> Lynn: "[my practising] It's a mess, honestly."
> Annie: "Basically [I practise] right after school, *if I have time*."

Most participants did not keep a record of their practice times and were not able to report on how much time they spent practising during a week. Only Mia, who plays two instruments, had a rigid weekly schedule:

> Mia: "I use an alarm clock because I also have to practise for [my second instrument] so sometimes maybe I do ten minutes' scales and then later I'd come back to practise my pieces.''

The length of their practice sessions varied. Gabby and Leila reported making use of short time slots of ten minutes or less, whenever they had the opportunity. Hayley agreed that she also preferred shorter sessions as she felt that she could concentrate more intensively, while Rita reported aiming for a thirty-minute practice session every day.

It was surprising to find that many of these intermediate participants still started practising new pieces hands separately. Rita specified that she would start with the "hand that looked easier", while Gabby, alike, reported that she would only play hands together if "it look[ed] easy". Hayley and Mia described a more varied but

similar approach and described practising hands together, but switching to separate-hand practising for challenging sections.

To the majority of participants, it was standard procedure to start from the beginning of the piece during every practice session. Although Mia used many high-level strategies and analysed problems in detail, she admitted to continuously playing from the beginning of the piece instead of focusing on problematic areas:

> Mia: "Always from the beginning ... it's a habit ma'am. It's really hard to start somewhere else."
>
> Lynn: "I'll start at the beginning and I'll start with the right hand ... always always always."
>
> Gabby: "... always [start] from the beginning."

It can be concluded that the predominant goal towards which most participants strive, is to play the notes fluently. Only then will they pay attention to any score indications, character, style or interpretation.

Mid-level Strategies

The use of mid-level strategies included score study, analysis, the identification of the structure and observation of the integration of structural phenomena – for example, observing the texture of a piece as 'melody and accompaniment' or observing the harmony forming a cadence at the end of a phrase.

A few participants' comments indicated the use of a mid-level strategy. Although several participants reported studying the score briefly before they started practising, the dominant focus was typified by observations of notational aspects.

Mia and Rita reported studying the score before they started practising, to observe the key signature, while Gabby and Leila made sure they understood symbols and tried to identify difficult sections beforehand:

Gabby:	"... to see if there's key changes ... to see if there's any difficulties, like some symbols I don't understand, to mark it out to find out before I start practising it."
Hannah:	"I first look at the key signature...."
Hayley:	"... playing legato and stuff like that, whether it's supposed to be played faster or not like the accents and if it's staccato or legato."
Rita:	"I look at the key signature and then the hand position and what clef it is in and time signature."
Mia:	"I would first see what key it's in and then I'd like play the scale to like get it in my head."

Hannah reported sight-reading slowly through the whole piece in order to gain an overview of the structure but her comments also implied attention to aspects related to interpretation:

Hannah: "... sight-read and then get the general idea of what's going on ... I look at the title and who composed it ...."

Hayley, on the other hand, reported discovering the structure of the piece as she practised it, but made a connection on the notational level only. To her, a repeated section implied that she would be able to play the notes of that section when it recurred. Lynn's intentions were similar. She stated bluntly that she despised the note-learning process and recurring passages had no meaning in terms of the structure of the piece:

Hayley:	"If there's a section that repeats [long pause], then I'm, I mean I know I can play that section; if I can play that section, then I know I can play it when it repeats ...."
Lynn:	"... I almost feel like I have to take a step back just to like analyse it almost, but like at a quick glance. I don't spend more than like five minutes doing that ... and then I see if there are any phrases that are repeated, so that's almost like ok, so that's like three bars less I have to learn."

Annie's approach was more advanced. She studied the score to identify repeated sections in order to plan her practice sessions better and identify recurring challenging passages:

Annie: "[will identify a repeated section] ... sometimes, cause then you know that it's the same thing that you're playing, so you might [practise these sections in conjunction]."

No participants mentioned observing phrases or cadences, or referred to the texture of the music.

High-level Strategies

Participants who displayed the use of high-level strategies mentioned aspects related to interpretation and reported the use of self-regulated activities.

High-level practice strategies are characterised by attention to aspects of interpretation, which includes an awareness of the style period, character, composer, emotion and expression of the music. Musicians' level of their understanding of interpretation is closely related to the independent implementation of this in their practice strategies. Because the focus of this study is on the development of interpretation, this aspect was discussed at length in the previous section. For this reason, information will not be repeated here, but findings which were reported in the previous discussion will be integrated when results are summarised.

When participants' verbal responses were evaluated for statements relating to the use of self-regulated activities, traces of such activities were found in the approach of most students. Statements included reference to identifying and starting with difficult sections, correcting mistakes and focusing on short sections, rather than playing through the piece as a whole.

Correcting Mistakes

Two participants mentioned that they immediately aimed to correct mistakes during their practice sessions:

Rita:	"I correct [mistakes] straight away."
Gabby:	"... I try to get the mistakes out of the way."

A more sophisticated approach was reported by Lynn and Mia who analysed their mistakes in order to identify the root of the problem. Lynn stated the following in this regard: "I look if it's fingering or if it's a sharp that I haven't noticed." This type of self-regulation is crucial for independent practising. Although Mia displayed similar behaviour in analysing mistakes, she still used the ineffective method of playing from the beginning of the piece when she had made a mistake, instead of working on that specific section. However, Mia was the one participant who kept a strict practice journal, made notes on interpretative aspects of each of her pieces, did research on the style and composer and compared different recordings; thus, although her methods reflected the use of some ineffective strategies, her focus was mainly on artistic aspects.

Identifying Difficult Sections

Three participants showed the ability to identify challenging material with the intent of focusing their attention on these sections during their practice sessions:

Annie:	“I start at a difficult section, cause ... I want to practise that, until I get it right.”
Leila:	“I look at what I struggled with and then I’ll focus on those bits.”
Mia:	“I’d see where I made the mistake ... make sure that’s my problem.”

Focusing on Short Sections

Several participants adopted the effective strategy of focusing on shorter sections as opposed to only playing through the whole piece during practising:

Annie:	“I normally do sections.”
Gabby:	“I practise section by section, so get [it] perfect and then I go on.”
Hannah:	“Piece by piece.”
Leila:	“I’ll [do] sections A first ... I wouldn’t just play through the whole thing.”
Lynn:	“I try break it down into eight bars.”

Most participants integrated all three levels (low, mid and high) to some degree, although the majority of strategies represented less consideration of aspects of integration and only little attention to interpretation.

The most prominent features which could be identified related to an emphasis on notational aspects (pitch and rhythm). Participants mostly saw the ‘note learning’ process as an isolated phase and often failed to integrate note learning with musical aspects until they were able to play the piece fluently. Very few participants had engaged in focused and goal-orientated analytical activities before they started learning a new piece.

Although some high levels of self-regulation were reported, artistic aspects of interpretation were mostly neglected and often completely ignored.

The practice approach of the majority of participants has evidently not yet been developed into a set of sophisticated strategies to guarantee success in terms of performance outcome. The use of ineffective methods which represent a low-level

approach will have to be reduced, while more effective approaches ought to be refined. This implies that these participants need to be taught *what* an effective practice strategy constitutes and *how* this is independently applied. This observation is discussed in depth in the next chapter.

4.2.2 Category 2: Attitude when Learning a New Work

The Oxford dictionary (Oxford Dictionary and Thesaurus, 2009:54) describes 'attitude' as "a way of thinking". Participants presented contrasting reports when asked to describe the way in which they usually responded to the learning of a new piece. They reported both positive and negative attitudes:

Table 4-5: Summary of Attitudes when Learning a New Work

NEGATIVE ATTITUDE	INTERPRETATION OF NEGATIVE ATTITUDE	POSITIVE ATTITUDE
Annie: "I get frustrated ... I am overwhelmed because it looks hard."	Focus on instant results. Impatience.	Annie: "Part of me is excited."
Gabby: "... to find time to practise ... if I see the piece has a lot of things I don't understand, I kind of get nervous."	Focus on the end result and not on the process. Time constraints.	Gabby: "Mostly excited."
Hannah: "I feel quite nervous ... the piece might be difficult."	Focus on the end result.	Hannah: "... but I'm excited."
Hayley: "When I start playing, I get impatient."	Focus on instant results. Impatience.	Hayley: "I'm excited to learn it."
Lynn: "I don't like learning notes ... I really hate learning notes ... I think my sight-reading is bad ... I get so frustrated .... it's not fun."	Focus on instant results. Impatience.	No positive comment with regard to learning a new work was made by this participant.

Mia: “I’m sort of frightened and worried ... I think about how long I would have to practise it.”	Time constraints.	Mia: “I can’t wait to play it.”
Rita: “If it’s harder’ [then she does not like practising it].”	Immaturity.	Rita: “If it’s nice ... then I’m excited.”

The note-learning process is clearly a frustration to many students. It seems that many of them focused primarily on the end result, but did not enjoy the process. In some cases this could be due to poor sight-reading, which makes the process of learning notes cumbersome. Adding to their frustration is their expectancy of instant results. They expect instant results but are possibly applying ineffective strategies which fail to deliver the desired outcome. Furthermore, the level of difficulty (be that in terms of notation or technical requirements) often leaves participants nervous and anxious. As most of the participants in this study are actively involved in extra-mural and academic activities at school, many of them expressed concern about finding enough time to practise. Besides their demands on time, the choice of repertoire was also mentioned by some students. One participant stated that she practised more regularly if she “liked the piece.”

On the other hand, all but one of the participants complemented their negative attitude with a positive aspect. Despite their apprehension, they expressed excitement at the prospect of being able to perform the piece eventually.

4.2.3 Category 3: Auditory Activities when Learning a New work

Auditory activities can be described as activities which relate to hearing. The themes in this category, audiation and listening to recordings, are both activities related to hearing.

4.2.3.1 Listening to Recordings

In Chapter 2, it was clarified that the development of aural and critical listening skills played an important role in the development of the young musician. Participants were

prompted to discuss their attention to critical listening activities which could develop their aural perception of the notated score.

As a result of easy access (mostly YouTube) to recordings, most of the participants reported listening to recordings of their repertoire.

Table 4-6: Report of Listening to Recordings of Repertoire

PARTICIPANT	CONTINUALLY LISTENING	OCCASIONALLY LISTENING	NEVER LISTENING
Gabby	X		
Mia	X		
Hannah		X	
Leila		X	
Lynn			X
Hayley		X	
Annie		X	
Rita			X

It must be noted that Rita's level in piano is approximately Grade 3 and it is possible that there are no recordings available of the repertoire on which she is currently working.

In some cases, participants described listening with focused attention. Other participants' reasons for listening were ill-defined. Although most of the participants reported that they listened to recordings of their repertoire, only Mia described her strategy in detail and explained that she attempted forming an idea of the interpretation of the piece. She listened to recordings more than once while following the notation, each time focusing on a different aspect. She also reported comparing different performances and making notes in a practice journal:

> Mia: "I'd listen to the pace the first time ... the second time I'd pay attention to the articulation and the dynamics ... do they speed up ... maybe if it's a forte, do they get extra loud ... the emotion of the piece."

Many participants presented vague answers when they were asked to explain on what they focused when listening to recordings. Comments mostly suggested that the aim was to establish if their own playing lacked some dynamic variety and to identify possible incorrect notes in their own playing:

Leila:	“Mainly [if there are any] note mistakes ... if it’s not loud enough or soft enough.”
Annie:	“It gives me an idea.”
Gabby:	“Tempos ... and dynamics.”
Hannah:	“Just for hearing.”

Lynn reported a strong aversion to listening to recordings and stated that “it intimidates me ... I would get frustrated that I couldn’t play it like that immediately.”

Although the majority of participants reported listening to recordings of their pieces, their comments indicated that they did not have complete understanding and knowledge of critical listening skills. The activity of listening to a recording of a piece that they are practising will be more effective if they are able to assess and evaluate the performance, as well as their own.

4.2.3.2 Audiation

Audiation is a term which was coined in the 1970s by Edwin Gordon and is defined as follows: “If you hear musical sound and give meaning to what you see in music notation before you perform it ...” (Gordon, 1980:7). Gordon distinguishes between basic audiation and notational audiation. In this section, the latter is referred to, which means to “read the score silently ... before sound is physically heard (Gordon, 1980:16).

When asked during interviews if they could form an internal aural perception of the score by studying it, participants’ responses varied.

Some participants seemed confused by this concept as seen by Mia’s response:

Researcher:	"If you pick up a new piece of music ... that you've never seen and you just look at it, can you form an idea of what it might sound like?"
Mia:	"Well, not really ma'am."
Researcher:	"... can you tell ... if it's gonna be a slow piece or a fast piece?"
Mia:	"Oh ja [yes]."

Comments by other participants included the observation of notational aspects such as tempo and articulation, but some also made connections between notational aspects and the character of the piece:

Leila:	"[Yes] I can [form an idea of what the piece would sound like], if I look at it properly then I'm like, ok, ... but sometimes I don't."
Lynn:	"... when I see the *staccatos'* I obviously think, like that's for me; it's like an obvious and then sometimes, like most of the time I'll look at like the words that they put near ... where the beat ... [referring to a character description at the beginning of a piece near the time signature]... and then I look at it and then I try think about how fast it is and then I count it a little bit ...."
Hayley:	"I can say if it's gonna be a slow kind of piece or if it's gonna be lively."

Now that a pre-view of the view and actions of the participants has been presented, I turn to my report on the teaching learning process.

4.3 Phase 2 – Application of the Analytical Procedure

4.3.1 Analysis of Video-recorded Lessons

During Phase 2, each participant received three individual lessons during which the application of the analytical procedure was recorded. A total of twenty-four lessons were recorded and analysed.

The structural phenomena were the following (as described in Chapter 3): cadence, tonality, tempo, dynamics, metre, register, texture, form, density, motive, rhythm and

timbre. These phenomena were the frame on which the mind-map for analysis was based. Participants' understanding of the structural phenomena varied: while some concepts were easily grasped, others concepts posed some difficulties. In some cases, participants were not familiar with the terminology and the researcher had to explain terms before written activities could be completed.

Video recordings were analysed by using a checklist to verify participants' understanding of the structural phenomena. Results from the checklist were combined with written descriptions from practice diaries. Merging information from both data sources enabled the researcher to draw reliable conclusions regarding the participants' development throughout the process.

In the discussion to follow, evidence from video-recorded lessons and written activities will be integrated to show the way in which participants' understanding of challenging concepts evolved during the process.

Findings will be described from two divergent perspectives: firstly, concepts which were easily understood, and secondly, concepts which posed some difficulties.

The data-analysis tool presented by Van Niekerk (2015:23-26) was adapted and used to analyse video-recorded material (Addendum F). Results from analysing video-recorded lessons and written activities were quantified and are depicted in the table below:

Table 4 -7: Summary of the Participants' Understanding of the Structural Phenomena

	Cadence				Tonality				Tempo				Metre				Dynamics				Register				Texture				Form				Density				Motive				Rhythm				Timbre		
	L1	L2	L3		L1	L2	L3		L1	L2	L3		L1	L2	L3		L1	L2	L3		L1	L2	L3		L1	L2	L3		L1	L2	L3		L1	L2	L3		L1	L2	L3		L1	L2	L3		L1	L2	L3
Gabby																																															
Mia																																															
Hannah																																															
Leila																																															
Lynn																																															
Hayley																																															
Annie																																															
Rita																																															
Correct	5	7	7		7	7	8		7	7	7		7	8	8		8	6	7		5	5	8		5	7	7		7	8	8		5	5	5		5	6	6		6	7	7		7	8	8
Partially	3	1	1		0	1	0		1	1	1		1	0	0		0	2	1		2	1	0		2	1	1		0	0	0		3	2	1		1	0	0		2	1	0		1	0	0
Incorrect	0	0	0		1	0	0		0	0	0		0	0	0		0	0	0		1	2	0		1	0	0		1	0	0		0	1	2		2	1	1		0	0	1		0	0	0

The figures provide a clear representation of structural phenomena which were understood either without any difficulty or with the occasional difficulty. Figures also indicate participants' improvement or lack thereof related to each structural phenomenon.

