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**An Exploratory Study of the Teaching of Beginner Recorder
Players in England and Its Links to Social Perceptions of the
Recorder: Teachers, Technique and Tutor Books**

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Abstract

This thesis explores common practices, expertise, values, attitudes and motivations to teach among recorder teachers. It analyses links between society's perception of the recorder and its position in English music education. The research follows a mixed-methods, exploratory framework comprising relevant literature, thematically analysed focus group discussions with professional recorder player-teachers, mixed-methods survey data from England-based recorder teachers and thematically analysed recorder tutor books.

This thesis triangulates views and perceptions surrounding recorder pedagogy to reinvigorate and develop recorder teaching for the 21st century and beyond. This has far-reaching implications for instrumental pedagogy in an ever-changing climate of music education.

Key findings include that a lack of pedagogical development in recorder teaching materials has led to the recorder in education existing within a musical subculture where othering of social sections of the recorder-teaching community is present and social perceptions of the instrument are negative. Findings present a new framework for the teaching and learning of recorder technique, taking inspiration from informal learning practices within a constructivist curriculum design in order to improve social perceptions of the recorder in education.

Keywords: Recorder, teaching, social perceptions, instrumental pedagogy, music education.

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Abbreviations

ABRSM	Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music
ACE	Arts Council England
CPD	Continuing Professional Development
ERTA	European Recorder Teachers Association
GSMD	Guildhall School of Music & Drama
ITT	Initial Teacher Training
LA	Local Authority
MEH	Music Education Hub
NC	National Curriculum
NPME	National Plan for Music Education
OFSTED	Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills
QTS	Qualified Teacher Status
SIT	Social Identity Theory
SRP	Society of Recorder Players
TCM	Trinity College London
UK	United Kingdom
USA	United States of America
WCAM	Western Classical Art Music
WCET	Whole Class Ensemble Tuition

Chapter 1: Introduction

This thesis is a study of contemporary society's perceptions of the recorder in English music education. It offers a contribution to original research in the field of music education and instrumental pedagogy. I draw on concepts such as pedagogical practices in Whole Class Ensemble Tuition (WCET), learning theory, teacher training and identity, with a specific focus on the recorder. Whilst this research focuses on the beginner teaching and learning of the descant (soprano) recorder, it is acknowledged that progression as a student of the recorder includes playing instruments across the recorder family. I use a mixed-methods research design to offer an exploratory study in an area that has received little focused research.

This introductory chapter introduces and summarises the recorder as an instrument, its use in education and schools and contemporary society's perception of the instrument through personal experiences and relevant sources from traditional and online media. It discusses music education provision in England including the National Curriculum (NC) for Music. Music education provision in England is contrasted with Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland and the United States of America (USA). This chapter introduces the National Plan for Music Education's (NPME) WCET provisions and the practicalities of delivering such provision, providing arguments as to why the recorder remains popular in English schools. The chapter will discuss the recorder's situation in both amateur and professional contexts as well as education, leading to an overview of the presentation of the recorder in popular contemporary media.

The chapter ends by stating the research questions and an outline of the chapters and their contents.

Preface – My Recorder Story

As a musician, people regularly ask me: ‘What instrument do you play?’ When I respond with ‘the recorder’, reactions are usually similar. More often than not people laugh as if I had made a sarcastic joke. Equally as common is the retort: ‘Yes, but what do you *really* play?’

In the early stages of my career, I found it difficult to find employment as a recorder teacher. Potential employers would often ask if I played the flute or clarinet. On closer inspection, they would see that I studied the violin as a second study and on multiple occasions offered me work as a violin teacher and gave recorder teaching to flautists with no recorder qualifications. To me, this implied that the recorder did not require a specialist teacher, whereas orchestral instruments did.

Every professionally trained recorder player I know faces daily discrimination by ignorant colleagues and the general public who think we play a plastic toy that comes free with *Peppa Pig Magazine* at the local supermarket. However, we read in five different clefs, transpose at sight and improvise elaborate Baroque ornamentation. We live in a world where most of the general public can recognise a recorder but has probably never heard of the oboe.

A report by Keele University stated that: ‘Learning to play the recorder at school puts children off music for life’ (O’Neill et al., 2001). However, in the past ten years, there has been a renaissance in the recorder world, with the recorder coming to the forefront of the media with provocative headlines such as ‘Can the recorder ever be sexy?’ (Hewett, 2014) printed in *The Daily Telegraph* on 30th April 2014, and young recorder players have reached the final of BBC Young Musician of the Year in 2012, 2014 and 2020. These events have contributed to a new interest in the recorder at a national level (BBC, 2013). Despite the media hype, the recorder still struggles to shake off its negative image. *The Daily*

Telegraph's opening statement predictably reads that learning the recorder is tortuous and commands the same respect as a football being tossed into a sports cupboard.

Robert Ehrlich, recorder professor at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama (GSMD) and former principal of Hochschule für Musik Hanns Eisler Berlin, says that an 'indication of the instrument's humble position in the pecking order of children's music making is the crude superficiality of many [recorder] tutors [books]' (Ehrlich, forthcoming, p. 75). Ehrlich blames 'the general awfulness of the school recorder and the way it has been employed in elementary musical training' as the main reason for 'the recorder's unattractive image' and dislike by pupils, as demonstrated by the Keele University study (Ehrlich, forthcoming, p. 77). He goes further by explaining that 'children learn the recorder from the age of six or seven, either in small groups or in a full school class from non-specialist teachers... The recorder is commonly taught by persons lacking a command of its basic technique, unthinkable for teachers of other wind instruments' (Ehrlich, forthcoming, p. 76).

I had a typical 1990s musical education within the English state-education system. When I was seven years old, the Local Authority (LA) music service came to give a demonstration concert during assembly. The recorder was absent. Instead, I fell in love with the violin, took a letter home and the next week I was provided with a free instrument and free, small-group lessons with a specialist violin teacher within school. I was in the string orchestra, symphony orchestra and chamber choir. After being caught playing the piano rather than being in maths lessons I was given two options for my punishment: sorting out orchestra folders or going to recorder club. I chose the recorder club and was hooked! Clubs were held at lunchtime, they were free to attend and attendees were given a free instrument to borrow and take home.

On transferring to upper school and setting my sights on a career in music I asked if the school had a recorder teacher. The response was simple: 'The music service doesn't teach recorder and we can't find a private teacher.' My middle-school music teacher, who was not a specialist, agreed to continue teaching me the recorder. She made it clear that

she wasn't a specialist and we would have to work it out together. So that is what we did; we had a fingering chart to help us with the notes, an exam syllabus to find exciting new repertoire and ourselves to teach each other.

My violin lessons, however, were strikingly different. My teacher trained at the Royal Academy of Music and my lessons were full of technique and studies. During half-terms, I was put in a string quartet and we had strict chamber music coaching. Three times a year the County Youth Orchestra beckoned. Here we played the great symphonies of the canon: Mahler, Sibelius and Stravinsky were personal favourites. We diligently marked up our parts with bowing and sectionals were stern, scary occasions where people were frequently told off for using 'incorrect styles of bowing'. *Martelé*, *détaché*, *sul tasto* and *sul ponticello*: we were expected to master them all. Bedfordshire Youth Orchestra was a carefully constructed conservatoire boot camp.

Yet at the same time, I couldn't tell you how to play dynamics on the recorder or even how to play in tune. I didn't know anyone else who played the recorder and there were no ensemble opportunities for me and my recorder. Why was this? Was my enthusiastic but uninformed school recorder education an anomaly or was it typical?

Current Practices in English Music Education

All children in England are entitled to a free place at state school between the ages of 5 and 16. In England there is a mix of how this provision is presented: state schools run by LAs and then academies and free schools that are independent of the LA. There are also academically selective grammar schools, state boarding schools, pupil referral units and special educational needs schools. In addition, there are private, fee-paying schools. This research focuses on music education in non-selective, NC-delivering state schools, whilst acknowledging that music, and within that instrumental music, is offered at the vast majority of educational establishments across England.

Today, there are two intertwined music education programmes that run concurrently in England.¹ The first is statutory for all LA-run primary schools in England (but not academies or free schools): the NC for Music. The second is optional: a series of opportunities offered to schools by local Music Education Hubs (MEHs). Schools usually have to pay to buy in the services of the MEH to their school. MEHs are generally connected to local councils, supported by Arts Council England (ACE) funding and provide specialist music support and provision to all schools within their designated area. With the introduction of the NPME in 2011, MEHs have to offer at least one term's worth of WCET to all primary-aged children via schools (Department for Education, 2011a). The idea behind this is to give all children the opportunity to experience playing a musical instrument, at which point MEHs and schools are recommended to provide appropriate progression routes. These initial WCET classes should be at no cost to parents or carers. MEHs have to offer the programme to schools and, although there is no statutory requirement for schools then to offer it to pupils, a 2017 report by Music Mark showed that all schools surveyed did so (Fautley et al., 2017). The majority of these projects are presented to pupils as compulsory provision. The Model Music Curriculum, published in March 2021, explains that children in English primary schools should receive at least one hour of music a week. It goes further to explain that children should have access to rhythmic and melodic instruments and that when they reach Year 3 they should be engaged in WCET in addition to their NC music lessons.²

One of the most obvious differences between the two programmes is that the NC for Music focuses on general music skills³ to be gained and developed throughout children's school life, whereas MEHs focus on acquiring instrument-specific skills. Learning a musical

¹ This research does not include Sistema England as it is a charity and not an initiative from the Department for Education. It does not include In Harmony as this is a programme only available in Liverpool and Newcastle. The research focuses on national music education initiatives.

² https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/974366/Model_Music_Curriculum_Full.pdf page 4.

³ Gaining experience of performing, listening, composing, reviewing and evaluating, and developing an understanding of music.

instrument in English schools is therefore supplementary to the more general music education offered by the NC for Music.

The NC for Music at Key Stage 2 says:

Pupils should be taught to:

- play and perform in solo and ensemble contexts, using their voices and playing musical instruments with increasing accuracy, fluency, control and expression;⁴
- improvise and compose music for a range of purposes using the interrelated dimensions of music;
- listen with attention to detail and recall sounds with increasing aural memory;
- use and understand staff and other musical notations;
- appreciate and understand a wide range of high-quality live and recorded music drawn from different traditions and from great composers and musicians;
- develop an understanding of the history of music. (Department for Education, 2013)

Immediately notable about this list is that the first item requires pupils to already have core instrumental skills to engage with and fulfil the requirements of the curriculum. Though all the other objectives on the list can be taught by someone who can teach general music, for pupils to gain the skills necessary to 'play and perform in solo and ensemble contexts', this requires the input of a specialist in a particular performance discipline (e.g. voice, recorder, piano, etc).

Garnett explains that there is a 'fault line' in music education in England, where the music curriculum taught in schools and universities 'considers musical learning to be essentially to do with cognitive development', whereas instrumental learning through MEHs

⁴ Many schools use Wider Opportunities schemes to fulfil this particular section, if not all of the National Curriculum.

and conservatoires 'consists of becoming proficient in a range of musical behaviours or skills' (Garnett, 2013, pp. 161,175).

Garnett defines traditional, classical, instrumental learning as the transmission of definitive musical behaviours, where the transference of musical skills is passed from teacher to pupil and not with the pupil's own creative or cognitive abilities. The typical learning experience in the classical tradition is focused on the transfer of skills from teacher to pupil in the style of an apprenticeship. The learner acquires a set of taught behaviours from the master-teacher and these behaviours are copied and relayed on demand. The assumption is that there is very little time made for free exploration of the pupil's instrument and not much value is held in free improvisation or play. Garnett's article argues that it is more beneficial to design music curriculums around developing students' competencies and understanding rather than focusing on what learners can 'do'.

These theories are proved by the graded examinations set by exam boards such as the Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music (ABRSM). According to the current woodwind syllabus published by the ABRSM, a typical graded exam from grades one to eight has four sections, including the rendition of three set pieces, with the exact copying of editorial dynamics, phrasing, tempo and articulation (ABRSM Shop, 2018). (Whilst this research acknowledges the role of the instrumental examination system in English music education, it focuses on beginner recorder teaching and learning.) There is also a presentation of set scales and arpeggios, which are to be learnt by memory, followed by a test in sight reading and finally an aural test. The latter exemplifies a gap in traditional classical music learning where the learner's free will and creativity could be explored and used in the learning process. Instead, as predicted by Fautley and Garnett, it is a precedent of behaviourist learning styles (Garnett, 2013).

Garnett clarifies the nature of constructivist learning in terms that relate strongly to child development that will be discussed later: 'the nine levels of attainment set out for music in the 2000 curriculum... provide a continuous model of progression that describes a

continuum of cognitive-music development that is loosely connected with age' (Garnett, 2013, pp. 169).⁵ Assessment in NC music lessons is largely based around 'ascertaining the stage of cognitive development that has been reached by students, rather than their ability to perform a specific task' (Garnett, 2013, pp. 169). For example, it focuses on foundational cognitive skills needed for music performance rather than on music performance itself. The updated NC for Music was updated on 26th March 2021 and the pedagogical structure and demands remain the same, through a Kodály-inspired curriculum model.

Instrumental Tuition across the United Kingdom and the USA

As mentioned above, England has two concurrent music curriculums. In Wales and Scotland, music in the primary school is framed within an expressive arts curriculum encompassing music, drama, art and media. Northern Ireland, as with England, presents music as a discrete subject. Instrumental tuition is an additional provision alongside school curriculum music lessons across England. This system could be changed and improved. I will draw contrasts between approaches here and in other countries for which there are governmental reports and academic studies available.

A 2020 report into Welsh Music Services (lead providers of instrumental tuition in schools, similar to MEHs in England) separates out music education and musical experiences. The report explains that short-term, free at the point of delivery for pupils, whole-class musical experiences are popular in primary schools. The reasons cited for this are that they are simple to plan and budget for. In addition they give children a musical experience with a perceived musician in place of a school music specialist. However, the report raised concerns that young 'enthusiastic' people are commissioned to undertake the teaching of these musical experiences who do not have any teaching and musical qualifications. These concerns are shared with Scotland's WCET provision.⁶ Furthermore,

⁵ Whilst the NC has had revision over the years, the model of performing, composing and appraising remains.

⁶ <https://www.gov.scot/binaries/content/documents/govscot/publications/advice-and-guidance/2016/05/instrumental-teaching-in-scotland-guidance-2016/documents/instrumental->

the report details concerns that in Wales, whole-class musical experiences are coming to replace continued, long-term music education. Whilst musical experiences were initially designed to supplement the primary music curriculum, they are now being used to fulfil the curriculum. The report quotes music teachers who explain that they are frustrated that they are meeting pupils who have no enthusiasm to continue with instrumental learning because their initial WCET experience has deterred them.⁷

Scotland's 2016 report on instrumental learning reported similar themes, whereby WCET puts children off continuing with musical engagement. One of the recommendations of the report was that Scotland's providers of instrumental tuition should aim to change perceptions of music and improve the subject's effectiveness and social status.⁸

The USA has a well-embedded WCET system across the country. As with the UK, these programmes are not always thought of positively. As a reaction to traditional teacher-directed instrumental tuition, there is a growing Modern Band movement (Powell, 2019, p. 42). Modern Band uses electric guitars, bass guitars, drum kits, keyboards and singing to utilise commercial popular music in the classroom. Learning is student-led and the teacher takes on a facilitating role. A study in 2004 showed that there was a 49.52% reduction in students taking music classes in secondary schools in California (Music for All Foundation, 2004). It explains that this is because in many cases, pedagogy in WCET has not developed for the past seventy years, and this has led to a stale curriculum that is not always fit for purpose. It explained that in schools where the teacher takes account of students' pre-existing musical knowledge, and students take a leading role in their learning, programmes

teaching-scotland-guidance-2016-pdf/instrumental-teaching-scotland-guidance-2016-pdf/govscot%3Adocument/Instrumental%2Bteaching%2Bin%2BScotland%2B-%2Bguidance%2BMay%2B2016.pdf.

⁷ <https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2020-01/music-services-feasibility-study-final-report.pdf>.

⁸ <https://www.gov.scot/binaries/content/documents/govscot/publications/advice-and-guidance/2016/05/instrumental-teaching-in-scotland-guidance-2016/documents/instrumental-teaching-scotland-guidance-2016-pdf/instrumental-teaching-scotland-guidance-2016-pdf/govscot%3Adocument/Instrumental%2Bteaching%2Bin%2BScotland%2B-%2Bguidance%2BMay%2B2016.pdf>.

flourish. Student autonomy is a crucial part of Modern Band curriculums; in compulsory WCET, the recorder is not always chosen by the students.

The Field of Debate: Why ‘Choose’ the Recorder?

What are the costs of the recorder relative to other instruments in WCET ensemble tuition? Table 1.1 shows the recorder as the fourth most frequently taught instrument through the government’s WCET scheme.

Table 1.1: Cost of nine most popular instruments taught in whole classes in primary schools (Fautley et al., 2017, p. 24)

	Instrument	Individual Price	Class set of 30
1	Violin	£49.00	£1,470.00
2	Trumpet/Cornet	£139.00	£4,170.00
3	Clarinet	£140.00	£4,200.00
4	Recorder	£2.00	£60.00
5	Ukulele	£19.00	£570.00
6	Trombone	£190.00	£5,700.00
7	Percussion – Djembe Drums	£12.00	£360.00
8	Guitar – Acoustic	£45.00	£1,350.00
9	Flute	£129.00	£3,870.00

For the academic year 2016/17 a total of 8,042,026 children were involved in the NPME’s WCET (Fautley et al., 2017). According to the Music Mark report, this data refers to WCET projects provided to school years 3 and 4 (Key Stage 2), for one year. This results in 8.84% of school-age children per national population. 145,374 children accessed large-group tuition that was not part of the NPME’s funded WCET. The report shows that the recorder is still being taught widely in English primary schools.

Cost is a main driver for the selection of the instrument ahead of a student's initial interests (Fautley et al., 2019, pp. 243–252; Hallam, 2019, pp. 229–241). The recorder is cheap to purchase in comparison to other instruments. In June 2019 a plastic descant recorder could be bought for £2.77 (chamberlainmusic, n.d.-a) whereas a plastic clarinet retailed at £93.70 (chamberlainmusic, n.d.-b). All woodwind instruments are simple to store as even when in their cases they are less bulky than for example brass or especially string instruments. The recorder can be stored in students' drawers in a classroom. From experience, I can store a class set of thirty descant recorders in just one classroom drawer. My class set of clarineos (plastic clarinets) need to be stored on shelving as they are too large. With English class sizes rising within schools built for smaller numbers of students, space is at a premium (Adams, 2018). The recorder's easy storage could be a deciding factor in choice of instrument for WCET.

Additionally, the recorder does not take up lesson time by having to be put together, and there are no needs to take care of. In contrast to string instruments, a violin for a beginner on the same website costs £79.88 (chamberlainmusic, n.d.-c). String instruments need to be tuned, and tuning 120 strings at the start of each lesson combined with rosinning and looking after bows is incredibly time-consuming at the start of a 30-minute lesson. Therefore, with its cost efficiency, easy storage and lack of maintenance demands, the recorder seems a logical choice for many schools and MEHs that are involved in WCET. The following section will detail how the recorder became synonymous with primary-school education.

The Recorder Revolution

After great popularity during the Renaissance and Baroque periods, the recorder was marginalised through the Classical and Romantic periods, with few being made, little new music being written and few public performances taking place.

In the 1920s, historically informed performances were bringing recorders out of historical obscurity by presenting them at London's concert halls. A few short years later, for the very first time, recorders were being mass-manufactured out of plastic and brought into wartime classrooms. This signalled the start of a long-held hostility between, on the one hand, professional recorder player-teachers and on the other, amateur recorder players and generalist music teachers that has lasted until the present day. The Society of Recorder Players (SRP) was developed to support amateur recorder playing. This exclusive support of amateurs shows that relationships between professional and amateur recorder players have always been strained: 'A degree of general impatience and irritation in encounters between amateur and professional musicians is perhaps inevitable' (Ehrlich, forthcoming, p. 79).

Recorder professionals such as the Dolmetsch family,⁹ who had been key in the renaissance of the recorder as an instrument of high art and antiquity in England, were horrified that an instrument as serious and difficult to play as the recorder could be put in the hands of untrained music teachers and foisted upon the general elementary-school population. Very quickly, recorder tutor books were published and a new cohort of general music teachers were crudely instructed in how to present the recorder to their pupils.

Contrary to Dolmetsch's initial opinion, the recorder was and continues to be marketed as something easy to play. Recorders do not suffer any degree of resistance (unlike reed instruments such as the clarinet, oboe and bassoon). This means that at first glance, as soon as you cover a hole with your finger, you can produce a note. It is a very difficult instrument to play for those two same reasons: with no resistance, the pitching and intonation of the instrument is difficult, and the lack of keys (with the exception of some tenor and bass recorders) means recorder players rely heavily on tricky fingering patterns without room for error.

⁹ The Dolmetsch family later changed their opinion on the recorder in education and manufactured plastic recorders and recorder tutor books.

The recorder started to be marketed as an instrument that can be self-taught through a tutor book. When searching the term 'recorder tutor book', three out of fourteen books on the first search page of amazon.co.uk present books with titles including *Teach Yourself to Play the Recorder*, *Step by Step Guide for Adult Beginners* and *Easy Recorder Tunes*. By contrast the same searches for bassoon (Amazon, 2020a), clarinet (Amazon, 2020b), flute (Amazon, 2020c) and oboe (Amazon, 2020d) see no mention of 'easy' or 'teach yourself', situating the recorder differently to orchestral woodwind instruments.

This can be summarised by Robert Ehrlich:

Perhaps the saddest consequence of the invention, exploitation and abuse of the school recorder is the collateral damage caused to the cultural status of the art instrument. The recorder's unattractive image all too often acts as a disincentive to further study: children demonstrating musical talent are generally advised to switch to an instrument with a higher perceived worth. (Ehrlich, forthcoming, p. 82)

This is also reflected in the disconnection between the professional recorder world and the recorder in education that can be seen clearly in 2023 in England through the disparity between skills required in professional training for recorder at music college and the recorder instrumental exam systems such as ABRSM. The recorder is a consort and transposing instrument where notation for different instruments makes use of different clefs. As such, recorder players must learn to read multiple clefs, not dissimilar to horn players, cellists or trumpeters. Neither the ABRSM nor Trinity College London (TCL) music exams reflect these skills in their recorder examination system (ABRSM Shop, 2018). To contrast this with other instruments requiring similar skills, the exam system recognises that horn players have to transpose and cellists have to read in the bass, tenor and treble clefs. What is apparent is that recorder players reach the highest levels of the graded examination system devoid of any of the much-needed skills needed to be a professional recorder player except the ability to play in C and F fingering systems. Thus, examination systems neglect the fundamental skills required to play the recorder and leave vast amounts of further

knowledge left to be accrued at conservatoire level. This research aims to fill gaps in missing knowledge about where the recorder is taught. This thesis will analyse how the recorder's role in education has influenced society's perception of the instrument.

The recorder was made redundant by the growing aesthetic for louder instruments with an evenness of tone throughout its chromatic capabilities, and as such was overshadowed by instruments such as the keyed clarinet and the metal, Boehm-system flute. The recorder is synonymous with amateurism and this permeates public performances of the recorder alongside its relationship with primary-school education. The recorder is the fourth most popular instrument taught in WCET, yet arguably the most synonymous with primary-school education.

By contrast, professional recorder performances are seldom broadcast in traditional media and can be hard to spot in social media. When I typed 'violin' into YouTube the first link to appear was *Top 50 Best Classical Violin Music*. For trumpet and clarinet it was an information video about each instrument by the Philharmonia Orchestra. Finally for recorder: a tutorial for children to learn to play *Oh When the Saints*, with colourful music notes and fingering diagrams. The first video on YouTube for each instrument in the top four most popular WCET instruments was a professional recording; only the recorder had an amateur, play-along tutorial. Except it wasn't a recorder, it was an artificial computer sound.

Contemporary Society's Perceptions of the Recorder

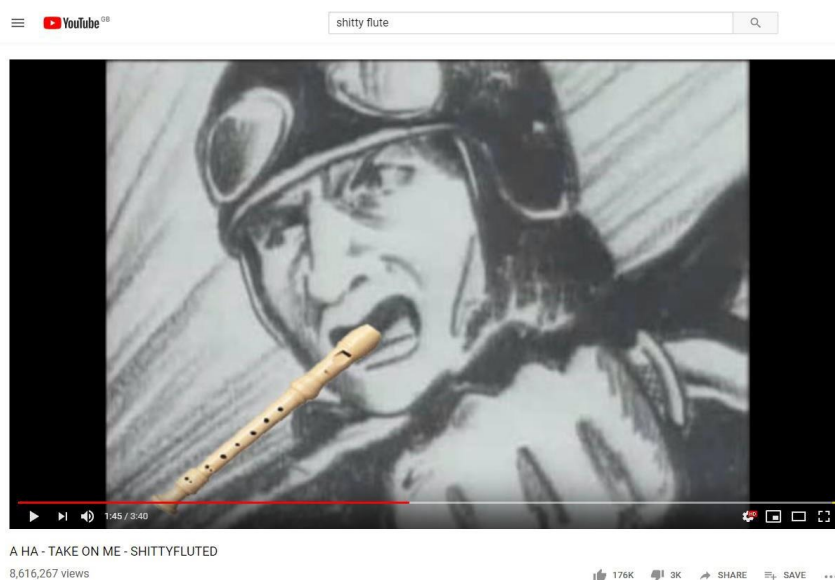
I have already examined comments about the recorder made by the mainstream broadsheet media, but casting the net wider, there are vast amounts of recorder vitriol in the UK's media, both traditional and online. Here is an example from Victoria Coren Mitchell printed in *The Guardian* newspaper in 2014. It is about her experience of whole-class recorder lessons as a child:

It was a roomful of nine-year-olds, all obliged to play *London's Burning* on the recorder. At the same time. Can you imagine what that sounded like? How could anyone take it seriously? (Coren Mitchell, 2014)

Even less well-known independent bloggers have the same negative images of the recorder. Jessica Peresta's blog ran this headline in 2016: 'Does My Child REALLY Need to Learn the Headache Inducing Recorder?' (Peresta, 2016).

Negative slurs are commonplace across the internet. YouTube is full of audio-visual material where you can hear sounds of incorrectly played recorders. Most videos that I reviewed for this research have over one million views. The popular YouTube channel *Shitty Flute* includes an ironic, badly played recorder cover of the classic 80s song *Take on Me* by A-ha. Ironically, it is called *Shitty Flute* but is exclusively about the recorder: therefore, they have even got the name wrong of the instrument they are using.¹⁰ They are representing the recorder as if it were not a real instrument. On 20th January 2016, the video had amassed 10,734,412 views and had over 604,000 subscribers (shittyflute, 2016). The images below demonstrate how the recorder is negatively presented in contemporary media and its ubiquitous links to education, parenting and childhood.

Image 1.1: Example of YouTube video by *Shitty Flute* (shittyflute, 2016)



¹⁰ Technically the recorder is a 'duct' flute, but this is not a commonly used phrase.

Image 1.2: Example of YouTube video by 'Why We Were Forced to Play the Recorder' (Great Big Story, 2016)

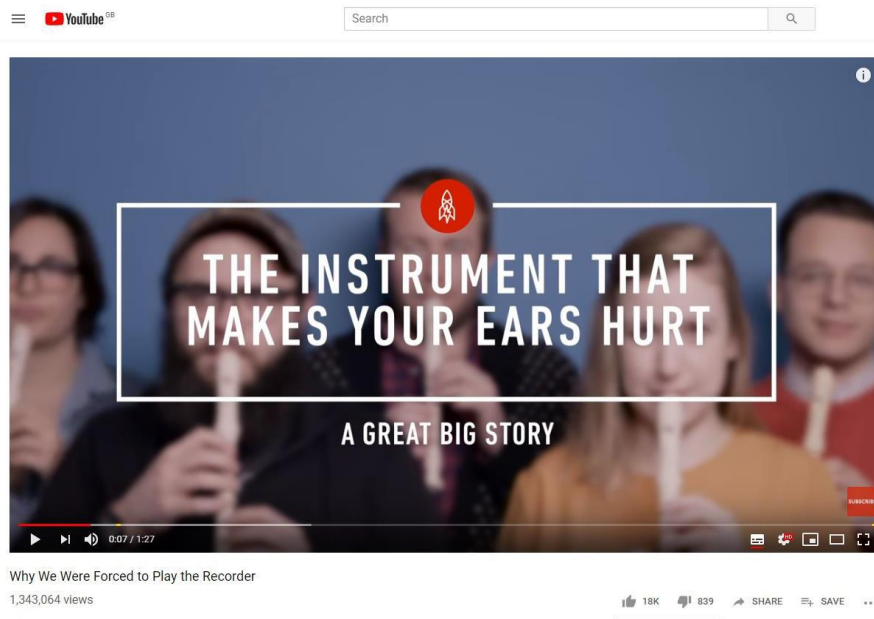


Image 1.3: Example of a recorder meme no. 1 ('Issaquah Connect', n.d.)



