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Landscapes of musical metaphor and musical learning: the example of jazz education

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Theoretical approaches to learning in practice-based jazz improvisation contexts include situated learning and ecological perspectives. This article focuses on how interest-driven, self-sustaining jazz learning activities can be matched against the results of a recent Swedish investigation based on extensive qualitative interviews with jazz musicians regarding their views on the metaphor ‘storytelling’ and its relevance in the field of jazz improvisation. In order to visualise and discuss the educational implications of the results of this study, the notions of a landscape of musical metaphor and a corresponding landscape of musical learning are presented and discussed.

Keywords: jazz education; jazz improvisation; storytelling; landscape of musical metaphor; landscape of musical learning

Introduction: problematising jazz education

In the view of several jazz scholars, certain features of jazz come more easily as objects of pedagogy than other aspects: e.g. chord/scale methods, structure or sound (see, for instance, Berliner 1994; Lewis 1996; Schwartz 1996).

The guitarist Derek Bailey (1993) has spoken of bebop as ‘the pedagogue’s delight’ (50). Importantly, this statement must not be taken as referring to *all* aspects of bebop music. Needless to say, it is not the case that bebop *is* merely formulaic. However, certain aspects of this tradition and style, its formulae and its structures, lend themselves particularly well to systematisation. The chord/scale approach to improvisation has dominated jazz education for half a century now. Improvisers learn to associate scales with chords, which then guide their choices of notes when they improvise. This model for instruction regarding genre and form is easily gradable.

As a consequence, improvisation may face the risk of becoming a *search for mastery* rather than a *search for freedom*. Musical knowledge may be treated as individual, abstract and relatively fixed. Arguably, much conventional jazz pedagogy is limited, since it often does not direct sufficient attention to *collective*, *experiential* or *exploratory* approaches to improvisation. There are of course many different approaches to jazz education in a global perspective. Many educators are well aware of these kinds of complexities. Their work ought not to be summed up in a simplified schema. Still, returning to Bailey’s (1993) words, it is only certain aspects of bebop

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that have been ‘the pedagogue’s delight’. He continues: ‘The mechanics of the style are everywhere; [but] of the the restlessness, the adventurousness, the thirst for change which was a central characteristic of the jazz of that period there seems to be no sign at all’ (50). It might be argued that the chord/scale formulaic methods are likely to remain a popular approach in jazz pedagogy for several reasons: it is comparatively easy to verbalise and communicate, it is measurable to some degree, and it has come to be perceived as a stepping stone in improvisational instruction.

In brief, jazz improvisation has long been ‘a troublesome concept within musical academia’ (Prouty 2012, 68), and the grounds and methods of jazz education will likely remain the object of problematisation and discussion among musicians and educators. In this article, I will point to a particular feature of musicians’ discourse on jazz that may be of relevance to such discussions, namely, how the metaphor ‘storytelling’ is put forward as a description (and prescription) regarding what jazz improvisation is about (Berliner 1994; Monson 1996). Taken at face value, the concept may perhaps seem self-contradictory: how could stories be told without words? Nevertheless, the term storytelling has a long history of prominence in descriptive and prescriptive talk on jazz improvisation, ranging from saxophonist Lester Young’s legendary question to fast young players, ‘You’re technically hip. *But what is your story?*’ (cited by O’Meally 1989, 221) to the very first sentence in pianist Randy Weston’s autobiography: ‘I come to be a storyteller; I’m not a jazz musician, I’m really a storyteller through music’ (Weston and Jenkins 2010, 1).

I would like to make it clear that my aim here does not include any general study of how metaphorical language is or could be used in music educational contexts. Though important and interesting, the phenomenon of educational metaphor is another matter entirely. My aim here is, rather, to (1) analyse the scope of meanings included in jazz improvisers’ usage of the concept of ‘storytelling’ when they speak of their craft, and to (2) take this analysis as a point of departure for discussing some educational implications of their views through the introduction of the notion of a ‘landscape of metaphor’ as well as a corresponding ‘landscape of learning’.