4.3.1.1 Structural Phenomena which were Understood without Difficulty

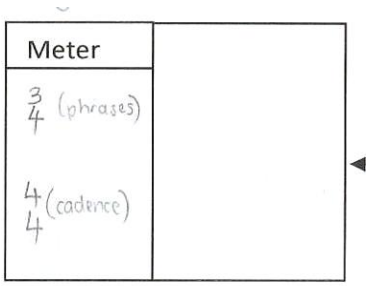
The following structural phenomena were easily grasped by the all participants: metre, timbre, form and tonality. Participants were not only expected to understand the structural phenomena, but also to make a connection between phenomena and the implications for interpretation in a specific piece. This was described in terms of the way it should be played and depicted in a column with the heading 'play-as-if' on their mind-maps.

METRE

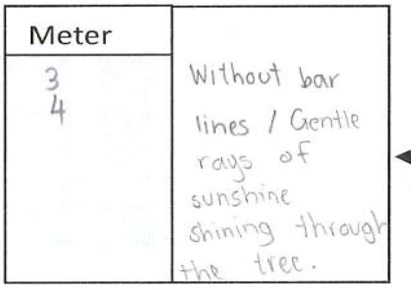
The concept which was effortlessly understood and described in terms of character, was metre. Evidence from mind-maps showed that, across the three lessons, participants' written comments developed into more detailed and specific descriptions.

In her first lesson, Mia identified the change in time signature which took place at the cadence each time, but offered no description of the character; however, she made clear interpretative deductions and presented a detailed description in lesson 2, providing more detail and specification:

Mia: Lesson 1 – Metre



Mia: Lesson 2 – Metre

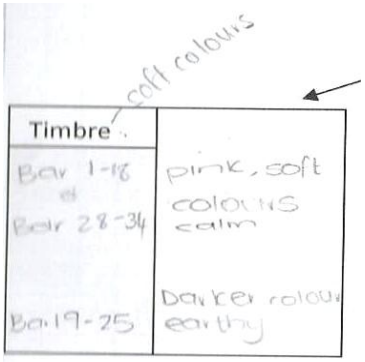


TIMBRE

This concept was equally well grasped by all participants. Although Lynn related timbre to a single instrument in her first lesson, she extended her description with more detail and specification in lesson 2:

Lynn: Lesson 1 – Timbre

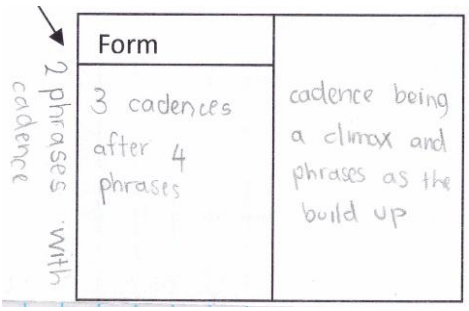
Lynn: Lesson 2 – Timbre



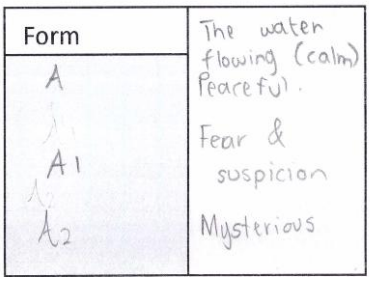
FORM

Participants were mostly able to identify the main structural divisions of each piece; however, they were often not familiar with the terminology used when referring to the form of a piece. Mia suspected that phrases and cadences were related to the structural divisions, but was unable to describe this convincingly during her first lesson. She showed a vast improvement in the next lesson when she marked the sections clearly in the score and gave a detailed character description for each section in her mind-map:

Mia: Lesson 1 – Form



Mia: Lesson 2 – Form

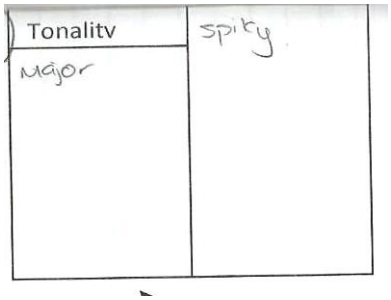


TONALITY

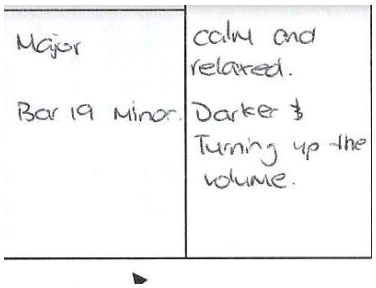
Participants were comfortable with identifying the tonality of pieces, although mainly through listening to the music. They were often confused at the first study of the score before listening. Because the chosen music was composed in the twentieth century, there were often many accidentals which disguised the key, but participants' perception of the tonality became clear once they had listened to the pieces.

Although Gabby and Hannah offered the correct description in their written work, their initial verbal answers in the lessons were incorrect. Descriptions of character changes which often accompanied a change in tonality, however, were more comprehensively described in lessons which followed:

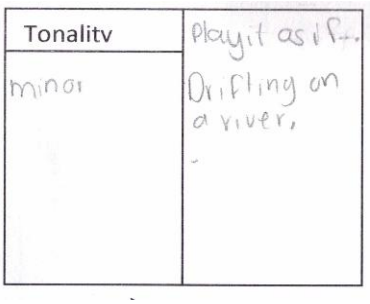
Gabby: Lesson 1 – Tonality



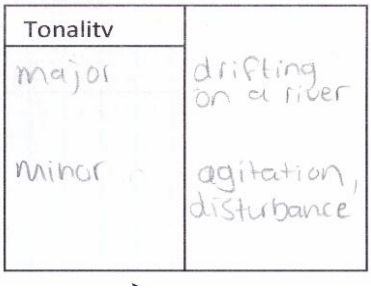
Gabby: Lesson 2 – Tonality



Hannah: Lesson 2 – Tonality



Hannah: Lesson 3 – Tonality



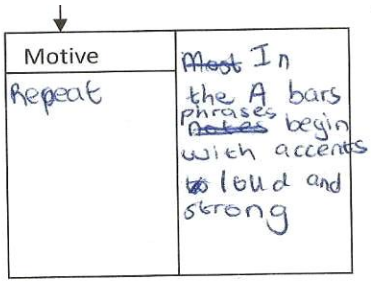
4.3.1.2 Structural Phenomena which were Understood with a Degree of Difficulty

The following structural phenomena were grasped by the majority of participants, but a considerable amount of uncertainty was evident in terms of their understanding and ability to give a comprehensible written description in their practice journals: motive, rhythm, tempo and dynamics.

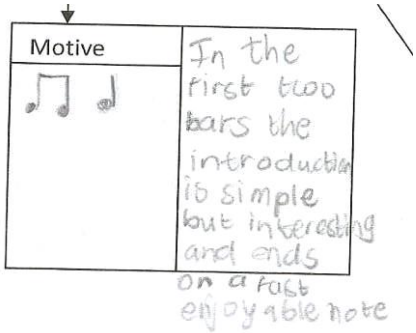
MOTIVE

Rita was entirely confused by this concept in her first lesson, but quickly grasped it from her second lesson and had identified a clear rhythmic motive by the third lesson:

Rita: Lesson 1 – Motive

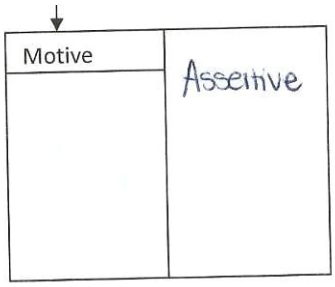


Rita: Lesson 3 – Motive

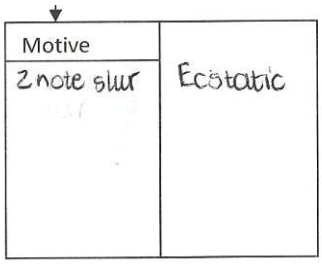


During Annie's first lesson, she shared Rita's uncertainty, but was able to identify a recurring rhythmic motive by the third lesson:

Annie: Lesson 1 – Motive

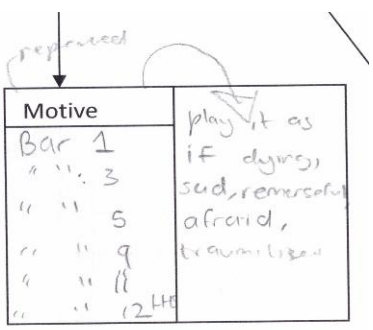


Annie: Lesson 3 – Motive

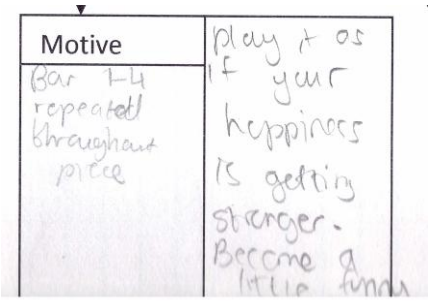


During the first lesson and evident from Leila's written work, it was clear that she was not fully confident to describe this phenomenon adequately. Throughout all three lessons, she lacked the ability to correctly identify the occurrence of a rhythmic or melodic motive:

Leila: Lesson 1 – Motive

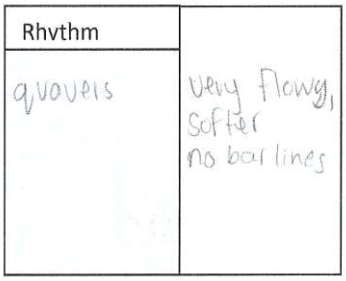


Leila: Lesson 3 – Motive

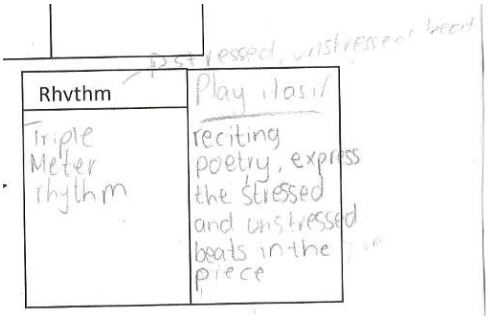


Although all participants understood this concept, two offered comments in their written descriptions which indicated an initial misinterpretation of rhythm. In the first lesson, instead of referring to the rhythm of the piece, Hannah described the time signature. In lesson two, she referred only to the use of 'long notes', but by lesson three, she had observed the repetitive quaver pattern which she associated with the flowing character of the piece:

Hannah: Lesson 1 – Rhythm

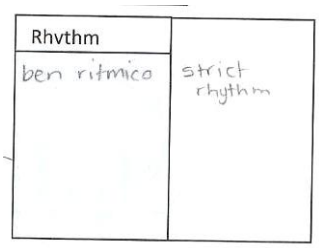


Hannah: Lesson 3 – Rhythm

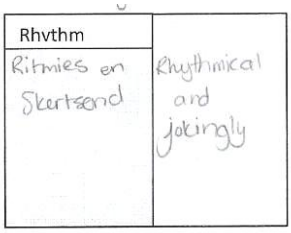


Hayley misinterpreted this concept in all three of the lessons. In the written work during lesson 1, she referred to the character indication of '*ben ritmico'* instead of the specific rhythms used in the piece. In lesson two, she offered a vague description and by lesson three, she still had described the character indication rather than the actual rhythms of the piece:

Hayley: Lesson 1 – Rhythm



Hayley: Lesson 3 – Rhythm

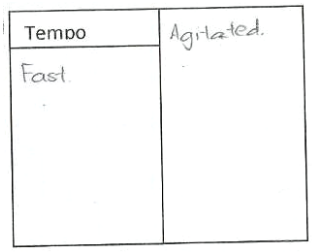


TEMPO

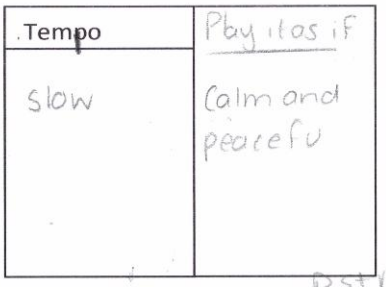
Although tempo is a concept which participants frequently encounter and with which they are mostly familiar, it was interesting that two participants primarily regarded the tempo as that which is designated by a metronome indication. Both participants' first reaction during the lessons was to look for a metronome indication and not finding

one left them somewhat perplexed. However, after a short discussion, they understood that the tempo could also be implied by a character indication. Confirmation of their understanding was clear in their written work from all three lessons:

Gabby: Lesson 1 – Tempo



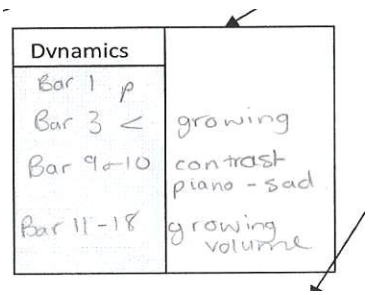
Hannah: Lesson 1 – Tempo



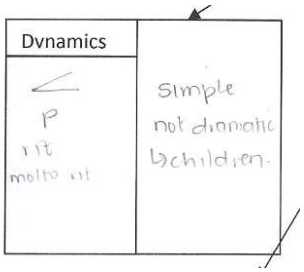
DYNAMICS

Although participants effortlessly identified the dynamics, they often neglected to observe gradual changes. All participants were familiar with this concept, but some failed to be thorough in their descriptions and omitted to observe gradual changes in dynamics. This was clearly evident having compared Hayley's detailed description to Lynn and Annie's work, rather than analysing each participant's progress individually. These descriptions of the dynamics were done for the same pieces:

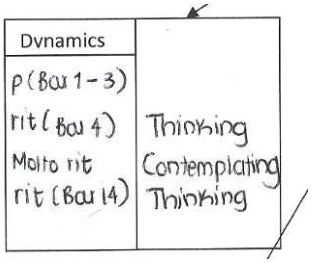
Hayley: Lesson 3 – Dynamics



Lynn: Lesson 3 – Dynamics



Annie: Lesson 3 - Dynamics



4.3.1.3 Structural Phenomena which were Challenging to a Number of Participants

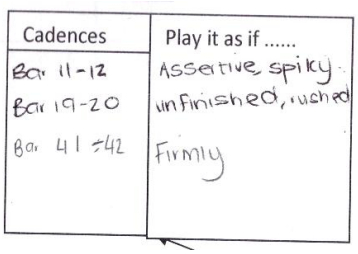
In some lessons, participants found four phenomena especially challenging: cadence, texture, register and density.

CADENCE

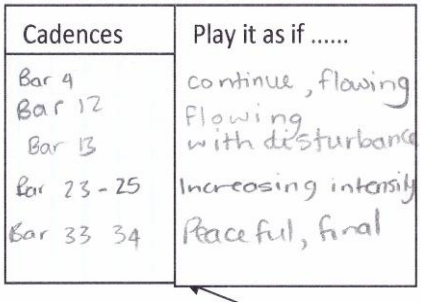
It was notable that when the activity of score study was combined with listening, participants found it easier to identify the occurrence of a cadence than when they studied only the score, without listening.