Image 1.4: Example of a recorder meme no. 2 (Parrilla, 2015)

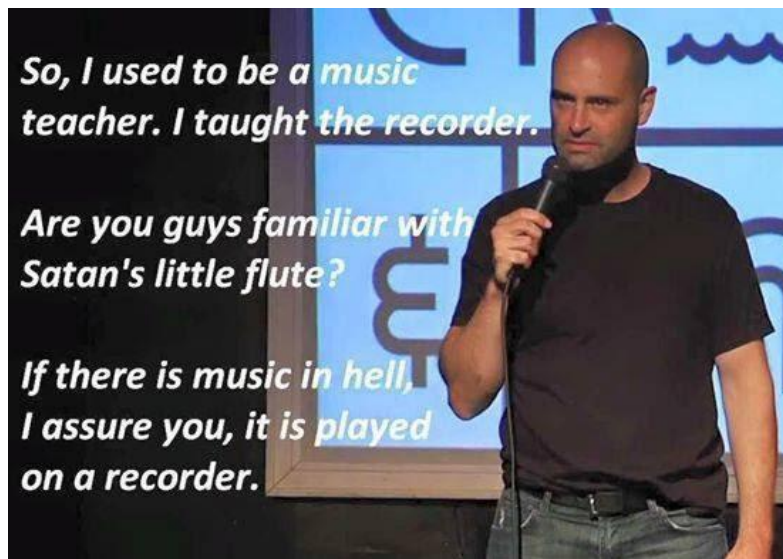


Image 1.5: Example of a recorder meme no. 3 ('Meme by Volleyball972: Memedroid', n.d.)

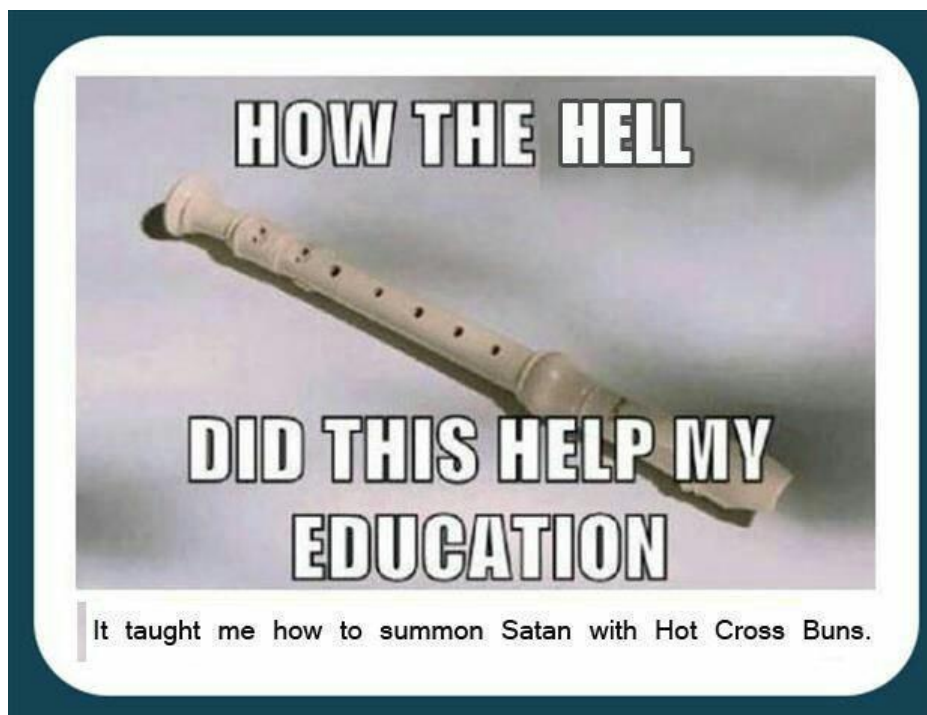


Image 1.6: Example of an oboe meme no. 1 ('Makameme.org', n.d.)

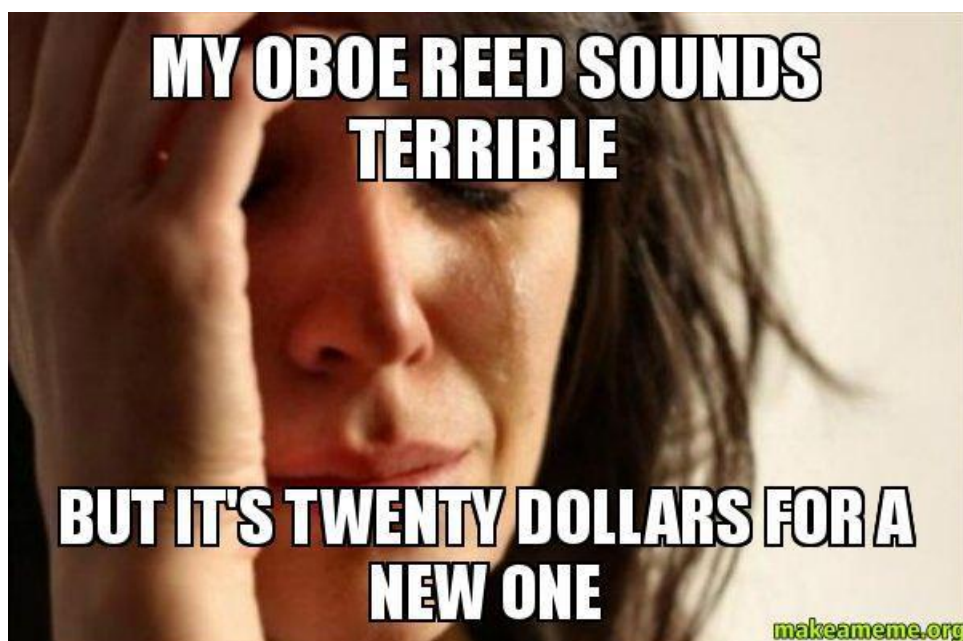
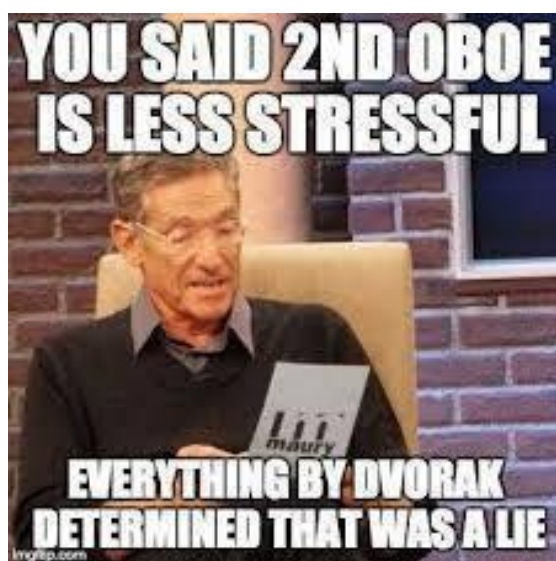


Image 1.7: Example of an oboe meme no. 2 (Oboe Memes, 2017)



These images contrast how memes related to the recorder exist within a paradigm of music education, parenting and primary schools, whereas oboe memes are related specifically to instrument and repertoire specific subjects.

In summary, traditional and social media paint the recorder as a primary-school educational tool, and this view is widely popular, as proved by the amount of Google search results containing humorous memes on the topic. The recorder's image in popular media was used to situate this research and formulate a research plan.

Research Questions

The recorder is still taught in the majority of English primary schools and is offered at seven UK conservatoires.¹¹ This thesis will explore the recorder's role in music education and evaluate the disconnection between professional and amateur recorder player-teachers. Despite the recorder being such a familiar sight in recent music education and recognisable by children, parents, teachers and professional musicians, no specific research exists surrounding how the recorder is taught in England.

This research will aim to answer the following questions:

1. How is the recorder taught in 21st-century England?
2. How do the views on the teaching of beginner recorder technique compare between professional recorder player-teachers and the wider teaching community?
3. To what extent has the recorder's role in education affected society's perceptions of the instrument?

To answer these questions, this research will seek to investigate the role of the recorder in music education throughout the 20th century. It will review the role of the recorder in educational history in order to ascertain trends in recorder teaching and learning and society's perceptions of the instrument over time. The literature review will build on the research undertaken by Alexandra Mary Williams in her thesis: *The Revival of the Recorder in England 1879–1941* (Williams, 2005).

There has been limited research on beginner recorder technique and there are currently limited resources available in England that specifically outline the nature of recorder technique for beginners. In light of this, a focus group comprising current and alumni students and professors of recorder at GSMD was established to discuss professionally trained recorder technique and what might be important for teaching

¹¹ Undergraduate and postgraduate degrees in the recorder are offered at the Royal Birmingham Conservatoire, the Guildhall School of Music and Drama, the Royal College of Music, the Royal Academy of Music, the Royal Northern College of Music, the Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama and Trinity Laban Conservatoire of Music and Dance.

beginners. The interview data from the focus group has been transcribed and the data analysed. The findings will be presented later in this thesis.

To ascertain if Ehrlich's thoughts regarding the superficiality of recorder tutor books and the 'general awfulness' of the way in which the recorder is introduced is accurate or widespread, an analysis of beginner recorder technique was undertaken as it is presented in tutor books. The research investigated which recorder tutor books were currently available using online searches and communication with publishers. The information derived from this desk research was cross-referenced with information provided by recorder teachers through an online survey where they were asked what tutor books they use. The relationship between the technical advice set out in the recorder tutor books and the techniques described in the focus group were analysed.

The online survey asked for information about teachers' qualifications both generally and musically, and specifically in relation to the recorder. My aim was to see whether there was any relationship between teachers' qualifications on the recorder and the way in which they teach the instrument. Survey data detailed where the teachers teach, their income and what they include in their beginner lessons. It sought to uncover whether Ehrlich's statement that recorder teachers are largely non-specialists on the instrument was accurate. This research aimed to investigate if recorder teachers are regularly accessing continuing professional development (CPD) opportunities. It will also find out where recorder teachers are employed to ascertain how and where teachers access CPD.

The survey aimed to establish the perceptions that recorder teachers have of recorder teaching, with a focus on the learning of beginners in terms of technique, repertoire, pedagogical philosophies and ideas, and the teaching of the recorder for musical engagement throughout the lifespan beyond the learning of the descant recorder.

Scope of the Research

This research focused on beginner recorder teaching and learning within England. In January 2015, the majority of MEH WCET projects were presented as compulsory provision to pupils between school years 3 and 6 (Key Stage 2). In addition, from my personal experience of teaching in schools, the recorder is most commonly taught to children of primary-school age, typically between the ages of 6 and 11. Therefore, this research was framed within the English primary-school educational environment, focusing on beginner recorder teaching and learning. The research focused purely on beginner recorder teaching and learning; the thesis does not make explicit reference to or comparisons with the teaching and learning of any other woodwind instrument. This is because techniques required to play other woodwind instruments are not directly comparable with recorder technique.

Chapter Summary

The structure of this thesis is as follows:

Chapter 2 presents issues around subject speciality in music teaching, music teacher identity, formal and informal learning, and learning theory to demonstrate an up-to-date picture of instrumental music education in contemporary England. The literature presented is used to argue that the tutor-book model has relegated the recorder to being devoid of pedagogical development across the 20th and 21st centuries, which in turn has reflected badly on society's perceptions of the instrument.

Chapter 3 details the mixed-methods approach to the research, explaining processes of literature and data collection through surveys, focus groups and tutor-book analysis. The following three chapters present the data which is used to answer the research questions. Chapter 4 presents survey data, detailing recorder teachers' experience, qualifications, employment and views of recorder teaching, and draws conclusions on recorder teaching in 21st-century England. It shows a largely underqualified workforce with little training in recorder pedagogy or performance. Chapter 5 presents findings from a focus group of

professional recorder player-teachers who gave their views on the teaching of beginner recorder technique. It presents findings from thematically analysed transcript data leading to an approach to teaching the recorder with an awareness of the player's body. Chapter 6 shows analysis and comparisons of recorder tutor books. This chapter introduces learning theory and shows data from thematically analysed tutor-book data, taking account of general layout, intended audience and instrumental technique.

The final chapters compare data from the previous three chapters and draw conclusions regarding the recorder in contemporary music education, linking these conclusions to educational theory and recommendations for the future of recorder pedagogy.

Chapter 2: Review of Practice and of Existing Research Literature in Music Education and the Recorder

Introduction

Chapter 2 reviews existing scholarship on the recorder in education, highlighting gaps in current research. Acknowledging the gaps in scholarly literature specifically about the recorder in education debates around instrumental teaching will be discussed, such as music teacher training and qualifications, specialist vs. non-specialist music teachers, teacher identity, social identity theory, online memes, the concept of othering, pupil choice in music education, formal vs. informal learning, learning theories, enculturation in music education, mentorship in learning and enculturation. In England, there is no recognised Qualified Teacher Status (QTS) for instrumental teachers.¹² As it is an unregulated industry, instrumental teachers are able to teach instruments in which they are not specialists or have qualifications in. In addition, generalist primary-school teachers teach a range of subjects, including music, and within this, the recorder. Many schools, however, choose to budget to buy in a musician to teach music and the recorder, instead of the generalist class teacher teaching music to their class. This connects to reflecting on teacher-training processes for music and the recorder, teachers' perceived confidences and how teachers identify their role within music education.

The recorder has been used in the primary classroom since the Second World War, and therefore it can be perceived that current teachers and parents have memories and connotations of the recorder in education from their own past experiences. These memories

¹² The Royal Northern College of Music runs a Postgraduate Certificate in Education course which leads to QTS, but this is to bring music-college graduates into classroom teaching, not necessarily to teach WCET. ABRSM and TCM have a Level 4 Certificate for Music Educators, but this does not lead to QTS. These courses are optional; there is no requirement for QTS or a music educator's qualification to teach instrumental or vocal lessons in England.

can be linked to the content of online memes which directly reflects the recorder's social position in education, schooling and parenting. Issues around the recorder being presented as compulsory provision link to comparing and contrasting pedagogical theories in formal and informal pedagogical framing, and these are put into the perspective of the recorder in education. This in turn links to developing an understanding of how WCET is presented in English schools and its relationship with learning theory and instrumental pedagogy.

Specialist vs. Non-Specialist Music Teaching

This thesis will make reference to four cross-sections of music teachers who teach the recorder:

1. Generalist primary-school teachers (with QTS, employed by primary schools to teach the NC across multiple subjects, including music).
2. Music specialists – a catch-all term to describe any person who self-identifies as a music teacher. This could also include generalist primary class teachers who may have specialist musical training.
3. Recorder specialists – teachers trained to tertiary level in the recorder.
4. Non-specialist recorder teachers – teachers that teach the recorder without a tertiary-level training in the instrument.

Since the 1980s there has been a debate whether curriculum music (and instrumental/vocal teaching) in primary schools should be provided by generalist class teachers, generalist music teachers or instrumental specialists (Holden & Button, 2006).

Generalist Primary-School Teachers and Music Teaching

Robert Ehrlich states: 'Typically, children learn the recorder from the age of six or seven, either in small groups or in a full school class, from non-specialist teachers' (Ehrlich, forthcoming, p. 76). Holden and Button verify Ehrlich's statement regarding 'non-specialist' teaching by reporting that there is an expectation that general, non-specialist primary-school teachers teach music in English schools (Holden & Button, 2006). Ehrlich's comment about

recorder learning happening in full groups is confirmed by Hallam's report that the recorder is usually taught through WCET in year 3, as a warm up to learning another instrument, later in their school life.(Hallam, 2019, pp. 229–241). According to Hallam, the recorder through WCET is a starter instrument and not an instrument that is carried on past WCET programmes.

Teacher Training and Teacher Confidence

Biassuti et al. cite literature from the past thirty years suggesting that non-specialist generalist primary-school music teachers feel that music is the subject they feel least confident teaching (Biasutti et al., 2015). Hallam et al. echo a disparity of musical experience and training in primary-school teachers when they note that in England there are apprehensions that generalist primary-school teachers do not have the skills to deliver the NC for Music (Hallam et al., 2009). This is exemplified by Beauchamp's study that 77.2% of trainee primary teachers in 2010 had no qualifications in music (Beauchamp, 2010). However, this is unsurprising, because these teachers were on a generalist, primary-school teaching course, not a music- or arts-based teacher-training course. It could instead be argued, however, that the reason for generalist primary-school music teachers' lack of confidence and expertise in music teaching could be due to Beauchamp's observation that trainee primary-school teachers do not have any assessment in their music teaching practice (Beauchamp, 2010). This is in stark contrast to other NC subjects such as English and maths, for which a GCSE pass grade is required in order to gain QTS (Department for Education, 2020).

Research shows that generalist primary-school teachers ranked music as the NC subject they were least confident in teaching (Holden & Button, 2006; Henley, 2017). The NC requires children to experience learning a musical instrument. It would be an advantage if generalist primary-school music teachers felt confident in playing a musical instrument in order to teach it. Hennessy suggests that perceived confidence in music teaching is linked with a teacher's perception of their own expertise in the subject (Hennessy, 2000). This links

with Ehrlich's view that recorder teachers are largely underqualified and lack expertise on the instrument.

Where lack of confidence, connected to lack of training and qualifications in music, is known, some schools elect to pay to 'buy in' perceived specialist music teachers to teach music lessons in lieu of the generalist primary-school teacher (Holden & Button, 2006). It is widely accepted that in addition to low levels of confidence and a lack of adequate music teacher training for the generalist primary-school teacher, there are not enough music specialists to provide high-quality provision in all English schools (Miliband, 2004). This supports Ehrlich's theory by saying that beginner recorder players are taught by non-specialists due to a lack of appropriate training. There is much work to be done in order to provide better long-term training, support, subject knowledge and confidence among non-specialist, generalist primary-school teachers in order to improve standards of music education in English primary schools (Holden & Button, 2006). Seventy-five per cent of trainee generalist primary-school teachers had no qualifications in music prior to starting their Initial Teacher Training (ITT) and only 69% of trainee teachers had some music training during their ITT (Holden & Button, 2006).

Book-Based Music Resources and Non-Specialist Music Teachers

Ehrlich (forthcoming) explains that many non-specialist recorder teachers use a tutor book to guide their lesson planning. This is echoed by data explaining that 47% of non-specialist, generalist primary-school teachers use musical textbooks and teacher guides, whilst 69% of the same group of teachers use published music schemes and books (Holden & Button, 2006). It is likely that the popularity of the tutor book is correlated with, and perhaps consequent on, the lack of adequate music-specific teacher training.

Initial Teacher Training and Continuing Professional Development for Music Teachers

According to a Music Mark report, the recorder is still a popular option in terms of WCET (Fautley et al., 2017). Hennessy quoted a teacher, when they explained their reluctance to teach music themselves was entirely due to the fact that their school had bought in a music specialist (Hennessy, 2000). Generalist primary-school classroom teachers presume that because the bought-in teacher is, unlike themselves, a specialist in music, they are as a result a specialist in the instrument they are teaching. However, there is no current data on the levels of qualifications held by recorder teachers or their levels of training in recorder playing and pedagogy. A survey analysed in 2019 concluded that the most frequent response from instrumental teachers was that they believed that the minimum qualification for teaching an instrument should be Grade 8 (level 3) (Norton et al., 2019). This is in contrast to school-based teaching whereby the minimum level of qualification is an undergraduate degree (level 6) (Department for Education, n.d.-a; Department for Education, n.d.-c). In fact, a report from the ABRSM found that 94% of instrumental and vocal teachers they surveyed in the UK had a tertiary-level qualification in music, or higher (ABRSM, 2014).

Robert Ehrlich points out that for professional recorder teachers, the underqualified recorder teacher is more than an annoyance: 'teachers are especially vulnerable to undercutting from underqualified... competitors... A considerable number of people have made money from teaching the recorder without being able to play it' (Ehrlich, forthcoming, pp. 79–80). However, as already discovered, there has been a longstanding debate within primary education regarding whether receiving an education from a music specialist is more or less beneficial, notwithstanding that they may not be an instrumental specialist: Mills (1989) reported that employing specialist musicians to teach primary classes does not improve the subject's image. Moreover, Henley argues that generalist primary-school

teachers need to have the skills, knowledge and experience to teach music in an 'authentic' way (Henley, 2017).

In addition to the disconnect between what instrumental teachers deem an appropriate qualification for teaching music and what the classroom-based profession demands, there is also a lack of clarity over how to define a profession. Furthermore, Furlong et al. explain that interpretations of 'professionalism' and how to define a 'profession' have been academically and ideologically debated within the context of broader teaching and education, aside from music. Furlong et al. have drawn attention to the difficulty of defining 'professional' (2000).

The Music Mark report explains that 77% of MEHs provide training in how to teach WCET; no accurate data exists surrounding the qualifications of recorder teachers in England. Ehrlich suggests that most teachers teaching the recorder have had no specific training in recorder performance or recorder pedagogy. Given the understandable lack of confidence among primary-school classroom teachers and the apparent lack of relevant training among bought-in specialists, there is clearly a lack of confident, trained recorder teachers.

The need for furthering skill development among generalist primary-school teachers was noted by Hallam et al. when they said that there is a critical need to improve ITT and CPD for primary-school teachers in music (Hallam et al., 2009). This was echoed in 2009 when the Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) rated the majority of music provision in schools to be inadequate, found that teachers were not kept up to date with developing trends in music education and that teachers lacked appropriate opportunities for continuing professional development (Ofsted, 2009).

Hallam et al. (2009) do not mention instrumental teachers' training in their report: if generalist primary-school teachers are passing on the responsibility of music teaching to what they perceive as experts, then generalist primary-school teachers may not feel the need for continuing professional development in the subject, whereas they would be likely to

welcome such additional training in subjects in which they are not a specialist but which they are frequently required to teach.

Both the NC (Department for Education, 2013) and the NPME (Department for Education, 2011a) demand that every child should have the opportunity to play a musical instrument. Yet in 2005, 45% of music specialists who went into generalist primary-school teacher training reported that in the third year of their degree, they had not seen musical instruments being used in school during their teacher training (Barnes, 2005). Nearly half of music specialists studying to become primary classroom teachers saw no instrumental teaching during their training (Barnes, 2005). If this is the case then one can assume that a large majority of newly qualified, NC, specialist, primary music teachers have never seen instruments used in the classroom. Teaching Standard Three (the set of standards all qualified teachers in England must adhere to) states that teachers must:

- Demonstrate good subject and curriculum knowledge;
- have a secure knowledge of the relevant subject(s) and curriculum areas, foster and maintain pupils' interest in the subject, and address misunderstandings;
- demonstrate a critical understanding of developments in the subject and curriculum areas and promote the value of scholarship. (Department for Education, 2011b)

However, whilst musicians are being welcomed as experts, we need to problematise how expert they in fact are in the task they are being hired to carry out. Whilst classroom teachers in the maintained sector all have to hold QTS, the instrumental music teaching industry is largely unregulated (Norton et al., 2019). Parkinson explains that 'instrumental teachers... rely on tacit knowledge built up experientially, and on teaching strategies understood to be "commonsensical", rather than learned through formal [teacher training] education or underpinned by research' (Parkinson, 2016, p. 241).

Millican builds on this theme when he states that it is largely presumed that just because a person is proficient at playing a musical instrument, they will automatically become 'good' teachers, even though without sufficient pedagogical knowledge and

experience this will not be the case (Millican, 2013). Shulman explained that successful teaching is less about subject knowledge and more about *knowledge for teaching* (Shulman, 1986).

The literature highlights that primary classroom music is frequently left to people who have training in music but rarely have any training in pedagogy and are also frequently not expert in the specific aspect of music which they are teaching, as in the specific case of the recorder which is the focus of the research. This could highlight a wider-reaching debate about the CPD of music teachers across different settings. If music specialists are not demonstrating appropriate knowledge and skills, including teaching skills, would a generalist classroom teacher be better able to fulfil the NC demands if prepared with better ITT and supported with adequate CPD?

This is in stark contrast with other subjects, but Garrett explains that music is similar to maths in that it is 'socially acceptable' for adults to admit to being 'rubbish at maths' in the same way that adults profess to be non-musical or unable to sing. However, regardless of whether generalist primary-school teachers initially think they are 'rubbish at maths', there is no option to transfer the responsibility of teaching the NC for Maths to a maths specialist (Garrett, 2019).

Aside from generalist primary-school teachers, Ballantyne reports that early-career specialist music teachers felt poorly prepared for the realities of teaching. Her survey concluded that after their specialist music teacher training, early-career music teachers still felt that they were 'unprepared', 'learning on the job' and that transferring from being a trainee teacher to being a professional teacher was a 'shock' (Ballantyne, 2006). She reports that the teachers she surveyed felt there was a disconnect between what specialist music teachers were taught during their training and how that training related to the jobs they were employed in after graduation. They reported that the training they received did not translate well to a real-life classroom environment and they were left feeling unconfident. Similar to general, non-specialist primary-school teachers, the teachers surveyed by Ballantyne

explained that they needed more pedagogically specific training because they currently relied on published schemes of work and tutor books (Ballantyne, 2006). This is consistent with Ehrlich's observations that tutor books are popular with recorder teachers, particularly if Ehrlich's claims that recorder teachers are underqualified is true.

In summary, the dependence which Ehrlich indicates risks leading to a lack of imagination and individual input into lessons, an inability to offer more than scripted answers, and thus a reduced ability to respond to specific situations and individual pupils' needs.

Teacher Identity

Garrett (2019) explains that negative perceptions of music education held by teachers could link back to the teachers' own experiences of learning music at school. She goes on to hypothesise that this unconscious bias towards the subject can permeate the way in which the teacher then introduces the subject to their pupils. Sachs explains that a teacher's own experience of education can form their 'teacher identity and heavily influence their own teaching opinions' (Sachs, 2001). This view is shared by Connelly and Clandinin, who explain that the building blocks of teachers' philosophies, ideas and viewpoints follow into the architecture of teachers' identity (Connelly & Clandinin, 1990). Therefore, if generalist primary-school teachers have had a negative past experience of music and recorder playing whilst they were at school, have been insufficiently trained in how to teach music and then not given the opportunity to develop their own confidence in the subject (as confirmed above), this leaves little opportunity for positive subject development in music in general and (given the nature of primary-school music) recorder pedagogy in particular.

Similarly, Isbell reports that specialist music teachers also construct their own identity as a teacher through past, lived and learnt experiences. Specialist music teachers have developed an 'apprenticeship of observation' throughout their lives as learning musicians themselves, and this is carried on into their professional lives as music teachers (Isbell, 2008). He goes on to say that musicians are conservative and resistant to change about how

and what they teach (Isbell, 2008). Instrumental teaching is an unregulated profession in England: Ehrlich remarks that most recorder teachers are underqualified. The evidence above shows that most music teachers deem Grade 8 (ABRSM) an appropriate level of qualification to teach a musical instrument. This is three levels below the qualification level required to become a classroom-based primary- or secondary-school teacher, and only 77% of MEHs delivering WCET provide their teachers with appropriate CPD. Therefore, if instrumental teachers' only qualification in music is Grade 8 and they have not received appropriate CPD, then, as backed up by the literature from Isbell (2008) and Connelly and Clandinin (1990), such teachers will be relying on past experiences of their own learning to deliver their own lessons and teach their own students. Relying on past experiences rather than formal training as a vehicle for developing one's own identity and value system as a teacher is further confirmed by Nias (1996), Hargreaves (1994) and Sumsion (2001), who explain that the personal lives and experiences of teachers are intrinsically linked to the way in which teachers carry out their professional duties in the classroom. In addition, Kelchtermans notes that it is not only a teacher's past personal experiences that influence their professional duties but the social, cultural and institutional community in which they fulfil their professional roles (Kelchtermans, 1996). This has important implications for the recorder, as the introduction to this thesis observes informal and popular signs that the recorder has a negative image within popular culture.

Social Identity Theory of Music Teachers in Online Memes

Browne explains that 'identity is about how individuals see and define themselves and how other people see and define them' (Browne, 2011, p. 10). Tajfel (2010) categorised Social Identity Theory (SIT) as the way in which people self-define their identities in terms of their social groups and how that identification works to enhance self-identity (Islam, 2014). SIT is a theory that argues that identity is based on membership, e.g. class, ethnicity, faith, age, gender, sexual orientation, hobbies and pursuits, profession, etc., not the individual.

This is why it is relevant to include it within the debate of recorder teacher qualifications and identities (Bryant & Vorderer, 2006).

Whilst Garrett (2019) acknowledges that past experiences affect the way in which teachers approach their music teaching and that these may include negative past experiences, the role of the negative presentation of the recorder in the media in additionally providing negative connotations to recorder teaching and learning in schools cannot be overlooked in teacher identity. Salavuo asserts that Social Networking Platforms and online activity are indispensable to music students' lives (Salavuo, 2008). Pan et al. explain that in 2012, people spent an average of 6.5 hours a day on social media connecting with, socialising and sharing with members of their social network (Pan et al., 2017). In 2014, 87% of the adult American population were connected to the internet, and within this group, 74% admitted to regularly using social media (Stets & Serpe, 2016). Furthermore, online, professional and special interest communities and social networking platforms bring together people with similar interests and cultivate comradery between groups (Pan et al., 2017). Blumler recognised that 'little attention has been given to how people identify themselves and their roles in society through what they see, read and hear in the media' (Blumler, 1985, p. 50) Even within an increasingly connected web of social groups online, SIT is a relatively new psychological theory in terms of how frequently it has been used to analyse the effects of media usage in relation to how people identify themselves to and within a social group (Bryant & Vorderer, 2006). In 2014 Shifman said 'we need to take Internet memes seriously... Internet memes may help us decipher contemporary political, cultural, and social processes' (Shifman, 2013, p. 172).