How can jazz students learn to improvise? It is reasonable that educational perspectives regarding musical improvisation, in contradistinction to the performance of written music, should have their distinctive features. Ronald B. Thomas (1991) points out that the “‘knowing” skills’ ordinarily taught in music education – such as knowing notes, visual recognition and kinesthetic response – are quite different from those developed through improvisation. Thomas terms the latter *music fluency skills*, contending that ‘they deal exclusively with the language – the sounds of music – rather than with the symbolism and rules of notation’ (28).

Expanding on the differences between executing notated music and improvising ‘by ear’, Ben Sidran (1981) formulates a version of the Deweyan slogan: in jazz improvisation, he argues, learning *is* doing:

Relying on the ability to read music implies a rigid *preconception* whereas playing ‘by ear’ is part of the more free-flowing oral tradition and is merely *conception*. Hence, a musician can always learn to read music but, as is well known, even some of the best readers, i.e., the Western classical musicians, cannot ‘fake it’, or improvise on a given body of material. One cannot be taught how to improvise black musical idioms, because the *theory* of improvisation develops through the *doing* of it. The act is the theory. [Louis] Armstrong, it has been said, proved the idea that ‘if you can’t sing it, you can’t

play it', that improvisation is based on the ability to 'hear' with internal ears the sound of an internal voice. (61–62)

Sidran's polemic, categorical words on the impossibility of teaching improvisation may, I believe, be interpreted as a deliberate provocation. Notwithstanding, they point to the relevance and legitimacy of research devoted to educational questions regarding musical improvisation.

A number of theoretical approaches to musical learning can be considered pertinent to learning in jazz improvisation contexts which are, to a large extent, practice-based: for instance, *situated learning*, including the concepts of *legitimate peripheral participation* and *cognitive apprenticeship* (Lave and Wenger 1991; Nielsen and Kvale 2000), and *ecological perspectives* on perception, music and musical learning (Gibson [1979] 1986; Boyce-Tillman 2004; Clarke 2005; Barron 2006). In several important respects, jazz improvisers and jazz improvisation learners draw on their situatedness in time (in social and musical tradition) and in space (in social and musical environment).

Inspired by a story told by Rabindranath Tagore about his own musical learning, John Seely Brown and Paul Duguid (1993) introduce the concept of *stolen knowledge*, proposing that schools and places of work ought to make it possible for learners to participate legitimately and peripherally in authentic social practice. According to Brown and Duguid (1993), legitimate peripheral participation (Lave and Wenger 1991) could be viewed as *legitimate theft*. Learning, Brown and Duguid argue, is too often viewed from the teacher's perspective (supply); in their opinion, it ought to be viewed more often from the learner's perspective (demand).

Brigid Barron (2006) points out that an ecology of education is 'a dynamic learning system open to multiple influences' where people appropriate and adapt the resources provided, thereby choosing, developing and creating their own learning opportunities (200). I will attempt to illustrate in the next section that these perspectives are arguably highly relevant to jazz learning.

Learning jazz: some relevant perspectives

The attitude that teaching and learning jazz improvisation is not only difficult but also a bit mysterious – exemplified by the Sidran quotation above – might be a rather common one. However, according to Peter J. Martin (2002), the ways in which improvisational ability is commonly viewed are clearly *contextual*: 'The specific skills required for musical improvisation may be regarded, not as exceptional, but as normal and achievable in appropriate cultural contexts' (140). Specifically, Paul F. Berliner (1994) points out that 'children who grow up around improvisers regard improvisation as a skill within the realm of their own possible development' (31). Just as in several other professional fields, many jazz musicians testify to the importance of role models.

In practitioners' discourse on jazz learning, the crucial importance of *listening* has traditionally been emphasised. Ted Gioia (1988) points out that several famous jazz players and innovators exemplify jazz learning processes that relied heavily on their 'apprenticeship at the gramophone' (67). Such listening practices still prevail in jazz learning; Guro Gravem Johansen (2013b) provides an empirical study of the

practice of copying from recordings in contemporary Norwegian jazz students' instrumental practice.