When considering video-recorded lessons, it was evident that Lynn, Hayley and Rita had difficulty to identify the occurrence of a cadence during some lessons. Although they needed more guidance than other participants, they were able to describe the cadences accurately in their written work from all three lessons:

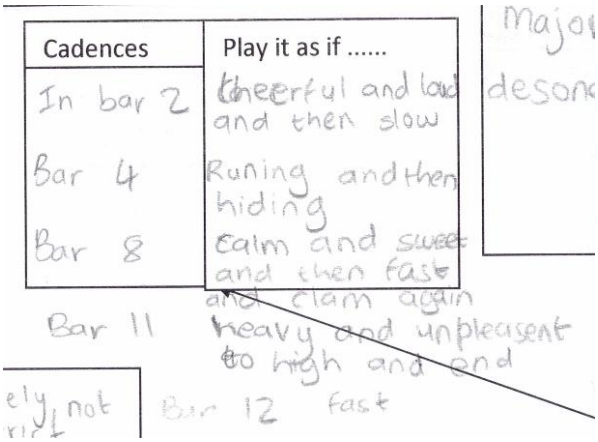
Lynn: Lesson 1 – Cadence



Hayley: Lesson 2 – Cadence



Rita: Lesson 2 – Cadence

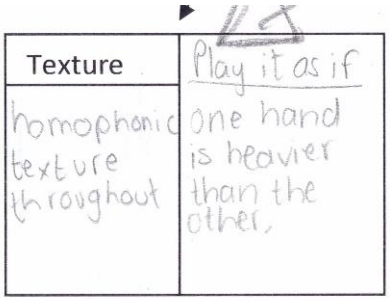


TEXTURE

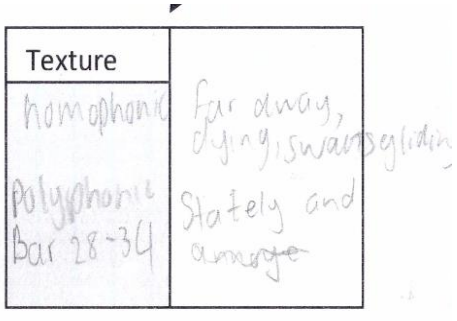
Participants were mostly familiar with this concept; however, several of them asked the researcher to explain texture and remind them of the terminology to describe texture. After short discussions, a measure of uncertainty still manifested.

Although Hannah identified the texture in the first two lessons accurately, her written work in the third lesson implied that there was still some confusion. In the return of the A-section of this particular piece, the melody shifted from the left to the right hand, which she incorrectly interpreted as a change in texture:

Hannah: Lesson 1 – Texture

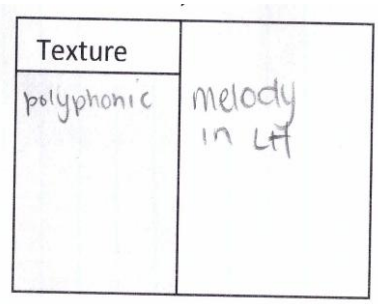


Hannah: Lesson 3 - Texture

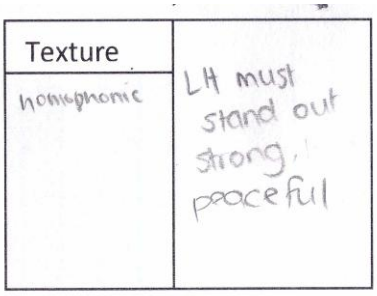


In the first lesson, Lynn described the melody to be in the left hand, but identified the texture as polyphonic. By lesson 2, she has understood the concept fully and indicated that the melody in this homophonic texture should be projected:

Lynn: Lesson 1 – Texture



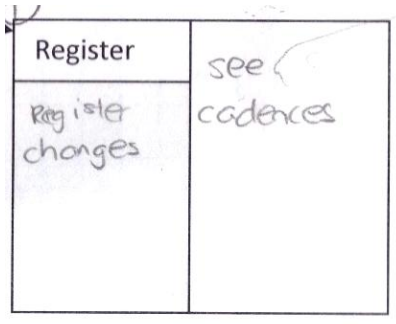
Lynn: Lesson 2 – Texture



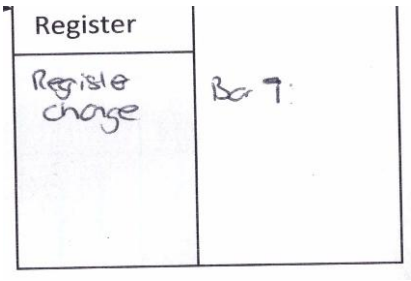
REGISTER

This concept was unclear to many participants. Gabby showed some understanding regarding register changes, but offered a vague description in the first lesson. By her third lesson, she had identified a clear register change in bar 9 of the particular piece:

Gabby: Lesson 1 – Register

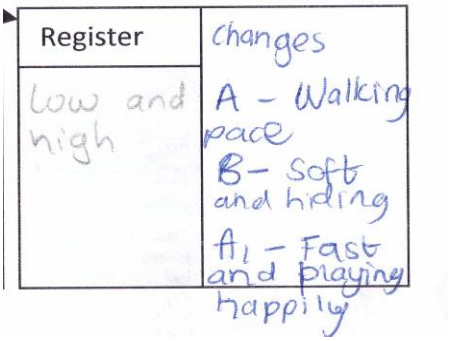


Gabby: Lesson 3 – Register

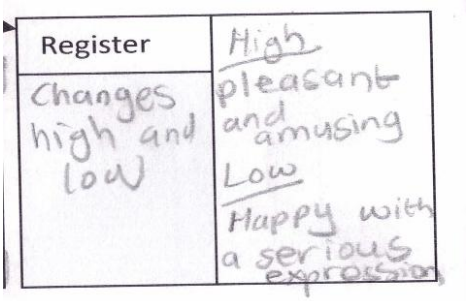


Although Rita's written work was not incorrect, vague descriptions were given. She referred to 'high and low' but failed to be specific in her descriptions:

Rita: Lesson 2 – Register



Rita: Lesson 3 – Register

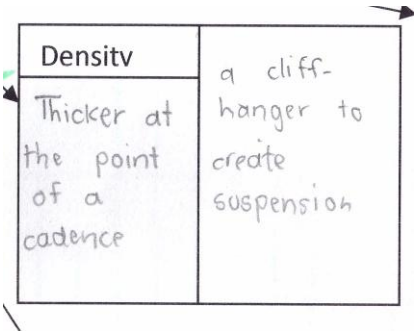


DENSITY

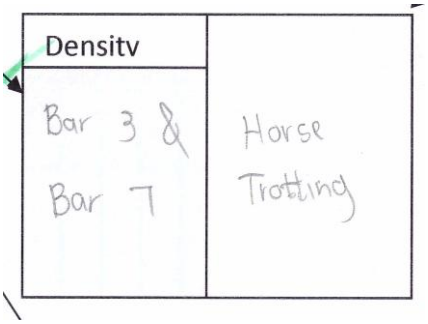
This was the structural phenomenon which was least understood by several participants.

Although Mia seemed to have grasped this concept in lesson one, she referred to a repeated pattern in bars 3 and 7 of a particular piece in lesson three which had no link to a change in density. As the written work of the last lesson was mostly done independently, it would appear that she had not yet fully understood this concept:

Mia: Lesson 1 - Density

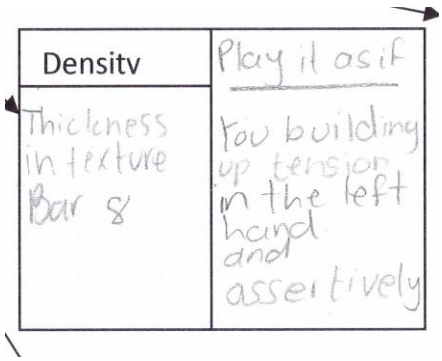


Mia: Lesson 3 – Density

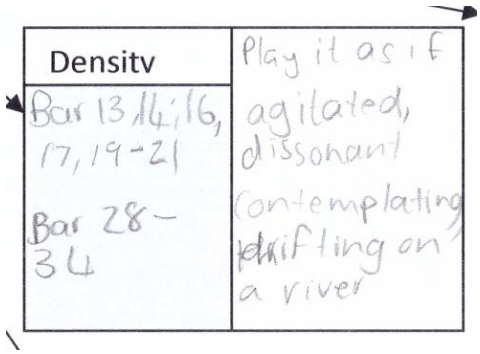


Hannah's written work displayed a similar pattern with a sensible description in lesson one, but an incomprehensible description in lesson three:

Hannah: Lesson 1 – Density

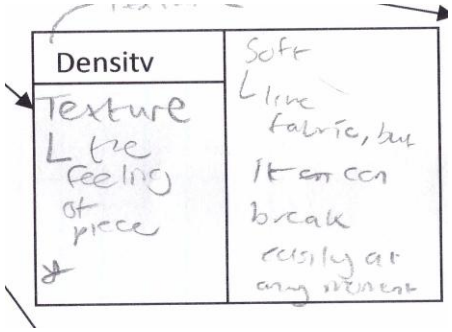


Hannah: Lesson 3– Density

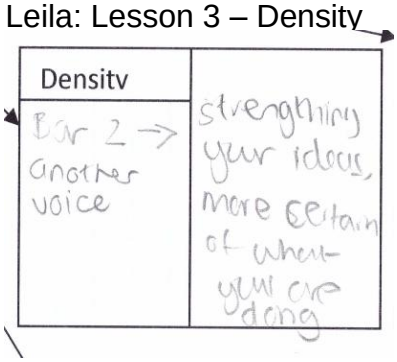


Leila did not seem to have fully grasped this concept in the first two lessons. She described character changes but never referred to the increase or decrease in voice until the third lesson:

Leila: Lesson 1 – Density

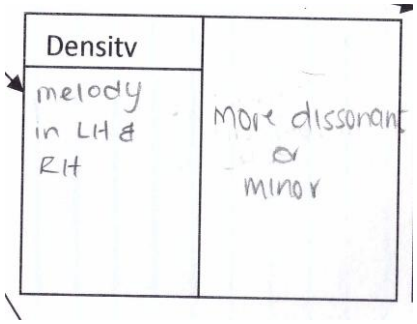


Leila: Lesson 3 – Density

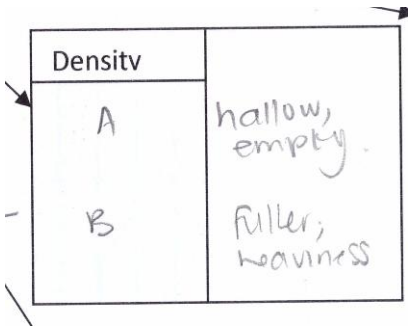


Lynn, too, seemed to have been confused and referred to the texture and tonality in her written work in lesson one. By lesson three, her description had included reference to a ‘fuller tone’:

Lynn: Lesson 1 – Density

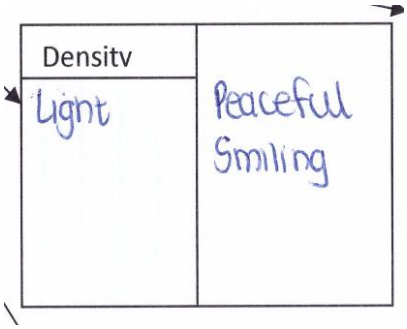


Lynn: Lesson 3 – Density

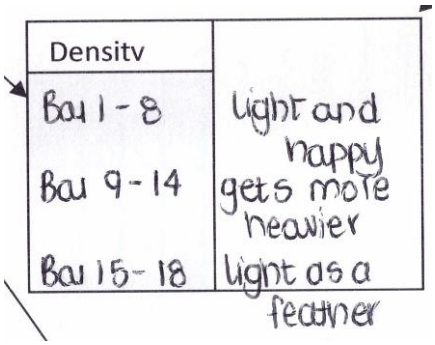


Although Annie's description in lesson one was acceptable, her improved understanding was evident by the detailed description she presented in lesson three:

Annie: Lesson 1 – Density

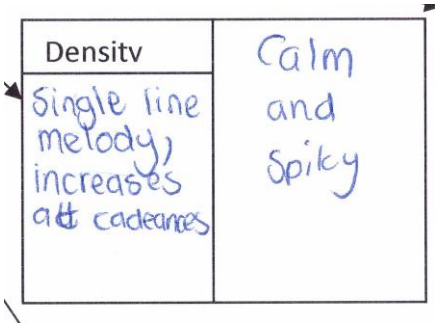


Annie: Lesson 3 – Density

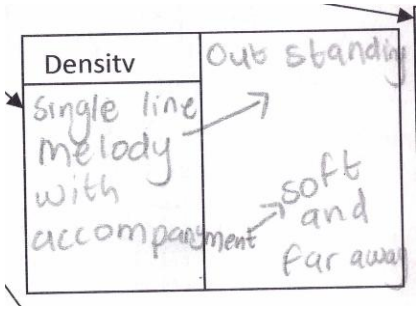


Rita understood the concept after some discussion in lesson one, but referred incorrectly to texture in lessons two and three. It seemed that she had not entirely grasped this concept at the end of the process:

Rita: Lesson 1 – Density



Rita: Lesson 3 – Density



In sum, participants' comments left the impression that the analytical procedure was mostly well understood by all. Their initial struggle to understand a concept would consistently be followed by an improvement in successive lessons. The only two structural phenomena in which some participants failed to improve, were register and density.

Throughout this analytical procedure, the focus remained on the development of interpretation. The main goal was to guide participants to make interpretative decisions, based on their understanding of the structural phenomena. This enabled

them to set specific goals and structure their practising with interpretative goals in mind.

4.3.2 Observations when Studying the Score and Listening to a Performance

During lessons, participants were asked to record their observations when studying the score and after listening to a performance of the piece. The following table summarises their comments on three levels: notational, syntactic and artistic. These three levels were described in Chapter 2 when Marín *et al*. (2012:193) observed the practice strategies of advanced musicians, but can be applied equally successfully to describe their observations when studying the score and when listening to a performance of the piece.

Table 4-8: Summary of Participants' Observations through Score Study and Listening

OBSERVATIONS DURING SCORE STUDY		
Notational Level	**Syntactic Level**	**Artistic Level**
Notation: note values, ties, syncopated rhythms, time signature, key signature, tempo. Score indications: dynamics, character indications, pedal, ornaments.	Phrases Interaction between hands Density and register Form	Character Stylistic period Title
OBSERVATIONS WHEN LISTENING TO THE PIECE		
Notational Level	**Syntactic Level**	**Artistic Level**
Notation: Rhythmic changes	Harmony: Dissonant chords Phrases: Climaxes Structure	Character and mood Title

When participants' written work was analysed, it was notable that the volume of their written work in response to observing the score was larger than that of listening to the piece. Many observations during score study, however, were focused on

notation. Fewer comments were made on the syntactic level and comments on the artistic level were sparse.

When listening to a performance of the pieces, the opposite occurred: participants commented far less on the notational level but showed an increased awareness on the artistic level. This confirms the importance of the relation between critical listening and the development of interpretation. Score analysis should always be accompanied by listening in order to develop critical listening skills.

4.4 Phase 3 – Interview 2 and Reflections: Post-view

The same categories and themes which were discussed above in Phase 1 will be discussed below in Phase 3. The purpose of this is to illustrate how participants developed or changed their views on certain aspects. It thus serves as a post-view, reflecting the way in which each participant's thoughts and understanding progressed throughout the process. Comments from the first interview will be compared with comments from the second interview. In addition, discussions will include the participants' attitude to the South African compositions they learned, what they viewed as highlights of the process and their general experience of the analytical procedure.

As discussions in these sections serve as post-view, written reflections of participants as recorded in their practice diaries, are also taken into account.
The discussion is outlined in the table below:

Table 4-9: Summary of Categories and Themes for Interview 2

CATEGORY	**TOPIC**	**TOPIC DESCRITION**
APPROACH when learning a new work.	Interpretation	How did the participants' understanding of interpretation develop throughout the three practical lessons?
	Practice strategies	Did their practice strategies change as a result of the application of the analytical procedure, and in which way?

ATTITUDE when learning a new work.	Positive Negative	Positive experience of South African repertoire. Negative experience of South African repertoire.
ACTIVITIES when learning a new work.	Listening Score study / analysis	Which activities did they find useful during the process?
EXPERIENCE of the analytical procedure.	Positive Negative Integration	Highlights of the process. Difficulties during the process. How can the knowledge that they have acquired be integrated in their subject (music)?