This is particularly relevant in assessing the effects of social media memes, as presented in chapter 1, about the recorder in education. Eschler and Menking explain that memes are an important part of online social groups that can help the work of social identity research (Eschler & Menking, 2018). They define memes as images accompanied by titles or phrases that illustrate an image, consisting of one or more images accompanied by

‘cultural artefact, member of a community, or shared experience’ (Eschler & Menking, 2018, p. 2). The memes presented in chapter 1 fit this description, yet to date, there has been no research assessing the effects of social media memes on music teacher identity or social perceptions of musical instruments.

Eschler and Menking also identify memes as having negative effects on social groups. Massanari argues that memes lead to *toxic technocultures* that result in *othering* of social groups (Massanari, 2017).

Othering in social identity of music teachers

‘Othering’ is a post-colonial theory first identified by Spivak in 1985 by examining the social constructs of power within British Colonial India. Spivak identifies three dimensions of the post-colonial theory of othering that I will summarise below in Table 2.1 (Spivak, 1985, p. 254).

Table 2.1: A summary of Spivak’s three dimensions of othering within Social Identity Theory

The Power Dimension	The Superiority Dimension	The Master of Knowledge Dimension
‘Making people aware who they are subject to’ by making the lesser party aware of who holds the power and is the most powerful.	Constructing the other as pathological and morally superior.	‘The master is the subject of... knowledge.’ (Spivak, 1985, p. 254). Knowledge is the property of the superior and not to be shared with inferior persons.

Drawing on the controversial but influential work of Spivak, Holliday argues that othering is ‘constructing or imagining a demonized image of “them” or the Other, which supports an idealized image of “us” or the Self’ (Holliday, 2011, p. 69). Othering has been criticised for being too binary and that because of this it can fail to see social groups that fall outside of this binary categorisation (Baumann & Gingrich, 2004; Soja, 1996). However, Tajfel discovered that affiliation to social groups leads to people discriminating against each

other (Tajfel, 2010). These social groups can be extended to include social networks where online memes are shared.

By its very nature, music teacher identity in English primary schools can be categorised into two groups: teachers that are generalist primary-school teachers that teach a wide range of NC subjects, and instrumental and vocal teachers who may teach in schools but are not always directly employed by schools and do not always have QTS. The generalist primary-school teacher commissions 'others' (specialised music teachers) to teach music in their school, thus creating a divide between the two roles and styles of teaching. Johnstone (2016, pp. 40–41) clarifies that both groups of teachers (specialised music teachers and generalist class teachers) feel othered by each other: she rationalises that generalist primary-school teachers in English primary schools feel that the presence of bought-in specialist music teachers 'affects their professional status and places them in a lower position to the instrumental teachers, as a person without music knowledge' and that the same feelings may occur, in the same situation, to the specialised, bought-in music teacher (Johnstone, 2016, pp. 40–41). In this case, both parties display both the 'Superiority' and 'Master of Knowledge' dimensions of othering. In a link to Hallam, Johnstone determines that the 'sharing of knowledge and better CPD for both parties could bridge the gap in each group othering each other' (Johnstone, 2016, pp. 40–41).

Delving deeper, recorder teachers can also be grouped in two categories: those who consider themselves specialists due to their status of having studied at conservatoire or university level as a specialised recorder player and/or teacher, and those recorder teachers deemed to be 'non-specialists'. Abrams and Hogg explain that SIT refers to 'group' behaviour that includes discrimination against outlying groups (Hogg & Abrams, 1988).

Ehrlich identifies this type of othering in the recorder community when he says 'amateur players (and teachers) can be vocal in expressing their independence from, and occasional distrust of, professionals' (Ehrlich, forthcoming, p. 79). This would fit within the 'Superiority' dimension, with amateur recorder players believing that recorder activities

should remain in the realm of the amateur. Ehrlich continues this sentiment with quotes from eminent professional recorder performers; Brüggem, Linde and Staeps 'agreed that the "recorder movement" (by which they meant the school recorder; "the youth playing the instrument")... had little in common with the professionals who see the recorder as a historic instrument or, in some cases, as a modern instrument like any other' (Ehrlich, forthcoming, p. 79).

This is consistent with recorder memes entirely linked to the recorder in education, in comparison with other orchestral woodwind instruments such as the oboe as demonstrated in chapter 1. The clear distinction between the 'distrust' between 'recorder professionals' and 'amateurs' as described by Ehrlich and its consistency with the difference between recorder memes and other woodwind instrument memes shows a clear structure of othering between the 'professional recorder community' and other members of the educational and musical community, each 'community' othering each other. Relating the concept of othering to Ehrlich's observations of professional recorder players' views surrounding amateurs, this would fall into the category of the 'Master of Knowledge'.

Lack of Autonomy in Pupil Choice

In American band programmes, taking part in WCET provision is elective for students and schools have a 'band' teacher as part of their staffing. The Music Mark report shows that the recorder is commonly taught as part of compulsorily presented provision to pupils in primary schools. Pupils do not always get a choice in what instrument they learn to play when it is compulsorily presented to them at school. This can link to SIT, as the process of compulsory WCET recorder instruction can be a prominent memory of music education for previous generations of school pupils who are now teachers and parents. This memory helps to form an individual's social identity and helps to construct an individual's perception of the recorder in education.

Relevance in pupil choice has been seen to be important in creating positive musical relationships between school music-making and pupil engagement. Green (2002), Folkestad (2006), and Vasil (2019) have shown that pupils rarely choose the instrument they learn in WCET and that instead schools choose their instrument for practical reasons. It is because of this the recorder remains popular in schools. Ehrlich explains that non-specialist recorder teachers use a tutor book to guide their lesson planning. Holden and Button explain 47% of non-specialist, generalist primary-school teachers use musical textbooks and teacher guides, whilst 69% of the same group of teachers use published music schemes and books (Holden & Button, 2006). Large numbers of primary music teachers are relatively inexperienced, and the recorder is chosen not through 'musical' or pupil choice. Tutor books could be a comprehensive resource in terms of repertoire and technical advice. This could aid the inexperienced teacher in physically teaching the recorder and also to expose children to a wealth of musical styles. Chappell (1999) and Ehrlich (forthcoming) have written that the tutor book is not always the most positive method of learning a musical instrument, particularly with an inexperienced teacher.

Ehrlich notes that it is not only the unskilled teacher that can give the recorder a negative reputation. As already cited, he argues that one of the reasons the recorder could have a low social perception is 'the crude superficiality of many [recorder] tutors' (Ehrlich, forthcoming, p. 72). Many unskilled recorder teachers will look towards a recorder tutor book for guidance in technique and pedagogy. Ehrlich asserts that since the 1930s, unskilled recorder teachers have depended on recorder tutor books for guidance in technique and pedagogy, but that popular *Tune A Day* tutor books lack such guidance. Ehrlich argues that as a result, recorder technique has been taught 'without reference to how to physically play the instrument, leading to bad habits that inhibit progress and discourage learners from continuing' (Ehrlich, forthcoming, p. 72). As a result, there are generations of teachers and parents who have negative previous experiences in learning the recorder that can, in turn, dissuade them to take an active role in undertaking further training and development to

broaden their instrumental pedagogy skills. Linking back to the theory of *apprenticeship of observation* in the identity and development of instrumental teachers, Ehrlich's claim of a stagnation in recorder pedagogy development for ninety years leads to a shared understanding of what recorder teaching and learning looks like, and this is prominent in the shared comedic material in online recorder memes. If parents identify as not having a previously positive experience learning the recorder themselves in compulsorily presented, whole-class, primary-school provision then this identity formation may go some way to explaining low levels of continuation in instrumental learning past WCET projects.

Anderson and Barton-Wales note the value of parental autonomy in the continuation of instrumental lessons after the initial experience of WCET has ended (Anderson & Barton-Wales, 2019). Fautley et al. explain that there is only a 28% level of continuation with instrumental learning past the primary school (Fautley et al., 2017). A lack of choice in the instrument that whole classes of children learn during WCET is one factor of this decline in engagement (Anderson & Barton-Wales, 2019). Hallam et al. explain that instrument choice in WCET comes down to availability of instruments relative to the school they attend, the cost of said instruments to the MEH and whether size is practical for schools (Hallam et al., 2008).

In terms of 'who plays the recorder', the instrument is not specifically gendered, with the recorder having an equal spread between male and female participants across school-aged children and between Key Stages (Hallam et al., 2008). This differs from instruments such as the clarinet and violin which are largely female-gendered and the electric guitar and drum kit, which lean towards the male gender (Cantero & Jauset-Berrocal, 2017). This could be because the recorder is presented compulsorily, in whole classes, rather than an individual choice, and data points towards the recorder not being continued after these WCET projects.

American band programmes show that instruments of the woodwind family are more female-gendered than brass. SIT is of larger consideration in American band programmes

as these classes are 'electives' (Hoffman, 2008). Hoffman explains: 'In addition to choosing to enrol in band, these students further identify themselves through musical choices. For instance, a sixth-grader may come to self-identify as a flautist, saxophonist, or percussionist' (Hoffman, 2008, pp. 1-10). In summary, where there is greater pupil autonomy, instruments show gendering; with the recorder, where there is less gendering, this confirms that there is less autonomy.

Formal vs. Informal Music Learning

Lack of pupil autonomy has also been cited as an important factor in formal music tuition. This could be a reason for the recorder's negative image. Keith Swanwick believes that 'music education is not problematic until it surfaces in schools and colleges; until it becomes formal, institutionalised' (Swanwick, 2002, p. 36). He reports that introducing Orff-style instruments into the classroom resulted in the creation of a 'musical subculture' of school music. This is because Orff created special classroom instruments with specific repertoire for use in schools only (Swanwick, 2002, p. 37). However, children naturally approach music in an integrated way, and many children choose for themselves what musical instrument to learn to play (Ross, 1995). In our media-centric 21st century, there are many genres and forms of music and musical activity just a computer-click away, not just Western Classical Art Music (WCAM). Hallam et al. highlighted a need to develop an informal music-learning approach to emulate the way in which popular musicians learn as a possible way to raise levels of engagement with music into and throughout secondary-school learning (Hallam et al., 2017). They argue that continuing levels of declining engagement with music at secondary school have been historically blamed on 'poor' teaching and therefore teachers need to look in new pedagogical directions by taking a more informal approach to music education (Hallam et al., 2017). According to the aforementioned Music Mark report, there are low levels of children continuing with learning an instrument in school following compulsory presented, teacher-directed WCET lessons where the recorder is frequently the choice of instrument (Fautley et al., 2017).

Searching out new pedagogical directions contrasts with the dependence on past experiences of teachers' own learning and the *apprenticeship of observation* which we discussed previously. Elements of informal musical pedagogy include giving students more autonomy over the instruments they elect to learn and the style of music they elect to perform. This is also in contrast to the manner in which the recorder is currently compulsorily presented to children who learn as part of WCET.

The conclusion to current research suggests that most musical learning occurs outside of institutionalised settings such as schools, where there is no teacher and the intention of the activity is not explicitly to learn about music, but to engage with it by playing, listening, dancing and socialising to music (Folkestad, 2006). A 2011 study into children's participation in music concluded that learning the recorder puts children off learning music. It stated that 85.7% of children in Year 6 listen to music on tapes or CDs outside school, 59.1% of the same children dance to music at discos or parties, 53.9% use a computer to make music with friends and 58.5% of the children surveyed play a musical instrument with a family member (O'Neill et al., 2001). In addition, it has been reported that 96% of children actively use social media (O'Keeffe et al., 2011). Children experience music both in and out of school, and both of these musical settings are likely to influence the way children learn music (Byo, 2018).

Göran Folkestad comments that a music teacher will never meet a pupil who is musically uninformed (Folkestad, 2006). Children already know lots about music and the type of instrument they would like to learn to play, and therefore a key pedagogical focus in informal music learning is pupil autonomy and pupil choice over a compulsory provision in choice of instrument and repertoire. Karlsen and Westerlund expand this viewpoint when they say that most teachers were taught through WCAM repertoire in a notation-based format and this tends to inform their own teaching (Westerlund & Karlsen, 2015). They go on to emphasise that musical diversity is extremely important for today's students, who rarely live in monocultural communities and are exposed to a globalised community through their

media and technology usage. They explain that a curriculum rooted in a notation delivery that uses exclusively WCAM is in opposition to the way in which young people experience their life. They report that many music teachers are institutionalised and resistant to changing their views and opinions on pedagogy and repertoire (Westerlund & Karlsen, 2015). This could stem from a lack of ITT and CPD.

Ross's article 'What's wrong with school music?' explains that many children choose to teach themselves to play a musical instrument with which they are already familiar because they like the sound and the repertoire of the instrument (Ross, 1995). They learn by a method of 'trial and error', listening to the songs that they enjoy and trying to figure out how to play it, aurally, without the aid of a teacher, usually in a non-school environment. It is reported that seating plans, set by teachers, are popular in primary schools and these can be seen as unpopular and as an 'injustice' by pupils (Adderley et al., 2015). By comparison, in 'informal music-making pupils work with their friends, using informal peer assessment to help each other in the learning process' (Ross, 1995). This is in contrast to WCET, which is a teacher-led learning experience by the very description that it is delivered by teachers bought in from MEHs.

Garrett explains that music is thought of as 'elitist' by students because they see a disconnect between the music they study at school and the music they engage with outside the classroom. They are not enculturated into the music they learn at school (Garrett, 2019). Clauhs and Cremata build on this idea when they too explain that teachers have a 'responsibility to make sure that what the music teachers are presenting in classrooms can be related to students' wider experiences outside of the classroom' (Clauhs & Cremata, 2020). The recorder is not a popular and regular feature in British popular culture, and children are unlikely to see a recorder in traditional or contemporary media outside of an educational paradigm. In addition, recorder repertoire does not feature in canonical symphonic or operatic repertoire and therefore can often be left out of populist WCAM

programming. *The Classical FM 2020 Hall of Fame* compiles a list of 300 most popular WCAM pieces, voted for by their listeners: the recorder does not feature (Classic FM, 2020).

Folkestad describes the field of research surrounding the informal versus formal debate as taking into consideration not only the formal, teacher-directed learning in schools and institutions but also learning that happens informally outside of such spheres (Folkestad, 2006). With the renewed interest in learning, situations have come to a shift in thinking and focus among music educationalists from teaching to learning and, as a consequence, from teacher to learner. The interest that surrounds the topic of learning styles is that of how and why children learn as opposed to how and why teachers teach (Folkestad, 2006). A more formal learning style would be teacher-directed learning: the teacher chooses the topic and the repertoire for the lesson and directs the children to what they need to learn. The child watches and copies. Schweder acknowledges that students' loss of motivation for learning in school can be linked to the pre-eminence of teacher-directed learning where the students' autonomy is ignored (Schweder, 2020). A more informal learning style would be a child-centred approach where the child discovers learning through playful and explorative activities. Informal learning encompasses what Knowles in 1975 described as self-directed learning (Knowles, 1975). The debate is less to do with praxis but more to do with the process of learning.

Folkestad describes four different ways of defining informal and formal learning: the situation refers to where the learning takes place; the learning style refers to the character of the learning process (a formal learning style would be to learn through notation, an informal style would be by aural transmission); ownership refers to the ownership of the musical activity (is it didactic teaching or self-regulated learning?); and intentionality refers to whether the intention is focused on how to play or just to *play* (Folkestad, 2006). Folkestad notes that these delineations are not incompatible but that the difference between the informal and formal music making can sometimes be intertwined (Folkestad, 2006). Cawley explains that

whilst traditional Irish music lessons organised by Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann¹³ are organised and led by a teacher, they can be characterised as informal music learning as they regularly feature learning by ear as opposed to learning through notation, they happen extracurricular to school, within a community context and do not include formal assessment (Cawley, 2013). In terms of WCET recorder lessons, these are taught at school, directed by a teacher: 52% of said teachers agree that children in these programmes must learn to read music, in contrast to 31% who disagree, whilst only 32% believe that instrumental technique is important in WCET lessons and 93% disagree that WCET is purely about learning to play an instrument (Fautley et al., 2017). Whilst there is no data on the repertoire learnt in WCET, only two out of the top ten most popular instruments taught through WCET are not part of traditional WCAM instrumentation (Fautley et al., 2017). Small explains that complete dependence upon written notation is exclusive to performers of WCAM (Small, 1998). It can be concluded that WCET recorder lessons occur within a formal setting whilst presenting as formal pedagogy.

Vasil echoes Folkestad, explaining that informal pedagogy intertwined with popular music can be used in the formal sphere of the classroom (Vasil, 2019). What Vasil and Folkestad describe is similar to lessons run by Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann in the field of traditional Irish music. Folkestad goes on to say that it is simplified and misleading to say that formal learning only happens in institutionalised settings and informal learning only happens outside of these institutional settings (Folkestad, 2006). In the formal sense of music-making, the learning activity is always predetermined by a 'teacher' who takes the lead in such activities. In the informal sense of music-making, the learning activity is not predetermined; it is the activity itself that determines the learning experiences in the present moment. However, there is also the difference of ownership in informal learning: the content of the learning material is self-chosen and learning is a voluntary experience. WCET recorder lessons are an involuntary experience. In formal learning situations, the teacher

¹³ Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann lessons happen across the world, including England.

chooses the material. In schools, practicalities can come ahead of pupil choice; this could go some way to explaining why the recorder is the fourth most commonly used instrument in WCET yet it is by far the cheapest option to resource. It is also the smallest-sized instrument on the list (Fautley et al., 2017). This is not to mean that pupil choice has to be excluded throughout the learning process. Folkestad clarifies the boundaries by saying that if a teacher directs the learning, then it is a formal learning situation. He goes on to say that teachers can create opportunities for informal learning processes to happen (Folkestad, 2006). Ideas for teachers in recorder lessons could include allowing children to choose who they work with, allowing children to choose repertoire and including learning repertoire aurally instead of exclusively relying on notation.

Green notes this way in which people engage with music in a naturally integrated way and has discovered that popular musicians approach music via 'enculturation' (Green, 2002, p. 22). Green reports that in contrast to levels of continuation after English WCET projects that are presented via formal learning, young people are more likely to continue playing music throughout their life if they acquire their musical skills and knowledge through informal learning practices (Green, 2002, p. 56). Green makes clear the differences between the formal and informal learning spheres and the correlation to continuation into later life by explaining that, in general, people are not as encultured into WCAM as they are with Western popular music, and this is especially true with children who are learning WCAM (Green, 2002, p. 56). It has already been mentioned that the recorder is not a regular feature within popular culture, and children are unlikely to see a recorder being played or hear a recorder outside of school or an educational context.

O'Flynn also picks up on the theme of enculturation in the way young musicians in Ireland learn traditional Irish music. He notes that everyone he interviewed had learnt music aurally, either in a group, through one-to-one tuition, or by learning traditional tunes from recordings or friends (O'Flynn, 2011, p. 263). He develops this by explaining that 'the influence of the family and social group had the most influence in enculturating children into

the music they played' (O'Flynn, 2011, p. 260). McCarthy builds on this point of enculturation through informal learning situations as she explains that the success of music education in Ireland has traditionally been located outside the formal education system, where music learning commonly takes place informally in the family and local community (McCarthy, 1999).

Cawley notes that many of her participants learnt the tin whistle as a starter instrument, in whole classes through formal music education whilst in primary school (in Ireland), but the repertoire was not focused on traditional music or culture (Cawley, 2013). One of her participants reported a common experience of learning nursery rhymes on the tin whistle for a year with a generalist primary-school teacher. Of her participants (based in Ireland) in a study into enculturation in music education of traditional Irish music, the tin whistle (like the recorder, an end-blown duct flute without keys which is cheap to purchase and easy to store) was regularly used as a 'starter' instrument, taught by generalist primary-school class teachers, not dissimilar to the recorder in English schools. Her participants acknowledged that they did not continue with tin whistle lessons formally or in school, but instead developed their musical activity within social, family and community contexts where enculturation was more present (Cawley, 2013). These musicians did not continue to engage with music in school but had a bustling musical life in the wider community.

Similar to the way in which Green argues that popular musicians and Cawley argues that traditional Irish musicians learn, Mok and On Nei Anniein explain that children who regularly engaged with the learning of Chaozhou music (in China) did not learn this music in school. Instead they learnt music in the home and with relatives and at informal music clubs with members of their community. Latter and Thompson observe that they learnt through methods of self-regulated listening and trial-and-error experimentation through aural learning (Latta & Thompson, 2011).

These examples of non-WCAM repertoire and informal learning strongly suggest that the roles of community, society and friendship are decisive in the learner's experience.

Participants and commentators acknowledge that school-based music education rarely provides a positive environment for informal learning and that formal education can be inhibitive of learning.

Introduction to Learning Theory within the Informal vs. Formal Learning Debate

Informal learning practices demonstrate good examples of Dewey's (Tan, 2016), Erikson's (Batra, 2013), Suzuki's (Suzuki, 1980) and Vygotsky's (Allsup, 2003) theories that learning in a social environment through conversations, with support from friends and family, supports and nurtures the learning process. In both cases of folk and pop learning, there is a cycle of integrated and encultured learning in a usually informal educational setting. Learning occurs through purposive or attentive listening, copying, arranging with peers or within social musical settings, and performing. In both accounts of pop and folk, learning via notation came secondary to learning by ear (Green, 2002, p. 96). Learning by ear results in an explorative, improvisatory learning experience as recommended by Dalcroze (Choksy, 2001), Montessori (Edwards, 2002), Piaget and Suzuki. Yet classical instrumental teachers have tended not to mitigate the disincentives to learning in this situation, and in general, 'the importance of musical enculturation seems to be overlooked' (Green, 2002, p. 187).

*The theory of behaviourism in music education*¹⁴

Up to now, we have been looking at an essentially constructivist reading of the NC. Garnett's argument is that the NC for Music in primary schools tends to follow a constructivist approach to learning (Garnett, 2013). Swanwick identifies that the NC's combination of composing, listening, appraising and performing is an example of a constructivist curriculum (Swanwick, 2002). This is further identified by Philpott and Plummeridge (2001). However, several analyses draw attention to the behaviourist content of English education. Fautley and Colwell declare that behaviourism is commonplace across

¹⁴ The following sections of this chapter will summarise approaches to learning that align with informal pedagogical framing. Further literature on learning theory can be found in Appendix G.

English instrumental (non-NC) music-education practices, where teacher-directed and sequenced learning of a musical instrument consisting mainly of practice and refinement tasks still prevail (Fautley & Colwell, 2012). O'Neill continues this theme, explaining that behaviourist teaching and learning is prevalent within WCAM lessons in schools and conservatories (O'Neill, 2012).

Pollard et al. explain that behaviourism was the most popular style and theory on learning until the 1960s (Pollard et al., 2014). Skinner explained that the concept of behaviourism in education was centred on the sorting and retrieving of information (Skinner, 1938). In 1939, music teacher Theodore Normann explained that instrumental teaching required 'a generous amount of rote teaching and imitative drill' (Normann, 1941, p. 150).

Johnstone (2016) explains that in music education, behaviourism can be thought of as a 'traditional style of learning whereby large numbers of children are taught, formally, in one class where the learning is controlled by the teacher who is the dominant person within the classroom' (Johnstone, 2016). Pollard et al. continue that behaviourism as a theory is where knowledge and skills are explicitly taught by a teacher to passive, whole classes where pupils respond to and follow direct instructions (Pollard et al., 2014). Johnstone continues to clarify that a behaviourist approach to learning is commonly found in contemporary WCET lessons in English primary schools due to their reliance on teacher-directed instrumental skill development and notation reading (Johnstone, 2016). The teacher is fundamental to a behaviourist-style curriculum, and Jarvis et al. go further by insisting that 'the teacher seeks to control the students' learning in order to produce the desired results' (Jarvis et al., 2003, p. 30).

Ehrlich explains: 'consistent lack of attention to the most fundamental necessities of recorder technique has firmly established a popular belief that technique itself is unnecessary' (Ehrlich, forthcoming, p. 73). Chappell describes behaviourist learning styles in instrumental lessons as based on tutor books and learning to read music (Chappell, 1999). In the same article, Chappell is explicit on the after-effects of learning on a note-by-note

basis at the loss of instrumental technique and seems to agree with Ehrlich when she says that a book-based learning experience can lead to muscular physical problems that often get worse as the student develops into adulthood (Chappell, 1999). This puts responsibility for instrumental technique onto the teacher, but in the case of the recorder, where even the tutor-book authors presume the teachers to be non-specialists in music, let alone the recorder, this could leave 'physical problems for pupils going undetected far beyond childhood learning and on into adulthood'.

Haddon explains that due to the lack of CPD opportunities and an under-trained workforce, behaviourist, master–apprentice-style lessons are most prevalent (Haddon, 2009). The tutor book exemplifies the master–apprentice model of instrumental learning. As already mentioned above, the NC differs from traditional instrumental tuition as it does not follow a master–apprentice curriculum design. Chappell is negative towards a master–apprentice, book-based learning style not in terms of pupil choice and relevance but in relation to instrumental technique, similar to Ehrlich's criticism.

Behaviourist learning styles are prevalent with the descriptions of formal music-education teaching and learning as described above by Green (2002), Folkestad (2006), Vasil (2019) and Schweder (2020). Swann recognises that behaviourism has been criticised for excluding creativity, exploration and play from learning processes and that behaviourist-style curriculums are reliant upon teacher directions (Swann, 2012). Johnstone explains that the pervasiveness of behaviourism in WCET (and in turn, recorder lessons) has been detrimental to pupils' learning within the programme (Johnstone, 2016). A behaviourist style of learning, clearly still prevalent in English schools, is in opposition to informal learning practices that incorporate peer mentorship, group work, exploration and enculturation.

The theory of constructivism

Constructivism is more aligned to informal pedagogical framing. Woolfolk Hoy interprets constructivism with two main elements: that pupils are engaged and active in assembling their own knowledge and that social interactions between fellow pupils and

adults are a vital part of knowledge construction (Woolfolk Hoy, 2000). Dewey also believed that pupils learn better when they collaborate with peers and adults, working cooperatively together (Garhart Mooney, 2013, p. 16). Meade and Cubey acknowledge that in constructivist learning environments, 'teachers will create opportunities for children to encounter the concept and explore it in groups' (Meade & Cubey, 2008, p. 9). Emphasis on cooperative learning with adults and peers is something that is at odds with the learning practices in formal music education within the genre of WCAM; however, this is something that often happens in the informal learning spheres of the folk and pop traditions through mentorship and the sharing of knowledge.

The role of the mentor in musical learning

Whilst the role of society, community and friendship in the success of informal musical learning cannot be ignored, the role of a musical mentor is also acknowledged within informal learning. Mentors appear in popular-music learning situations, as noted by Green: 'watching and imitating the actions of more experienced players are prime activities in the enculturation and apprenticeship practices of many traditional musics and jazz' (Green, 2002, p. 82). Mentorship relationships within informal music education also appear in the ethnography of North Indian classical music practices, as Neuman explains: 'a period of intense training with a guru [as opposed to a formal teacher] is considered mandatory' (Neuman, 1990, p. 50). This can link with Folkestad's acceptance that informal learning practices can coincide within a formal context such as a primary-school lesson. Cawley explains that in traditional Irish music practices, family members, commercially available recorded musicians, community members, peers and teachers can become mentors for children and adults engaged in musical learning (Cawley, 2013). In a recorder lesson this would mean that beginner recorder players would see people of all ages playing the recorder. Waldron explains that musical mentors are not the same as music teachers: instead of direct instruction where a student may copy a teacher, musical mentorship is more concerned with a practice of sharing and exchange of knowledge and expertise. It is a

reciprocal arrangement between mentor and mentee, with both parties equally involved and engaged in the relationship and process (Waldron, 2007). Mentorship can include conscious and unconscious learning, and the learning is not always predetermined as in a formal teacher–student learning paradigm; this can be achieved in recorder lessons through informal pedagogical framing.

Wenger explains that the mentoring relationship does not always have to be with an adult guiding a child for the relationship to be valuable, and many peer-to-peer mentor relationships exist within musical communities: ‘more experienced peers are not merely a source of information... they represent the history of the practice as a way of life... They are living testimonies to what is possible, expected, desirable’ (Wenger, 1999, p. 156). The recorder being used as a starter instrument, in preparation for learning a real instrument as described by Hallam, presents a problem of a lack of peer-to-peer mentorship in the enculturation of the recorder and recorder learning in the primary school. As the recorder is often learnt for one year, or even one term, with limited possibilities for progression, there are rarely older pupils acting as role models, including playing outside WCET projects, and rarely opportunities for informal learning. The recorder’s use as a starter instrument hinders any opportunity for children to be encultured into recorder learning by not giving the opportunity for children to see fellow school pupils engaging in the practice of playing the recorder outside of WCET projects.

Dewey’s educational theory was founded on the view that ‘children learn best when they interact with other people, working side by side and cooperatively with peers and adults’ (Garhart Mooney, 2013, p. 16). This is something shared by Vygotsky (1896–1934), who similarly believed that children learn through conversations between themselves and through creative, independent role play. Likewise with instrumental learning within popular and folk traditions, he observed that social interactions between family groups, peers and teachers are an integral part of the learning process (Topçiu & Myftiu, 2015). In recorder lessons this

could be utilising recorder groups such as the SRP to bring together multigenerational opportunities for recorder players of all ages.

Vygotsky acknowledged the role of teacher and mentor through his theory of the Zone of Proximal Development. He noticed that some children preferred to learn independently, some with help from adults and others with help from their peers (Daniels, 2002). Pound explains that 'two children may have similar levels of competence but different levels of success because of their differing abilities to benefit from the help of instruction given to them by adults' (Pound, 2009, p. 40). The Zone of Proximal Development is best explained as 'the gap between what a child can do alone and what they can do with the help of someone more skilled or experienced' (Pound, 2009, p. 40). According to Vygotsky, we should allow children to do as much as they can alone, but we can stretch them a little by 'scaffolding' their learning. In a recorder lesson, giving children an opportunity to explore their learning in small groups and on their own as opposed to wholly teacher-directed instruction could provide opportunities for scaffolding.