Berliner (1994) presents samples of traditional *frameworks* for jazz musical learning, such as jam sessions and participation in orchestras. Such frameworks seem very much in line with the windows onto practice recommended by Brown and Duguid (1993). The tension between *imitation* and *creation* constitutes a central educational dilemma in arts pedagogy. Perhaps all education needs to be founded on the supposition that there is a way to dissolve this seemingly paradoxical challenge. David Liebman (1996) strongly advocates transcription and imitation as educational means for the jazz improviser to attain musical individuality: 'all artists go through imitation' (17); 'The inspirational effect of being able to sound like the records being admired will spur the youngster on to find his own individuality' (117). For clarity's sake, it ought to be added that the task of stealing knowledge in this context would not be considered as an end in itself; even though transcribing and learning recorded solos is an important part of jazz musicians' learning processes, sheer imitation is seldom encouraged in jazz. The pianist Billy Taylor has told his story of Art Tatum's reaction to a near-perfect imitation (!) of his own virtuoso recording of 'Tiger Rag':

Tatum couldn't have cared less. He said, 'Well, he knows what I do, but he doesn't know why I do it'. (Brown 2010, 211)

According to Kenneth Prouty (2008, 2012), 'self-teaching', commonly perceived as essential to non-academic jazz traditions, will permit performers to determine their own aesthetic course. During the last half century, however, the role of nightclubs and jam sessions to jazz performance and learning has diminished dramatically. College-based programmes have replaced the traditional learning grounds for young jazz musicians as well as the primary professional homes of many jazz performers (Ake 2010). In all probability, the changing contexts of jazz learning may have had significant impact on *what* is being taught and learnt, and *how*. A discussion of these and related questions has started to grow in jazz literature during the last few years.

In the following section, the notion of 'self-teaching', or interest-driven, self-sustaining learning activities in the field of jazz improvisation, will be matched against the results of a recent empirical study. This investigation was based on extensive qualitative interviews with 15 Swedish jazz musicians of national and international renown. They were asked to expand and reflect on their views on the metaphor 'storytelling' and its relevance in the field of jazz improvisation (Bjerstedt 2014). The findings clarify, I believe, how the storytelling metaphor may help us understand several aspects of jazz improvisation. I suggest that on a general level, they exemplify how rich intermedial metaphor may mediate holistic views in artistic practice, analysis and education. In my discussion of these findings, I suggest that visual models may come forward as appropriate means to attempt to sum up these views.

Results of qualitative interviews with jazz musicians

My recent interview study with Swedish jazz musicians (Bjerstedt 2014) focuses on their views on the concept 'storytelling' in connection with jazz improvisation. Most of them find it a very apt description of what jazz improvisation is about.

For instance, trumpeter Peter Asplund compares a good jazz improvisation to ‘a good, captivating story when you sit at a child’s bedside at night’; and pianist Lars Jansson holds that:

You have to tell a story when you play a solo. It’s an abstract thing. You don’t tell it in words, you tell it in notes. [...] All great musicians [...] mirror their own life in their playing, their music. And that is what touches us. So content is extremely important.

The investigation sheds light on the informants’ views on jazz learning. I will argue that these opinions are influenced to an important extent by the informants’ outlook on ‘storytelling’ as a crucial aspect of jazz improvisation. To begin with, the results of the study provide ample corroboration of the view of ecological perceptual theory. Several aspects of apprenticeship (Nielsen and Kvale 2000) are of pertinence to the informants’ statements on educational issues. Some musicians’ outlook on the potential of formal jazz improvisation education may indeed come forward as rather pessimistic. In its place, they seem to advocate apprenticeship learning, such as learning through practice in a community (e.g. developing a professional identity through participation in a jazz band), learning between generations and learning between communities of practice (e.g. through musical interplay with older – according to some, preferably American – jazz musicians), and learning through imitating and identifying (e.g. analysing jazz recordings). Based on their own experiences, several informants adhere to the view that learning in communities of practice is the appropriate kind of learning for jazz improvisation.

The importance of learning the jazz tradition and musical craftsmanship is emphasised by many informants. With formulations seemingly closely related to notions such as stealing knowledge and learning ecology framework, saxophonist Amanda Sedgwick points out the importance of *learning as a driving force* for the jazz musician’s development:

I think this music is so cool, because it is so rich. [...] There is so much to learn. So rich harmonically and rhythmically. There is so much you can do, so much you can learn. [...] I also think you grow as a human being by seeking honestly for more knowledge.