4.4.1 Category 1: Approach when Learning a New Work

Most students seemed to have developed a better understanding of the way in which to approach interpretation, which included observing and integrating score indications early on and considering the composer, stylistic period and character of the pieces they learned. Furthermore, the structured approach which was followed provided several participants with a method with which they felt confident enough to apply during their independent practice sessions.

4.4.1.1 Interpretation

Gabby

PRE-VIEW – Key Ideas	**POST-VIEW – Exemplar Quote**
Gabby did not observe any score indications or dynamics during the early phases of learning a new piece. Her main approach to interpretation was to listen to recordings and to imitate what she had heard.	"[Interpretation means] what the music is trying to express like the emotion behind the music and what's happening and what the composer is trying to tell."
DEVELOPMENT OF IDEAS	Gabby was now able to verbally express her understanding of interpretation and included comments on the mood and character. Before, she mainly focused on notation.

Mia

PRE-VIEW – Key Ideas	**POST-VIEW – Exemplar Quote**
Mia listened to and compared different recordings while making notes on interpretation in a practice journal. She considered the title and composer as important factors and made many independent decisions on interpretation.	"... if someone has to ask [me] to interpret a piece ... I think I'll do much better, because now, like learning all the other stuff like motive and form ... when we had to do that whole 'play-as-if' thing, it's like, it sort of broadened my musical mind to how something will be played and how a melody should be played ... and describing it is important cause how you describe it is how you play it ... I've started doing some of the stuff [referring to the analytical procedure] ... I want to get it like properly."
DEVELOPMENT OF IDEAS	Mia had a reasonable idea of interpretation and she felt that her understanding and skills were more developed and, therefore, she could clearly discuss this more explicitly. She had already started applying the analytical procedure independently to her current repertoire. Written descriptions which were done during lessons could help her in future with writing comments on interpretation, when listening to different recordings.

Hannah

PRE-VIEW – Key Ideas	**POST-VIEW – Exemplar Quote**
Hannah stated that she had focused on learning the notes of a new piece first, without paying attention to any score indications. She did regard the title and composer of a piece as an important part to guide her interpretation, but relied mostly on the teacher to assist her.	Interviewer: "If I now ask you [after the application of the analytical procedure] about interpretation and the interpretation of a piece, do you understand it better?" Hannah: "Yes." Interviewer: "Explain it to me." Hannah: "Do you mean like in terms of, should I ...?" Interviewer: "Explain to me how you understand interpretation now." Hannah: "I think, if I look at a piece, first, the title is the most important and then I can go look at the notes and see what it's about." *later in the interview* Hannah: "... [it] helped with *how* I should play the notes, ... I knew what I had to do with certain parts in the piece like if I had to play softly, and then I knew *how* to play it."
DEVELOPMENT OF IDEAS	Hannah was still uncertain when asked to explain interpretation. Although she found it difficult to define her understanding of interpretation, she moved away from thinking on a primarily notational level, to thinking more on an artistic level and about how to play the notes. The analytical procedure gave her a structured method to apply in future.

Leila

PRE-VIEW – Key Ideas	POST-VIEW – Exemplar Quote
Leila was able to verbalise her understanding of interpretation by saying ‘it would be like learning the notes first and also the way I would play the piece, like how, like the dynamics and the different techniques and the feeling of the piece’. Although she first mentioned learning the notes and then paying attention to aspects of interpretation, she also considered the title and composer of the pieces that she was playing.	“... to look at the piece more carefully ... and how I must play the piece ... to perform better ... for example, a cadence, I wouldn’t really take note of it before.”
DEVELOPMENT OF IDEAS	She was able to formulate her understanding of interpretation in the first interview, but was more specific when describing her method. She moved away from a notational focus to an artistic awareness, describing that she now was more aware of ‘how’ to play the notes. She further showed an increased awareness of integrating the structural phenomena of a piece, which is characteristic of a mid-level practice strategy.

Lynn

PRE-VIEW – Key Ideas	POST-VIEW – Exemplar Quote
Lynn was uncertain about the stylistic period and the composers of current repertoire on which she was working. She stated that she "sometimes struggled to see the picture, it's almost like somebody has to give me the picture and then I'll see it". She lacked the ability to use her imagination when it came to interpreting pieces and focused only on learning the notes – a process that she intensely disliked. Furthermore, she depended entirely on the teacher to assist her with the interpretation of the pieces she was learning.	Interviewer: "... has this [process] made the interpretation of a piece, in general, clearer to you?" Lynn: "Yes, because now I can see ok, this is where the cadence is, this is a new section, or here's a repeat."
DEVELOPMENT OF IDEAS	Lynn's thinking had been transferred from a narrow focus on the notational to a greater focus on the syntactic level, which was the start of progressing to the artistic level. Her main development was in the area of analysing the music and observing the structure of the piece.

Hayley

PRE-VIEW – Key Ideas	**POST-VIEW – Exemplar Quote**
Before this process, Hayley did not consider the title or stylistic period as important. She struggled to think on an artistic level and use her imagination with regard to interpreting music. She did, however, try to add dynamics and other score indications during the early phases of the note-learning process.	Interviewer: "If you had to explain to somebody, now, what interpretation in music is, do you think you can do it better than what you would be able to do before this process?" Hayley: "Ja, [Yes], I think so." Interviewer: "... explain ..." Hayley: "What the music was like created to represent or what it was created to mimic almost ... the imitation kind of, you have to play it kind of how it would sound naturally, like in terms of ... Waterpoel ['Water-pool' – the piece she learned in the second lesson] ... like you have to play it like you would hear the drops, like falling or how you picture it." *later in the interview* Hayley: "... it was very cool ... the drops, you could hear the disturbances and like you could imagine the ripples ... it [the analytical procedure] will help a lot in terms of playing the character of the piece better, as opposed to just playing the notes."
DEVELOPMENT OF IDEAS	Hayley moved away from the notational level, through the syntactic level, to an artistic level of thinking. This process stimulated her imagination and directed her attention to the title of the piece, and it showed her how to realise this awareness in her performance.

Annie

PRE-VIEW – Key Ideas	POST-VIEW – Exemplar Quote
Annie was able to formulate a detailed perception of her understanding of interpretation. Annie: "... basically the history of the music, the composer, what form is it in, the period, the dynamics ...." Even though she could list many important factors when considering the interpretation of a piece, she admitted that she didn't always consider these when learning a new piece. She was uncertain about the composers and stylistic periods of her current repertoire.	Annie: "... think I maybe understand more about the music because I had to interpret which one I must play, as this or that, normally I don't do that, I just start playing ... because we had to fill in those worksheets [mind-map]."
DEVELOPMENT OF IDEAS	Annie felt that she now had a better understanding of the way in which to apply her theoretical knowledge of aspects of interpretation. She was now able to make independent interpretive decisions – "as this or as that" – which she had normally not done, as she would usually focus on the notes only. This clearly confirms that, although students often have the theoretical knowledge of effective strategies, it does not necessarily suggest that they apply this knowledge independently when practising.

Rita

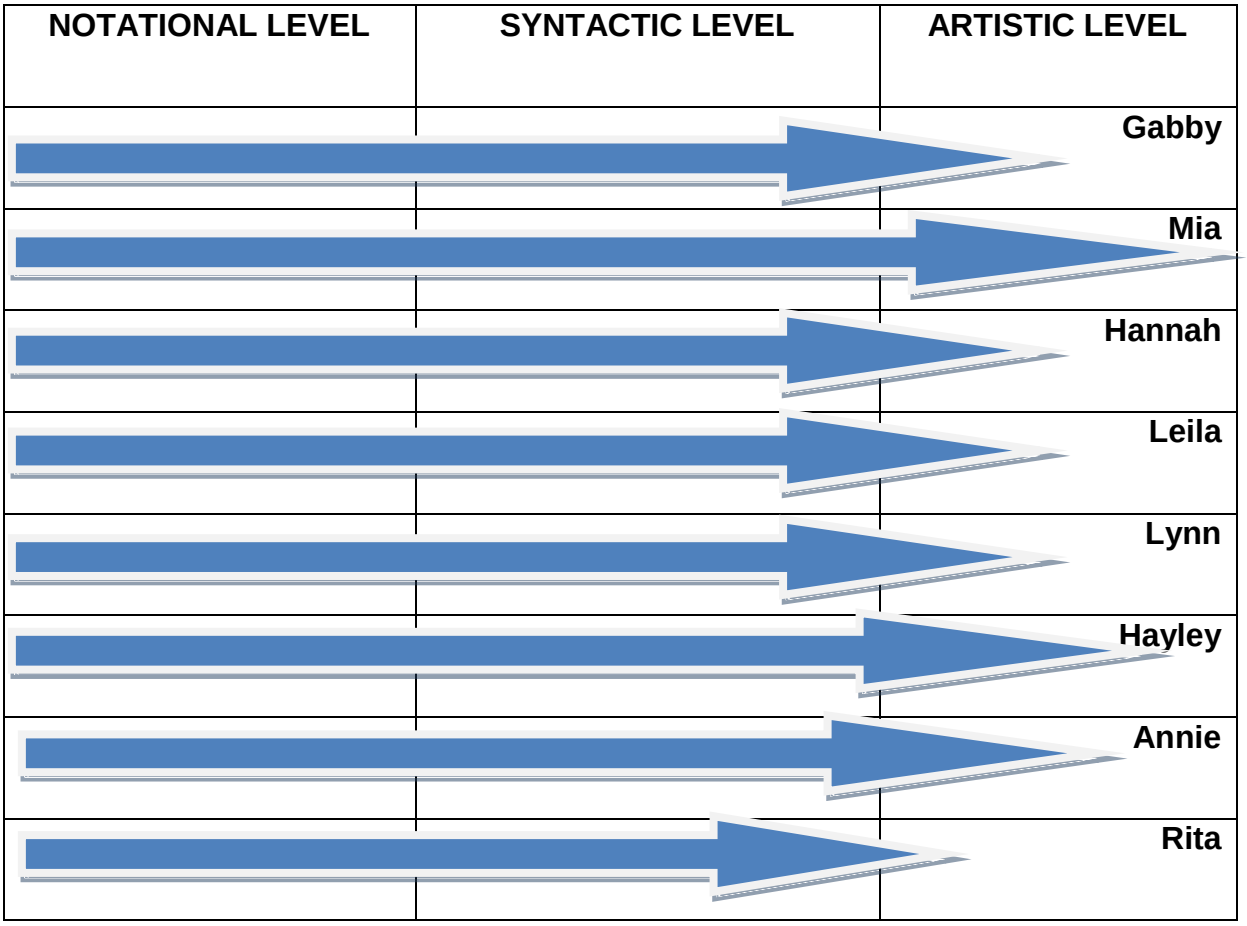
PRE-VIEW – Key Ideas	**POST-VIEW – Exemplar Quote**
Rita primarily focused on notational aspects. "I look at the key signature and hand position, what clef it is in and time signature." She did, however, state that she tried to integrate score indications while learning notes. Her candour aside, a level of musical immaturity was detected: "If I like the piece, then I look at the composer and try to research them ... if I don't, I just leave it alone."	"[Interpretation] means the sound and how you play it and knowing ... how it should sound and the mood and the technique and the different ways of playing it."
DEVELOPMENT OF IDEAS	Rita's post-view represented a shift in focus from a notational level to a more mature view on the character of the music. She also seemed to have gained better understanding of an approach to interpreting a piece of music.

Considering all the evidence, participants' responses in the pre- and post-view can be summarised as follows:

Table 4-10: Representation of Comments in Three Levels for Interview 1 (Pre-view)

NOTATIONAL LEVEL	SYNTACTIC LEVEL	ARTISTIC LEVEL
Gabby		
		Mia
Hannah		Hannah
Leila		Leila
Lynn	Lynn	
Hayley	Hayley	
Annie	Annie	Annie
Rita		

Table 4-11: Representation of the Development of Comments to Indicate Levels for Interview 2 (Post-view)



When comparing the results of the pre- and post-view, all eight participants showed a vast improvement in their awareness and perception of aspects related to interpretation. Although practice strategies still included the necessary attention to aspects which relate to the notational and syntactic levels, every participant responded in a way which reflected a shift in focus and a positive development of her understanding of interpretation. The degree of progression of each participant, however, varied respectively.

4.4.1.2 Practice Strategies

Following the outline similar to the discussion of Phase 1 above, participants' reports on the practice strategies which they followed during the three recorded lessons will be discussed on three levels: low, mid and high. The primary aim of this discussion is to show the way in which previously ineffective methods were adapted and improved.

Data collected during Phase 1 revealed that although participants used a variety of practice strategies, analytical activities, which included score study, awareness of the integration of structural phenomena and attention to aspects of interpretation, were often neglected.

In order to understand the development of each participant throughout the three lessons, reports from Phase 1 will be compared to those from Phase 3 according to each participant respectively.

It must be noted that the aspect of listening, as discussed in the preview, will not be discussed in the post-view. Participants were not able to listen to recordings of the pieces they had to learn as no recordings were available. Pieces were played to them during the video-recorded lessons and only one participant commented on the value of listening to a performance prior to practising it on her own. Should any aspect of the pre-view not be discussed in the post-view, it is as a result of lack of evidence to support such viewpoints. Exemplar quotes presented in the pre-view will not be repeated in the following section: a summary of key points only is provided.

Gabby

PRE-VIEW		
LOW	**MID**	**HIGH**
Ineffective strategies: She always started practising a piece from the beginning. The primary focus was on learning the notes before paying attention to any other aspects.	Score study: She observed the structure of the piece to identify terminology with which she was unfamiliar.	Planning: She focused on short sections when practising. Listening: She listened to recordings of repertoire to observe the tempo and dynamics and then compared these to her own playing.
POST-VIEW		
LOW	**MID**	**HIGH**
	Score study: As before, Gabby stated that she would study the score, but now focused on gaining better understanding of the music: “First I understand the music and then go play.” She stated that she started each session by reading through the mind-map (the written analysis of the piece) to observe comments on interpretation. By doing this, she set goals which were specifically related to interpretation. This allowed her to adjust her practice strategies in order to achieve these goals.	Planning: She now had a clear-cut plan for each session. Comments implied that she first aimed to get an overview of the piece and incorporate score detail during the early stages of learning a new piece. She also identified and worked on challenging sections: “I learn the whole piece first from beginning to the end and I pay more attention to sections I find challenging.” Self-regulation: Self-evaluation included honest criticism on her own performance and comments on interpretation: “I have not achieved my goal because I still need to practise to really know the piece well enough to create the atmosphere that I was meant to create.” Interpretation: By the third lesson, she had aimed to integrate the character and dynamics while still in the note-learning phase: “I start each session by playing through the piece with the indicated dynamics and accidentals.”

Mia

PRE-VIEW		
LOW	**MID**	**HIGH**
Ineffective strategies: She repeatedly played pieces from the beginning when she had made a mistake, instead of correcting the mistake where it occurred.	Score study: She had observed the key and tempo before she started practising. She studied the score away from the instrument which strengthened her aural perception of the work.	Planning: She displayed high levels of planning and used a structured approach. Listening: She compared different recordings and made notes on dynamics, tempo, articulation and the character of the pieces. Self-regulation: She analysed mistakes before correcting them. Interpretation: She regarded the title, composer and character of a piece as very important. She did research on the composer and the pieces that she played.
POST-VIEW		
LOW	**MID**	**HIGH**
Ineffective strategies: Mia continued to practise the piece as whole, but when she realised that her approach was not yielding the desired results, she adapted her strategy and focused on smaller sections. Two of the three lessons were started by primarily focusing on rhythm and notes: "I would start by getting the melody right in the right hand ... I started each section getting the rhythms correct in both hands."	Score study: She reported score study activities for only one of the three pieces: "I would start each session thinking about the melody ... then looking at the dynamics."	Planning: She found it helpful to write down her practice times which improved her planning. Self-regulation: Not only was Mia able to adapt her ineffective approach, but she also described remedial procedures: "I thought I could tackle the whole thing at once, but then I discovered there were awkward places that needed repetition and slower practising." Her goal was to perform the piece according to the character required. During self-evaluation, she was able to assess her level of success in terms of interpretation: "I wanted it to be more spectacular, but I just hadn't seem to have felt the music as much as I wanted to."