Music educationalists Suzuki (1898–1998) (Hannon & Trainor, 2007) and Kodály (1882–1967) (Mapana, 2011) also acknowledged the role of adults and peer mentors in children's learning through the way children learn language from their environment, picking up local dialects with ease, and learning and mimicking fluctuations in pitch during the speech from their parents. Similar to the learning processes of informal music learning, Suzuki and Kodály were advocates for the benefits of enculturation in the learning process. Suzuki believed in the role of the mentor and enculturation of the learning process within the home and advocated that at least one parent should learn the instrument alongside the child, as children want to do what adults do (especially mimicking their parents). Suzuki is quoted as saying 'nurturing is the basis for developing ability' (Suzuki, 1981, p. 18). Suzuki's approach to instrumental learning requires both individual and group lessons. Children should have individual lessons to nurture their innate talent and group lessons to inspire the children and also to include music learning as a social, environmental activity. Maria

Montessori (1870–1952) also noted children’s need to copy adults and older children: children learn from watching, listening, copying, practising and repeating what they see their primary caregivers doing (Lillard, 2018). This aligns with the processes found in informal music-making.

Learning through conversation, social interaction and a flexible scaffold is something not recognised in a behaviourist learning environment (Verenikina, 2008). The learning that happens in this way cannot always produce a tangible outcome and is rarely something that can be repeated or conditioned in the learner. Learning in a social, conversational environment is something that is fluid and learner-directed; it cannot be a simple stimulus-response mechanism. This, again, could be recreated through small-group work away from teacher-directed learning.

Constructivism, like progressivism, harnesses the idea that children’s interests should inform the basis for lesson planning and that education is a part of life, but unlike the latter, the theory acknowledges the positive role of adults and mentors in the learning process. Dewey was adamant that teachers should have strong subject knowledge and spend time observing, planning, organising and documenting the learning experiences of children, with specific regard to the interests of the children (Sikandar, 2016).

Although Dewey was a strong advocate of the child-centred approach to learning, he was keen to point out that ‘fun’ as a stand-alone by-product of educational activities was not enough when educating children. Garhart Mooney explains that ‘teachers can use Dewey’s criteria to make sure the experiences they plan for children are not only fun but also build children’s learning’ (Garhart Mooney, 2013, p. 27).

Enculturation in constructivism

The role of mentorship and learning through experimentation are not the only constructs of constructivist learning that are present in informal learning. Enculturation both through social groups and topics of learning are central themes in constructivism (Bächtold,

2013). Dewey thought that children's interests should inform the basis for lesson planning and that education is a part of life; this is complementary to using a student's choice of music at the start of informal learning practices.

It was Kodály's belief that children should primarily learn music that is of their home country, as this folk music is the purest form of music, and also because it was his belief that children would be most familiar with folk music. Although folk music is at the heart of the Kodály method, it is not the exclusive genre; Kodály believed that any form of high-quality music was worthy of being used as a pedagogic tool. He despised the idea of music being composed purely for pedagogical purposes, as this was not 'authentic' music (Houlahan & Tacka, 2008). In the 21st century, it is no longer the case that traditional English folk music is the most familiar form of music to most children of primary-school age; the idea of traditional English folk music could be changed to familiar, modern nursery rhymes and/or topical pop music.

The literature from Green, Swanwick, Dewey, Piaget and Suzuki suggests that in order to be introducing pupils to the recorder in an integrated way (Bächtold, 2013), teachers need to be presenting music from as many different backgrounds as possible. This is highlighted in the 2021 Model Music Curriculum Pupils need to see a wide spectrum of music in a way that does not create a musical subculture: pupils need to be able to see that this music lives outside the classroom. Beach, Evans and Spruce point out that children need to be able to see that what they are learning in school links to their everyday life, and that the gap between school music lessons and music within wider popular society needs to be bridged (Beach, Evans and Spruce, 2012). This links to advocacy in educational ideology by Dewey and Montessori. This, they say, results in 'integrated experiences' (Matthews, 2010, p. 68). Green points out that when musicians 'play music into which they are encultured and with which they identify... enjoyment, commitment, even passion for a wide variety of music run high' (Green, 2002, p. 177).

Dalcroze, Kodály and Suzuki as examples of a constructivist musical learning style

The Dalcroze approach to music education is referred to as eurhythmics, the study of music through movement (Juntunen & Hyvonen, 2004). Dalcroze (1865–1950) believed that the natural rhythmical processes of the body such as breathing and walking could be used as an aid in musical education. The Dalcroze approach includes not only movement but also solfège and improvisation (either through expressive body movements, or instrumental or vocal). Mead says that 'Dalcroze believed that in the study of music, students should continually be cultivating a memory bank of aural, visual and kinaesthetic images which could be recalled at any time for reading, writing, performing or creating music' (Mead, 1994, p. 5). It is a method based on musical and physical improvisation and experimentation which correlates to a constructivist style of learning and could be a way to imbed informal pedagogical framing in recorder lessons (Abril & Gault, 2016).

With this in mind, it is important that when introducing children to music they should have the opportunity to respond freely to music using their bodies through activities such as stepping, clapping, gesturing and dancing. Children should be encouraged to spontaneously move in a way which is inspired by the music in whichever way they wish. In more directed activities, teachers may introduce work songs or singing games with specific actions. The main aim in Dalcroze eurhythmics is that children feel free to interpret music in a physical way, creating a kinaesthetic memory that can be used as a basis for further musical learning. The Dalcroze approach, with its strong emphasis on improvisation, could be used in a constructivist-style learning environment as it embodies the free will of the learner in the learning process. Childhood musical games often feature 'hand-clapping, mimetic movement, skipping... counting out... and ball bouncing' (Marsh & Young, 2008, p. 290). Children approach musical play both visually, kinaesthetically, aurally and from an improvisatory angle: Marsh and Young note that 'even apparently fixed forms are subject to a continual process of creative change' (Marsh & Young, 2008, p. 290).

Table 2.2 shows common themes across constructivism, education theory, music education theory and informal learning practices. I will use this to start to build a framework as an approach to the teaching and learning of beginner recorder technique.

Table 2.2: Correlations between behaviourism, constructivism, education theory, music education theory and informal learning practices

Learning Experience	Present in Behaviourism	Present in Constructivism	Present in General Education Theory	Present in Music-Specific Education Theory	Present in Informal Musical Learning Practices
Experimentation and curiosity		X	X	X	X
Play		X	X	X	X
Improvisation		X	X	X	
Movement		X	X	X	
Conversation, social interaction and scaffolding		X	X	X	X
Independent learning and discovery		X	X	X	X
Learning based on familiar material		X	X	X	X
Mentorship		X	X	X	X
Enculturation		X	X	X	X

Summary

Whilst there is a distinct lack of recorder-specific literature in the field of education or sociology, this chapter has concluded that the recorder is still a ubiquitous instrument in primary schools. As part of WCET projects, pupils do not themselves choose to play the

recorder. Schools elect to offer the recorder to their classes because it is cheap to purchase, easy to store and perceived as easy to play.

Robert Ehrlich argues that ‘since the Second World War the recorder has been commonly taught by persons lacking a command of its basic technique, unthinkable for teachers of other wind instruments’ (Ehrlich, forthcoming, p. 72). This chapter has shown that it is most likely that the majority of those teaching the recorder are non-specialist recorder players, even though it is highly likely that those teaching the recorder are music specialists. Among both sets of teachers of curriculum music, those who are music specialists and those who are classroom generalists, opportunities for CPD are not readily taken up by teachers. This literature review also uncovered a lack of music teacher training both in ITT courses and through MEHs.

Issues around how those that teach music view themselves and each other were debated through the lens of SIT. Online memes from the previous chapter present the recorder as an instrument inextricably linked to education and negative pupil experiences. Negative past experiences can permeate a teacher’s own teaching. Within the teaching and, more specifically, recorder teaching and playing communities, othering is present, whereby each set of teachers is committed to their own social identity, be it generalist primary-school teacher, general music teacher, recorder amateur or professional recorder player-teacher. This divisive nature of music teacher identity/identities may underlie or at least worsen the lack of collaboration.

In WCET recorder lessons children do not get a choice in whether they play the recorder, and this is in contrast to informal pedagogical practices. Lack of pupil and parent choice in instrumental lessons has been noted to be a dividing factor in low levels of continuing with school musical involvement. Online, social media memes present the recorder negatively, and social groups are particularly susceptible to pictorial memes shared within their social network, therefore any enculturation children, parents and non-specialist teachers are exposed to is likely to be negative. The recorder does not regularly feature in

popular or contemporary society and children are unlikely to be encultured into the mainly historical or avant-garde repertoire that exists for the recorder.

The low continuation rates for WCET projects in England could be the result of the absence of adequate peer and adult mentorship. The latter is a key component of enculturation within informal learning practices. The existence of an older peer network could make children's engagement with the recorder beyond WCET projects more likely. Without an older peer network, children are unlikely to continue with engagement with the recorder past these whole-class projects.

Ehrlich is resolute in his argument that the low social perceptions of the recorder are due to the 'class environment into which it is usually introduced, and the methods by which it is taught' (Ehrlich, forthcoming, p. 72). Behaviourist learning styles are still prevalent across instrumental teaching and learning. This is in contrast to the structure of the NC for Music and theories of educational and music educational theorists. Learning through experimentation and curiosity, independent play, improvisation, social interaction and scaffolding all appear in theories of constructivism and educational ideology but not regularly in English instrumental teaching and learning. This overview of recent and older literature in the field of learning theory provides material for a possible framework for the teaching and learning of beginner recorder technique that encompasses informal pedagogical framing, constructivist curriculum planning and embodied learning. Image 2.1 presents key elements of a potential framework for teaching and learning based on evidence from this literature review.

Image 2.1 Word cloud showing elements of a potential framework for teaching and learning of beginner recorder technique



Chapter 3: Methodology

From the literature review it is clear that there is a gap in the research surrounding contemporary recorder teaching and learning. In order to establish current trends in recorder teaching and learning, a research plan had to be developed that would be able to obtain access to a wide range of recorder teachers and also have the flexibility to discover key themes in existing teaching material. Given the parameters of the subject matter I decided that a mixed-methods research design, combining both quantitative and qualitative methods of data collection, would be fitting to track emerging themes and codes throughout the data but would also have the flexibility to permit cross-referencing across data sets to glean thorough conclusions.

This thesis aimed to answer the following research questions:

- How is the recorder taught in 21st-century England?
- How do views on the teaching of beginner recorder technique compare between those of professional recorder player-teachers¹⁵ and the wider recorder teaching community?¹⁶
- To what extent has the recorder's role in education affected its society's perceptions of the instrument?

Bryman describes mixed-methods research as combining 'quantitative and qualitative research within a single project' (Bryman, 2012, p. 627). I chose mixed methods as a pragmatic option as no one method of data collection would be able to give a more rounded answer to the research questions. Combining qualitative and quantitative data collections through a mixed-methods approach enabled me to create a research design that could answer all research questions thoroughly.

¹⁵ In the focus group.

¹⁶ Through the teacher survey and tutor-book analysis.

The Empirical Elements of the Research

Data was collected through:

1. focus group interviews with twelve professional recorder player-teachers;
 2. a survey of 169 recorder teachers across school phases and educational settings;
- and

an analysis of four tutor books from across the late 20th century to the early 21st century used to teach recorder in primary schools today.

This research design used an exploratory sequential structure, where each component contributed and was compared to the following round of data collection.

Ethical Considerations – Focus Group

The focus group was proposed to the GSMD's Ethical Research Committee in 2015 and the research followed its ethical guidelines. A call for participants among current undergraduate students was put out by Professor Ian Wilson. Through my personal network I recruited participants that were alumni from the Guildhall, and I also asked Professor Robert Ehrlich (as a visiting professor of recorder at the Guildhall) to join the focus group as a participant.

Participants were informed in advance that I would be facilitating the discussion of the focus group and that it would last between one and two hours. This followed Principle B of the American Psychological Association's (APA) Ethical Principles and Code of Conduct that refers to researchers' 'clarify[ing] their professional roles' (American Psychological Association, n.d.).

Ahead of the focus group, participants were asked to read and sign a consent form.¹⁷ This consent form asked for their teaching experience and their level of recorder education. The consent form showed the objectives of the focus group: 'What are the fundamental

¹⁷ Recorder Technique Focus Group Consent Form – see Appendix A.

aspects of recorder technique and how can we introduce these techniques to beginners?’ This acknowledged the boundaries of participants’ competence, and the limitations of their expertise in order to ensure that these did ‘not lead to or condone unjust practices’ (American Psychological Association, n.d.).

In order to subscribe to the APA’s Ethical Principle C, ‘Integrity’, the consent form explained what the findings would be used for. These were:

1. for the submission of a PhD thesis;
2. to produce a future handbook of recorder technique games, warmups, advice, etc. for both specialist and non-specialist recorder and music teachers;
3. for use with small-group, large-group and individual tuition as appropriate,
4. to target the age group of between 7 and 12 years.¹⁸

As a researcher I used the consent form ‘to avoid unwise or unclear commitments’ (American Psychological Association, n.d.).

The consent form explained why participants had been asked to take part in the focus group (see Appendix A). The text upheld APA’s Ethical Principle E, ‘Respect for People’s Rights and Dignity’, by respecting ‘the dignity and worth of all people, and the rights of individuals to privacy, confidentiality, and self-determination’ (American Psychological Association, n.d.). The consent form declared that the focus group would be audio-recorded and transcribed via conversational analysis and that all participants would be kept anonymous when data would be reported.

Participants were asked to sign the form before the commencement of the focus group interview. Participants were made aware that they could withdraw their consent from partaking in the focus group at any time and that they could also withdraw their consent for their data to be used, during or after their participation in the focus group.

¹⁸ Recorder Technique Focus Group Consent Form – see Appendix A.

As the facilitator I also followed the ethical guidelines of the GSMD (which echo the guidelines of APA) and this was approved by the School Research Committee. The focus group interview lasted for one hour and fifteen minutes and was audio-recorded and then transcribed after the event. Participants were not given the option to review the transcript or comment on the outcome of the focus group. As professional colleagues, there was an understanding between us of trust that meant that at the time of planning the focus group, none of the participants felt the need to review the transcript. Participants were made clear that their conversations were to be used in this thesis to draw conclusions about beginner recorder technique based on their discussions in the room and at that specific time.

Ethical Considerations – Teacher Survey

As with the focus group, the teacher survey was approved by the GSMD's Ethical Research Committee. Participants in the online survey were assured that their identities would be made anonymous and that they did not need their email address or any personal information to take part in the study (see Appendix A).

The Rationale for the Choice of a Focus Group

As so little was known about current approaches to teaching, I wanted to find out what professional recorder player-teachers thought about the teaching and learning of beginner recorder technique, starting from existing literature about recorder technique. I wanted to answer the following questions:

- What are the main points of technique that should be introduced to beginners?
- How can we introduce these techniques to beginner recorder players?

These focus group questions were in order to answer one of the three overall research questions: How do views on the teaching of beginner recorder technique compare between those of professional recorder player-teachers and the wider recorder teaching community? I consulted with a focus group of professional recorder player-teachers to produce ideas on what would constitute agreed *good practice* recorder technique in beginner lessons with

specific focus on the development of skills needed to be a proficient player and musician across all of the instruments of the recorder family. The data from this focus group would go on to inform other empirical elements of the research design such as the teacher survey and tutor-book analysis. The data about teaching beginner recorder technique could then be compared with the data on teaching beginner recorder technique in the teacher survey and then compared again with the information in beginner recorder tutor books.

Given the range of opinions surrounding recorder technique and the lack of literature on these topics for beginners, there was a need to pinpoint the main areas of successful recorder technique required for beginner recorder learners. One method of achieving this could have been to use current recorder tutor books. However, my own experience of recorder tutor books, as someone who has been trained in recorder at conservatoire level, is that the technique advice set out within them is not always completely accurate. There are also hundreds of tutor books on the market, and finding out which are the most popular would have meant starting the research with the teacher survey. I wanted to start the research from the perspective of the professional recorder player-teachers and then use this information to build the following parts of my research. This is because it was presumed from literature-review sources that the recorder is frequently taught by non-specialists. By using specialist recorder player-teachers who were all experienced at teaching beginner recorder players, there would be a benchmark for evaluating what teachers in the survey said.¹⁹ This is what created an exploratory sequential structure to the research (Leavy, 2017, p. 173).

Another possible method would have been to collect technical advice from historical treatises such as Ganassi's *La Fontegara* or Hotteterre's *Art of Playing the Flute*. However, these are historical documents that do not necessarily relate to modern recorder playing; for instance, Ganassi's treatise uses fingering that does not work on modern recorders. As a more recent alternative, Walter van Hauwe's *The Modern Recorder Player* could have been adapted for beginner learners. As the most comprehensive guide to recorder technique

¹⁹ All focus group participants were experienced in teaching beginner recorder players in England.

currently in print, it is also a set text for every recorder department in every UK conservatoire. Walter van Hauwe is widely regarded as the seminal writer on contemporary recorder technique. However, as this book was first published in the 1970's a more modern approach would have been needed to reflect more recent trends in recorder pedagogy. Any adaptation would have had to take into account that his book is not a tutor book and does not include the material needed to introduce technique to beginners.

However, because *The Modern Recorder Player* is a seminal text for professional recorder players, it provided a suitable starting point for the focus group interviews. Volume One is set out with a chapter heading for each area of fundamental recorder technique. It was decided by the focus group that in order to discuss and understand what aspects of beginner recorder technique needed to be taught and learnt, the focus group would start by discussing the themes of each chapter.

The Membership of the Focus Group

Braun and Clarke explain that 'focus groups are a method where data are collected from multiple participants at the same time' (Clarke & Braun, 2013, p. 108). They argue that focus groups can be self-moderating, whereby the participants moderate themselves and the group is guided by its members. Focus groups allow for participants to mimic natural conversational patterns. As such, in a focus group, ideas are generated as a group rather than just between interviewer and interviewee. Braun and Clarke also argue that due to the social context of focus groups, they can provide more open and supportive environments where participants feel able to use their own vocabulary to generate new and novel knowledge. Focus groups can also 'elicit a wide range of views, perspectives, or understandings of an issue' (Clarke & Braun, 2013, p. 110).

It was decided to select the participants of the focus group from a homogenous source. Braun and Clarke argue that heterogeneity is good in a focus group as it brings different views and can lead to a more thorough, diverse data set. However, in this case, as

the main aim of the focus group was to establish a homogenised and clear 'school' of recorder technique, it was important that the focus group participants were all trained in the recorder at the GSMD.

Schools of instrumental technique are familiar in instruments such as the violin and the piano but do not officially exist in the recorder. Whereas the violin and piano have rich histories of pedagogical development, the literature review shows the recorder does not. This is in part due to its extinction throughout the Classical period to the early 20th century. As recorder players we cannot trace our pedagogical lineage. At the Guildhall there is a clear lineage of a technique 'family'. Ian Wilson has taught all recorder students at GSMD for fifteen years, alongside Pamela Thorby and Robert Ehrlich. Ian Wilson was taught by Pamela Thorby and Robert Ehrlich. In turn Pamela Thorby was taught by Robert Ehrlich who was taught by Walter van Hauwe at the Sweelinck Conservatorium in Amsterdam. Walter van Hauwe studied recorder with Frans Brüggen, who was one of the first professional recorder-player superstars in the early 20th century. Therefore, there is a clear lineage of technique for GSMD recorder students and alumni, following in the footsteps of closely related playing styles.

On the surface, it seems like this set is homogenous; they are in fact heterogeneous and give a good idea of current professional recorder practice both here and abroad. Although the participants were all current students, alumni or professors from GSMD, they included nationalities and experience of teaching from China, Germany, Holland, Ireland and Switzerland. The lineage of focus group participants represents the playing styles as a result of the European recorder revival and the emergence of the Early Music scene in the early 20th century. The age of participants ranged from 18 to 50 years; this meant that each participant brought their own experiences of their recorder education to the focus group.

In addition, this lineage has had a large outreach, with GSMD professors and alumni teaching and examining across some of Europe's most well-regarded recorder departments, including the Royal Academy of Music and Trinity Laban College of Music and Dance,

London; the Cork School of Music, Ireland; the Musikhochschule in Karlsruhe, the Hochschule für Musik und Theater Felix Mendelssohn Bartholdy in Leipzig and the Hochschule für Musik Hanns Eisler in Berlin, Germany. Alumni and GSMD recorder professors have presented papers and been keynote speakers at every Open Recorder Days: Recorder Teachers Conference at the Amsterdam Conservatoire and are also on the board of the UK's branch of the European Recorder Teachers Association (ERTA).

Therefore, although coming from the same recorder 'family', the chosen GSMD recorder player-teachers have had a meaningful impact on recorder teaching outside the GSMD, influencing potentially hundreds of other recorder players across the world. Another possible route of accessing participants could have been to go through ERTA, but it was not selected because in 2015 ERTA in the UK was not a well-supported organisation. It only just became well supported in 2019 with the appointment of a new president. ERTA, although technically an organisation, was not active with its members, and it was impossible to involve them in 2015 as they effectively did not exist past its name.

The members of the focus group were selected for their wide-ranging teaching experience, including:

- Whole-class primary-school recorder
- Individual beginner, intermediate and advanced recorder
- Adult recorder players
- Conservatoire teaching
- A mixture of state schools, academies, private schools and early years providers

Practically, it was easier to facilitate a GSMD-based focus group because with my research based at GSMD I had access to current students and professors. The recorder students at GSMD study recorder teaching skills and all of the current students were active recorder teachers across MEHs, schools and private practices. Having studied the recorder at GSMD myself, this meant I had access to the contacts of alumni through my existing professional and personal network. Recruiting members to a focus group from

conservatories other than GSMD would have been more difficult as I am not already affiliated with those networks. Using a GSMD cohort was also more practical in ensuring that everyone was in the same place at the same time, because most of the focus group participants were based at the GSMD. Furthermore, the venue choice for the focus group was central for all participants and easy to book and use.

It was important, therefore, that the focus group participants could work together to collate data that would provide guidance on the teaching of recorder technique, although Braun and Clarke explain that samples where participants know each other can ‘inhibit closure and open discussions’ (Clarke & Braun, 2013, pp. 114–115). This was an important consideration when recruiting the participants, as some would be current students and alumni and would be discussing recorder technique with their current or previous professors. This may have inhibited honest conversation. However, as the main aim was to establish a ‘school’ of recorder technique, the limitations of inhibited speech were seen as less important. The advantages of using a social and/or professional network of focus group participants is also commented on by Braun and Clarke. They explain that friendships and those with shared experiences can express similar points of views but also challenge each other more openly and thoroughly in the knowledge of each other’s existing knowledge and or views (Clarke & Braun, 2013, pp. 114–115).

I decided that a focus group was more appropriate than individual interviews as it was seen to encourage debate among participants. I decided to act as the focus group facilitator and present specific questions and ideas to generate discussion but did not form part of the focus group. This is in line with Bryman’s definition of the focus group: he explains that with the focus group method, ‘there is an emphasis in the questioning on a particular fairly tightly defined topic and the accent is upon the interaction within the group and the joint construction of meaning’ (Bryman, 2012, p. 501).

Bryman quotes Morgan when he says that a typical focus group comprises between six and ten people (Bryman, 2012, p. 507). The intention for the focus group in this research

was that it should have a maximum of ten people consisting of approximately two professors, four current students (two undergraduate and two postgraduate) and four alumni. Every member of the focus group was an experienced teacher, including undergraduate students. As already discussed, undergraduates were key to the focus group because not only were they involved in teaching skills modules as part of their degree, they were also teaching the recorder in London state schools through MEHs. Undergraduate students were also still young enough to clearly remember their school recorder experiences whilst also engaging in individual recorder lessons at a conservatoire. This close timeframe between them leaving school, joining a conservatoire and then teaching the recorder gives the undergraduate students in the focus group a unique viewpoint. In terms of technique, undergraduate recorder students at the GSMD concentrate vast amounts of practice and energy into learning and perfecting their instrumental technique and therefore would be experiencing physically (in terms of technique) and presently learning to play the recorder at the time of the focus group.

Alumni were recruited who spent the majority of their careers teaching and were invited to bring their wealth of experience of teaching beginners in different educational environments. This included teachers with experience of teaching beginner recorder in state and private schools, private practices, MEHs and outreach charities. All participants of the focus group had experience of teaching both small and large groups and individual beginner recorder lessons.

One of the major problems with focus groups is that people agree to participate but then do not turn up to the agreed meeting (Bryman, 2012, p. 507). With this in mind, I over-recruited by approximately 50% with regard to alumni students. This could have created a problem if all of the invited people turned up, as there was a risk that the focus group would be too large and discourage more reticent participants to speak. It would also be challenging for the facilitator to respond to each individual's remarks, and the transcription stage would be more labour-intensive and difficult. Current GSMD students were nearly guaranteed to

attend, as it was part of their degree study timetables as an extra class. (This did not go towards their degree, but they were encouraged to attend the focus group interview as they could draw connections with their teaching skills module). The time and location of the focus group was set by the Guildhall recorder professors to ensure students' attendance.

The Operationalisation of the Research

Focus group participants were recruited through my professional and personal network. They were told how long the session would last, where it would be and what it was for. They were told that in the final write-up of the focus group, participants would be made anonymous. Before the focus group started, participants were asked to read and sign a permission document explaining all the above details, asking for information on their recorder qualifications and teaching experience. The document also explained why they had been invited to take part, information on data collection and a declaration of participation. A copy of the focus group information sheet can be found in Appendix A.

Focus Group Discussion Themes

The headings of Walter van Hauwe's book are concise and focus on specific areas of technique:

- How to hold the recorder – balanced playing;
- How to move the fingers – the relaxed machine;
- How to breath – the sound; and
- How to articulate – 'the speaking' (van Hauwe, 1984)

As focus group facilitator, I asked the participants in the opening stages whether they agreed with the headings or if, nearly fifty years later, they needed to be changed, and if so, how? The headings also gave the opportunity to open out the conversation at the very start of the focus group and set the discussion in progress. The headings also allowed the focus group to be split into smaller groups to discuss each heading, thus cutting down the amount of time needed overall. This could have had implications for the transcription of the focus

group at the time when the groups split, but each subgroup gave their feedback to the entire group at the end of an agreed timeframe, at which point transcription of their ideas was made possible.

Analysis of Focus Group Data

The analysis of the transcription was based on thematic analysis. After transcribing and reading the transcription, a list of themes generated by the focus group was constructed; these were constructed by the focus group participants from the headings in Walter van Hauwe's book. From there, codes of repeating thematic material were extracted. Braun and Clarke explain that coding 'is a process of identifying aspects of the data that relate to your research question' (Clarke & Braun, 2013, p. 206). In the case of the focus group, the aspects of the data relating to the research questions were codes around how to teach beginner recorder technique. I undertook selective coding whereby I looked for recurring incidences of phrases or words within each focus group decided theme.

The session began by asking the group if the main chapters from Walter van Hauwe's *The Modern Recorder Player* and the principal areas of technique with corresponding titles were still relevant to modern recorder technique in relation to beginner learners. Walter van Hauwe's five main areas of technique are: how to hold the recorder, the right hand, the left hand, the lips and fair distribution of weight. The four new themes emerged after considerable debate. Overall, the thematic analysis revealed five main themes in relation to recorder technique:

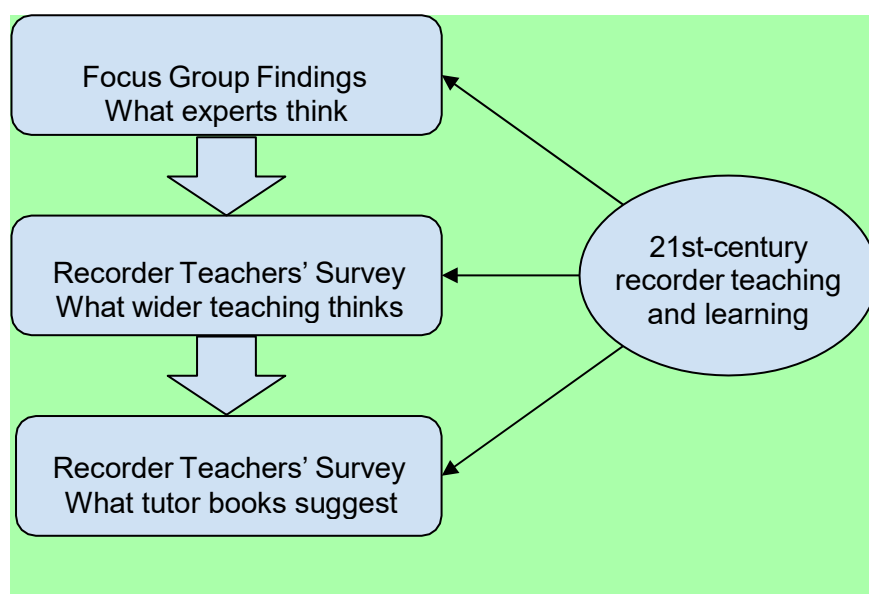
- holding the recorder;
- how to move the fingers;
- blowing and breathing;
- starting and ending notes; and
- sound and articulation.