As noted initially, in the view of several jazz scholars, certain features of jazz (e.g. chord/scale methods, structure or sound) come more easily as objects of pedagogy than other aspects. Several informants agree that jazz education is probably marked by what is easy to teach. For instance, pianist/trombonist Ulf Johansson Werre points to the difficulties to design exercises based on Cannonball Adderley’s playing: ‘To me he has the qualities I’m looking for. [But it is] Completely impossible to turn him into didactics’. Trumpeter Ann-Sofi Söderqvist contends that this focus on that which is easy to teach leads to schematisation and simplification. Saxophonist Roland Keijser thinks it may lead to an overly strong emphasis on theory, whereas sound may be neglected. Trumpeter Peter Asplund chimes in, making explicit the connection between these educational worries and the view that jazz solos ought to ‘tell stories’: Asplund says that he believes that jazz educators often put too much focus on rhythmical and harmonic aspects at the expense of what he understands as storytelling aspects.

The informants put forward a number of qualities in the improviser that they consider crucial to her or his 'storytelling' ability. One predominant theme in the interviews is the view that jazz 'storytelling' allows the improviser to *come forward as a human being*, to express her or his own emotional experiences in a truthful manner. Amanda Sedgwick emphasises that the most important quality in this regard is to be 'whole, meaning honest'. Several informants emphasise that it is also essential that the jazz improviser is *present in the moment*. In singer/violinist Lena Willemark's opinion, such presence is about openness and wholeness: 'The great discovery of being present. That may be what it is to tell a story'. Several informants mention that thoughts may hinder the improviser. Saxophonist Joakim Milder lists a number of conditions which, in his opinion, are favourable to the improvisation: 'Not to stand in your own way. Not to think. Not to fulfil expectations. Not to try to express something specific'. In Ann-Sofi Söderqvist's opinion, thoughts and plans are worthless in the performance situation; everything is about 'here and now, only, you know'. Furthermore, several informants state that *a personal sound* is essential to a successful jazz improvisation; Roland Keijser calls it 'absolutely crucial', and to Jonas Kullhammar the sound is the most important quality of his own saxophone playing. Several informants associate the instrument's sound with the human voice. Bassist Anders Jormin reflects that 'when I play my improvisations on the double bass, I probably have a human voice, I have melodiousness, dynamics, pauses'. Some informants point out that there is an interesting relationship between 'story' and sound. It cannot be taken for granted that the sound that is the most desirable from the storytelling jazz improviser's point of view can be attained by conventional means. Employing the storytelling metaphor, Roland Keijser distinguishes between credibility and technical perfection:

The storyteller sitting on a bench telling his lies, he may mispronounce a few words, or ... have some technical deficiencies or something, but he's a damn good storyteller. That's just an extra spice, you know. [...] Of course you can learn many valuable things also from classically trained musicians, but there is no neutral technique.

The notion of storytelling includes the notion of a recipient, a listener. In several interview statements expanding on the storytelling metaphor, fellow musicians are assigned the roles of active listeners, responding in various ways to the 'story'. Some informants point to the importance of *pauses* in jazz improvisation, among other things with regard to the soloist's credibility. The pauses may also provide possibilities for the fellow musicians to listen, react and respond, thereby facilitating a kind of improvised conversation. In the words of Anders Jormin, 'We musicians don't experience it as if we take pauses every now and then. We feel that we listen to what happens, and that's a damn difference'.

As I interpret the totality of these comments, they indicate (1) that the view of jazz improvisation as storytelling is an important one among Swedish jazz musicians and (2) that this quality is considered to require a more far-reaching experience than the easy-to-teach aspects that are seen as predominant in much current jazz pedagogy. For instance, Roland Keijser implies that some ways of improvising may be too 'internal' in order to tell stories that will reach listeners:

the person who tells the story can do it in a very internal way. Let's say that [...] it only deals with what we who sit here learnt last semester at the Academy of Music. [...] But otherwise, if it's a good story-teller who hasn't got stuck in that rather internal way of telling a story, then of course those who are sitting a bit further away from the centre, that is, the audience, can also appreciate the story.