Hannah

PRE-VIEW		
LOW	**MID**	**HIGH**
Ineffective strategies: She only corrected mistakes at the end of a section, instead of immediately. Listening: She listened to recordings but mainly focused on notational aspects. She stated that it did not really help her to listen, which implies that she did not have an understanding of listening to recordings critically.	Score study: She observed the key signature and tempo before playing. She played through the piece to get an overview of the work before practising it.	Planning: She used a structured approach and aimed to learn a new piece in short sections, rather than simply playing through the whole piece.
POST-VIEW		
LOW	**MID**	**HIGH**
	Score study: Hannah reported studying the score before practising with the intention to gain a holistic overview of the piece: "… it's better if I just analyse my piece first and know what the piece is about."	Planning: Hannah continued to apply a structured approach which included identifying difficult sections which needed extra attention, but also explained that she would first get an overview of the piece: "I started each session by playing the entire piece, then I worked on bars 8 – 12 because I found them a bit challenging …" and for another piece: "I started each session by playing the entire piece, then I went back to learn short sections which I found challenging." Self-regulation: She offered a detailed description when evaluating her own success of the interpretation: "I feel like I have achieved my goal. I worked as hard as I could in expressing the meaning of the piece…"

Leila

PRE-VIEW		
LOW	**MID**	**HIGH**
Ineffective strategies: She neglected to correct mistakes immediately. She did not study the score before practising.		Planning: She practised short sections of the piece. Listening: She listened to recordings and observed the tempo and character. Interpretation: She observed the title and the composer of a piece.
POST-VIEW		
LOW	**MID**	**HIGH**
Ineffective strategies: Leila's focus often remained on notation: "I would just skim through it, focusing on the notes in the bass clef." During some lessons, she practised the whole piece instead of identifying challenging material: "I aimed to learn the whole piece from beginning to end, as the notes ... had a repeated rhythm." However, she gave a valid reason for choosing this strategy.	Score study: Leila reported that she started each practice session by studying the score with the aim to identify sections on which she needed to work: "At the beginning of each session, I would quickly look over the piece and see what I might need to work on, so that when I play the piece, I can focus on these parts."	Planning: She was able to choose a suitable practice strategy when she encountered challenging material: "I aimed to learn this [work] piece by piece." Self-regulation: Although Leila assessed her own performance, she often still focused on notational aspects: "... my timing was off ... I constantly felt that I wasn't playing it [the rhythm] right." Critical evaluation of her performance did, however, also include comments on improving the interpretation: "I feel that I have not completely achieved my goal ... that I can still improve in some ways, for example, playing with more emotion."

Lynn

PRE-VIEW		
LOW	**MID**	**HIGH**
Ineffective strategies: There was very little evidence of planning her practice sessions and she mostly used an ad hoc approach. She chose not to listen to recordings of her pieces and made almost no independent interpretive decisions. She always started practising from the beginning of a piece.	Score study: She observed articulation and considered the character description. She always studied the score to identify repeated sections; however, her main objective was not to observe the structure, but to check which "notes are repeated", which meant that she had 'less notes to learn'.	
POST-VIEW		
LOW	**MID**	**HIGH**
Ineffective strategy: Although Lynn reported the use of an ineffective strategy for her third piece: "... [I] aimed to learn from start to end", she offered a valid reason for making this choice by saying: "... because the piece was not too complicated." She was thus able to assess the piece before she chose how to approach practising it.	Score analysis: The use of the mind-map as a tool for score analysis provided Lynn the basis for a structured approach and helped her to set specific goals towards which to work: "... Before, I would just play the piece ... [now] I almost had like a structure, what it was meant to sound like." Not only did she have a method, but she also had a goal towards which she worked.	Planning: Lynn pointed out that the use of a practice journal helped her with the planning of her practice sessions: "I'm very bad at keeping time, it showed me how much I've accomplished ... I like to see progress." In addition, she varied her practice sessions in aim of achieving optimum results: "I played from the beginning right through, but afterwards I tried to practise from bars 9 -12, because of the change in rhythm and then sometimes I started with bars 29 – 36." Listening: Lynn was the only participant who highlighted that listening to the piece during the lessons, benefited her practising: "... what was

		easy is that I got to hear what the piece ... is going to sound like ... so it wasn't completely unknown." Self-regulation: Lynn primarily used an ad hoc approach before, but was now able to set goals: "... [the structured approach] gave almost like certain goals for me to work towards." Interpretation: When analysing her written self-evaluations, it was evident that she had moved away from focusing primarily on the note-learning process and focused more on interpretation: "I don't feel as though I achieved my goal as it wasn't what I planned ... the expression lacked" and for another lesson: "I believe if I had picked up the tempo slightly, I would have achieved my goal ... I feel I achieved my goal despite a few wrong slips." Before, Lynn regarded successful performance as fluent note-playing, but now she was more focused more on the interpretive aspects of her performance.

Hayley

PRE-VIEW		
LOW	**MID**	**HIGH**
Ineffective strategies: Her primary focus was on learning the notes and playing the piece fluently. She disregarded the title, character and composer. She had also neglected to study the score before she started practising, and discovered the structure as she learned the notes.		Planning: She identified difficult sections and worked on those. Listening: She listened to recordings with the main focus on the character of the piece. Self-regulation: She attempted to make some interpretive decisions on her own and would, at times, incorporate score detail during the early stages of learning a new work.
POST-VIEW		
LOW	**MID**	**HIGH**
	Score study: Before, Hayley's primary focus was on notation but she was now more aware of score detail as well. She intended to change her approach: "It will change the way I practise in terms of, I can look at the title and what they've added." She started her practice sessions by studying the mind-map of each piece to confirm what her performance goal was: "I started by checking the mind-map to make sure there was nothing I forget to include in terms of character."	Planning: Hayley followed a structured approach, including the effective strategy of getting an overview, working on shorter sections and then practising the whole piece again: "I practised short sections of the piece but once I was able to play the sections fluently, I was able to play through the piece fully each time I practised." Self-regulation: She set clear goals and anticipated a specific end-result to her performance: "... I enjoyed the character of the piece and how clear it is in the music, the picture it creates of water rippling with drops disturbing it ... I have found it to be a bit challenging and I think I could get it to sound better." Interpretation: Hayley was now much aware of the way in which the character of the piece played a role in the interpretation and she paid more attention to this from the outset: "Each session I started by practising the flowing tranquil sound of the quavers."

Annie

PRE-VIEW		
LOW	**MID**	**HIGH**
Ineffective strategies: She did not consider the title, composer and stylistic period when she learned a new piece. Her primary focus was on learning notes and playing the piece fluently. She neglected to study the score before practising. She mostly depended on the teacher for guidance.		Planning: She aimed to keep a structured practice routine. She identified difficult sections and started working on these first. She corrected mistakes immediately.
POST-VIEW		
LOW	**MID**	**HIGH**
Ineffective strategies: Even though she found one of the pieces difficult, she still adopted the ineffective strategy of playing through the whole piece instead of identifying challenging sections: “I found the whole piece quite challenging ... I did not do short sections; I merely played from start to finish.” Her main objective was still to play with fluency and overcome any technical difficulties: “My goal was to try and get the piece as perfect as possible but the trills, I found difficult, therefore I don’t think I achieved my goal.”	Score study: The score analysis provided her with a better understanding of the score notation: “I think I understand more about the music.”	Planning: Keeping a record of her practice times helped her to plan sessions more productively. She practised some pieces in shorter sections at a time: “I normally started at the A-theme [lack of correct terminology, meaning the A-section] until I got it right and then I would only go to the B-theme after I knew the A-theme.” She also identified problematic material and started her practice sessions with those: “I mostly started with the B-section first because I ... found it most challenging.” Self-regulation: She analysed problems: “... keeping my left hand at a constant pace because my left hand went faster in some areas and slower in the others ...” Interpretation: Before, Annie was uncertain of the composer and stylistic period of her current repertoire, and disregarded the meaning of the title of the piece. When evaluating her own performance, she focused on interpretive aspects: “... the title does shine through.”

Rita

PRE-VIEW		
LOW	**MID**	**HIGH**
Ineffective strategies: She always started with what she defined as the part that “looks easier.” She did not regard the title and composer important.	Score study: She had observed the key signature and time signature before she played and engaged in some score study away from the instrument.	Self-regulation: She corrected mistakes immediately and aimed to integrate dynamic indications during the early phases of learning notes.
POST-VIEW		
LOW	**MID**	**HIGH**
Ineffective strategies: Rita’s primary focus was often on notational level: “I usually started each session by playing the whole piece with no accents [as indicated in the score] or crescendo or decrescendo.” She also applied the ineffective strategy of aimlessly playing through the whole piece: “I aimed to learn the piece from beginning to end.” From her perspective, a successful performance meant to play the notes fluently: “I found bar 12 challenging ... my biggest goal while learning this piece was to play bar 12 perfectly and I think I practised enough to get it perfect, so I did achieve my goal.”		Planning: Although Rita followed a specific method, it was not necessarily an effective one. Reflections on her practice strategies showed the repetitive use of one method: playing through the piece from beginning to end. Self-regulation: Although she mainly applied one strategy only, she motivated her choice for this: “... there were a lot of repetitions, so I thought practising the whole piece from beginning to end was best and it did work out. I learned the piece faster.”

In sum, it was encouraging to find that the application of the structured analytical procedure resulted in positive growth for all participants. Although the use of ineffective strategies was not eliminated, the presence of more effective methods

was promising. Although participants showed varied levels of development, they all seemed to have benefited in some area. The most important aspect reflective of growth was the fact that they were able to set specific goals, related to interpretation. This forced them to adjust their approach in order to achieve these goals.

4.4.2 Category 2: Attitude when Learning a New Work

4.4.2.1 Responses Regarding the South African Compositions

All the participants in this study have played, or are preparing for an ABRSM (Associated Board of the Royal College of Music) piano examination. None of them was familiar with any of the South African compositions used in this study. Lynn, for example, stated that she had never heard of any of the composers. Although these compositions were unfamiliar to them, they all indicated a positive response to all or at least two of the three pieces that they learned.

Each participant had to learn three new pieces and expressed positive ideas when reflecting on this process. My choice of South African composers had important benefits. All participants now had knowledge of composers of their own nationality and seemed to have enjoyed playing these pieces. It broadened their knowledge of musical style and exposed them to different harmonic structures. Their aural skills, therefore, were also developed in the process.

Comments which are quoted below were not taken only from the second interview, but also from written reflections in practice journals:

Gabby: “It’s quite different, but I like it.”

Hannah: “I have not [played pieces by South African composers] ... I actually enjoyed playing all the pieces.”

Leila: “It was different from most music that I’ve played ... I mostly play like Bach and Beethoven.”

Lynn: “I didn’t know any of the composers at all ... now I do.”

Hayley: “Quite interesting actually, the way you could hear what they were trying to describe with the music.”

Annie: “I really did like [the second piece] ... I haven’t really heard of them [the composers].”

From the responses on the total of twenty-four lessons (three lesson from each participant), only Lynn stated that she disliked playing the piece in her first lesson. She gave reasons which included challenges when learning the notes. This participant is particularly adverse to learning notes and was possibly annoyed when she had to struggle with other aspects as well:

Lynn: “I disliked the piece ... I found the timing difficult when I had to play the quavers and to play the long crescendo in bars 21 – 27.”

Gabby reported conflicting emotions regarding the piece in her second lesson and some comments referred to the unusual harmonies which were used:

Gabby: “I enjoyed the beautiful soothing melody at the beginning and end of the piece. In the middle, the harmonies are strange; I am not used to such a combination, therefore I did not enjoy the middle section.”

It seems that students may experience negative responses when they struggle with a piece or encounter harmonies different to those they have come to know.

4.4.3 Category 3: Experience of the Process

4.4.3.1 Comments Regarding Participants' Experience of the Process

All eight participants indicated that the 'mind-map' (referred to as the 'ingredients-sheet' in their practice journals) was an extremely helpful tool to assist them in their approach to independent interpretation. Two participants, Hannah and Mia, felt that it encouraged their interpretation of the music:

> Gabby: "to help me understand the piece and play with more emotion."
> Mia: "... *how* something will be played ... how a melody should be played."
> Hannah: "I knew *what I had to* do with certain parts."

Their comments implied that they had acquired a better understanding and a definite method when considering an approach to interpretation.

Rita, Lynn and Gabby regarded the practice diary in which they recorded their practice times and set specific goals, a useful tool which they would like to use in future. Rita commented that it taught her "how to practise more, faster", while Lynn reported that it helped her towards good time management.

Concerns regarding the process were expressed by two participants. Lynn reported that she found it "really time consuming". As a result of the interactive nature of the process, practical lessons were longer than what these participants were used to. They also had some written tasks to do at home which had an impact on their time. Mia shared the same sentiment and commented that "it was a little bit annoying ... I still had everything else". Mia plays two instruments and felt somewhat pressured throughout the process; however, her practice journal reflected that she had managed to have ample time for practising.

4.4.3.2 Difficulties Experienced during the Process

When asked if they had experienced any difficulties, participants mostly referred to notational aspects which included challenging rhythmic passages, articulation difficulties and technical challenges. Two participants found it difficult to describe the music metaphorically:

> Gabby: "... like finding words to describe [how to] play."
> Lynn: "I don't like that I had to put music into words."

Lynn added that she had problems playing the music in the way she described it and that she was "indecisive at times".

4.4.3.3 Integration

A diversity of responses was received when participants were asked if they thought aspects of the analytical procedure and the theoretical part of their subject could be integrated.

Annie was, at the time, working on an arrangement task. She was excited about certain compositional techniques that she had encountered in one of the compositions and planned to use these techniques to create the desired effect in her arrangement. Hannah reported that she had already used the analytical procedure when she recently had to do a score study activity during a music history class and felt confident that the analytical procedure "made it much easier." Mia felt that she would benefit in particular when she had to do a theory or harmony examination in which case she did not have access to an instrument. She reported that she would "have to mentally think of it", before she would write it. She felt that she would now find it easier to form an aural perception of a piece when studying the score, even if she could not play it.

In this chapter, data were gathered in three phases (as described in the introduction of this chapter) and the findings for each phase were discussed. In conclusion, the

findings reported contribute generously to an understanding of the way in which the participants approached learning a new work.

In the next chapter, these findings will be aligned to those in existing literature in order to ensure a reliable applicability in practice.

CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

5.1 Introduction

This study investigates the experience of eight female piano students who are studying at a government secondary school. My research focuses on the application of an analytical procedure that was specifically designed to facilitate the independent development of interpretation.

In this chapter, I will discuss findings from Chapter 4 by relating my findings to those studies discussed in Chapter 2. The data as presented in Chapter 4 arise from interviews with participants, analysis of video-recorded lessons and written documents presented in practice journals. These findings are discussed with reference to the primary research question and the third of the secondary research questions as stated in Chapter 1 and presented again below.

The primary research question is the following:

> When learning a new work, how do students respond to and experience the application of aspects of an analytical procedure designed to facilitate the independent development of interpretation?

The primary research question will be answered in Chapter 5 by interpreting data gathered in Phase 2 and 3 of my research.