Holding the recorder was the only area of technique to remain without any question or debate. It was within these five themes that, through selective coding, the codes were established. The themes were the headings of Walter van Hauwe's book; the codes were the repetition of incidences of vocabulary and topics of conversation within those focus group selected themes.

After selective coding, it became clear that within each focus group derived theme, many of the codes were the same. For example, through coding each theme individually a pattern emerged whereby the same phrases and vocabulary appeared across themes. The focus group arrived at a consensus on an approach to an agreed 'good practice' of beginner recorder technique. These repetitive codes across each theme were called categories.

Using a sequential exploratory research design, I decided to use this data as the basis to build the remaining elements of the data collection for the thesis. I wanted to explore how the views and recommendations of the focus group compared with the views of a wider teaching population and also how these views compared with the technique advice set out in current recorder tutor books. Figure 3.1 presents the sequential exploratory research design.

Figure 3.1: Building the data



Recorder-Teacher Survey

There have been four main surveys into general instrumental teaching: Gibbs (1993), the Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music (ABRSM, 2014), Music Mark by Martin Fautley et al., (2017) and Naomi Norton et al. (2019). Although the latter focused on WCET, none of the surveys focused on recorder teaching. The ABRSM report shows that generally, the recorder is the third most popular instrument learnt in the UK (behind the piano and keyboard) for individual lessons (ABRSM, 2014). The Music Mark report shows that the recorder is the fourth most popular instrument after violin, trumpet/cornet and clarinet in whole-class instrumental tuition (Fautley et al., 2017). This contrasts with the ABRSM report which shows the recorder was the most popularly taught instrument in whole-class instrumental tuition (WCET) (ABRSM, 2014). Although Naomi Norton's research is the latest addition to the field, there is no information regarding specifically the recorder. Both the ABRSM and Music Mark reports highlight some new data surrounding recorder teachers; there is limited research and data specifically about recorder teachers. The only in-depth data on how many recorder teachers there are can be found on music teacher search-engine sites. A search on musicteachers.co.uk on 23rd November 2015 showed that within a 30-mile radius of London, there were 286 recorder teachers. Apart from this there is no in-depth data relating to recorder teachers.

The ABRSM Making Music 2014 report states that instrumental teaching is an overwhelmingly female occupation, with most teachers being experienced and well qualified. The report showed that most teachers are between the ages of 45 and 64 years of age and have either an undergraduate or postgraduate degree in music. Teachers reported that their main inspiration to become an instrumental teacher was that they had always had a vocation to teach. Gaunt's research into conservatoire students could go some way to explaining why the ABRSM reported an older cohort of teachers: 'The students were nearly all oriented towards careers as professional musicians' (Gaunt, 2010, p. 195).

Children are most likely to learn a musical instrument between the ages of 8 and 10, and children between the ages of 16 and 17 are least likely to still be having instrumental lessons or playing musical instruments. Woodwind is the fourth most popular family of instruments to be taught, with strings the most popular, followed by brass and then keyboard instruments. According to the same ABRSM report, teachers are most likely to teach in primary state schools, where they report that 82% of children do not continue after WCET.

Studies in specific instrumental teaching have been undertaken for the piano (Cathcart, 2013) and violin (Creech, 2010). Cathcart surveyed piano teachers in great detail, including where and how they teach, their income, gender and age, etc. Creech's study was into how parents support their child's violin learning. It highlighted the correlation between positive parental support and positive student progress. No such data exists for the recorder. Based on the lack of research on recorder teaching identified in the previous chapter, I decided that more information needed to be obtained about current trends in recorder education. To obtain this knowledge, a survey was designed to assess as many people teaching recorder to children of primary-school age as possible.

Survey Methodology

The survey was undertaken by means of a self-completion questionnaire. Bryman explains the advantages of a self-completion questionnaire (Bryman, 2012, p. 232): they are cheaper to administer than structured interviews, they are quicker than interviewing individuals, the absence of an interviewer can lead to a more honest response from participants, and they are convenient for respondents. The main advantage for me was that they are a practical and financially efficient way to collect data from many people.

Initially a pilot survey was designed, and a series of statements were developed with pre-coded answers in the form of a Likert scale. This approach was adopted as the data could be easily processed and analysed. The questionnaires were sent to members of the GSMD's consort WoodWork and recorder professors Robert Ehrlich and Ian Wilson.

The feedback given was that respondents wanted to give more personal, in-depth feedback. Bryman refers to this when discussing the disadvantages of designing a wholly closed-questioned survey: 'There is a loss of spontaneity in respondents' answers. There is always the possibility that they might come up with interesting replies that are not covered by the fixed answers that are provided' (Bryman, 2012, p. 246). Therefore a mix of closed pre-coded Likert-scale questions and more open questions was designed. Bryman advises that researchers should 'consider using questions that have been employed by other researchers for at least part of one's questionnaire' (Bryman, 2012, p. 264). He explains that the advantages of this are that the questions will have already been piloted in advance of one's own study.

Some of the questions in the final survey were taken from Sally Cathcart's 2013 PhD thesis, *The UK piano teacher in the twenty-first century* (Cathcart, 2013). These pre-existing questions were mixed with questions specifically relating to the recorder. Questions that remained the same included questions regarding qualifications, locations of teaching, age, number of students taught and age ranges of students. Some questions were irrelevant to the recorder, such as questions regarding piano technique. Examples of similar questions can be seen below:

1. Is the piano your first study instrument?
2. Teachers' academic qualifications
3. Employment status
4. Teaching venues
5. Lesson fees
6. Levels of teachers' teaching experience
7. Age of pupils taught
8. Lesson content

Distribution of the Survey

As the number of recorder teachers working in England is not currently known, it was decided that an online survey via Google Forms would provide an opportunity for the survey to be easily distributed to a large population of possible respondents. One of the reasons it was decided to use an online survey instead of face-to-face distribution was that it would be quicker to obtain larger amounts of data and for respondents to post the survey on online social networks. The results of this survey were only accessible by me.

The survey was posted online via Facebook on the following music teacher and recorder-related pages: Recorder Player 'n' Enthusiasts, UK Recorder Teachers, The Society of Recorder Players, Music Teachers, Primary Teachers – Resources, ideas, stress relief!, KS3 Music – Hints and Tips, and Early Years Music. In 2015 Giebelhausen noted that 'Facebook is easily the most widely used social media platform with 1.32 billion users' (Giebelhausen, 2015). It was therefore thought that by using Facebook, there would be a large catchment of recorder teachers to recruit to complete the survey. The survey was live for three months and received 194 responses. The following musical and teaching organisations were contacted to ask if they could also distribute the online survey: Incorporated Society of Musicians, Musicians' Union, Music Mark and the ABRSM. These organisations were contacted to expand the range of respondents to the survey and collect more data, but also to reach potential respondents who may not be members of online social networks relating either to recorder interests or music education. Individual MEHs were also contacted and asked to distribute the survey to members of their hubs. No MEHs or teaching or musical organisations mentioned above responded to my communication and they did not distribute the survey.

Survey Questions

At the start of my research there had been no research into contemporary recorder teaching and learning. In order to compare and contrast the values of technique learning

with the expert focus group, I needed to know the thoughts and values of the wider recorder-teaching community. The teacher survey was designed to discover the following:

1. Uncover the recorder teachers of 2016: their demographics, qualifications and experiences;
2. How and where the recorder is taught; and
3. Highlight commonalities across teaching practices, attitudes and beliefs held by recorder teachers when teaching young beginners.

A full list of the survey questions can be found in Appendix F.

Analysing the Qualitative Data from the Teacher Survey

To analyse the qualitative data from the teacher survey, I used the same style of thematic analysis that I used to analyse the focus group. However, when analysing the qualitative data from the survey, the themes were not automatically generated from the raw data. In the focus group the themes were automatically generated from Walter van Hauwe's book. These themes were decided during the focus group by the focus group participants. With the survey, themes emerged from qualitative answers given in relation to the questions.

After I read through all the responses for each question, I coded each response and then grouped the codes into categories. I went through this process again, but this time created a mind map of recurring themes throughout each of the responses.

Codes were detected through recurring words or phrases throughout the answers to the questions. I gradually grouped these into larger groups to create categories and themes. The analysis started broadly, collecting every piece of data that was relevant to the research question: this produced lots of data. I grouped related sections of data together as a code before zooming in to bunch similar types of data together. I bunched similar pieces of small data together to create a category where these related pieces of data around a certain topic could be placed together. Based on the similar data, I created a name to describe the codes

and this became the category. Taking a step away from the vocabulary used in the data set, the theme became the broad topic that each code within the category was describing.

Thematic Analysis

Thematic analysis is a word-based analysis where a researcher 'evaluates the frequency and co-occurrence of particular words or phrases in a body of textual data in order to identify key words, repeated ideas, or configuration of words in respect to other words in the text' (Guest et al., 2012).

Virginia Braun and Victoria Clarke explain that thematic analysis is the most commonly used qualitative method of data analysis (Clarke & Braun, 2013). They explain that in thematic analysis, after transcribing the data the next step is to code the data across the entire data set. From the codes the researcher then searches for the themes and finds links between the codes and themes.

After copying and pasting the transcript data from the Google Forms survey into Word. I read through all the answers to each of the questions. I then collected reoccurring codes; from here I put these codes into categories that would link together. Finally, I linked these categories together under one theme.

Quantitative Data Analysis

The closed and Likert-scale questions were analysed using SPSS software, which helped the researcher to present descriptive statistics. At a later stage, inferential methods were used to test hypotheses.

Triangulation of Data Methods

In order to answer the broad research questions, comparisons were drawn between respondents' answers to questions. After this I was able to compare and contrast the views of expert recorder player-teachers and the wider teaching community in relation to views on the teaching and learning of beginner recorder technique. This formed part of the data

triangulation. Braun and Clarke describe data triangulation as when ‘two or more methods of data collection or sources of data are used to examine the phenomenon, with the aim of getting as close to the “truth” of the object of study as possible’ (Clarke & Braun, 2013, p. 285). In this thesis there are three methods of data collection in order to answer the research questions. After ascertaining the views of professional recorder player-teachers and the wider teaching community, I analysed the technique advice set out by beginner recorder tutor books.

Analysis of Beginner Recorder Tutor Books

As much of the analysis of the tutor books was built from the focus group and teacher survey, only a brief description of methods and selection of sources will be described in this chapter. A more detailed description of the methods used to analyse recorder tutor books is presented in the tutor-book analysis chapter.

From anecdotal evidence and personal experience, it was presumed at the start of the research that tutor books would be regularly used in beginner recorder lessons. From my experience as a director of a music teachers’ cooperative, actively observing and mentoring recorder teachers, the tutor book provides an important function. The first is that tutor books provide a progressive scheme of work for teachers and pupils to follow. Secondly, tutor books provide a bank of pupil resources all in one place, easily transportable from lesson to home.

In order to select books to analyse, a question about what tutor books teachers used was put into the teacher survey. This did not come out with a clear sense of the most popular tutor books. Though the books of Sarah Watts and John Pitts came out as very popular, it was not clear which other books were used. Music publishers were contacted to ask for sales figures on recorder tutor books in 2017, but none responded. It was decided that four books written in the 20th and 21st centuries that appeared on Amazon UK’s best-selling list on Saturday 25th May 2019 would be used for analysis. These were:

- Brian Bonsor: *Enjoy the Recorder* – first published in 1981
- Marlene Hobsbawn: *Me and My Recorder* – first published in 1989
- John Pitts: *Recorder from the Beginning* – first published in 1993
- Sarah Watts: *Red Hot Recorder, Book 1* – first published in 2003

All the books were listed in the teacher survey, with the most popular being John Pitts, *Recorder from the Beginning*, followed by Sarah Watts, *Red Hot Recorder*. Watts's *Razzamajazz* was also popular, but Watts clearly explains in the foreword to the book that *Razzamajazz* is not a tutor book, but instead a book of recorder tunes.

From my experience as a recorder teacher, all of my recorder-teaching colleagues use Sarah Watts's *Red Hot Recorder* in their lessons. Anecdotally, my recorder-teaching colleagues, who are aged between 20 and 35 years of age, all reported conversationally to me that when they were at school, they learnt the recorder from John Pitts's *Recorder from the Beginning*. This is information that was not explicit in the data collected from the teacher survey. It was also hypothesised that most of the current recorder teachers probably would have learnt the recorder in conjunction with a tutor book; therefore they will have likely come across at least one of the books on the list, either through their teaching or their own learning.

The tutor-book analysis aimed to answer the following questions:

1. What are the most prevalent learning themes in recorder tutor books?
2. Are teachers finding specific areas of recorder technique difficult because these are the neglected areas of recorder tutor books?
3. Does the technical advice in recorder tutor books match that of professional recorder technique, as set out by the GSMD focus group?

After selecting a sample of tutor books, I wrote a page-by-page commentary of each book, detailing what was presented to the learner and the teacher on roughly each page. This provided a synopsis of content which functioned as a transcript for the analysis and

provided an accurate insight into the pace of learning each book follows. This transcript provided data on what topics were taught and presented throughout the book, which were then thematically analysed. The transcript description of each book was then analysed to find overarching themes within each of the books. Once the broad thematic analysis had taken place, I then looked in more detail at each of the overriding themes to uncover what was presented to the teacher and learner, and how, within each theme.

Matching themes across tutor books were compared and contrasted. This yielded a set of data which showed the most prominent themes in recorder tutor books and what those themes contained. The themes were then compared and contrasted with the themes from the expert focus group. The themes derived from the focus group were contrasted with the content in each book to evaluate the similarities and differences in approaches to the teaching of beginner recorder technique. Data from the teacher survey regarding what elements of technique are regularly taught were also contrasted with information in tutor books, and comparisons were made with teachers' qualitative data opinions on the teaching of beginner recorder technique (see Triangulation of Methods).

Summary

In summary, due to there being a gap in literature and data surrounding who is teaching the recorder, how it is taught and whether the recorder's role in education has affected its societal reputation, it was decided a mixed-methods approach to data analysis was the best fit. A mixed-methods approach to research through focus groups, surveys and thematic analysis of tutor books was designed to broadly review the recorder's use in education.

To draw conclusions about how the recorder is taught in 21st-century England, the survey was designed using qualitative and quantitative questioning styles to fill gaps in current research about recorder teachers' approaches to teaching and learning, their experience in teaching beginner recorder players and their working environments. Alongside

evidence from literature, specific questions in the survey related to the teachers' views on the reputation of the recorder in order to find out to what extent the recorder's role in education affected its perception as an instrument in wider society.

Ultimately, by comparing and contrasting data sets from the survey, focus group and tutor-book analysis, the methodology was designed to clarify how views on the teaching of beginner recorder technique compare between those of professional recorder player-teachers and the wider recorder teaching community.

Chapter 4: The Survey of Recorder Teachers

Introduction

The survey was shared on recorder and music-teaching social media sites and gained 169 responses via Google Forms in March 2016. The data from this survey will help to answer the research question, 'How is the recorder taught in 21st-century England?' In order to answer the research question, this survey draws conclusions around three key themes:

1. Uncovering the recorder teachers of 2016: their demographics, qualifications and experiences;
2. How and where the recorder is taught;
3. Discussing commonalities across teaching practices, attitudes and beliefs held by recorder teachers when teaching young beginners.

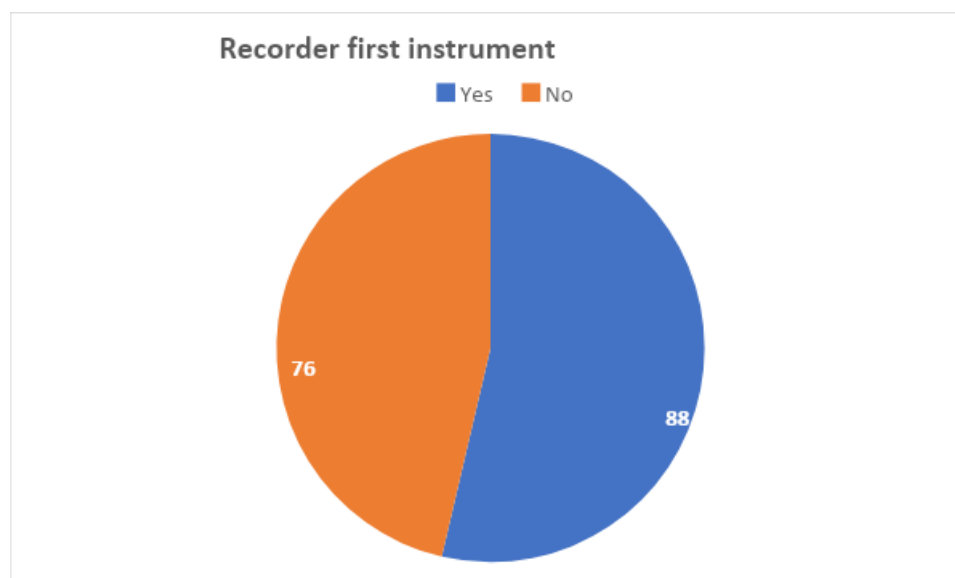
Data Analysis

The questionnaire included open and closed questions. The data from the open questions were analysed using thematic analysis. The data from the closed questions were analysed making comparisons between different groups.

Background Information

Of the 164 respondents who answered the question 'Is the recorder your first-study instrument?' 54% indicated that the recorder was their first instrument (see Figure 4.1).

Figure 4.1: The recorder as first-study instrument



When asked to respond to statements about their level of qualifications (n=162), 29% indicated that they had a postgraduate qualification in music, 13% that they had a postgraduate qualification but not in music, 15% had graduated from music college, 22% had graduated from university in music, 14% had graduated from university in a subject other than music, whilst 7% answered 'other' to the question (see Figure 4.2). A chi-squared test for independence (with Yates's Continuity Correlation) indicated no significant association between having recorder as a first-study instrument and academic qualification ($\chi^2(5, n=162) = 6.002, p > .05, \phi = .306$).

Figure 4.3 shows the highest level of qualification respondents have on the recorder. Of the 162 respondents, 12% had an MA or MMus with recorder as their principal study, 13% had a BA or BMus with recorder as their principal study, 13% had a diploma in recorder, 7% had a Grade 8 Recorder, 9% had Grades 5–7 Recorder, 2% had Grades 1–4 Recorder, and 9% had some other qualification in the recorder. 35% reported having no qualification in the recorder. On the whole, the majority of the respondents (38%) had a qualification in the recorder at diploma level or above. In order to explore a possible association between having recorder as the first instrument and highest qualification in the recorder, a chi-squared test for independence (with Yates's Continuity Correction) was

Figure 4.2: Academic qualifications

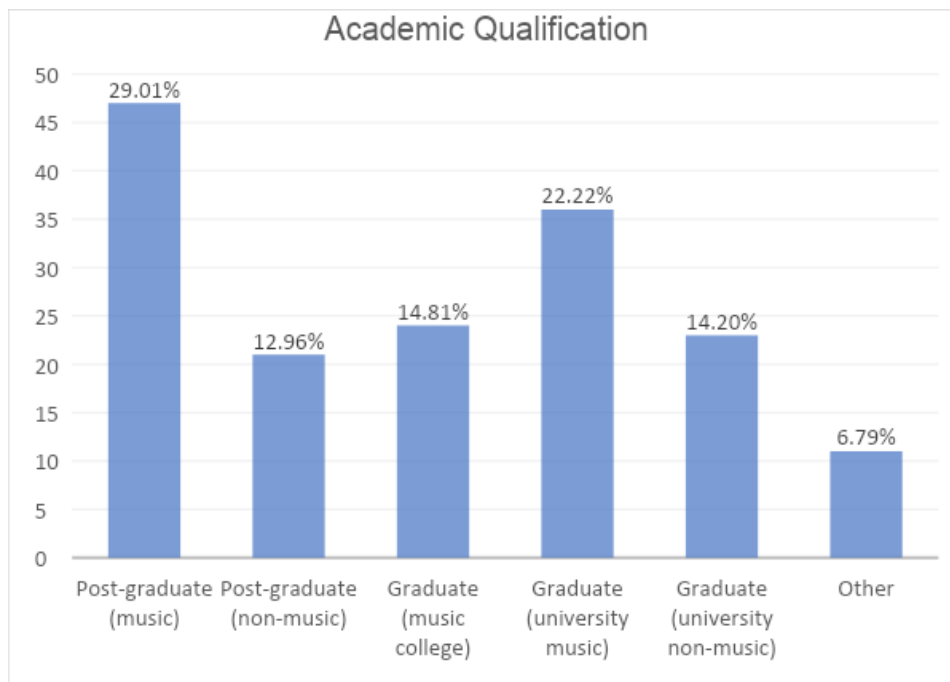
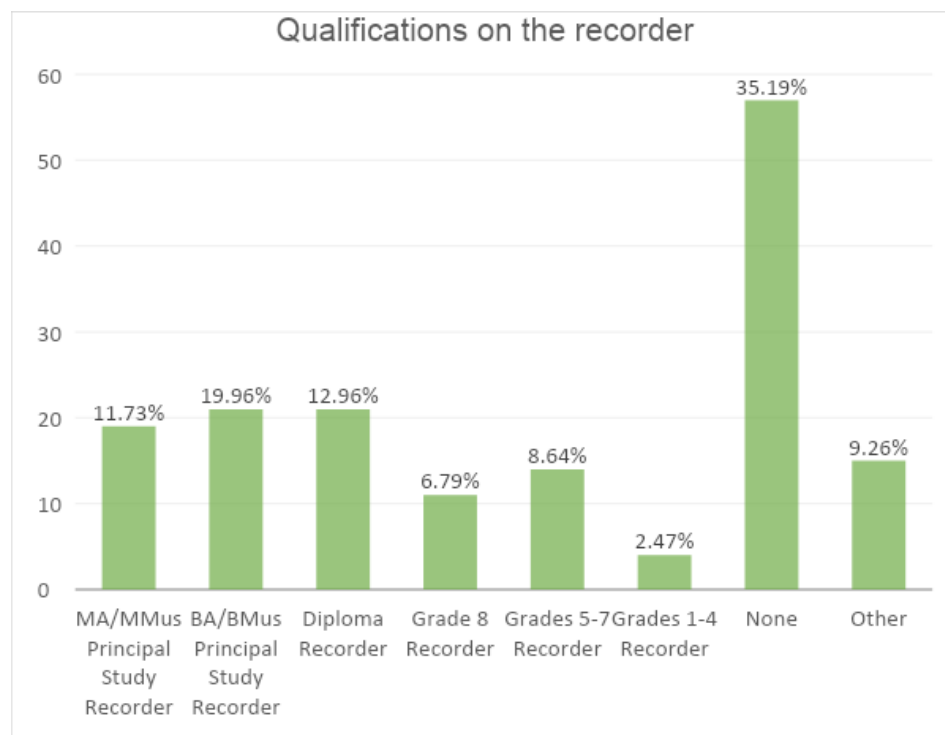


Figure 4.3: Qualifications on the recorder



undertaken, which indicated a significant association ($\chi^2 (7, n=160) = 58.552, p < .001$, $\phi = .609$). This suggests that those with recorder as their first-study instrument were more likely to have achieved qualifications in the recorder.

Figure 4.4 shows how many years respondents (n=147) had been teaching the recorder. 10% had been teaching for between 0 and 1 year, 29% for 2 to 5 years, 18% for 6 to 10 years, 10% for 11 to 15 years, and the greatest number, 33%, for more than 16 years. This suggests that overall the sample mainly consists of experienced recorder teachers.

Figure 4.4: Years teaching the recorder

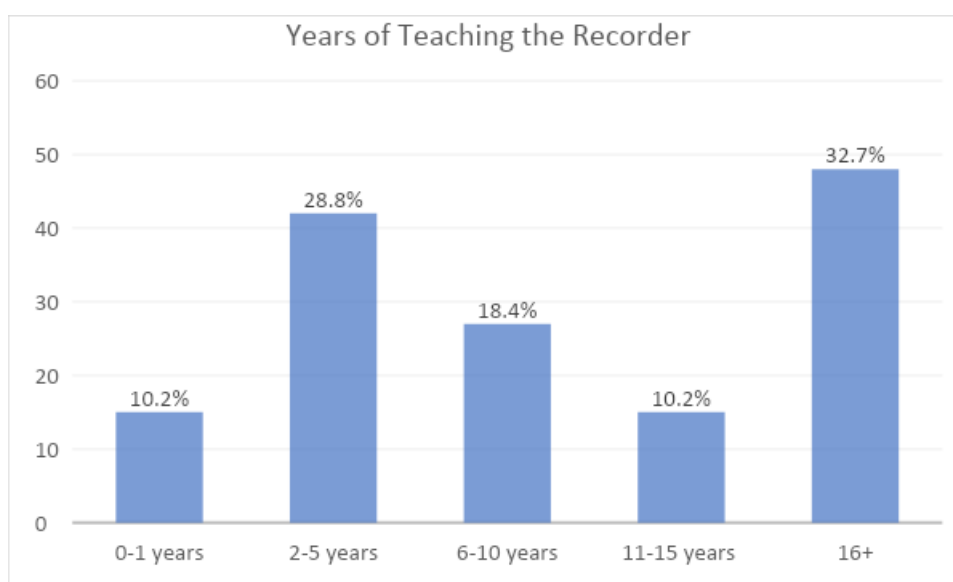


Figure 4.5 sets out the data on the employment status of the recorder teachers (n=161). Only 6% taught the recorder full-time. The largest group of respondents taught the recorder part-time (68%), although 11% replied that recorder teaching was their main source of income. A considerable percentage (28%) replied 'other'. Overall, there were few full-time recorder teachers in the sample to date.

Figure 4.6 sets out the data as to where the respondents were teaching the recorder. The most common location to teach the recorder appeared to be the primary-school setting (64%, n=93), followed by working at the teacher's own home (36%, n=52), the pupils' homes (22%, n=32), at multiple schools or other locations (17%, n=25), at a secondary school (15%, n=22), for an MEH (Music Service) (14%, n=20), at a specialist music school (10%,.

Figure 4.5: Employment of recorder teachers

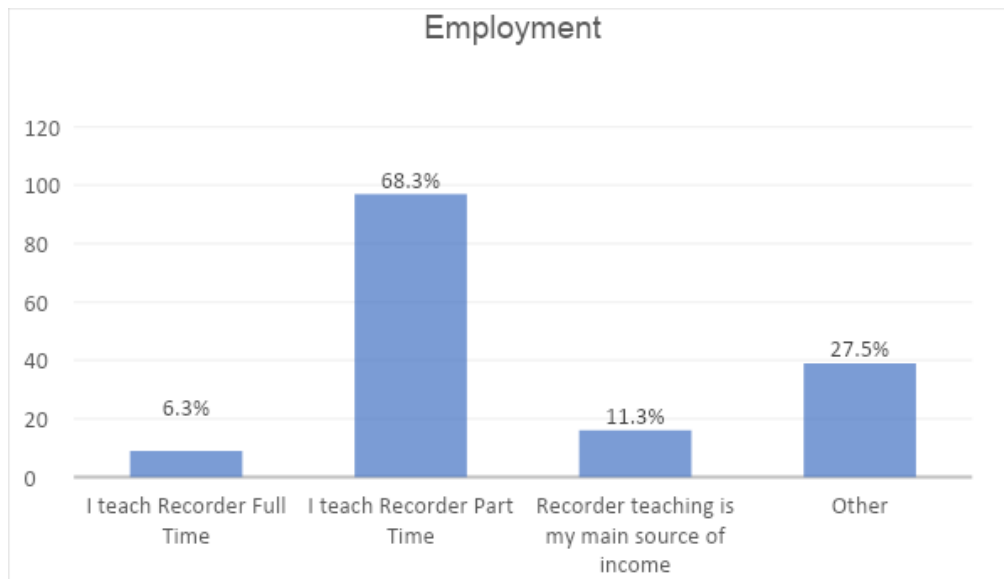
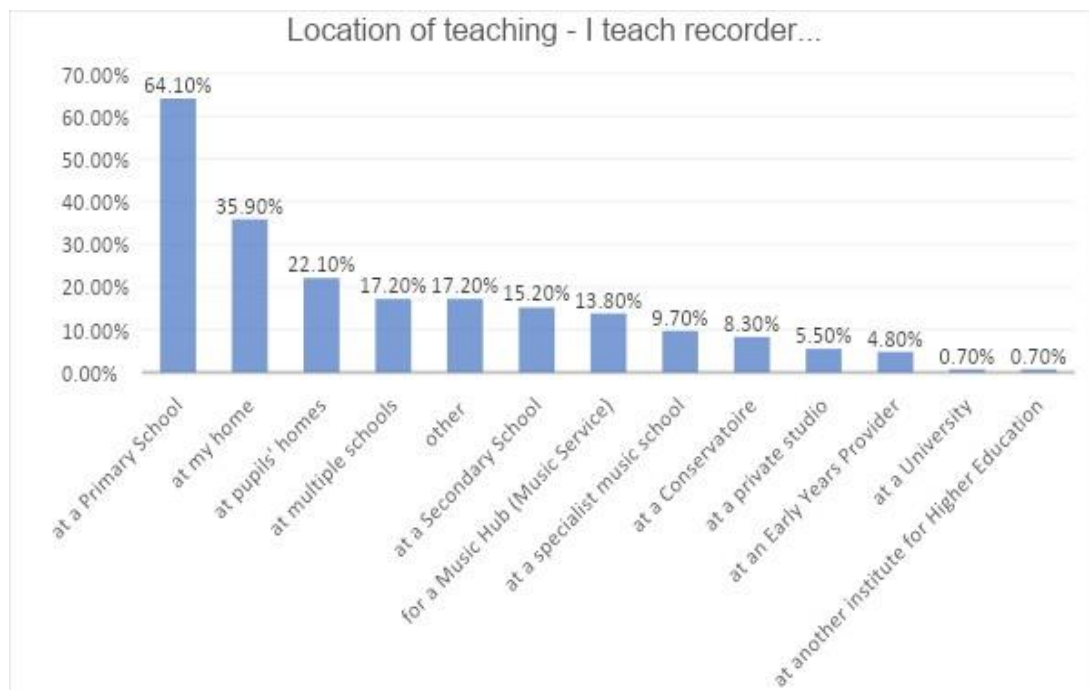


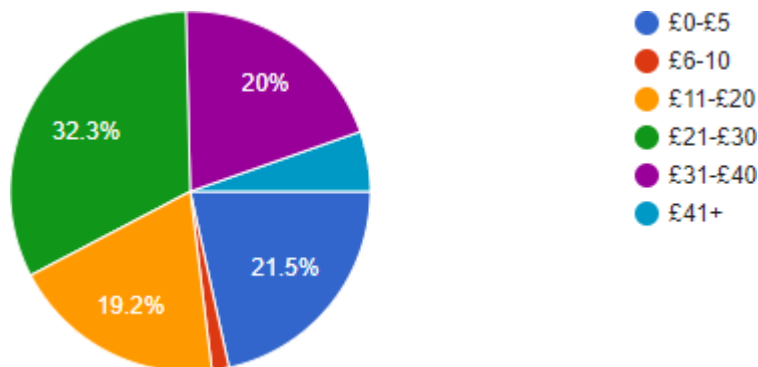
Figure 4.6: Location of teaching



n=14), at a conservatoire (8%, n=12), at a private studio (6%, n=8), at an Early Years provider (5%, n=7), and at a university or another institution for higher education (1%, n=1). The percentages do not sum to 100% as teachers responded in more than one category.