If storytelling, then, is considered to require several qualities in the improviser, e.g. to come forward as a human being, to be present in the moment and to have a personal voice, then this view on jazz improvisation appears to have a number of important educational implications. The difficulty, or impossibility, to teach individuality or creativity is emphasised by several informants. Amanda Sedgwick says: 'Jazz schools have destroyed much of musical life. [...] You can't teach creativity, you know. You can only learn that in life'. This may perhaps be interpreted as a polemic statement much in the same vein as the Sidran quotation above, on the alleged impossibility of teaching improvisation. Ann-Sofi Söderqvist, after mentioning the analyses and techniques a jazz teacher may be able to provide, continues: 'it's still up to the student to make something of it'. Peter Asplund suggests that 'input from theatre and literature' may facilitate jazz improvisation learning with regard to storytelling aspects.

Saxophonist Jonas Kullhammar does not find current Swedish jazz education good enough. He offers, and states reasons for, three recommendations for learning processes in jazz. In his opinion, technical practice ought to be less focused on and much more attention and work should be devoted to *musical interplay*.

Number one is to play together. Number two is to listen a lot, to concerts and records. And then, number three: to practice on your own. Music will never work without communication and listening. I don't know how many practice rooms I have passed, and I have been extremely impressed by how people have played – then when I heard them play together with others, it was completely meaningless.

Saxophonist Gunnar Lindgren points to the often astounding musical learning processes that took place among musicians working with Miles Davis:

When you ask those who have been shaped by Miles, 'What did he teach you? What did he do to you?' they all reply, 'Nothing'. He let the baby come out. He may often have been an authoritarian asshole in social life, but he had that openness.

Lindgren describes the jazz educator's task as a mission to *deliver the individuality* of every improviser: 'to draw out the artistic baby, whatever it looks like, that every human being carries [...] to feel the universe of that particular student [...] to help them the best you can'.

In the remaining sections of this article, I will introduce a way of visualising some results of these qualitative interviews through two 'landscape' models, and I will discuss some possible implications of these models in connection with the notion of 'didactic locus'.

The landscape of musical metaphor

The broad and complex conceptualisations of jazz storytelling indicated above may arguably be visualised as a multidimensional landscape of metaphor and, consequently, as a corresponding landscape of learning.

The recent Swedish interview investigation (Bjerstedt 2014) makes it eminently clear that the rich metaphor ‘storytelling’ when used about jazz improvisation can mean several things and that not all of those who use this metaphor take it to mean all of these things. Based on George Lakoff’s (1993) views on the cognitive topology in metaphorical mapping I suggest that the notion of an ‘interpersonal topology’ might be fruitful to understand the scope of metaphorical usage: a *landscape of metaphor*. Furthermore, through an extrapolation along this line of thought, and inspired by, among others, Günter Kleinen’s (1997, 2011) topography of metaphor and Aslaug Nyrnes’s (2000, 2002) didactic topology, I will suggest that the notion of a landscape of the storytelling metaphor may provide interesting possibilities to also develop a *landscape of learning* suited for jazz improvisation.

As I interpret my findings, they point to a multidimensional landscape of metaphor including inner vision, openness and temporality as important dimensions.

In a very schematic way, this landscape is visualised in Figure 1. One way of interpreting the collection of perspectives on the storytelling metaphor might be to view the jazz improviser as a traveller in time. The expression of one’s inner voice and one’s vision is at the centre of the improviser’s task, and among its prerequisites are: *openness*, *wholeness* and *listening*. The route the improviser will take is not – indeed, cannot be – known in detail beforehand. Hence, any plans one makes must be restricted to overarching structure, such as coherence, simplicity, contrast or dramaturgy. Furthermore, one must be prepared to adapt at any time, since the improviser must relate continuously not only inwards, to one’s inner voice and vision, but outwards as well: both to the fellow musicians and to the audience.