The secondary research questions are as follows:

When students are guided through the application of an analytical procedure aimed to develop independent interpretation, the following should be considered:

- How do musicians generally approach learning a new work, as described in existing literature?
- Which themes emerge from the exploration of students' experiences and their responses regarding the development of independent interpretation?
- **How should the data be interpreted in the context of the literature on interpretation?**

The first secondary question was answered in Chapter 2 when the literature on the subject was discussed. The second secondary question was answered in Chapter 4 when data were analysed. The third question will be answered in Chapter 5 when data from Chapter 4 are interpreted in the context of existing literature on interpretation and aspects related to interpretation. Discussions will proceed according to the same outline which was used in Chapter 4, providing a summary of the process of my investigation in three phases:

Phase 1: Pre-view
Phase 2: Video-recorded lessons
Phase 3: Post-view

5.2 Phase 1- Interview 1: Pre-view

The purpose of this interview was to present a pre-view of participants' knowledge and understanding before the application of the analytical procedure. Although this study was not based on a pre- and post-test model, it was the intention to show the development of participants' understanding and application of aspects of interpretation. For this reason, a pre-view was necessary.

The data collected during this phase will now be discussed with specific reference to the participants' approach, attitude and auditory activities when learning a new work.

5.2.1 Category 1: Approach when Learning a New Work

My data suggests that the participants' approach when learning a new work can be described in terms of two main themes, namely their theoretical knowledge with regard to interpretation and the practical application of their knowledge during independent practising.

5.2.1.1 Interpretation

Few participants were able to define their understanding of interpretation and their descriptions were mostly vague and inconsistent. After being prompted to share their view on the importance of the composer and stylistic period, four participants were able to describe the role of this information with regard to interpretation. Despite some verbal reports on their attention to style, several participants completely disregarded the title and the composer of a piece, which implied a lack of attention to these aspects of interpretation. If participants lacked the ability to verbally describe their understanding of interpretation and disregarded some crucial aspects related to interpretation, it can be assumed that they do not focus on artistic aspects during independent practice sessions.

This is partly in line with the findings of Lindström *et al*. (2003:30) who report that the majority of conservatoire participants (who are older than the participants in this study) expressed their understanding of interpretation in terms of 'communicating emotion'. The researchers mention that a smaller percentage of the participants referred to score indications, the style, the composer and the structure of the piece. Observations concerning the smaller percentage of his participants are related to my findings regarding the intermediate students in the current study. Lindström *et al*. (2003) record the age group of participants between 18 – 43 years and do not distinguish between descriptions of younger and more advanced students. It is possible to assume that students' understanding of interpretation develops as their level of expertise and experience increase, but I cannot speculate on the way in which my students would have developed to be more or less in line with the participants studied by Lindström *et al.* (2003).

As a result of their lack of understanding, my intermediate students need a great deal of guidance with regard to making interpretative decisions. The vast majority of their responses reflected that they primarily rely on their teacher for making interpretative decisions. This could be a result of the fact that as musicians, they are still in the developing phase and have not reached a sufficient level of expertise to enable them to make independent interpretative decisions. The unique perspective of one participant in this study showed such a strong student-mentor perception that the participant seemed to assume a submissive role in which case the teacher's responsibility was to 'say what to do' and the student's role was 'to do it'. It is difficult to understand the roots of this attitude: whether compliance is a true conviction, a lack of independent development which could be age-related or have a deeper origin relating to this particular student's personality. This aspect will need further investigation for clarity, also because similar findings are reported in the literature.

My participants are not unique in these aspects. Their lack of understanding, coupled with the inability to apply theoretical knowledge effectively, enhances the problem. Several studies, which focus on a variety of age-groups and instruments, report on this problematic aspect (Koopman *et al*., 2007; Lisboa, 2008; Hallam, 2001). What complicates the matter even more is that research shows that even when students are able to verbalise their theoretical knowledge and their intention to apply this in practice, it often does not realise (Burwell & Shipton, 2013; Hallam, 2001). It is understandable that young musicians may not have developed a skill-set to apply theoretical knowledge as shown by Lisboa (2008:263) in a study with three young cellists; however, Lane (2006:223) reports on more advanced students (18 years and older) whose verbal reports and actual practical implementation during interpretation did not correspond. I elaborate on this in the next section.

5.2.1.2 Practice Strategies

In the section which follows, participants' practice strategies will be discussed with specific reference to the practical implementation of their theoretical knowledge, including their approach to interpretation.

My participants were able to give detailed descriptions of their unique approaches to practising. The quality of their strategies was explored and a combination of the use of low-, mid- and high-level strategies was identified. The three-levelled model (Table 5-1), as proposed by Sullivan & Cantwell (1999:245), was used as a guide to determine the quality of each participant's strategy. This is discussed in the next section.

Table 5-1: Practice Strategies: Three-levelled Model (Sullivan & Cantwell, 1999)

STRATEGY	**DESCRIPTION**
Low-level	Trial-and-error approach. Ad hoc approach which includes poor planning. Focus is mostly on aspects of notation. Low levels of self-regulation
Mid-level	Analytical activities which include: identification of the structure of the piece, integration of concepts, for example recognising a melody and an accompaniment.
High-level	Attention to interpretation which includes comments on the stylistic period, composer, character, emotion and expression. Self regulation. Planning and structured approach.

Considering evidence gathered in Phase 1, the primary focus of the majority of participants was on notational aspects, which represents a low-level approach. This finding is in line with results from several previous studies (Sullivan & Cantwell, 1999; McPherson & Renwick, 2001; Koopman *et al*., 2007; Bautista *et al*., 2009; Hallam, 2001).

Evidence of a Low-level Approach

Hultberg (2002:193) reports that pianists lacked the ability to describe their approach to practising. Lane (2006:264) agrees and explains that lower-level undergraduate musicians had difficulty describing their approach. In contrast with these findings, the intermediate participants in the current study were able to give detailed descriptions of their methods; however, these often reflected a low-level approach which included the use of ineffective strategies. This mirrors methods representative of beginner-musicians, as reported in previous studies (Lisboa, 2008; Hallam, 2001; McPherson & Renwick, 2001).

Evidence suggests the use of inconsistent and ad hoc approaches, with a focus on notational aspects, which supports previous findings (Miksza, 2006; Sullivan & Cantwell, 1999; McPherson & Renwick, 2001; Koopman *et al*., 2007). In agreement with findings from Pitts *et al*. (2000:54), these inconsistent approaches suggest poor planning. Even though the participants of the mentioned study were much younger (9 – 10 years) than the intermediate musicians of the current study, and less efficient planning could thus be expected in the case of the younger students, my students did not seem to progress towards becoming better planners. The notational focus resulted in neglecting dynamics and failure to observe other score indications, an observation that supports Miksza's (2006:317) finding when advanced brass players' approach to practising was studied.

When analysing the verbal reports of participants, it was surprising to find that the majority of the intermediate participants in the current study reported that they had started practising a new piece hands separately. No other evidence which describes this specific approach was found in any of the studies discussed in Chapter 2. A possible explanation for this could be that most of those studies focused on a variety of instruments and not on pianists exclusively. I expected that students at intermediate level would approach learning a new piece more holistically and use their practice time more effectively; however, it is possible that because these musicians are still developing the technical aspects of their playing and sight-reading skills, they choose methods which are, from their perspective, the most effective method to learn a new piece. Comments from participants supported this assumption when they referred to starting with 'the hand that looks easier'.

It appears that the participants were still using the same practice strategies they used during the early stages of learning to play their instruments, and this is a cause for concern that is also highlighted in the literature. Hallam *et al*. (2012:670) identify this problematic aspect and states that intermediate students who used the same strategies continuously, struggled to adapt these when repertoire became more demanding. It is evident that these participants will have to improve their technical and reading skills if they were to cope successfully with more challenging repertoire.

Evidence of a Mid-level Approach

Although I expected to find more evidence of the use of analytical strategies, it was mostly neglected as indicated by the fact that the smallest number of comments related to a mid-level approach. This finding matched a previous report (Hallam *et al*., 2012:671) in which case the researchers predicted to find an increase in the use of analytical strategies for intermediate students, but reported a significant lack thereof.

The lack of score study was also evident when the practice strategies of young musicians were observed by other researchers, specifically McPherson & Renwick (2001:174). Lisboa (2008) also reports that young cellists (9 - 14 years), taking part in that particular study, took notice of the key signature and accidentals only after playing through a piece several times.

Although detailed score analysis cannot be expected at a young age, it is crucial that the basic notational elements, which include the key signature, time signature, note names, articulation and some score indications, are observed. Even though these aspects were mostly observed by my participants, it was done in isolation, without making connections to the style or interpretation of the piece. Even though some participants referred to the structure of the piece, their reasons for this were purely from a notational perspective which they explained as ‘less notes to learn.’ Only one participant commented that repeated sections assisted her in planning her practice sessions and focusing on similar passages in conjunction with one another. I am of the opinion that the lack of score analysis is a result of inadequate planning and the use of an inconsistent approach.

Evidence of a High-level Approach

Koopman *et al*. (2007:387) report that a practice strategy which focuses mainly on notational aspects will result in negligence of interpretation. My study confirms this finding and evidence revealed that attention to aspects of interpretation was often neglected, and in some cases, completely disregarded. In this regard, my findings are similar to findings by Lisboa (2008:263).

Participants in the current study reported that score indications which played a role in the interpretation of the piece were mostly incorporated during the later stages of learning a new piece, similar to findings from a previous study (Hallam, 2001). In a later study, researchers report that students from grade five level onwards started paying more attention to dynamic indications, but my results showed very little evidence of this (Hallam *et al*., 2012:21). However, my data indicated that participants did observe these indications once they had learned the notes, and similar findings are reported by Marín *et al*. (2012) who found that students started to observe score indications only during the later stages of learning a new work.

This trend is not characteristic of a holistic approach as represented by the effective strategies of professional musicians, and I find it surprising that the same tendency has been observed in the practice strategies of conservatoire flautists (Marín *et al*., 2012). The aspect of reading piano music can be perceived as a more complex process, reading several voices simultaneously, when compared to flute music which is represented by a single voice. In light of this, I expected that these advanced flautists would apply a holistic approach, incorporating dynamic detail from the initial stages of learning a new work; however, evidence shows that they observed dynamic indications only once they had learned the notes.

Despite the lack of attention to aspects of interpretation, participants displayed fair levels of self-regulation, which is characteristic of a high-level approach. Similar to the findings of an earlier study (Marín *et al*., 2012:199), several participants reported identifying and focusing on challenging sections and correcting mistakes immediately. This contradicts findings by Hallam (2001:9) that suggest that although musicians repeated sections randomly, these skills usually improved from grade five

level: some of the participants in my study who reported the use of this effective strategy, had not yet reached grade five level.

Apart from the implementation of some successful strategies, many effective strategies were overlooked by my participants, another finding supported in the literature. Miksza (2007:308) found that performance success was directly related to strategic planning. In the light of reports of time constraints, which were a concern for some participants in the current study, the importance of careful planning of practice sessions is crucial; however, participants neglected to set specific goals and reported ad hoc strategies which are representative of low levels of planning.

In conclusion, evidence suggests that there was no consistent approach to practising, that strategic planning lacked, and that attention to aspects of interpretation were often neglected. This implies that young musicians need direction and explicit guidelines to improve ineffective strategies if they were to become independent musicians. McPherson (2005:27) states that if students had both knowledge of effective practice strategies and the skills to apply this knowledge, they would be successful musicians. The researcher further emphasises that the most important factor for musical growth is to teach students *how* to apply effective practice strategies.

5.2.2 Category 2: Attitude when Learning a New Work

There is a lack of data in existing literature which describe musicians' attitude and response to learning a new work. Although limited observations refer to boredom and frustration (McPherson & Renwick, 2001:175), information is insufficient. Furthermore, these reports are conclusions made by the researchers observing video-recorded practice sessions and do not reflect verbal reports like those by my participants.

In view of their experience when learning a new piece, the overwhelming response of participants in this current study was positive, reflected by numerous comments which indicated excitement and enthusiasm. These positive attitudes, however, were

always accompanied by some expression of anxiety. It can be concluded that these intermediate students experienced pressure and stress even though they were excited to learn new pieces. Daniel & Bowden (2013:258) argue that time constraints and involvement in extra-curricular activities may be negative influential factors. It is also possible that the desire to achieve and the fear of disappointment add pressure. I could, however, not find support for my observations or explanations in literature, and this aspect should be investigated more thoroughly.

5.2.3 Category 3: Auditory Activities when Learning a New Work

5.2.3.1 Listening to Recordings

In contrast with findings from previous studies (Miksza, 2007; Marín *et al*., 2012) which state that intermediate students seldom listen to recordings of their repertoire, results from the current study state the opposite. The participants in the current study have ample means of accessing recordings and make frequent use of them, although verbal reports suggest that the intent was not necessarily that of critical evaluation. Listening without focused intent or critical evaluation may be meaningless if the goal is to improve independent interpretation.

5.2.3.2 Audiation

Hallam (2001:20) states that a poorly developed set of aural skills will result in ineffective practising. To determine the level of aural development, participants in the current study were questioned on their audiation of the score. Few participants commented on the character of the piece which relates to interpretation. Observations were mainly focused on the obvious: dynamic indications, key, notation, pedal markings and tempo indications. This finding is a direct reflection of their focus on notational aspects, evident in their practice strategies. Observations were seldom linked to the character and interpretation of the piece. As a result of these findings, a hypothesis can be made that audiation is perhaps an underdeveloped but necessary skill for interpretation. This aspect can and should be explored further in future studies.

5.3 Phase 2: Application of the Analytical Procedure

5.3.1 Analysis of Video-recorded Lessons: Response and Experience of Participants

Phase 2 of the data collection process comprised a cycle of three practical lessons and written activities in practice diaries.

By referring back to the primary research question, this section will answer a specific part of the question, which is to describe how participants responded to the application of the analytical procedure.

> When learning a new work, **how do students respond** to and experience the application of aspects of an analytical procedure designed to facilitate the independent development of interpretation?

In teaching, the application of an age-appropriate method is crucial for success. This is highlighted in previous research (Burwell, 2005; Brenner & Strand, 2013). Data from the current study reflected that the essence of participants' experience of the application of the analytical procedure which was applied during Phase 2 of this research, was positive embracement. They participated actively during lessons and in most cases, endeavoured to complete written tasks in practice journals, which suggests that the analytical procedure was, without doubt, age-appropriate. Their enthusiasm created the basis for a positive learning experience, and my impression is that this method of teaching was well-suited to this group.

The application of the analytical procedure required participants in the current study to interpret familiar concepts in music (previously referred to as the structural phenomena) in context of the character of the piece. Aspects which hindered this process were uncertainty of terminology and a lack of imagination, which can be associated with the initial focus on notational aspects, resulting in a lack of attention to interpretation. This conclusion is in agreement with Koopman *et al*. (2007:388)

who state that students who focused primarily on notational level, neglected aspects of interpretation.

Furthermore, participants were not thorough when observing score indications; for example, they would observe *forte* or *piano*, but would fail to observe a *crescendo* or *diminuendo*. As already stated above, it seemed that these participants tended to approach a new work in clearly defined stages, starting with exclusive attention to learning the notes before integrating score indications or aspects of interpretation.
This resulted in a high level of the participants' dependence on their teachers, an aspect described in detail above. It is evident that they define clear roles for themselves as well as for their teachers, in which case their main focus is to learn the notes and the responsibility is on the teacher to guide towards the interpretation of a piece.

As a result of applying a holistic approach (the analytical procedure), participants were able to make independent decisions regarding interpretation. Furthermore, they were able to describe the practical implementation of their decisions, in other words, the 'how to' of their theoretical knowledge. Verbal discussions and written work from Phase 3 (which are discussed in the next section) proved their insight and understanding of the process.
Participants mostly struggled with structural phenomena which required some integration of their musical knowledge; for example, analysing the harmony in order to identify the type of cadence. The importance of listening, however, was confirmed by their ability to hear the occurrence of a cadence, rather than to identify it by studying the score. These findings confirm the importance of supplementing teaching and practising with critical listening activities, as reported in an earlier study (Woody, 2000:21).