Figure 4.7 shows how much the teachers charged for individual recorder lessons per hour. The responses revealed that there was a very wider range. 22% charged £0–5, 2% charged £6–10, 20% charged £11–20, and the majority (32%) charged £21–30. 21% charged £31–40 and 5% £41 and upwards.

Figure 4.7: Amount charged for lessons



Through a closer look at the association between highest qualification in music and fee charged per hour (see Figure 4.8), it is clear that the majority of teachers with no qualification tended to charge the lowest fee and none reported charging a fee above £41. On the contrary, teachers with graduate, postgraduate and diploma qualifications charged high fees.

Figure 4.8: Amount charged for individual lessons and highest qualifications in music

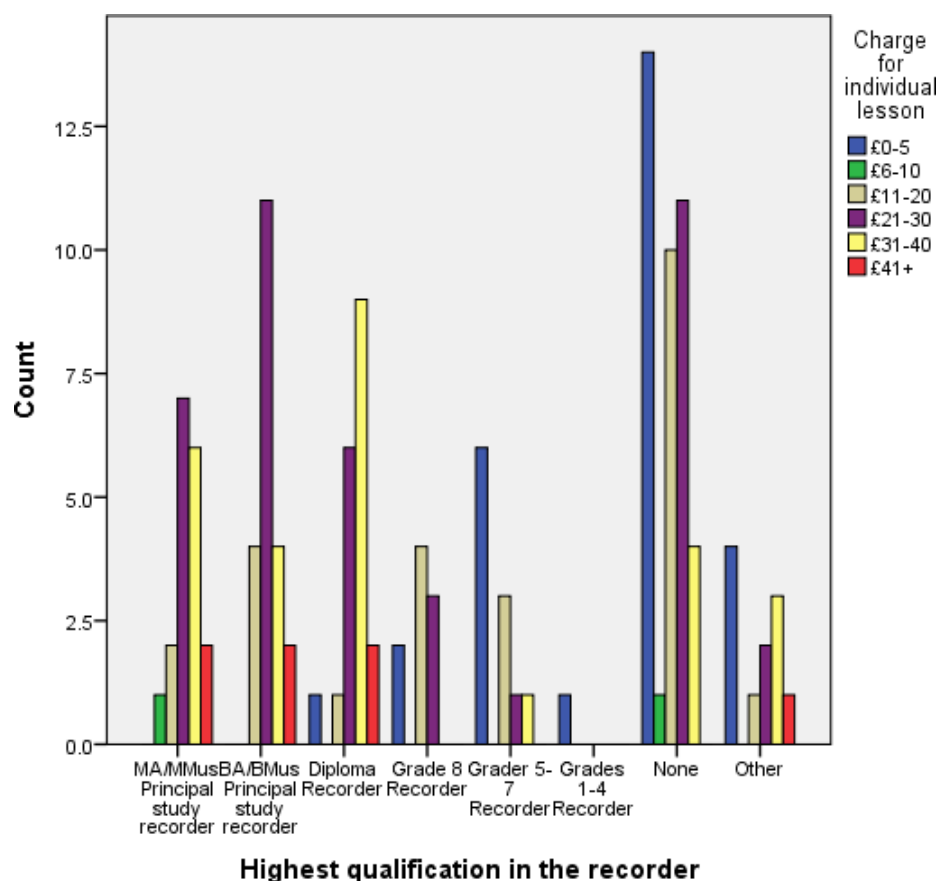


Figure 4.9 shows how the teachers organised their lessons in terms of group size. The majority (60%, n=96) taught individually, 30% (n=47) taught in groups of up to three students, 27% (n=43) taught in groups of three to six students, 23% (n=36) taught in groups of six to ten students, and finally 50% (n=79) reported teaching in large groups of more than ten students. The percentages do not sum to 100% as teachers selected more than one category. However, most recorder teachers (66.9%, n=97) reported that they did not teach recorder First Access (Wider Opportunities) (see Figure 4.10), so one might wonder where these teachers teach large groups of more than ten students if it is not through whole-class ensemble tuition.

Figure 4.9: Teaching individually and in groups

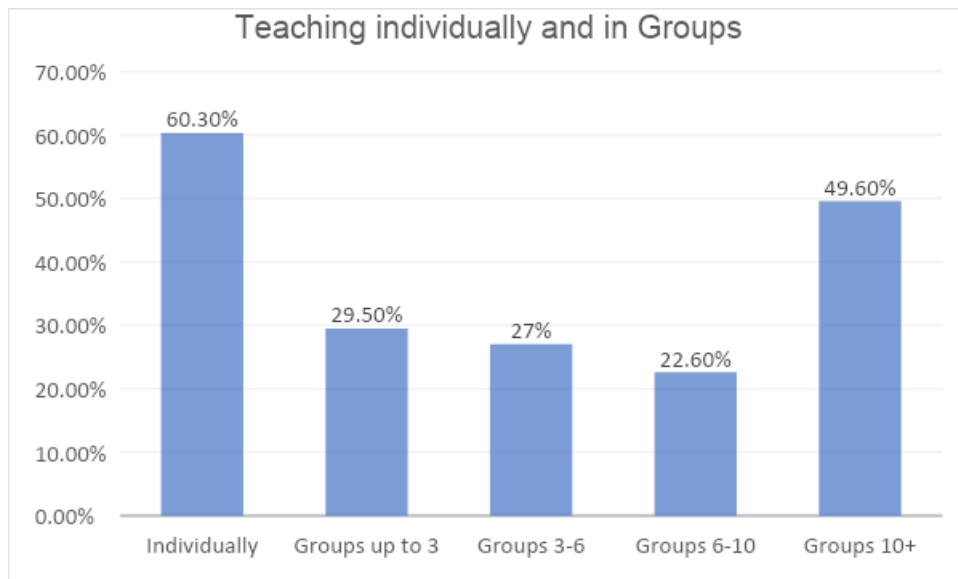
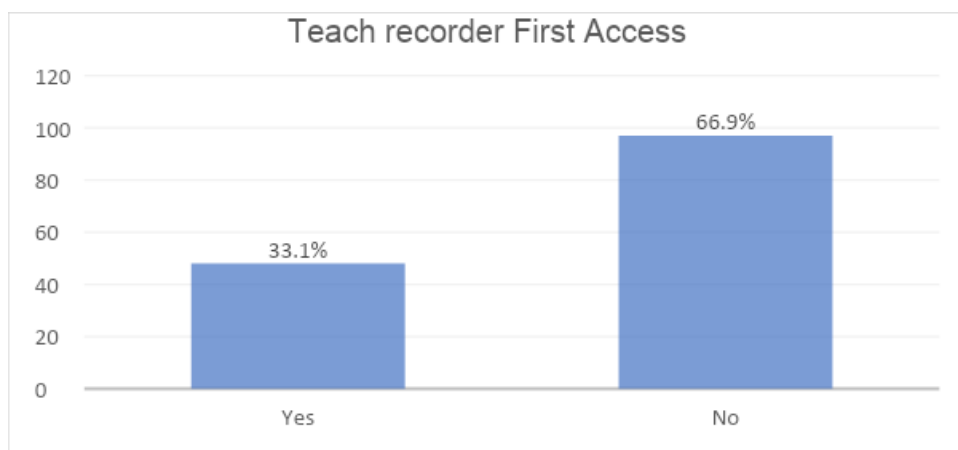


Figure 4.10: Teaching the recorder First Access



At the time of the survey most teachers (43%, n=68) taught more than thirty students; 20% (n=31) taught four to ten students, and 18% (n=28) taught up to three students. Few teachers taught eleven to fifteen students (9%, n=14), sixteen to twenty students (6%, n=9) and twenty-one to thirty students (4%, n=7) (see Figure 4.11).

Figure 4.11: How many recorder students the teachers currently teach

How many recorder students do you currently teach?

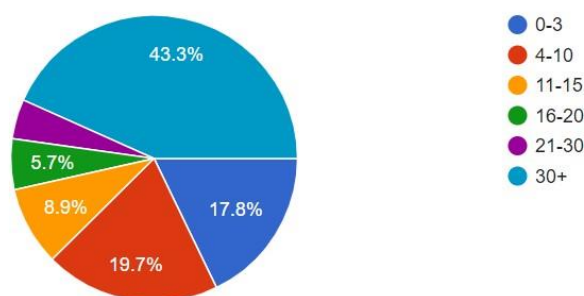


Figure 4.12 shows the twelve elements that teachers reported they may use with a beginner recorder player during the first twelve lessons. The majority (89%, n=130) reported using note reading as the most common activity in beginner recorder lessons. This was followed by working on listening skills (78%, n=114); 78% (n=114) played games with their students, indicating an attempt to make playing the recorder fun, and many gave considerable emphasis on general musical skills through aural training (69%, n=100). To support their teaching most teachers (84%, n=122) reported modelling playing the recorder. Aspirational modelling (playing video or audio clips of professional recorder players to their students) was adopted by 34% (n=49). Also, to support aural development, 60% (n=87) taught playing by ear, 53% (n=78) sang tunes to be learnt on the recorder, 50% (n=73) encouraged sight reading, and 18% (n=26) encouraged sight singing. 31% (n=45) reported developing inner-hearing skills and just over half (53%, n=78) memorisation. A high number of teachers reported focusing on instrumental technique (66%, n=77), whilst 64% (n=94) reported using a tutor book. 65% (n=95) focused on playing pieces, and 28% (n=41) focused on practising flexible fingering patterns. A smaller number (18%, n=26) of teachers taught scales within the first twelve lessons. On the whole, a substantial number of teachers reported focusing on musicianship skills (54%, n=79), whilst 42% (n=61) taught theory of music, and 36% (n=53) taught musical knowledge and history. Some teachers promoted creative skills through improvisation (49%, n=73), whilst 25% (n=37) worked on composition. Few teachers engaged their beginner students in ensemble work, for instance in consort

(8%, n=11), whilst over half (52%, n=76) played duets. The percentages do not sum to 100% as teachers responded in more than one category.

Figure 4.12: Activities in beginner recorder lessons

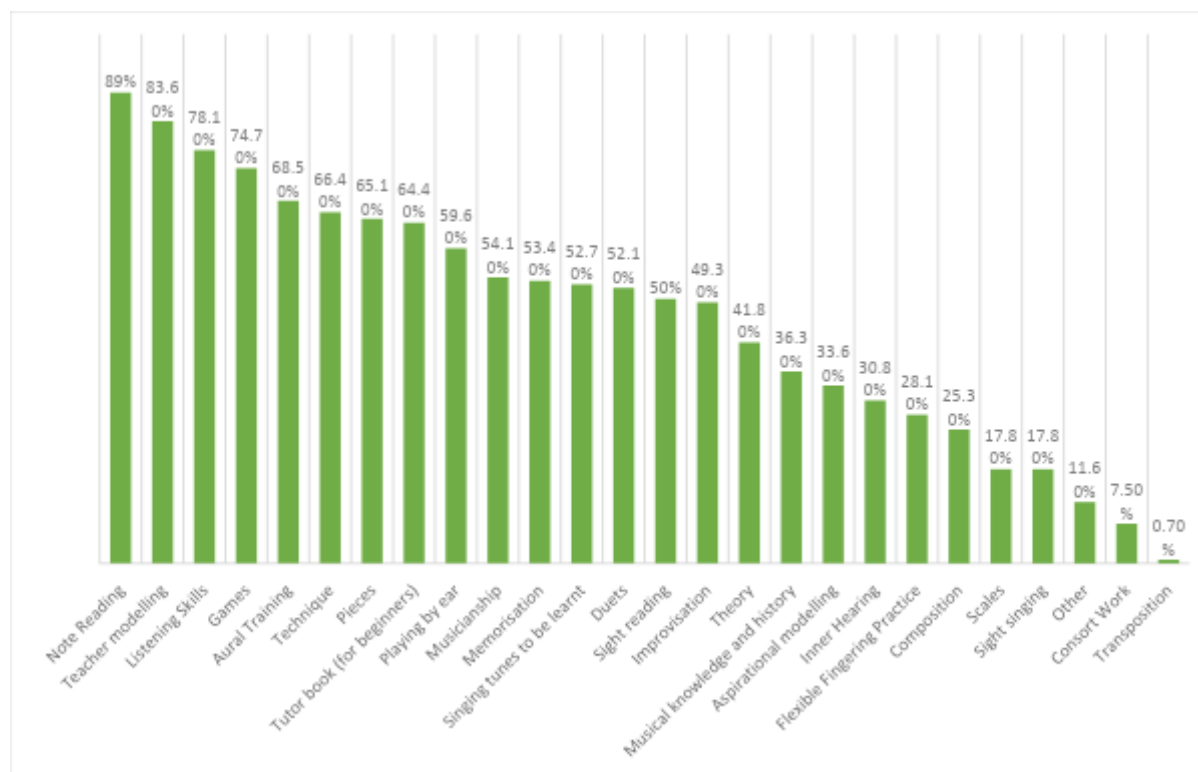


Figure 4.13 shows which instrument of the recorder family was introduced to pupils first. Overwhelmingly, the descant was introduced first (70%, n=99). Only 13% (n=19) introduced both the descant and the treble first. No respondents introduced the tenor, bass, G alto or voice flute, but 17% (n=24) indicated that another instrument was introduced first.

Figure 4.13: Instrument first taught

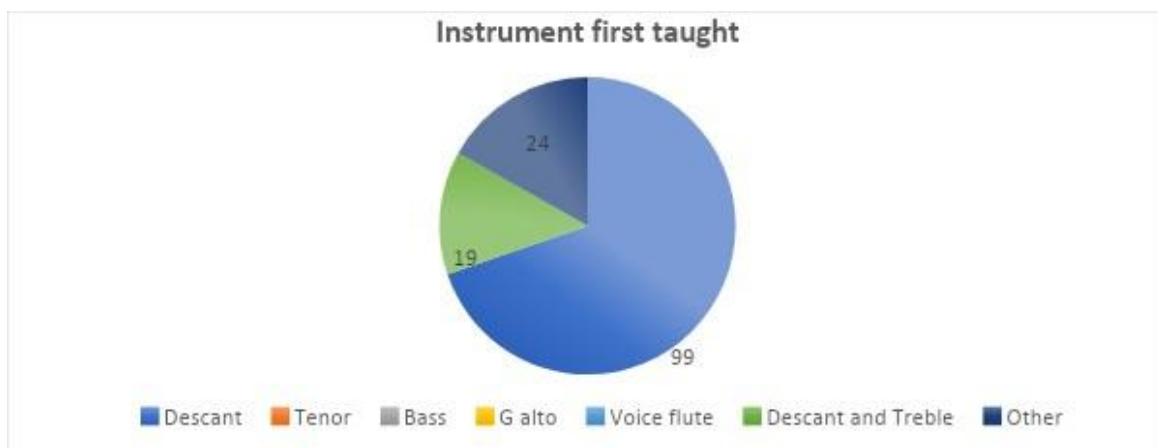
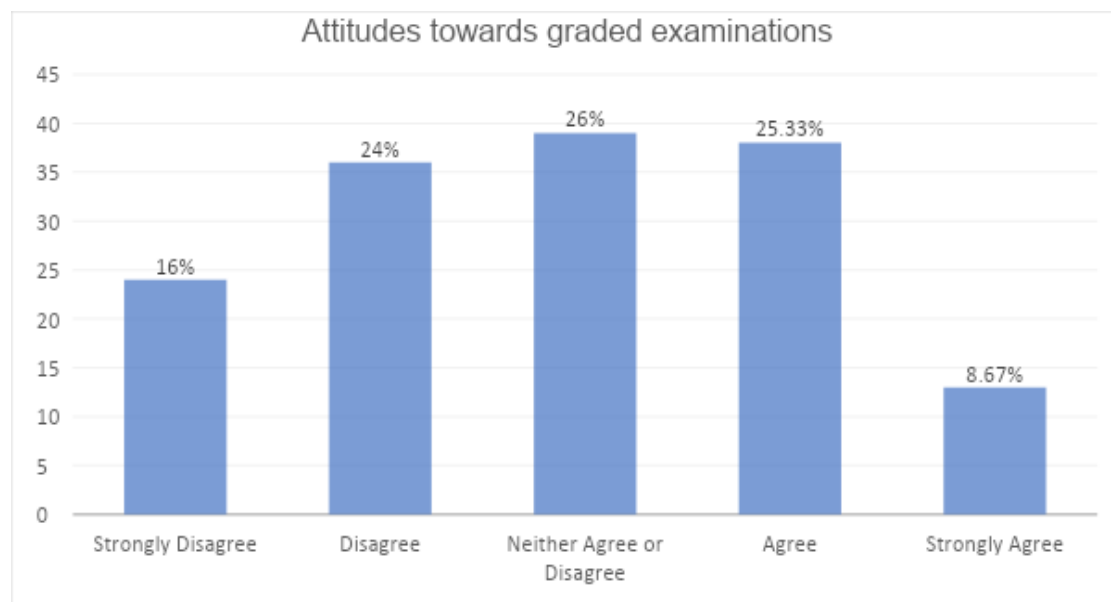


Figure 4.14 shows the level of agreement or disagreement with the statement 'grade examinations are a regular feature of my teaching'. 34% of respondents (n=51) either agreed or strongly agreed with this statement. A quarter (26%, n=39) were undecided, whilst the majority (40%, n=60) either disagreed or strongly disagreed.

Figure 4.14: Attitudes towards graded examinations



A one-way discourse between groups analysis of variance was conducted to explore the impact of highest qualification in the recorder on level of agreement on grade examination as a regular feature of teaching. Subjects were divided into seven groups

according to their level of recorder qualification (Group 1: MA/MMus principal study recorder; Group 2: BA/BMus principal study recorder; Group 3: recorder diploma; Group 4: Grade 8 recorder; Group 5: Grade: 5–7 recorder; Group 6: none; Group 7: other). Categories Grade 1–4 recorder ($n=3$) and missing cases ($n=6$) were eliminated because they had a variance of 0. There was a statistically significant difference at $p<.01$ level in agreement scores for the seven groups: $F(6, 139) = 3.65$. Post-hoc comparisons using the Tukey HSD test indicated that the mean score for Group 2 ($M=3.61$, $SD=.979$) was significantly different from Group 6 ($M=2.41$, $SD=1.186$).

This suggests that teachers with a BA/BMus principal study recorder value and promote graded examinations in their teaching more than any other groups of teachers with qualifications in the recorder. Teachers with other qualifications do not include graded exams as a regular feature of their teaching, probably because they themselves have not taken such exams themselves.

Almost all of the teachers (94%) taught C fingerings (see Figure 4.15), although 66% taught F fingerings. Much smaller percentages taught D (14%) or G fingerings (15%). 7% indicated otherwise.

Figure 4.15: Fingerings taught

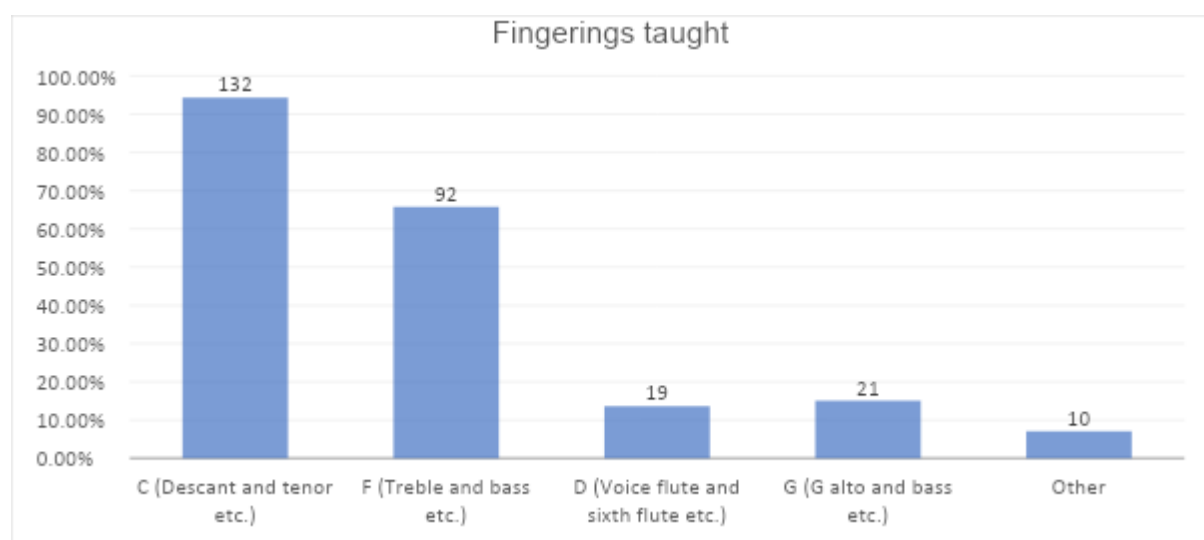
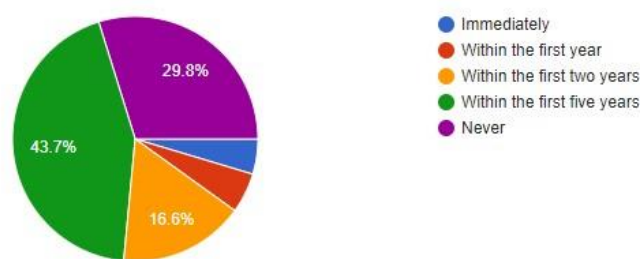


Figure 4.16 shows when the respondents taught multiple clef-reading skills. Overall, 44% (n=61) taught multiple clef-reading within the first five years of learning. Very few did so immediately (4%, n=5), within the first year (7%, n=8) or within the first two years (15%, n=21). 32% (n=44) reported never doing so. Perhaps unsurprisingly, only when considerable expertise had been developed were learners taught to read multiple clefs.

Figure 4.16: Timing of teaching multi-clef reading skills

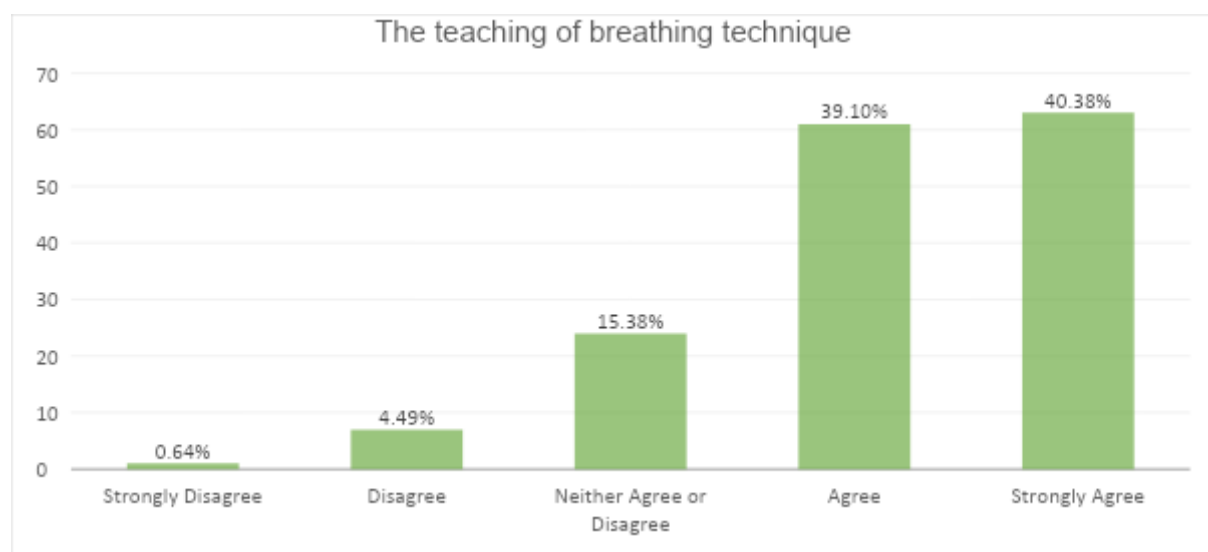
When do you teach multi clef reading skills (treble and bass etc.)?

Responses



Most respondents regularly taught breathing techniques. 40% strongly agreed that they did so and 39% agreed. Of the remainder of respondents, 15% neither agreed nor disagreed, 4% disagreed and 1% strongly disagreed (see Figure 4.17). This suggests that most teachers recognised the importance of controlled breathing in playing the recorder.

Figure 4.17: The teaching of breathing technique



Similarly to breathing, most teachers regularly taught articulation (see Figure 4.18). 51% (n=81) strongly agreed that they did so and 39% (n=61) agreed. 9% (n=14) neither agreed nor disagreed. Only 1% disagreed or strongly disagreed (n=1, respectively). This reflects the importance attached to articulation which emerged from the expert focus group.

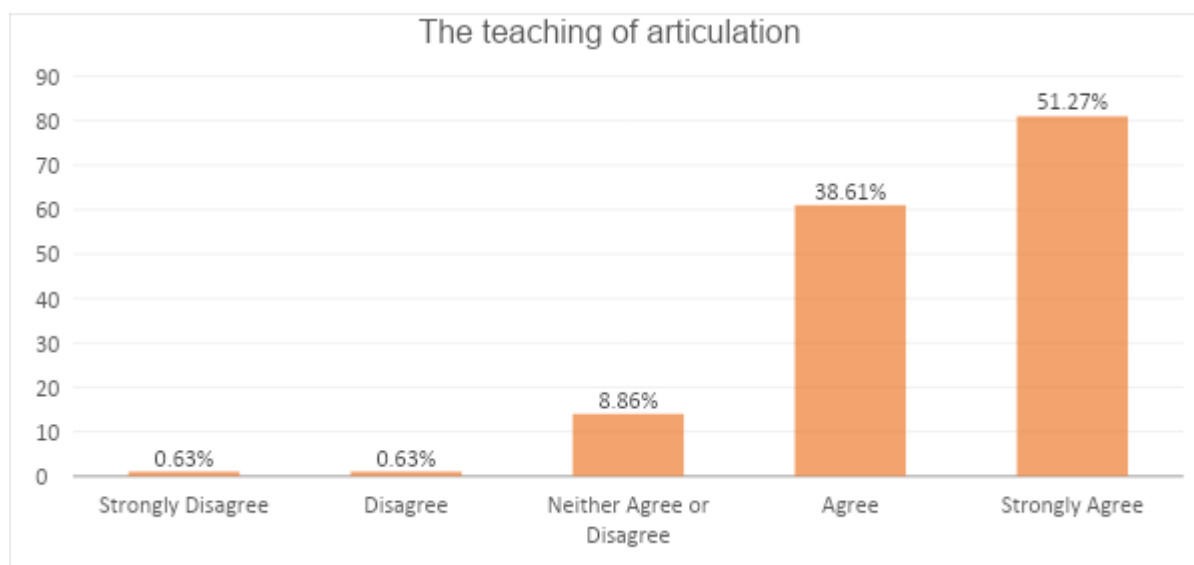
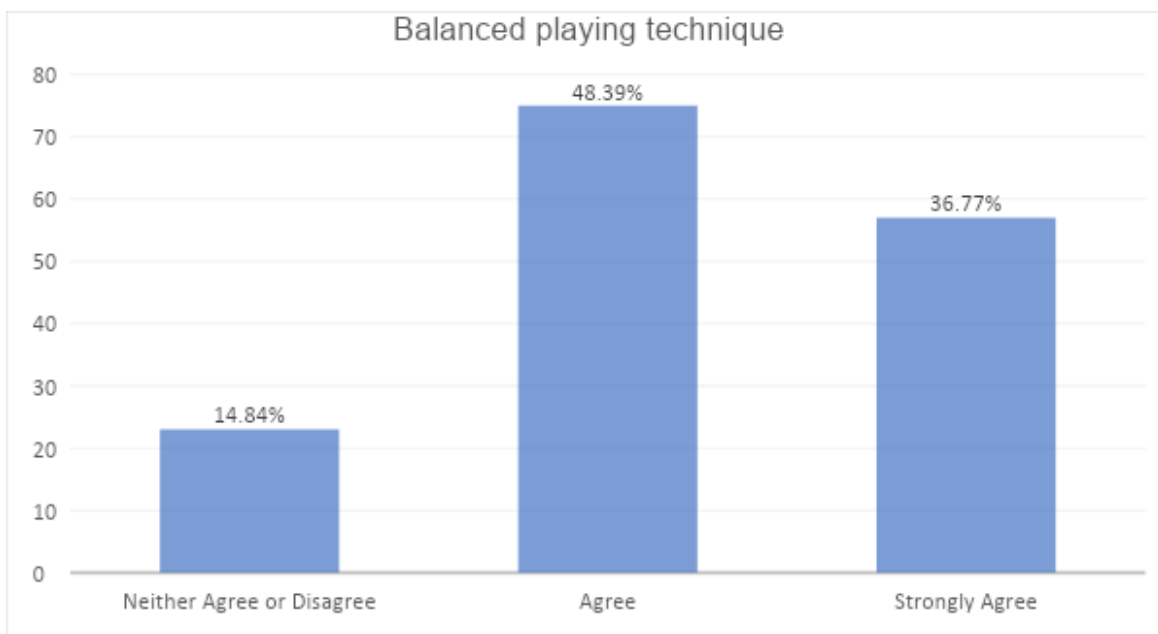


Figure 4.18: The teaching of articulation

Respondents also overwhelmingly either strongly agreed (37%, n=57) or agreed (48%, n=75) that it was important to have a balanced playing technique. The remainder neither agree nor disagree (see Figure 4.19).