In this picture, the tradition, the style, the formulae and the quotes are what makes up the luggage of the traveller, or perhaps, rather, her supplies. This is probably the dimension of the landscape that corresponds to the main content of much education in jazz improvisation. But according to this interpretation of my

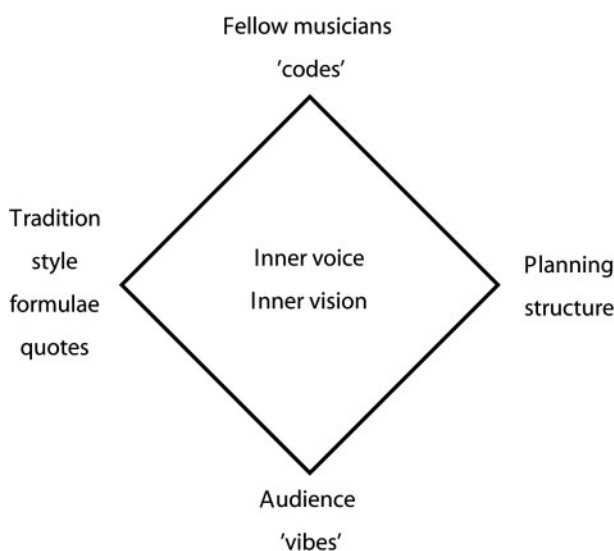


Figure 1. The landscape of the storytelling metaphor in jazz improvisational contexts. Temporality – Openness, wholeness, listening.

findings, this part is only one of several important areas that any jazz improviser must focus on simultaneously.

The landscape of musical learning

Language analogies permeate discourse on jazz improvisation. Much of the present results arguably corroborates these analogies also from an educational viewpoint; learning how to improvise does in many ways resemble learning how to use a language. The multivariety of aspects involved in jazz teaching and learning comes forward as an important result of the present investigation. The landscape model appears adequate in order to attempt to visualise this multivariety (Bjerstedt 2014, 334).

Figure 2 includes five parts. Some of the ingredients of this landscape of learning were borrowed from Nyernes's (2000, 2002) outline of didactic topology. The concept of *temporality* is crucial to her; in short, Nyernes holds that didactics has to do with being at the right place at the right time. She also puts forward the concepts of *mimesis* and *copia*. The inclusion of the dimension of *mimesis* points to the relation of knowledge to imitation; consequently, learning will include methodical form and genre practices. The dimension of *copia* (stock, supply) has to do with the didactic question of *how* to store up, and with the supply of forms on all levels: from details to large structure; for instance, from vocabulary to style (Nyernes 2000, 2002). The *mimesis* and *copia* dimensions correspond to the luggage of the traveller: to imitation and to genre and form practices. Arguably, they also correspond to the main contents of traditional and current formal jazz education.

Of course, it may be easier to teach that which is easy to systematise, that which Bailey (1993) calls 'the mechanics of the style' (50). Arguably, however, these things make up only one of several important areas that any jazz improviser must focus on simultaneously. The interview results point to the relevance and importance of more

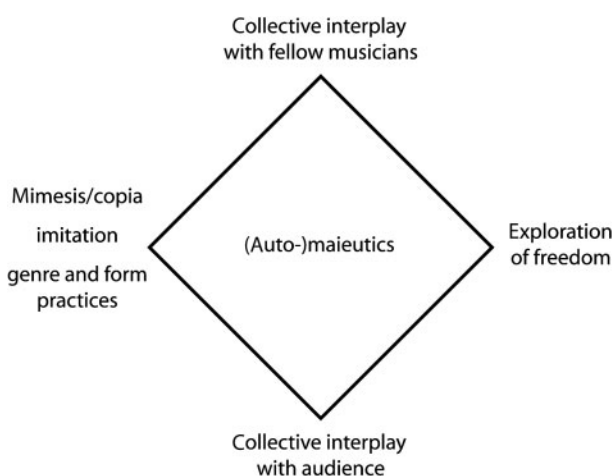


Figure 2. The landscape of jazz improvisation learning. Temporality – Openness, wholeness, listening.

experiential, exploratory, collective and reflective approaches in jazz improvisation teaching and learning.

If the improviser is a traveller, then there may be more things to explore than the highroad, and more things you need than the luggage and the map. In other words, imitation and genre practices are not enough. Based on the interview results, it may be suggested that a landscape of learning (Figure 2) may include several other areas than imitation, and genre and form practices. In addition, other things come forward as essential: for instance, the improviser's multi-directed relations to fellow musicians and audience as well as, perhaps most importantly, the improviser's own inner voice and vision.