The fact that the majority of participants showed an improvement in their understanding reflects the success of a structured approach which includes explicit instructions, as suggested by previous researchers (Woody, 2003; Lauka, 2004; Burwell, 2005).

5.3.2 Observations when Studying the Score and Listening to a Performance

Previous research suggests that score analysis activities should be accompanied by focused listening activities in order to improve the development of interpretation (Hallam, 1995; Woody, 2000). Hallam (1995:127) also states that successful performers should have a variety of skills and emphasises that score analysis and critical listening should be accompanied by discussions on interpretation. In the current study, the effects of this finding were demonstrated when participants' responses to analysing the score were compared to their responses to listening to a performance. Responses to listening to a performance were focused on artistic aspects, whereas responses to studying the score prior to listening were focused on notational observations. This is in agreement with Purser (2005:297) who states that successful performance will result from critical self-evaluation and the development of focused listening skills.

A significant observation was that participants' responses were enhanced by focused listening activities that were, to a large extent, facilitated by the teacher. This suggests the importance of the use of modelling as a teaching technique, which was also emphasised in previous studies (Lauka, 2004; Woody, 2000). Although other research indicates that some teachers have a preference for using verbal instructions (Purser, 2005), it is clear that a combination of explicit verbal instruction and modelling yields successful results. By combining these two methods, the current study followed a holistic approach which involved attaining an overview and analysing the composition during the initial stages of practising, as suggested by Hallam (1995) and Brenner & Strand (2013).

5.4 Phase 3 - Interview 2 and Reflections: Post-view

It this section, the experience of the participants, as part of the primary research question, will be described.

When learning a new work, how do students respond to and **experience** the application of aspects of an analytical procedure designed to facilitate the independent development of interpretation?

Data collected during the second interview and the written reflections in homework diaries will be interpreted below to describe the participants' experience of the analytical procedure, and this will be related to findings in the literature. The discussion that follows is structured as in section 5.2 above.

5.4.1 Category 1: Approach when Learning a New Work

The discussion which follows, considers participants' development in terms of their understanding of interpretation and the application of their theoretical knowledge in their practice strategies. Their views and perspectives as represented in Phase 1 will be reviewed to show their development.

As stated above, according to the three-levelled model of Sullivan & Cantwell (1999:245), attention to aspects of interpretation is characteristic of a high-level practice strategy. As the focus of this study is on the development of interpretation, this topic will be highlighted and discussed separately and will not be represented again as part of the discussion which focuses on practice strategies.

5.4.1.1 Interpretation

From the data analysis, I deduced that participants acquired a refined understanding of the concept of interpretation. Previously vague descriptions were now replaced by detailed reports with reference to the composer, mood, character and title of the piece. As a result of the application of the analytical procedure, their awareness of aspects related to interpretation was heightened.

The structured approach which was followed in the analytical procedure provided them with clear guidelines for making independent interpretative decisions when learning a new piece. It also aided them in gaining an overview of the piece, observing all score indications and making interpretative decisions before practising commenced. This means that previously ineffective strategies were adapted and improved. All participants made statements which implied that this approach would change the way in which they practised in future. Comments were mostly focused on analysing the music while integrating artistic elements namely style, character, mood

and emotion. When compared to statements made in Phase 1, their comments were more detailed and specific, closely related to those of conservatoire students at a much higher level of expertise (Lindström et al., 2003).

The incorporation of artistic elements in the early phases of learning a new piece parallels the approaches of professional musicians, which are described in a study by Chaffin & Imreh (2001:39): performance directions and consideration of interpretation were observed from the first practice session when learning a new work. These participants' reflections mirrored this effective approach as reports showed that the majority of them incorporated these aspects from the outset.

5.4.1.2 Practice Strategies

In this section, the development of the participants' ability to apply their theoretical knowledge practically, will be discussed. The fact that participants were now more focused on artistic elements and less on notational elements, improved their quality of practising significantly. The characteristics of an effective strategy outlined in Chapter 2, are summarised below and will be used as a guideline for the discussion to follow:

Characteristics of an effective practice strategy:

1. A holistic approach should be followed throughout.
2. Self-regulated activities are crucial, and include:
    - self-evaluation;
    - ability to adjust ineffective strategies;
    - goal-setting;
    - self-instruction.
3. The use of a practice checklist is recommended.
4. Detailed planning is essential.
5. Score analysis for interpretative purposes is advised.
6. Strengthening the aural perception is beneficial.
7. The aim of sound production has to be expression of emotion.
8. Interpretative aspects must be integrated from the early phases of learning a new work.

Although there was still evidence (as discussed above) of low-level practice strategies, which included continually starting practising from the beginning of a piece and focusing on notational aspects, mid-level strategies had increased remarkably. Seven of the eight participants presented detailed descriptions of score-study activities which they related to interpretative aspects.

Levels of self-regulation, characteristic of a high-level approach, increased. This was evident from written reflections in which participants evaluated their own practising. Reports showed a shift in focus from notational to artistic levels. Participants set specific goals, adjusted their strategies to achieve these and assessed their own progress. Their measured success was described in terms of successfully portraying the character of the piece and not in terms of playing without note-mistakes.

Nielsen (2001:150) supports these observations when reporting that the activities of setting specific goals and making use of self-instruction will ensure successful learning. It may be concluded that if goals are set with interpretation in mind, practice strategies will be adapted to ensure that these goals are achieved. Holmes (2005) also supports this view and states that practice strategies should be chosen with the interpretative goal in mind.

By giving the participants a structured method, they were forced to plan their approach deliberately and incorporate artistic elements from the early phases of learning a new piece. This approach is characteristic of that of a professional musician's, as discussed by Chaffin & Imreh (2001).

Prior to this process, few participants made an effort to study the score with focused attention. Two participants mentioned that for them, score-study was merely an activity to determine if any 'notes were repeated'. From written reflections, it was evident that, as a result of the use of the analytical procedure, score-analysis activities increased considerably. This is in line with previous studies (Sullivan & Cantwell, 1999; Ward, 2007; Lisboa, 2008; Hallam, 1995), which report that score analysis prior to practising is imperative for making interpretative decisions.

In sum, the use of high-level strategies was progressively utilised. As a result of setting specific goals focused on interpretation, the focus of participants shifted from a notational- to an artistic level, which means that they adapted their strategies to achieve their goals. It would seem that the approach I initiated in my teaching-learning-process did result in favourable outcomes that are in line with published findings.

5.4.2 Category 2: Attitude when Learning a New Work

The responses of participants with regard to the chosen repertoire predominantly reflected optimism and excitement.

5.4.2.1 Responses Regarding the South African Compositions

The choice of repertoire plays a fundamental role in sustaining the interest of the intermediate student (Daniel & Bowden, 2013:258). Participants in the current study responded positively to the chosen repertoire and from a total of twenty-four lessons, only two participants reported disliking one of the pieces which they had to learn. Several participants commented that the music was ‘different’ from that which they usually play. The constructive contribution made by this study was to expose these participants to music of composers from their own country and broaden their stylistic repertoire.

5.4.3 Category 3: Experience of the Process

Woody (2003) and Burwell (2005) emphasise the importance of a structured teaching approach which is characterised by the use of explicit verbal instruction. Participants’ descriptions of their experience of the application of the analytical procedure suggest that they responded positively to a method which is based on the suggestions of Woody (2003) and Burwell (2005). The analytical procedure provided a comprehensible approach to interpretation which can be applied during independent practice sessions.

5.5 Implications for Education

It must be noted that previous studies (Miksza, 2011; Pitts *et al.,* 2000; Bautista *et al*., 2013; Burwell & Shipton, 2013; Hultberg, 2008; Koopman *et al*., 2007; Lisboa, 2008; McPherson, 2005) investigated the practice strategies of musicians of various levels of expertise and instruments. Conclusions in these studies were drawn from observations and written or verbal reports of participants. Although the current study shows some similarities to these, it differs in that the researcher intervened in the participants' approach by introducing the analytical procedure; thus, participants' experience and development throughout the process could be observed and described.

Evidence shows that by providing intermediate students with a structured approach which incorporates all aspects related to effective practising, their independent development was encouraged. Positive growth was evident within a very short period of approximately eight weeks. It may be argued that if intermediate students were exposed to this method for longer periods of time, progressive development would be sustained.

The implication for education is thus twofold: intermediate musicians need to improve their practice strategies and teachers need to assist them by teaching them what an effective strategy comprises and how to apply it independently. Lauka (2004) and Purser (2005) found that although teachers regarded teaching interpretation as a primary element during instrumental lessons, they were often not able to clearly define their methods. Every music teacher has a unique approach which they develop and adapt over years, but it could be particularly beneficial to young musicians if these methods were more clearly defined. My research contributes to the clarification of methods by showing one method for structuring the teaching-learning process and by providing an indication of students' responses and experiences. My research adds to a growing body of literature, as discussed in the next paragraph.

Blickenstaff (2012) and Harris (2006) propose useful methods to support teaching and practising, but neither of their methods is applied and described in terms of the music students' experience. Ward (2007) developed and tested a teaching method

which involves score analysis, but focuses on the teachers' experience and their feedback on the process, while Brook (2015) describes the effectiveness of an online tool to enhance self-regulated learning. Although the focus of the current study is on the independent development of interpretation, it has become clear that the root of the problem lies in the use of ineffective practice strategies. These ineffective strategies include poor planning and primarily focusing on notational aspects, neglecting interpretation. Burwell & Shipton (2013) address this very problem and facilitated a practice clinic to assist students with their individual practising. This type of workshop would be a natural consequence of the evidence which emerged from this study.

The findings from the current study could benefit young musicians and instrumental teachers who wish to explore a method to assist with the development of independent interpretation.

5.6 Limitations of this Study

There are some limitations to this study as the participants were all female pianists. It would be interesting to be able to determine if male participants of the same age-group would respond differently to the application of the analytical procedure. It is possible that intermediate male pianists would have a different attitude and set different goals when starting to learn a new work, compared to females.

It is clear from the literature focusing on practice strategies that students' verbal reports and the practical application of their intentions, often do not correspond (Koopman *et al*., 2007; Burwell & Shipton, 2013). In the current study, several of the written activities which reflected aspects of participants' practice strategies, were based on self-report; therefore, it would be valuable to record practice sessions, rather than rely on self-reported behaviour. Recorded material could be a useful tool to prompt discussions and self-reflection sessions with the aim to improve self-regulation during independent practising.

Participants in this study were exposed to a specifically designed analytical procedure which influenced their approach to learning a new work and directed their

focus to interpretation; however, the long-term effectiveness of this approach needs further inquiry. Although the participants in the current study showed a significant improvement in the quality of practice strategies, focusing their attention increasingly on artistic elements, the process was only applied in three lessons over a limited time period; therefore, it is inexact to presuppose that these new, improved habits would have a lasting effect in the long term. A follow-up study after a few months could be useful to determine whether these participants have permanently adapted previously ineffective strategies.

Finally, this study focused on pianists only. Although the analytical procedure was designed to be a generic method for any instrument, it was implemented among pianists only. Further research involving a variety of instruments is needed to determine if this procedure can be applied equally successfully to other instruments. This will allow instrumental teachers, other than piano teachers, to contribute valuable input and enable the researcher to adapt the analytical procedure if necessary.

5.7 Recommendation for Future Study

While the research elucidated many aspects regarding the approach of intermediate musicians when learning a new work, it has also raised some issues. These issues in need of further investigation can be divided into two main sections: recommendations regarding students and recommendations regarding teachers.

5.7.1 Recommendations Regarding Students

It became clear that the root of difficulties with regard to interpretation stems from inadequate practising which underlines the need for further investigation into the practice strategies of young developing musicians. It will be useful to investigate the planning strategies of students in order to determine their approach to setting specific goals. It has been shown that by setting specific goals, practice strategies can be adapted in order to realise these goals (Holmes:2005). If practice sessions are planned with a specific focus, the quality of practising may improve.

As the repertoire used during this study was limited to character-pieces by South-African composers, it would be interesting to determine how the analytical procedure could be applied to a wider range of repertoire and styles. Results from such a study would show if and how the analytical procedure would have to be refined in order to be applied with success.

As critical listening formed an extensive part of the lesson procedure, it would be useful to investigate young developing musicians' understanding of critical listening. A study which focuses on *what* they listen to when listening to recordings, and not only *if* they listen to recordings, would provide useful information for the development of critical listening skills.

The results of this study clearly indicate that, when learning a new work, the primary focus of these intermediate pianists is on notational aspects. The pieces which were chosen for the purpose of this study, were specifically sourced to eliminate technical and notational challenges and to be of at least two grades lower than each participants' current graded level in piano. The question that arises is whether or not these pianists can be expected to cope with technically demanding repertoire as well as incorporate aspects of interpretation during the initial stages of learning a new piece. This focus on the complexity of kinaesthetic and cognitive (reading) skills which are demanded specifically when playing the piano, is a matter which requires further investigation. In addition, it would be interesting to determine the way in which these skills either differ from or correspond with other instruments.

When focusing on the participants' ability to make independent decisions regarding interpretation, it was found that they still needed much guidance from their teacher. It could be useful to do a survey to determine how these developing musicians perceive instrumental lessons, how they perceive their own role and responsibilities and that of their teacher. This type of information could be very useful to teachers in order to assist students in gaining an understanding of what is expected of them, while guiding them towards musical independence.

5.7.2 Recommendations Regarding Teachers

When focusing on the development of independent musicianship, the role of the teacher is crucial. There is a need for further investigation of successful teaching strategies. Purser (2005:297) points out that, for various reasons, teachers are often hesitant to share their ideas and approaches. In order to compile guidelines for an effective teaching approach, it would be useful to conduct a teaching workshop during which keen instrumental teachers can share their ideas and successful strategies. The focus can be narrowed down even further in a study focusing on the way in which specific teaching strategies would vary in the case of high-achieving and average students at intermediate level. Results from studies like these could enable teachers to improve their own teaching and, additionally, the application of these methods could be tested and discussed in successive workshops.

Because the focus of the current study is on the independent development of the participant and the analytical procedure was applied by the researcher, the experience of only the participant has been investigated. It is necessary, therefore, to obtain teachers' responses to this procedure. This implies a study in which the analytical procedure is implemented by other teachers, enabling the researcher to gain better understanding of the quality of the procedure and allowing for adjustments where necessary.

5.8 Conclusion

This study set out to describe the experience and response of eight female participants to the application of an analytical procedure, designed to develop independent interpretation. It is evident that the development of young pianists' understanding of interpretation cannot be studied in isolation; the integration of a holistic, structured teaching approach comprising explicit verbal instruction and modelling strategies is of crucial importance. These two aspects are the foundation of the approach to interpretation upon which the analytical procedure should be designed. The characteristics of an effective teaching approach, described in Chapter 2 and applied during the practical lessons of the current study, left participants no choice but to adapt their ineffective strategies. By directing their goal

from notational to artistic, their awareness of aspects relating to interpretation increased which led to a constructive adjustment of their practice approach.

Several other aspects, related to the student, play a role in the independent development of young musicians: the period of time that they have been learning their instrument; the level of devotion to their craft; the amount of time they spend practising and the quality of their independent practising, are all instrumental to the maturity of the young developing musician. The aim of this study was to enable students to make optimum use of their practice sessions through methodical planning, goal-setting and effective application of theoretical knowledge.

Unlike tertiary level institutions, the teaching of Music as a subject at school does not allow for a balance between the theoretical and practical aspects in terms of time allocation. It is, therefore, imperative that students, especially those involved in extra-curricular activities, make optimal use of their limited practice time in order to maximise their potential.