Figure 4.19: Balanced playing technique

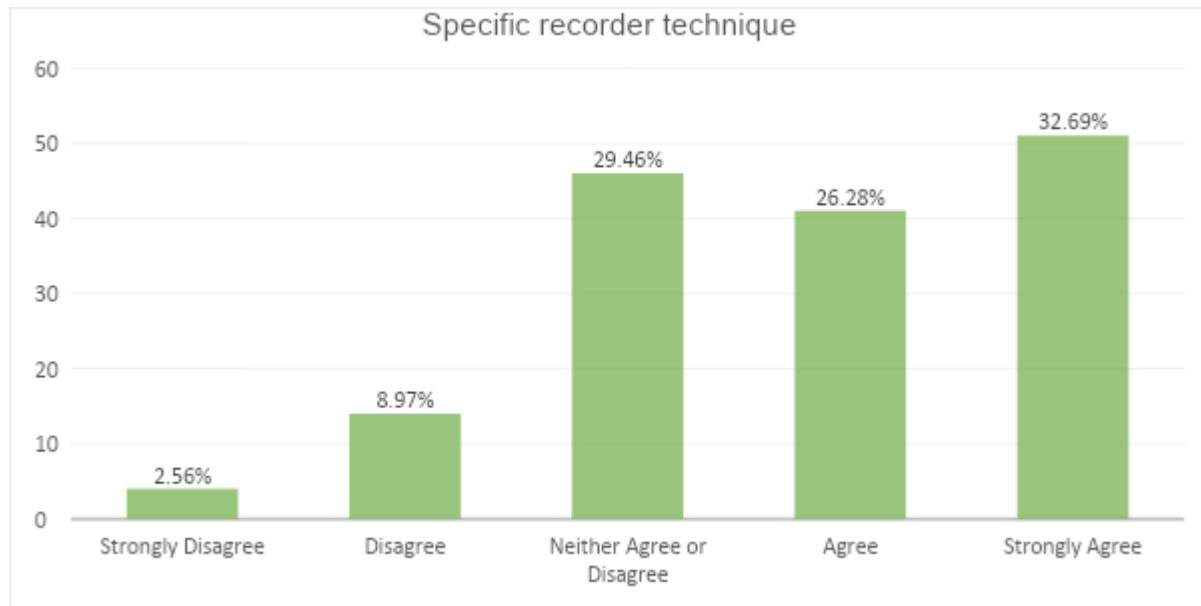


A one-way discourse between groups analysis of variance was conducted to explore the impact of highest qualification in the recorder on level of agreement on the importance of having a balanced playing technique. Subjects were divided into seven groups according to their level of recorder qualification (Group 1: MA/MMus principal study recorder; Group 2: BA/BMus principal study recorder; Group 3: recorder diploma; Group 4: Grade 8 recorder; Group 5: Grade: 5–7 recorder; Group 6: none; Group 7: other). Categories Grade 1–4 recorder ($n=3$) and missing cases ($n=6$) were eliminated because they had a variance of 0. There was a statistically significant difference at $p<.01$ level in agreement scores for the seven groups: $F(6, 143) = 3.17$. Post-hoc comparisons using the Tukey HSD test indicated that the mean score for Group 3 ($M=4.55$, $SD=.605$) was significantly different from Groups 5 ($M=4.00$, $SD=.953$) and 6 ($M=4.00$, $SD=.673$). This suggests that teachers with a diploma value having a balanced technique more than teachers with Grades 5–7 or other qualification in the recorder.

However, there was much less agreement that there was a specific recorder technique, although 33% ($n=51$) strongly agreed and 27% ($n=41$) agreed that there was.

29% (n=46) neither agreed nor disagreed, 9% (n=14) disagreed and 3% (n=4) strongly disagreed (Figure 4.20).

Figure 4.20: Specific recorder technique



A one-way discourse between groups analysis of variance was conducted to explore the impact of highest qualification in the recorder on level in agreement with the three statements presented above: 'I regularly teach breathing technique', 'I regularly teach articulation technique' and 'I believe there is a specific recorder technique'. Subjects were divided into seven groups according to their level of recorder qualification (Group 1: MA/MMus principal study recorder; Group 2: BA/BMus principal study recorder; Group 3: recorder diploma; Group 4: Grade 8 recorder; Group 5: Grade: 5–7 recorder; Group 6: none; Group 7: other). Categories Grade 1–4 recorder (n=3) and missing cases (n= 6) were eliminated because they had a variance of 0. There was no statistically significant difference in agreement scores for the seven groups. This suggests that regardless of music qualifications in the recorder, all recorder teachers who filled in the survey tend to agree that they regularly teach breathing and articulation techniques and that there is a specific recorder technique.

Figure 4.21 sets out the responses to the question asking which tutor books respondents used. 36% (n=50) used *Recorder from the Beginning*, 22% (n=31) used *Razzamajazz*, 9% (n=13) used *Recorder Boppers*, and 4% (n=6) used *Suzuki Recorder Book 1*. The majority used another tutor book (49%, 69), and 20% (n=28) reported not using a tutor book (see Figure 4.21).

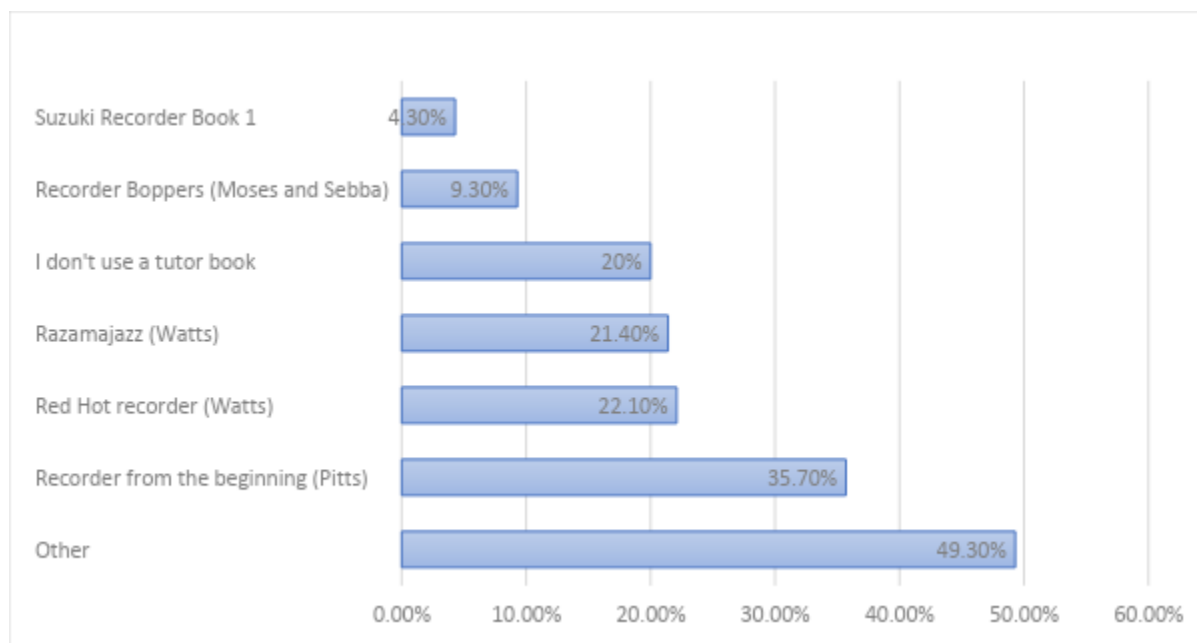
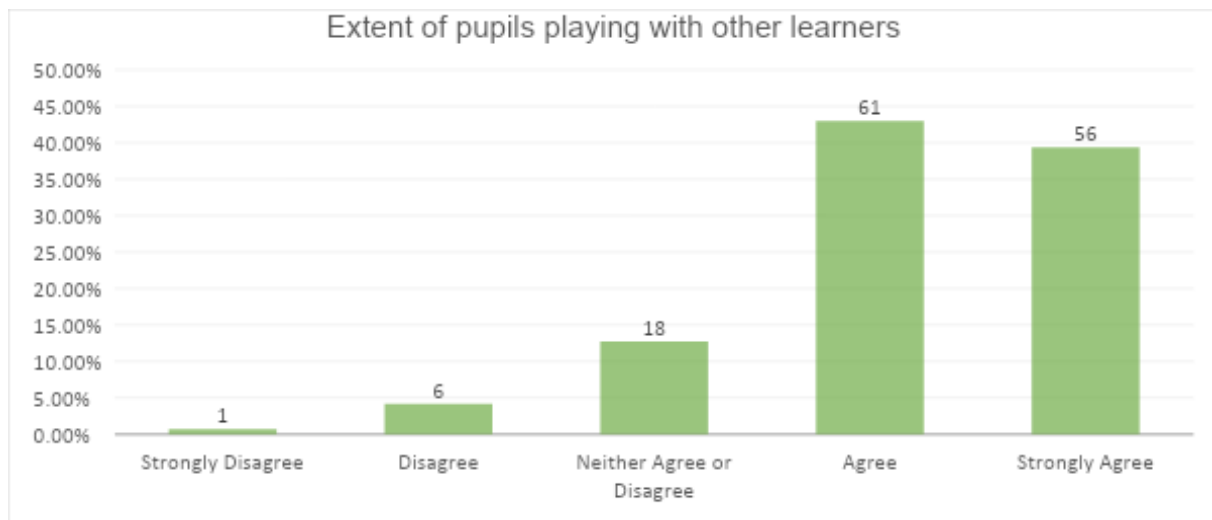


Figure 4.21: Tutor books used

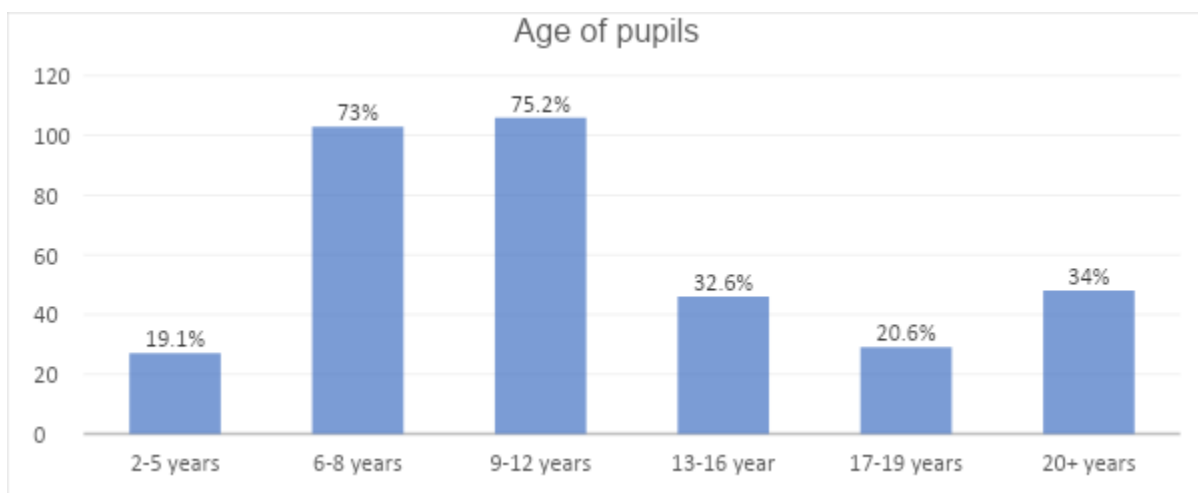
The majority of teachers either strongly agreed (39%) or agreed (43%) that their students regularly played with other recorder players. Only 1% strongly disagreed, and 4% disagreed. The remainder were unsure (13%) (see Figure 4.22).

Figure 4.22: Extent of pupils playing with other learners



The majority of teachers taught pupils between the ages of 6–8 years (73%) and 9–12 years (75%). A smaller number 34% (n=48) taught those of 20 years and over, followed by 33% (n=46) who taught students aged 13–16 years and 21% (n=29) who taught 17- to 19-year-olds. Only 19% (n=27) of the sample taught 2- to 5-year-olds.

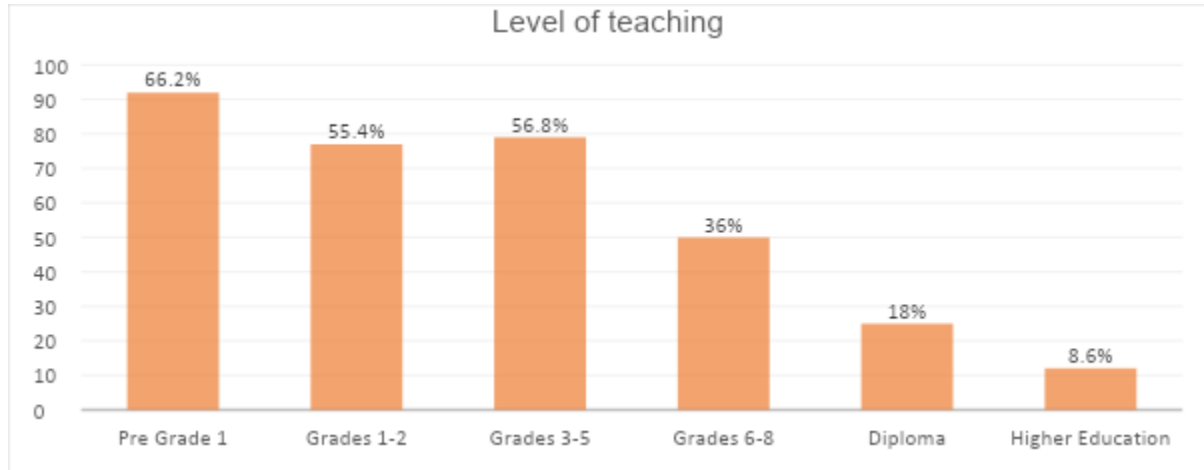
Figure 4.23: Age of pupils



Related to the previous question, Figure 4.24 sets out at which grade level respondents taught. 66% (n=92) taught pre-Grade 1, 55% (n=77) taught Grades 1–2, 57% (79) Grades 3–5, 36% (n=50) Grades 6–8, 18% (n=25) diploma level, and 9% (n=12) taught

in higher education. As expected, the majority of learners taught by teachers of the survey were at the lower levels of expertise.

Figure 4.24: Level of teaching



Just over half of the respondents indicated that they had received training in how to teach the recorder (52%). The remainder (48%) had had no training (see Figure 4.25). This is clearly a major concern.

Figure 4.25: Training to teach the recorder



In order to explore a possible association between having recorder as the first instrument and having received training in teaching the recorder, a chi-squared test for

independence (with Yates's Continuity Correction) was undertaken, which indicated a significant association ($\chi^2 (1, n=157)=8.185, p<.01, \phi=.232$). This suggests that those with recorder as their first-study instrument were more likely to have received training in teaching the recorder.

Following on from the question about training, respondents were asked if it was socially acceptable for a person to teach the recorder without any recorder-specific qualifications. Opinion was divided on this issue. 14% (n=22) strongly agreed, 27% (n=42) agreed, 22% (n=34) neither agreed nor disagreed, 21% (n=33) disagreed and 15% strongly disagreed (n=24) (see Figure 4.26).

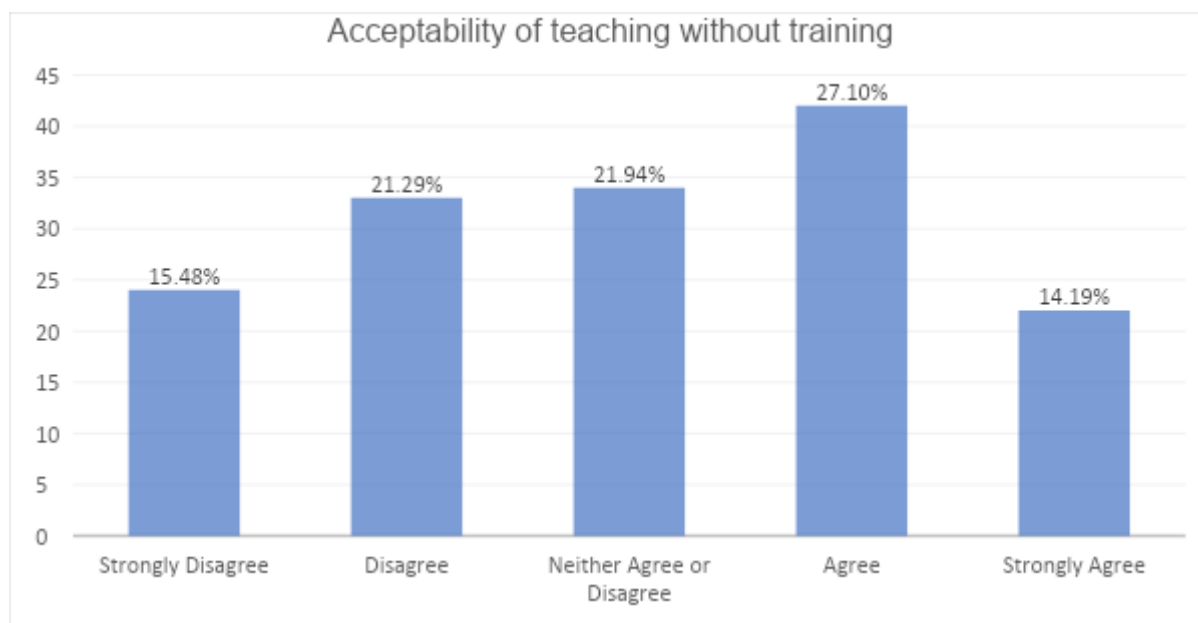


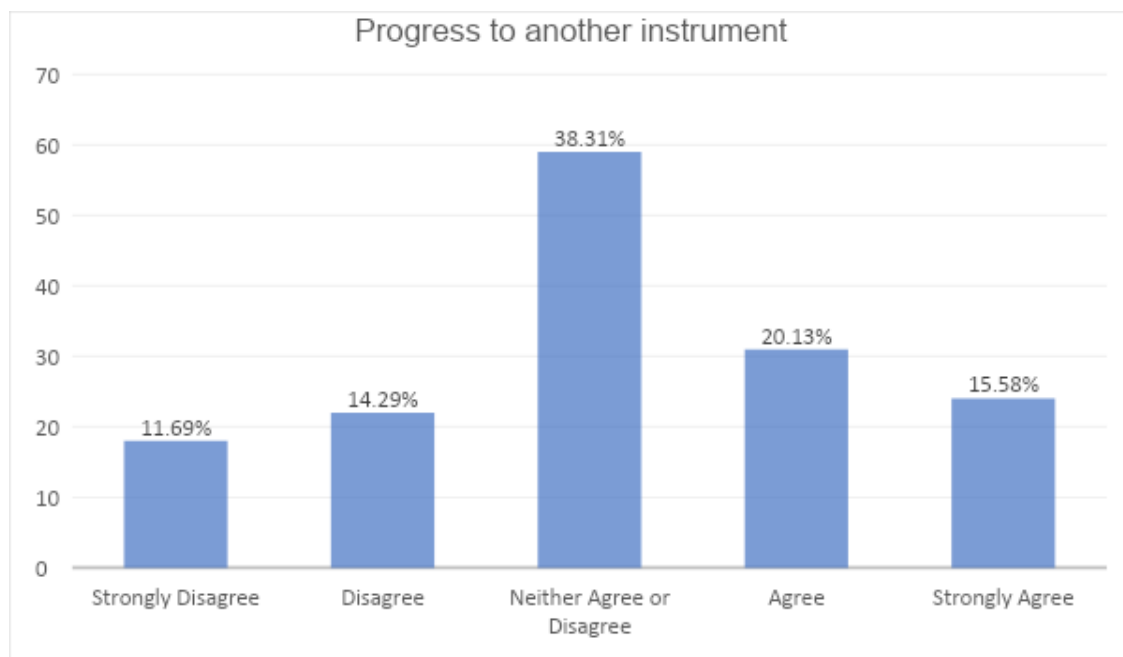
Figure 4.26: Acceptability of teaching without training

A one-way discourse between groups analysis of variance was conducted to explore the impact of highest qualification in the recorder on level of agreement on being socially acceptable to teacher recorder without any qualification. Subjects were divided into seven groups according to their level of recorder qualification (Group 1: MA/MMus principal study recorder; Group 2: BA/BMus principal study recorder; Group 3: recorder diploma; Group 4: Grade 8 recorder; Group 5: Grade 5–7 recorder; Group 6: none; Group 7: other). Categories

Grade 1–4 recorder ($n=3$) and missing cases ($n=6$) were eliminated because they had a variance of 0. There was a statistically significant difference at $p<.001$ level in agreement scores for the seven groups: $F(6, 143) = 5.24$. Post-hoc comparisons using the Tukey HSD test indicated that the mean score for Group 3 ($M=2.15$, $SD=1.182$) was significantly different from Groups 5 ($M=3.62$, $SD=.961$) and 6 ($M=3.58$, $SD=.929$). This suggests that teachers with Grades 5–7 or other qualifications in the recorder tend to agree more with the statement that no qualification is needed to teach the recorder, as opposed to the teachers with a diploma who express a stronger disagreement.

Finally, teachers were asked if they encouraged students to progress onto another instrument other than the recorder. Figure 4.27 sets out the details. 16% ($n=24$) strongly agreed with the statement, 20% ($n=31$) agreed, 38% ($n=59$) neither agreed nor disagreed, 14% ($n=22$) disagreed and 12% ($n=18$) strongly disagreed.

Figure 4.27: Extent of encouragement for students to progress to another instrument



A one-way discourse between groups analysis of variance was conducted to explore the impact of highest qualification in the recorder on level of agreement regarding encouraging the students to progress to another instrument. Subjects were divided into

seven groups according to their level of recorder qualification (Group 1: MA/MMus principal study recorder; Group 2: BA/BMus principal study recorder; Group 3: recorder diploma; Group 4: Grade 8 recorder; Group 5: Grade 5–7 recorder; Group 6: none; Group 7: other). Categories Grade 1–4 recorder ($n=3$) and missing cases ($n=6$) were eliminated because they had a variance of 0. There was a statistically significant difference at $p<.001$ level in agreement scores for the seven groups: $F(6, 143) = 6.96$. Post-hoc comparisons using the Tukey HSD test indicated that the mean score for Group 1 ($M=2.26$, $SD=.991$) was significantly different from Groups 5 ($M=3.85$, $SD=1.608$). This suggests that teachers with Grades 5–7 encourage their students to progress to another instrument more than teachers with MA/MMus principal study recorder.

Overall, these preliminary data offer some insights into the nature of recorder teaching in the 21st century. The following data analysis will include thematic analysis of qualitative data and comparisons of the responses made between different sets of respondents with different characteristics, including level of recorder qualifications, location of teaching and age of pupils.

Analysing the Qualitative Data from the Teacher Survey

To analyse the qualitative data from the teacher survey, I used thematic analysis. I printed off the responses to each qualitative question in the survey. After I read through all the responses for each question once, I coded each response and then grouped the codes into categories. I went through this process again, but this time created a mind map of recurring themes throughout each of the responses.

What do you find most challenging about recorder teaching?

There were 133 responses to this question out of a total of 169 complete respondents to the survey. Thematic analysis showed the following broad themes:

Table 4.1: Themes relating to 'What do you find most challenging about recorder teaching?'

Codes	Categories	Theme
• Adjudicators' perceptions • Ignorant examiners' reports • Parents' perceptions • Society's perceptions • Colleagues' perceptions • Colleagues' inability to play the recorder	Negative perceptions and the low social status of teaching the recorder	Perceptions
• Articulation • Tonguing/articulation • Breathing • Fingering • Intonation • Left-hand thumb • Left hand on top • Dexterity • Teaching accurate fingering • Covering the holes • 'Internal' techniques • Blowing too hard • Control • Support	Instrumental technique	Actual teaching practice
• Differentiation • Behaviour management • SEN • Forgotten recorders • Unwanted blowing • Class engagement • The sound of multiple recorders together • Left hand on top	The challenges of teaching large classes	Whole-class instrumental teaching
• Taking the recorder seriously • Supporting practice • Negative views of recorder • Lack of motivation/support • Pressure to move on to a 'real' instrument • Pressure on teachers to start teaching children that are too young	Issues with parents	Parental support
• Ability to afford quality resources • Finding quality resources	Finding and affording appropriate teaching resources	Availability of recorder-teaching resources
• Teaching children who have difficulties with fine and gross motor skills • Teaching children who struggle using their 'working memory'	Accommodating children with special educational needs	Teaching children with special

• Teaching children with special needs in general • Behavioural issues • Differentiation		educational needs
• Underfunding of music programmes • General lack of ensemble options and opportunity for students • Specific lack of ensemble opportunities within systems such as schools and music services • Music services 'selling' the recorder as a 'pre' instrument • Workplaces encouraging progression onto another instrument	Issues with workplace environments	Music education institutions
• Children using low-quality instruments • Tuning of instruments • Sounds of instruments	Quality of instruments	Availability and sourcing of appropriate instruments
• Students not practising • Parents not encouraging practice	Practice	Student practice
• Parents' pressure to move their children on to a 'real' instrument • Losing students to other instruments • Music services 'selling' recorder as a 'pre' instrument • Ensemble opportunities • Judging pace and progression of students	Progression	How to 'keep' students playing the recorder

Three codes linked to special educational needs; four codes surrounded concerns with workplace environments leading to the theme of music education institutions.

Perceptions of the recorder

The most recurring theme for this question was that recorder teachers find society's view of the recorder the most challenging aspect of recorder teaching. Comments showed that parents, other teachers, musical and pedagogical colleagues, examiners (from the ABRSM) and adjudicators do not value the recorder as a 'real' instrument.

One respondent replied by only saying 'Stereotypes!!!!' Some other comments were the following:

- 'The most challenging part is getting the students to see it as something other than a "toy instrument" because of the wider opps programmes in schools' programmes in schools and the poor teaching associated there – with the instrument's reputation has [sic] been tarnished.'
- 'Trying to persuade students, parents and other teachers (and the world in general) that the recorder is a "real" instrument.'
- 'Challenging perceptions of those who wrongly believe it is just for primary students and cannot sound nice.'

Negative perceptions of the recorder also link to progression on the instrument, with some respondents explaining they 'lose' their pupils to 'other instruments':

- 'Often... the child will have lessons for a year or two, then go onto a "real" instrument. It's hard to lose your best students to the saxophone teacher down the hall.'

The survey also gleaned that perceptions from the professional music community were also a challenge for recorder teachers:

- 'Making adjudicators and others accept that the recorder is not simply a stepping stone to something "better".'
- 'Working with an instrument that even musicians think that they don't need to know [or] play very well to teach, or they don't know how to teach.'
- 'ABRSM's silly comments about dynamics!'

Comments linked to the low perception of the instrument were commonly also linked with parents' views on the instrument. This has led to 'parents' becoming a theme on its own, and more will be discussed later.

Technique

There were twenty-five comments relating to instrumental technique. These are split into eight categories.

Articulation was the most popular technique that teachers found challenging. The word 'articulation' was most frequently used, followed by 'tonguing'. The comments around this area of technique were not expanded upon, which makes fully understanding what teachers find challenging about teaching articulation difficult.

Issues surrounding **breathing** were the next most mentioned. Here, respondents were more vocal with their opinions but largely comments were limited to 'breathing'. 'Breath control' was mentioned frequently, alongside concerns of children 'blowing too much'. Although not always linked to breathing, tone quality was also a theme within breathing.

Next popular in the coding of themes in technique was **fingering**. As the recorder does not (for children in the elementary stages of learning) have keys, this was not a surprise. Teachers expressed challenges with general 'dexterity', in particular with the left-hand thumb, accuracy with fingerings, and at its most basic levels getting children to physically cover the holes in order to produce the correct pitch.