So, even though the other parts of the picture may be less prominent in formal jazz education, they appear to be no less important to the jazz improviser. *Collective interplay with fellow musicians* as well as with an *audience*, of course, corresponds to the observation made in the landscape of metaphor that the improviser must relate outwards continuously, to the fellow musicians and to the audience. *Maïeutics* or *automaïeutics* (cf. Bigelow 1997; Ljungar-Chapelon 2008), finally, corresponds to the improviser's inner voice and inner vision, which are at the centre of her task.

It is crucial that a jazz improviser develop this *multi-directedness*. Importantly, the improviser's attention is always (1) *directed*, never contained; (2) directed in *multi-varied* ways, never in only one way. For lack of better words, such improvisational multi-directedness might be analysed as:

- *self-directedness* (inner voice, inner vision);
- *context-directedness* (fellow musicians, audience);
- *text-directedness* (tradition, style, formulae, quotes);
- *goal-directedness* (planning, structure).

The quality of *temporality* permeates any improvisational activity. Furthermore, in order to enhance the multi-directedness of the improviser, qualities of *openness*, *wholeness* and *listening* stand out as crucial.

Indeed, this multivariety of required skills is arguably a main reason why jazz learning may have to rely on a rich learning ecology framework (Barron 2006) that not only includes legitimate peripheral participation characterised by improvised practices and cognitive apprenticeship (Lave and Wenger 1991; Nielsen and Kvale, 2000) but also offers rich and multivariety opportunities to steal knowledge (Brown and Duguid 1993). Reflections like these may be developed into arguments against the more orthodox manifestations of formal jazz education, in favour of more heterodox educational ideologies – or even autodidactic learning cultures.

Those inclined to agree regarding the need for a multivariety of jazz learning aspects indicated by these visualisations might still argue that some prerequisite of a technical and/or theoretical nature (such as, for instance, 'learning bebop') is needed *before* students can, or should, focus on storytelling aspects of jazz improvisation. Jazz education curricula may even be construed from such premises: first technique, then expression. In response to such lines of argument, it might be suggested that the landscape of learning provides no reason, at least not in principle, that any single dimension should be prioritised before the others. From a historical point of view, it might seem less than accurate to assume that learning processes of jazz musicians in the 1940s, for instance, took place along these lines: learn bebop first, then (and not

until then) use this knowledge to express and communicate. Rather, it might be argued that these aspects may coexist throughout musical learning processes; and that the possibility or commendability of such coexistence deserves continuous consideration.

Didactic loci

To make all these things the objects of formal education, to be sure, is not easy. In a general sense, the words of Christopher Small (1987) apply: ‘there is not much point in practising alone what can only be done in a group’ (464). On the same note, Guro Gravem Johansen’s (2013a) findings point to the importance ascribed by jazz students to band practice as a learning arena for developing abilities specific to the interactive situation. Such multi-directedness – and, indeed, any multivariety of skills – would seem to call for a multivariety of didactic loci. The landscape model may be supplemented, in jazz learning practice, with yet another, very real, landscape which is, however, to be developed in its details on a local and individual level: the *didactic loci of jazz improvisation*. Arguably, faculties such as text-directedness and goal-directedness are comparatively suitable for the kinds of didactic loci that formal teaching may provide, while faculties such as context-directedness and self-directedness would seem to call for other or complementary forms of didactic loci.

Several issues regarding jazz education call for further studies. First and foremost, based on the perspectives presented here, a change of focus from conceptual issues to ‘real’ issues is warranted. The notion of *didactic locus* may provide exactly this: a means to relate ‘conceptual’ perspectives on jazz improvisation with concrete questions regarding suitable learning ecology frameworks. This notion may be considered a promising tool for further jazz educational study and thought. If the educational goal includes a healthy balance between artistic mastery and artistic freedom; if faculties such as openness, wholeness and listening are considered crucial for the jazz improviser; and if learning the jazz tradition and musical craftsmanship is important, as well as acquiring the ability to relate inwards to one’s inner vision and articulate it musically, and the ability to relate outwards continuously in collective interplay with one’s fellow musicians and one’s audience – what combination of didactic loci, then, may be best suited to provide learning opportunities for all of these aims? This is an urgent topic for future educational studies and development.

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