

# Just listen! (Or can I also *look* at my chamber music partners?)

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## PhD in the Arts...

- I am researcher and participant
- aim: to enhance my understanding of my own practice
- main “data collection” method: self-reflecting

## ... with scientific track:

- mobile eye-tracking
- aim: to describe gaze behaviour in trios

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# **SELF-REFLECTING AND ANALYSIS**

## Self-reflecting: how?

- after rehearsals (three periods)
- report on significant moments in terms of gaze, i.e. acute awareness of gaze, talk about gaze
- report on ‘what happened’ and ‘my inner state’
- allowing explanation and evaluation on meta-level but priority: to bring into consciousness what was in “near-consciousness” during practice

- ⇒ purpose of analysis: theoretical mapping of how my gaze behaviour is linked to my rehearsal behaviour and the rehearsal context
- ⇒ usefulness: offering a tool to enhance understanding of/during practice



Analysing self-reflections:

HOW??????

Explorative example:



## Fragment from self-reflective texts:

I had gotten accustomed to paying a lot of attention to Marilena and started to think that Sandra might have noticed my frequent looking at Marilena. I then decided I probably had to change my gazing strategy if I didn't want Sandra to feel ignored.

To be fair though, I'm not sure why I looked at Marilena so often. Was it, indeed, because she (and me) dominated the verbal interaction? Was it because I'm more familiar with playing with pianists than with clarinetists? Now that I think about it, at times the reason why I paid more attention to the piano part than to the clarinet part was that the piano part was rhythmically speaking not as complex as the clarinet part. I was worried that focussing too much on the clarinet part would confuse me. Similarly, there was a moment in the music where something confusing in the piano part attracted my attention time and again. As soon as I was comfortable playing in sync with the piano, I started focussing more on the clarinet part.

Fragment from analysis

This text is about a decision (made during practice) to change my gaze strategy.

#### Awareness of own initial gaze behaviour

- (gazing at the partner: dividing gaze between partners):  
- I started to have the impression that I might be looking more frequently at Marilena (piano) than at Sandra (clarinet).
- (gazing at the partner: visibility):  
- I almost couldn't see the pianist (at the most from her eyes upwards). I could see the clarinetist better. Visually speaking, there might not have been a lot to learn by looking at the pianist. I don't remember whether I was disturbed by not obtaining much visual information when looking at the pianist.

#### Assumed effect of gaze

- (gazing at the partner: seen by the unaddressed partner or not?):  
- I assumed that Sandra might have noticed my frequent looking at Marilena.
- (gazing at the partner: effect on the unaddressed partner):  
- I assumed Sandra might feel ignored.

#### Gaze-related decision

- (gazing at the partner: dividing gaze between partners):  
I decided to divide my gazes more equally among both partners.

#### Intended effect of the changed behaviour:

- (ensuring socio-emotional wellbeing in the group):  
- I intend to make Sandra feel less ignored.

#### Explaining the initial gaze behaviour: attention

- (description of attention: dividing attention between partners):  
- I paid more attention to Marilena than to Sandra.
- (description of attention: auditory or visual attention):  
- I doubt as to whether the attention goes out to something visual or something auditory. Given the restricted visibility I may not have looked at Marilena in order to *see* her. Instead, 'the eye may have followed the ear': I looked more often at Marilena because I listened to her more often.

#### Explaining attention: factors

- (social dynamics during rehearsal talk):  
- No one seemed to be eager to lead the rehearsal. Some discomfort in that respect could be felt. Nevertheless, there was a difference in amount of talking. Most talking seemed to come from Marilena and me. Sandra talked less. During playing I may have directed my attention more towards the more assertive talker of the two.

#### Explaining attention: intentions

- (looking for security: familiarity with instruments):  
- I am more familiar with the playing of pianists than clarinetists.
- (looking for security: familiarity with musical parts):  
- (Ignoring possible confusion): The piano part was not as complex, rhythmically speaking, as the clarinet part. I was worried that focussing too much on the clarinet part would confuse me.  
- (Solving possible confusion): Something confusing in the piano part attracted my attention time and again. As soon as I was comfortable playing in sync with the piano, I started focussing more on the clarinet part.

Envisioned outcome: theoretical mapping of how my gaze behaviour is linked to my rehearsal behaviour and the rehearsal context

⇒ not achieved yet:

- 'writing out' coded texts (from an emerged theme = 'vantage point' e.g. 'gazing at the partner')
- topics other than gaze (e.g. cueing)

⇒ positioning? similarities with

- Grounded Theory

(e.g. Strauss & Corbin, 1990)

- can start with interpretive reading

- bottom-up coding in several levels

- retelling the story from a selected category

- Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis

(e.g. Pietkiewicz & Smith, 2012)

1. starts with making interpretive notes

2. proceeds using the notes → emergent themes

3. seeking relationships between and clustering themes

4. writing a narrative account

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# A MORE AMBITIOUS AIM

Gazing and speaking about gaze = coloured (by personal aesthetic preferences, cultural views)

‘Don’t look at your partner: that is unprofessional.’  
versus ‘Make your intentions visible.’

‘Music is something to be heard, not seen.’

→ A more ambitious aim: distinguishing **necessity** from **personal aesthetic/cultural preference**

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# ARTISTIC RESEARCH WHEN BEING MAINSTREAM

My profile: 'mainstream', 're-creating', ~~HIP~~

My research: autobiographical research / practitioner research / autoethnography

→ Could there be a use in higher music education for autoethnographical accounts of mainstream musicians?

experiences of being a conservatory student

experiences of being a classical musician

→ value:

- uncovering educational issues specifically at the level of higher music education

- critical feedback on conservatory culture and classical music culture

- the student-researcher discovers cultural situatedness and own aesthetic identity

## References:

Pietkiewicz, I., & Smith, J. A. (2012). A practical guide to using Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis in qualitative research psychology. *Psychological Journal*, 18(2), 361-369.

Strauss, A., & Corbin, J. (1990). *Basics of Qualitative Research: Grounded Theory Procedures and Techniques*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

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