Considering the fact that many musicians, including several of these participants, will not necessarily follow a professional career in music I find it most compelling that music teachers recognise their purpose, being the catalyst in the development of young musicians' potential. Music teachers should accept their responsibility to equip their students with the necessary skills to be independent interpreters. This will ensure students' sustained interest and ability to continue playing their instruments in the long term.

In conclusion to this study, the pivotal factor seems to have been to encourage students to aim their focus on artistic expression which will induce effective practice strategies. Ultimately, this will culminate in producing independent interpreters of music.

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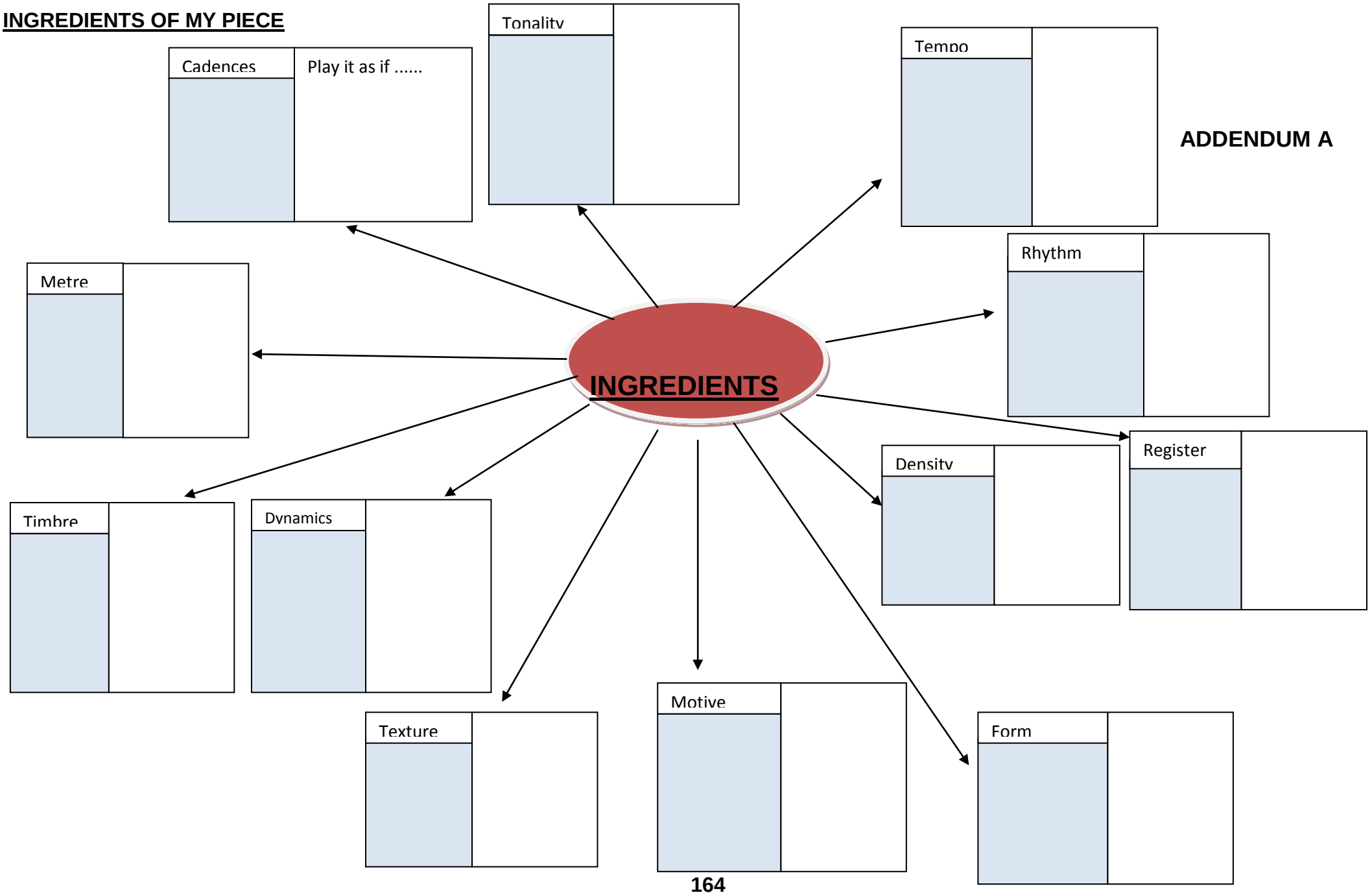
INGREDIENTS OF MY PIECE

ADDENDUM A



AT HOME…

ADDENDUM B

NAME OF WORK _____

COMPOSER _____

1. Record your practice time here.

DATE	START TIME	END TIME

REMEMBER: Look at your answer to question 5 when you explored your piece. Aim to practice enough to perform your piece according to your description of the character.

2. REFLECTION TIME

Write a short paragraph (in the circle) to describe your experience while you worked on this piece. Here are some suggestions to help you:

- How did you usually start each session?
- Did you do short sections or aim to learn the whole piece from beginning to end?
- What did you find challenging?
- What did you enjoy?
- Do you like the piece?
- Do you feel that you achieved your goal?

ADDENDUM D

EXPLORING MY PIECE (Adapted from Paul Harris (2006) – being a detective)

1. TITLE _____
2. COMPOSER _____
3. STYLISTIC PERIOD _____

4. If you study the score, can you form an idea of what the music would sound like? Comment.

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

5. Does the title give you an idea of the character of the piece?

_____
_____
_____

6. Listen when your teacher plays it, describe the mood.

_____
_____
_____
_____

7. Let us now take a closer look at the score, listen to some sections of the piece and complete the “ingredients”. Time to use your imagination!!

ADDENDUM E

PLAY IT AS IF …… (You may also add some of your own words)

Sleeping	Distraught	Angry	Happy
Grazing sheep	Delighted	Lonely	Smiling
Swans gliding	Laughing loud	Contemplating	Thinking
Firing rockets	Near	Far away	Dancing
Speed of light	Colourful	Dying	A bright day
Ecstatic	Cloudy skies	Thunder and lightning	Rich chocolate
Deep velvet	Spiky	Sour	Celebrating
Stately	Exhausted	Humorous	In love
Magical	Mysterious	Agitated	Annoyed
Tired	Peaceful	Calm	Drifting on a river
On a stormy sea	Hailstones on the roof	Seen a ghost	Turning up the volume
Turning down the volume	A bus over a bumpy road	A crowded mall	A King/Queen
Rocking a baby to sleep	Assertive		

ADDENDUM F – Data analysis tool (adapted: original version by Van Niekerk, 2015:23-26)

OBSERVATIONS WHEN LISTENING WHILE THE PIECE WAS PLAYED

NOTES ON THE SCORE

OBSERVATIONS WHEN ANALYSING THE SCORE

COMMENTS BY THE RESEARCHER ON WORKING WITH THE PARTICIPANT AT THE PIANO

OBSERVATION CHECKLIST USED FOR VIDEO RECORDED MATERIAL and SUMMARY OF WRITTEN WORK INCLUDING FIELD NOTES

PARTICIPANT _____ – LESSON/PERFORMANCE _____ (NAME OF COMPOSITION: COMPOSER)

TASK	Participant's RESPONSE	Description	Summary and field notes
DESCRIPTION: Each structural phenomenon will be described. The participant must be able to identify the phenomena. Some phenomena change during the course of a piece, the participant must also be able to identify these changes. HOW: (This will explain how the teacher will guide the participant through the process of discovering and identifying a particular phenomenon) The participant will have the			

score to follow while the teacher plays the music. Structural phenomena (any occurrence in the music that can signal a division in the design, may be considered a structural phenomenon) can be identified aurally or by analysing the score. The participant will write on the score during this process, to indicate the phenomena and changes thereof.			
CADENCE This refers to a point cessation in the musical activity. HOW While the teacher plays the piece, the participant will follow the score and indicate when he feels that a cadence was reached.	a) Correct b) Partially correct c) Incorrect	a) Able to identify the occurrence of a cadence correctly. b) Able to identify a change in structural phenomena, but not able to label it as a cadence. c) Unable to identify the occurrence of a cadence.	
TONALITY This refers to the key of the music (including major or minor). It also includes a change of	a) Correct b) Partially correct	a) Able to identify key and changes in key or tonality. b) Able to identify a change in	

tonality or key. HOW The participant will identify the key as indicated by the key signature and/or accidentals in the music. The tonality will then be determined. The participant will identify a change in key/tonality while listening to the piece as played by the teacher, and supporting their answer by analysing the score.	c) Incorrect	structural phenomena, but not able to identify it as a change in key or tonality. c) Not able to identify key by analysing score indications and unable to identify changes in key or tonality aurally.	
TEMPO This refers to the speed of the music. It can stay the same, gradually or suddenly change. HOW The participant will describe the tempo and identify any changes, while listening to the music.	a) Correct b) Partially correct c) Incorrect	a) Able to identify the tempo changes and describe as abrupt or gradual. b) Able to identify the tempo change but not able to say if it was gradual or abrupt. c) Unable to identify gradual or abrupt changes in tempo.	
METRE This refers to the organization of beats within a bar. When the metre changes, a visible	a) Correct	a) Able to identify metre change OR subtle change in rhythmic organization.	

indication in the score (new time signature) will be observed OR it can be a subtle change in the rhythmic organization of the note values. HOW The participant will be able to see if a time signature change is indicated in the score. This will be audibly recognizable as well. Subtle changes in the rhythmic organization will be discovered by analysing the score.	b) Partially correct c) Incorrect	b) Visible metre change was observed but subtle change could not be identified. c) Unable to identify a change in metre.	
DYNAMICS This refers to the volume of the music. Changes in dynamics can occur abruptly or gradually. HOW The participant will observe dynamic changes while the music is played by the teacher. The participant will describe all the dynamics changes in the piece.	a) Correct b) Partially correct c) Incorrect	a) Able to identify dynamic levels and changes in dynamics. b) Able to identify abrupt changes, but not able to identify gradual changes. c) Unable to identify dynamic changes.	
REGISTER This refers to the pitch of a phrase or motif. A	a) Correct	a) Able to identify when a change in register occurs	

motif or phrase can be heard in different registers in one piece. HOW The participant will have to identify changes in register while listening to the music. This will also be clear in the score.	b) Partially correct c) Incorrect	and able to say whether it occurred in a higher or lower register. b) Able to identify the change in register, but not able to say whether it occurred higher or lower. c) Unable to identify the change in register.	
TEXTURE This refers to the role of each of the voices of the music. The role can be melodic or of an accompaniment nature. HOW The participant will comment on the texture (homophonic, polyphonic, monophonic) while listening to the music. If there is an accompaniment, the participant must describe the type of accompaniment (chords, broken chords, Alberti bass)	a) Correct b) Partially correct c) Incorrect	a) Able to identify the texture and describe the accompaniment. b) Able to identify the texture but not to describe the accompaniment. c) Not able to identify or describe the texture.	
STRUCTURAL DIVISIONS (FORM)	a) Correct	a) Able to identify the main	

This can be indicated by a change in structural phenomena. The participant will indicate the structural divisions on the scores and worksheets. This will be discussed during the lessons. Structural divisions will clarify the form of the piece.	b) Partially correct c) Incorrect	structural divisions and give suitable reasons. b) Able to identify some structural divisions that is clearly indicated in the score. c) Not able to identify any structural divisions.	
DENSITY The amount of music space filled. Reduction/increase of voices.	a) Correct b) Partially correct c) Incorrect	a) Participant is able to describe density and changes in density. b) Participant is able to describe some density changes. c) Participant does not understand the concept of density in music and therefore not able to describe it.	
MOTIVE	a) Correct	a) Participant is able to	

Prominent melodic or rhythmic pattern. Must be easily remembered by the listener.	b) Partially correct c) Incorrect	identify a melodic or rhythmic motive. b) The participant is able to identify some motives. c) Participant is not able to identify any motives.	
RHYTHM Observation of recurring rhythmic pattern and/or change in note values without a change in tempo or metre	a) Correct b) Partially correct c) Incorrect	a) Participant is able to identify a recurring rhythm or a contrasting rhythm. b) Participant is able to identify some rhythmic aspects but did not observe any changes in rhythm. c) Participant finds it difficult to describe or understand any of the rhythmic aspects.	
TIMBRE The property of sound.	a) Correct b) Partially correct	a) Participant is able to describe the timbre and timbre changes. b) Participant is able to describe some of the	

	c) Incorrect	timbres but uncertain. c) The participant is not able to describe or understand timbre.	

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ADDENDUM G

Miss Gonçalves

I, Catharina Elizabeth Susanna (CES) Kruger am a registered student for the DMus degree at the North-West University. It is my intention to conduct a research study which will aim to develop a procedure that will facilitate the independent development of young, secondary school pianists, especially in terms of their ability to interpret new compositions. The procedure will be developed by analysing the data that will emerge from the involvement of the participants.

As a full-time employee at Jeppe High School for Girls, I will be using eight of my current piano students to collect the necessary data to be analysed and compared. Piano lessons will be recorded but no personal information of the participants will be divulged in the thesis. The intention is to record lessons over a period of approximately ten weeks.

The information gathered during the course of this research study will be used for the sole purpose of fulfilling the requirements of the degree. The researcher will not be remunerated for the research and students will not be expected to pay any fee for the lessons.

Permission from parents/guardians and from the Department of Education will be obtained in writing before the research will commence. Furthermore, a detailed document, outlining the purpose of this study, information regarding the participants and procedures for data analysis will be submitted to the Ethical Committee of the North-West University for approval.

I would like to obtain permission from you as the headmistress of Jeppe High School for Girls, to proceed with the preparations for the intended research study.

Regards

CES Kruger

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ADDENDUM H

Dear Parent/Guardian

RESEARCH FOR DOCTORAL MUSIC STUDIES

I am currently busy with post-graduate studies at the North-West University and as part of my research, I will be investigating the effects of a different method of teaching piano in order to determine the benefits for young, developing piano students.

For this purpose, I would like to obtain permission from you, parent/guardian of _____ to allow her to partake in this study. Please complete the reply slip below if you grant permission.

This research will be done after school hours. All lessons will be recorded with the purpose of analysing the data and comparing the progress of each student over a ten-week cycle. No personal information will be divulged in the thesis.

Requirements

1. Students will have to learn four new piano pieces during a ten-week cycle and will be expected to practise on a regular basis.
2. They will have some written work to complete on each new piece.
3. Students will have to keep a practice journal.

If you have any queries or concerns in this regard, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Your co-operation is highly valued.

Regards

Ms E Kruger (Cell: 082 789 7839)

I, _____ parent/guardian of _____ give permission for my daughter to partake in the above-mentioned study (letter dated January 2014) which will be conducted by CES Kruger, DMus student at the North-West University. (Student number: 10217924)

_____ _____

Parent/guardian's signature Date

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ADDENDUM I

To whom it may concern

I, Catharina Elizabeth Susanna (CES) Kruger am a registered student for the DMus degree at the North-West University. It is my intention to conduct a research study which will aim to develop a procedure that will facilitate the independent development of young, secondary school pianists, especially in terms of their ability to interpret new compositions. The procedure will be developed by analysing the data that will emerge from the involvement of the participants.

I am a full-time employee at Jeppe High School for Girls and will be using eight of my current piano students to collect the necessary data to be analysed and compared. Piano lessons will be recorded but no personal information of the participants will be divulged in the thesis. The intention is to record lessons over a ten-week period between March and June.

The information gathered during the course of this research study will be used for the sole purpose of fulfilling the requirements of the degree. The researcher will not be remunerated for the research and students will not be expected to pay any fee for the lessons.

Permission from parents/guardians and from the headmistress of this institution will be obtained in writing before the research will commence. Furthermore, a detailed document, outlining the purpose of this study, information regarding the participants and procedures for data analysis will be submitted to the Ethical Committee of the North-West University for approval.

I would like to obtain permission from the Department of Education to continue with the preparations for the intended research study.

Your favourable response will be highly appreciated.

CES Kruger

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