Intonation was briefly mentioned by a small minority of respondents, and in even less measure, but linked to intonation, was 'listening'.

Many teachers expressed that the **internal nature** of playing the recorder was challenging, as many aspects of recorder playing cannot be seen, such as breathing, articulating, etc.

A common theme was that many teachers found the teaching of general technique in groups difficult, which led to the third broad theme of 'teaching large classes'.

From the codes collated from the theme of technique, there were only six areas of technique teachers find a challenge, with one of them teaching technique in large groups: articulation, breathing, fingering, intonation and internalisation. One person mentioned

flutter-tonguing but there was a distinct lack of challenges related to more specific areas of recorder technique within each subtheme. Examples will be given below.

Articulation: with the exception of one respondent who said they find teaching flutter-tonguing challenging, no other comments were any more specific than using the word 'articulation' or 'tonguing'. Specific areas of articulation technique were wholly omitted. These could include, and are not limited to, double- and triple-tonguing, vowel sounds within articulation, and developing flexible use of the tongue, accented playing and staccato playing.

Breathing: comments regarding overblowing were common, as was the comment of 'breath control'. No other details were matched with these solitary comments, so it is difficult to interpret what the respondents really mean. The following areas of breathing commonly utilised by recorder players were not mentioned: use of hot and cold air and slow and fast air to aid production of pitches, use of breath in intonation, adaptation of breath pressure to create dynamics alongside alternative fingering, adapting breath when playing smaller and larger instruments, and vibrato.

Fingering: comments attached to fingering were limited to covering the holes, issues with the left-hand thumb, and dexterity. None of the respondents mentioned teaching different fingering systems, teaching different instrument-model fingering (i.e. Baroque fingering is different to Ganassi fingering, for example), alternative fingerings, adapting to smaller and larger instruments, flattement or trills. Although dexterity was mentioned, coordination was not.

A small minority of teachers mentioned intonation, but again this was a very separate statement and was not linked to fingering or breathing, which is how intonation on the recorder is changed. Intonation is intrinsically linked to fingering and breathing.

Teaching large classes

Thirteen respondents to the survey expressed that teaching large classes of recorder pupils was what they found most challenging when teaching the recorder. Within this theme emerged five codes:

Differentiation and accommodating pupils with special educational needs: eight respondents explained that planning for differentiation in group recorder lessons is the most challenging aspect of their teaching. **Behaviour management** including ‘tricky children’ and ‘unwanted blowing’ was a very common theme. This was linked with engagement and keeping children ‘on task’ in large classes. Some teachers noted they didn’t know what to do when pupils learning in large groups had **forgotten their recorder**. Another common subtheme was that teachers found reinforcing the left **hand at the top** a challenge. Finally, it was noted that some teachers actually find the **sound of multiple descant recorders** and the physical noise levels difficult when teaching.

What do you find most rewarding about recorder teaching?

There were five broad themes in response to this question. In order of popularity this is what was extracted from the data: seeing pupil enjoyment, seeing progression, ‘light bulb moments’, and seeing and hearing students play in duets, ensembles and consorts.

From these five broad themes, subthemes were extracted from ‘progression’. Within progression, teachers commented that the recorder is an accessible instrument due to its size and relative financial cost, and this meant it was inclusive and versatile which meant that students could progress relatively easily. The data extrapolated came out with that statement, although it is hard to interpret. Do the teachers mean it is easy for them to progress onto a larger instrument? Or an instrument that is more expensive to purchase and maintain? Included within ‘fast progress’ was that teachers felt the recorder was easy to ‘pick up’ and a good stepping stone to another instrument.

Why did you start teaching the recorder?

The data provided four broad themes within the responses to this question. The most popular reason for teachers teaching the recorder was for financial gain. Second most popular was that the recorder was a part of the job description they were applying for as part of a job within a music service, MEH or school. Third was that the recorder is a cheap instrument and therefore they could recruit more pupils for financial gain. Lastly were those teachers that teach the recorder because they love the instrument, trained in the recorder during their higher education or loved playing the recorder as a child and wanted to pass on the love and enthusiasm to the next generation.

What training have you had to teach the recorder?

There are four broad themes in response to this question: a music education or pedagogy module during a degree programme; a pedagogy-specific style of training such as Orff, Suzuki or the ABRSM diploma in teaching; self-taught or based upon teacher/colleague observations; and lastly, music service, MEH or employer-funded CPD. The responses to this question suggest a lack of recorder-specific training available to recorder teachers. There was a more varied response and a variety of answers to the question 'What do you find most challenging about teaching the recorder?' Then there was the question 'What do you find most rewarding?' This suggests that teachers need broader and more available forms of continuing professional development in recorder teaching. The most popular response was that teachers undertook a module during their music degrees; depending upon the age of respondents this could have been many years ago.

How do you ensure progression with your students?

There were 129 responses to this question out of a total of 169 complete respondents to the survey. Thematic analysis showed the following themes, categories and codes:

Table 4.2: Themes, categories and codes from the question 'How do you ensure progression with your students?'

Codes	Categories	Themes
• 'Mini-goals' • Formative exams (ABRSM, Trinity, Music Medals, etc.) • Learning to play something the student wants to play • Student- vs. teacher-led targets • Festivals • Working towards concerts • Testing • Summative testing: in-lesson questioning, short quizzes • In-lesson teacher listening assessments • Working towards concerts.	Target setting Assessment Performances	Goal-oriented teaching
• Encouraging practice • Communication with parents • Use of practice diaries • Playing in ensembles & duets • Creating a community/social group	Communicating a philosophy of practice	Playing in addition to lessons
• Lesson structures • Regular lessons • Diverse range of activities • Appropriate differentiation in lessons • Promoting 'deep' learning • Selecting appropriate repertoire • Appropriate levels of challenge • Keep lesson records (both student and teacher) • Suzuki • Kodály	Lesson planning, planning for progression	Choosing the most appropriate curriculum
• Different genres • 'Graded' pieces • Building upon levels of difficulty • Repertoire choices • Moving through tutor books • Finding appropriate resources	Learning to play new music	Repertoire
• Encouragement • Stickers • Commemorating 'small steps' • Passing exams • 'Belts' and other commemorative mementos	Rewards	Recognising achievement
• Using bigger instruments • Having fun • Inspiration • Speed of progression vs. fun lessons • Move onto another instrument	Knowledge about the recorder and its family	Encouraging a love of the instrument

• Teacher modelling		
• Composition • Singing • Recording student performances		Musicianship
• Own teaching experience • Teacher modelling	Teachers' experience	The teacher

Following a thematic analysis, the following themes emerged relating to how teachers ensure progression with their students. The themes are ordered, starting with the most popular themes.

1. Goal-oriented teaching
2. Playing in addition to lessons
3. Choosing the most appropriate curriculum
4. Repertoire
5. Recognising achievement
6. Encouraging a love of the instrument
7. Musicianship
8. The teacher

Each theme will now be dissected into more detail.

Goal-oriented teaching

There were a total of thirty-one comments relating to using goal-oriented teaching methods within lessons to ensure progression. Categories included the use of target setting (either student-led or teacher-led), assessment (formative and summative) and working towards performance opportunities.

Teachers commented that they utilise formal exam-board exams such as ABRSM or Trinity College exams. The exams are graded from 1 to 8 and get gradually more difficult

with each rising grade. Teachers explained that they use these exams as students have a 'goal' to work towards, with the rising of each grade incorporating more difficult repertoire and technical skill on the recorder. One teacher said: 'Using exams or other staging posts for achievement to give them something to aim for.'

Alongside formative assessment procedures, teachers expressed how they use summative assessment to ensure progression with their students: 'We do regular recorder playing quizzes in class.' Another teacher explained that they set 'memorisation tests', whilst another commented that they listen 'individually to students' playing'. Working towards performance opportunities was a popular method of ensuring progression with students. One teacher said, 'The promise of concerts'.

The goal of learning to play music that the students want to play was expressed by many teachers – 'Letting them choose repertoire, even if it is difficult for them' – presumably because this is a forward-thinking goal as, if the music is currently too difficult, then their technical ability on the instrument will have to progress in order to play the chosen piece of music.

Playing in addition to lessons

Playing the recorder in addition to recorder lessons and communicating a philosophy of regular practice and playing was the second most popular theme extracted from the question 'How do you ensure progression with your students?'

The survey data suggests that many teachers use practice notebooks or diaries within their teaching. General encouragement of practice was the most prolific code within this theme. One teacher went into more detail: 'Make sure that they [the student] understand what practice is and why it's important and find a way they can do it regularly and effectively.'

Communication with parents about encouraging their children to practice was also a popular code, with many teachers commenting things such as: 'Encourage practice. Try to

engage with every parent.’ Another quote regarding parents is: ‘Make parents participate in classes. So they respect pupils and help them to practice at home.’

Playing in ensembles and creating a community and social group of recorder players also rank highly: ‘Measured steps between ensembles available, right up to a quartet/quintet.’ ‘Involvement in ensembles. Keeping friendship groups together as far as possible so that it [recorder playing] is a social activity.’

Choosing the most appropriate curriculum

Teachers commented that the choice of their chosen curriculum was what ensured progression with their students. Suzuki and Kodály were mentioned. One teacher explained that their music service provided them with a scheme of work. Schemes of work and lesson planning were predominant codes within this theme. ‘Termly plans, introducing something new each half term.’ ‘I plan schemes of work in advance and record achievements for each lesson.’ Structuring individual lessons to play for the appropriate level of challenge was mentioned by teachers.

Repertoire

Ten comments led to the theme of ‘repertoire’. These included selecting appropriate repertoire to aid differentiation, choosing gradually more difficult repertoire to progress and challenge students, enabling students to select their own repertoire and moving through tutor books.

Recognising achievement

Recognising achievement was asserted by many teachers as how they ensure progression with their students. One said ‘Simple rewards and encouragement’ whilst another said ‘Stickers! It’s such a cliché but all my kids go mad for stickers.’ Recognising achievement could also be linked to goal-oriented teaching.

Encouraging a love of the instrument

Having fun and inspiring students to love the recorder and their lessons was a popular theme. 'I think the most important thing is that they enjoy playing their instrument.' Another respondent said, 'make it fun'. Some teachers explained that using bigger instruments can help students progress in their playing: 'To learn another instrument of the recorder family.'

Musicianship

Musicianship was not very popular in how teachers encourage their students to progress. One respondent articulated that composition helped her students, another mentioned singing and another said they record their students' performances.

The teacher

Some answers to the question 'How do you ensure progression with your students?' linked to the personality or experience of the teacher. One respondent said '40 years of teaching experience.' Another explained: 'Not being too nice whenever they fail to do their homework. I'm there to make them better players, not to be their best friend.'

What kind of training would you like to receive?

Out of 169 total respondents to the survey, there were 42 answers to this question.

These responses resulted in six themes.

Table 4.3: Codes, categories and themes emerging from the question 'What kind of training would you like to receive?'

Codes	Categories	Themes
• Suzuki • Kodály • 'Classical' technique	Knowledge of different ways to teach the recorder	Curriculums
• Tonguing • Extended technique	Technique Beginner technique	How to teach students to play the

• Alternative fingerings • How to cover the holes • Tuning • Breathing • How to use the thumb • Hand position • When to introduce certain techniques • Teaching beginners	Advanced technique	recorder with correct technique
• Advancing own playing skills as a teacher • Conducting	How to play the recorder	Advancing practical recorder skills of the teacher
• Short courses • Workshops • Distance learning • Evening courses • General tips and advice	Teacher-training courses	CPD
• Modern repertoire	Where to find resources	Teaching resources
• How to make lessons 'fun' • Games • Community music • Building motivation • Creative teaching	Different styles of teaching	The creative teacher

There were six themes to emerge from the question 'What kind of training would you like to receive?'

Curriculums

Respondents expressed a willingness to know more about different, specific curriculums to teach the recorder, such as the Suzuki method and how to incorporate Kodály into their lessons. One respondent explained that they were mainly a folk musician and would like to know more about how to teach in a 'classical' style.

How to teach students to play the recorder with correct technique

This theme contained three categories: general technique, beginner technique and advanced technique. Within general technique respondents wanted training in how to teach

'tonguing', 'breathing', 'tuning', 'hand position' and 'how to use the thumb'. Some were very general in their comments: 'practical techniques: how to tackle common problems'. Teachers also explained that they wanted training in when to introduce certain techniques, for example, 'when to introduce certain techniques such as tonguing to a whole class'.

For beginner technique some responses were general: 'how to teach beginners'. More advanced technique included extended technique and the teaching of alternative fingerings.

Advancing the practical skills of the recorder teacher

Many respondents to the survey expressed a willingness to improve their own recorder playing and knowledge of recorder playing. 'My limited knowledge of the recorder is to many people (and certainly my employer) enough to teach pre-grade 1-ers and probably higher too. But it would be great to know more about specific techniques, particularly regarding breathing and articulation.' Another response was, 'I would like to enhance my skills more to give them more.'

Continuing professional development

Respondents replied that they would benefit from attending teacher-training courses. Some wanted short or evening courses or distance-learning courses. Others wanted general advice and tips: 'A short course with tips on how to teach the very young beginner and ideas for games.'

The creative teacher

Codes within this theme include help with games, improvisation and how to make lessons 'fun'. 'More ideas for integration of improvisation in group lessons.' One respondent explained that they would like more knowledge of modern repertoire. Two people explained they did not want any further training, with one person explaining they had been playing for fifty-eight years.

Summary

The recorder teachers of 2016 are an experienced cohort, with just under half having taught for more than eleven years. The data suggests that most of the teachers are amateur recorder player-teachers. The dictionary defines professionals as the following: ‘a person engaged in a specified activity... as a main paid occupation rather than as a pastime’ (Google, n.d.).

The data shows us that only 11.3% of teachers surveyed have recorder teaching as their full-time occupation. Added to this, just under half of the respondents charge below the recommended rate for professional teachers as set by the Musicians’ Union and the Incorporated Society of Musicians (Musicians’ Union, n.d.; ISM, n.d.).

This research shows that under half of the cohort have an undergraduate degree or higher in music, and over 35% do not have any qualifications in the recorder. In spite of this, 54% of the teachers surveyed believe the recorder is their first instrument. These statistics are in contrast with the dictionary definition of a ‘professional’. 41.29% think it is socially acceptable to teach the recorder without any qualifications at all. The low cost of lessons charged by the majority of teachers could be reflective of their levels of competency on the instrument. It could also be reflective of the recorder’s lowly public image, whereby the recorder is not seen to warrant the Musicians’ Union recommended music-lesson fee. This raises questions about the relationship between the recorder and amateurism, which will be discussed in the concluding chapter of this thesis.

How and where is the recorder taught?

Relating to competence in understanding the recorder as a serious musical instrument, 40.99% had either no opinion or disagreed with the recorder having a specific instrumental technique. The recorder-teacher survey has confirmed that the recorder is overwhelmingly taught in whole-classes or large groups in primary school, and very little recorder teaching happens at secondary school. It has confirmed that nearly all recorder

teachers teach the descant (83%). Recorders using F fingerings are the next most popular, but other fingering systems are rarely taught.

Although the cohort of recorder teachers are earning less than the recommended union rate, most recorder players explained that they started to teach the recorder for financial gain. This suggests that finding employment as a recorder teacher is easier than other instruments, or that the majority of teachers are not professional recorder player-teachers and are using recorder teaching for additional income. I make this conclusion based on the findings regarding recorder teachers' qualifications in the instrument.

What common teaching practices, attitudes and beliefs do contemporary recorder teachers hold when teaching young beginners?

In general, most teachers reported using a tutor book in their lessons. Alongside this, the top three activities in the beginner recorder lesson were not directly linked to physically playing the recorder:

1. Note reading – 89%
2. Teacher modelling – 83.6%
3. Listening skills – 78.1%

Regarding technique, these were common factors between recorder teachers:

1. Articulation – 89.88%
2. Balanced playing – 85.16%
3. Breathing – 79.48%

When explaining what they enjoyed most, teachers said that they liked to see pupils progress; this links with goal-oriented teaching being one of the most popular practices in recorder teaching. However, standardised instrumental exams (such as ABRSM) were not popular. This could be linked to the low social perception of the instrument. Teachers find negative perceptions of the recorder difficult to deal with, which shows that individual recorder teachers hold the recorder in high regard. Although 52% of teachers reported to

have had some kind of training in how to teach the recorder, most teachers would like more training and advice in how to plan their lessons and in actual teaching practice. They reported that teaching children to physically play the recorder was difficult, and this is the area in which they would like training.

Concluding Survey Comments

Most recorder teachers are not recorder specialists. Recorder teachers are reporting using a tutor book within their teaching practice, yet they are still finding the teaching of actually playing the recorder difficult.

The next chapter will uncover what expert recorder player-teachers believe is good practice in terms of recorder technique. After this, tutor books will be analysed to find out how they are exposing teachers to the teaching or technique (physically playing the recorder).

Tutor books may not accurately show teachers how to teach the recorder; the majority of recorder teachers are not specialists on the instrument and teachers are requesting additional help. The teaching of technique, then the findings of the focus group, become important in furthering the development of teaching and learning of the recorder.

Chapter 5: Focus Group Discussions

Introduction

This chapter presents an analysis of the responses from the focus group interview with recorder teachers. The focus group lasted for one hour and fifteen minutes, with twelve professional recorder player-teachers. It was audio-recorded and transcribed after the event. Ethics forms were filled out in advance.²⁰ Participants of the focus group gave their permission to be audio-recorded and recordings of the focus group have been kept secure. The focus group focused on two specific questions:

- What are the main points of technique that should be introduced to beginners?
- How can we introduce these techniques to beginner recorder players?

In selecting stimulus materials for focus group discussions, I decided to use the main chapter headings of Walter van Hauwe's *The Modern Recorder Player*. I chose to use this as it is the current main text for recorder technique and all the focus group members were guaranteed to be familiar with it, as it is on the GSMD's recorder undergraduate reading list. The headings are concise and focus on specific areas of technique.

I consulted with this focus group of professional recorder player-teachers to produce ideas on what would constitute agreed 'good practice' recorder technique in beginner lessons. This was with specific focus on the development of skills needed to be a proficient player and musician across all of the instruments of the recorder family. The findings from this focus group will be compared to the technique advice set out in recorder tutor books and comparisons will be made between:

- What technical aspects recorder teachers find difficult and what they would like help with;

²⁰ See Appendix A.

- What aspects of recorder technique do professional recorder players value in beginner recorder lessons.

These comparisons will help to answer the following research question: How do the views on the teaching of beginner recorder technique compare between professional recorder player-teachers and the wider teaching community?

Outcomes of the Expert Focus Group

At the start of the focus group, the facilitator asked members whether they agreed with the four elements set out by van Hauwe or if these needed to be changed, and if so, how. The plan was that each of the four elements could be discussed by smaller subgroups, reducing the time commitment of members. Each subgroup would then feed back to the entire group for further discussion, setting out their thoughts and enabling the entire group to critically discuss issues arising. There were five outcomes to focus group discussions that concluded five fundamental areas of technique for beginner recorder teaching and learning.

- Holding the recorder;
- Moving the fingers;²¹
- Blowing and breathing;
- Starting and ending notes;²²
- Sound and articulation.²³

Analysis of the Data

A thematic analysis was undertaken. After transcribing and reading the transcription, codes of repeating thematic material were extracted. These were subsequently verified by an additional professional recorder expert. Following initial discussion, the group amended Walter van Hauwe's four main areas of technique to:

²¹ See Appendix E.

²² See Appendix D.

²³ See Appendix C.

- How to move the fingers;
- Blowing and breathing;
- Holding the recorder;
- Starting and ending notes;
- Sound and articulation.

Holding the recorder was the only area of technique to remain without question or debate. The four new themes emerged after considerable debate. Table 5.1 sets out the themes derived from thematic analysis of the transcript. The following sections provide examples of how the themes were derived from the interviews. These four areas of recorder technique intrinsically connect with what recorder teachers find difficult about teaching the recorder and would like further training in.

Examples of How Themes Emerged for the Transcript

Below are extracts from the transcription detailing how some of these themes emerged. The details of how the remaining themes emerged are in Appendices C, D and E. The full transcript of the focus group can be found in Appendix A. The example below demonstrates how the initial themes arose during the focus group. The focus group used the headings from Walter van Hauwe's book as a starting point.

GMC: [same as in WVH's book]. So, holding the recorder, I'm going to put blowing versus breathing [sound of pen drawing].

IW: Do you mean versus or do you mean...

CF: Blowing out.

IW: Blowing out.

GMC: Yeah, blowing and...

IW: Sounds like you have a, err [laughter], struggle to overcome [laughter].

GMC: Articulation... What have I missed?

JT: What to do with the sound.

Focus group reply in unison: What to do with the sound...

Table 5.1: Themes derived from transcript data

How to move the fingers	Blowing and breathing	Holding the recorder	Starting and ending notes	Sound and articulation
Closing the holes	Internal action needs external help	Determined by child's hand span – right thumb either behind 4th or 3rd finger	Internal action needs external help	What to do with the tongue: Tonguing 'Tu ti'; articulation
Stopping the holes	Hissing	Right-hand technique in other instruments use similar hand position	What to do with the tongue? 'Tonguing'. Use of language, phonics and developing recorder language	Sound and articulation is heavily linked to starting and ending notes
Opening the holes	Control of air speed and flow	Flexible thumbs. Left-hand thumb needs to be flexible to produce octaves. Right-hand thumb will need to be flexible when moving across instruments of different sizes. Both thumbs need to be flexible to avoid tension	Use of 'tu' and 'ti' as an introductory form of articulation. Depending on the mother tongue this may change to 'doo' or 'di', etc. The use of recorder language to produce sound on the instrument	Recorder language and instrument-speak
Natural status of the body: Alexander Technique	Inhaling and exhaling	Little finger on the top of the foot joint for balance	Articulation = producing sound = creating a recorder language	Representation with physical motions Flash cards and drawings
Games and exercises	External aid needed to help internal actions, e.g. drinking straw or tissue to use in games as recorder is unfamiliar	Walter van Hauwe Robot exercises. The use of imagery to explain finger movement. Fingers should be efficient	Language and vocabulary	Listening to teacher/ professionals/each other

Language and vocabulary	Blowing and breathing are related	Bring the recorder to the body, not the other way round. Position of instrument in relation to the body	Games and exercises	Representation of pitch and sound
	Find out what the student already knows and does not know	Holding a hamburger could be a way to explain to student an ideal hand position	Natural status of the body: Alexander Technique	Being aware of sound
	Find the correct feeling. Not too much, not too little	Where does the thumb go? Marker for right-hand thumb. Could this be a sticker, Blu Tack, thumb rest?	How to end notes is just as important as starting notes	Play the action
	Language and vocabulary	Natural status of the body: Alexander Technique	Use of pictorial and visual aids	Peer mentoring
	Natural status of the body: Alexander Technique			Natural status of the body: Alexander Technique
	Use of visual and pictorial aids			

IW reply: What to do with the sound.

IW: What to do with the tongue.

JT: Yeah, what to do with the tongue.

GMC: How to move fingers [writing on board], how to move fingers, what to do with the tongue.

CF: Instead of articulation.

JT: [in agreement] yeah, instead of ar...

IW: Starting and ending notes.

[The sound of writing on the board]

GMC: Yep.

Emerging Theme – Holding the Recorder

Walter van Hauwe's chapters The Right Hand and The Left Hand became redundant during the discussion and instead 'how to move the fingers' became a theme. The discussion indicated that the right and left hands would be incorporated into the themes of 'holding the recorder' and 'how to move the fingers'.

During the concept stage of finalising the main themes of recorder technique, it was decided that adjectives were not necessary and instead it was important to concentrate on the very clear action of technique.

RE: There are two things I don't agree with here. One is the adjective 'good', I think it's too early to define that.

GMC: Yep.

RE: It's to get them thinking about sound. I think it's too early to be thinking about sound and the other thing is, what to do with the tongue. I can imagine that it would be possible to start and end notes without using the tongue, so I think that's also... erm, something that comes later. So therefore, I think it's starting and finishing notes and it's not tonguing yet.

LG: Really? Do you mean the word or the action?

RE: Erm, I mean the word at this concept stage.

IW: Oh, I see, yeah yeah.

The Emerging Themes – The Fundamental Five

How to move the fingers – ‘describing fingering’

The first thing to be mentioned in how to move the fingers is about obtaining as natural a playing technique as possible. This shows an overarching theme of naturalism in playing the recorder.

HSCF: Errrrrrrm. Yea, we came up with lots of words that we thought were good for us to get in there early. So relaxed and tension-free, natural hands, or efficient, gentle fingers, erm.

Directly after this statement more information is brought out in relation to preparatory games and exercises and another theme that is apparent across all areas of recorder technique.

IW: We like the idea of numbered fingers, you know, whether that’s a bit contentious or whether we should really already start numbering, you know thumb 0, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, but erm that that could be incorporated into some games. You know where you have to, you shout a number and children maybe tap that hole. I don’t know. Erm it’s nice.

GMC: I really like that.

IW: To sort of think, maybe further down the line, that concept of really knowing which fingering goes.

GMC: We do finger maths so like 1 plus 2 equals G and teachers really like that because I do that as a starter. So, if I’m doing wider opps and everyone’s there, I just put fingering maths on the board. Which sounds really bad! I’ll write that down because I’ll forget that I did it.

IW: And sort of, fingers belonging to a hole erm that there’s a sense that.

Wrapped into this game, however, is where the fingers go in relation to the holes on the recorder. Circles that are coloured show holes that are meant to be covered for each note. Here we see the contradiction in themes between using pictorial aids to explain internal techniques such as articulation, blowing and breathing and the visual act of putting fingers

on holes. Here it is suggested that a numerical system would be better than a pictorial aid. Given the overarching theme of using pictorial aids one may suggest that using both a numerical and a pictorial system in explaining the placement of fingers on holes may be a more holistic way of teaching finger placement.

Natural status of the body

The theme of naturalism in recorder technique comes up once again in the extract below by CDP. This is related to the adjectives used to describe how to move the fingers at the top of this subgroup.

CDP: Erm can I ask a question about that because it's something that's come up before about tension and yeah you're meant to be relaxed but if you're too relaxed when you're a kid the sound is not going to come out. So I end up saying, press the holes. I vowed I would never say that, but I do. Erm because for me, I only teach whole class so for me it's a bit different but I actually end up saying that because otherwise they're just there's going to be bits of holes missing so for them to be able to feel the edges of the holes I think they do need to actually press down, at least a small bit anyway.

Here, in the whole-class setting, being able to get all children to cover the holes and be relaxed is proving a difficult situation.

GMC: That's a really good thing, that sensory thing, because a lot of kids they just float or I see a lot of kids float because they don't, they're not in touch with how it feels. Do you have like, cos I can never think of a way...?

IW: Yeah it's what I find really fascinating is that you know children, you know their fingers are so touch sensitive because that's how you learn. You know you learn ooo I'll never touch that again because it's hot. So you learn it is, it's really interesting that you are asking with the young ones. I mean it's the first time they are having to deal with moving the fingers independently because they mostly, you know it's quite grabby. It's tricky but I I I think that's sort of rubbing and smearing fingers across erm I don't know err was it erm sorry.

Sensory relationships

GMC and IW bring along a new theme in how to move the fingers: sensory relationships. The overarching theme here is preparatory training and exercises to be learnt and practised ahead of learning lots of notes. It is important a pupil can feel the holes on the recorder in order to accurately cover them, and also produce the desired fingering patterns. If this is to be achieved then preparatory work has to be made in feeling the holes, finding where they are. The idea of rubbing and smearing fingers over the holes has been brought by IW.

Intrinsically linked to how to move the fingers and finger holes is playing the notes. Interestingly this is one of the final things to come up in the 'how to move the fingers' subgroup, another indication that the acquisition of correct recorder technique should happen in the preparatory stages of learning.

What note to start on?

RE: And what note are you starting on?

IW: I've tried everything. My issue with the note B to start with that in order to, if you haven't set up the holding the recorder properly what happens is that you end up with that [demonstrates incorrect-right hand technique] and I've seen plenty of people, you know, further down the line and that comes from astonishingly good finger memory, touch sensitivity. That's they they somehow manage to hold the recorder like that to play B and then that's how they remember to hold the recorder.

CDP: I think erm, the Suzuki method starts with all hands down and they lift don't they...

IW: I think they start with a D. And I think if you start with both hands on the instrument you get a really good sense of...

GMC: Well we spoke about starting on the other D (GMC and RE). High D.

MN: How much would that affect the sound thing? Because often I find as soon as that thumb is off, it's like, OK now start again because, I know that sounds horrible.

GMC: I think the argument was if you start with that D you have no option but to be balancing and you have no option but to use your right hand and it has a purpose for

the right hand [consensus] whereas in all the other notes you don't really have a purpose to using the right hand. There are, erm, so many options, that's the problem.

Mir: Erm I just saw something at the erm exhibition in Greenwich because low D is very difficult to start with because it doesn't sound because there is always something leaking, but what they did is like covering the holes with sellotape like very thin sellotape.

GMC: Yeah, I think that's the Suzuki method [consensus].

IW: Yeah.

Mir: Yeah, exactly the Suzuki method exactly.

CDP: I knew there was something else.

Mir: And so, you can actually play a D and it sounds nice like not a squeaky high sound but it doesn't matter because if it's a little bit leaky...

IW: I've done that with the thumb hole before because that's often the problem one. Just starting people with the thumb hole.

HSCF: So, start on? Sorry, so I start on C. I teach them C just because my preferred is C and A and so this is just Kodály background that, you've got so much...

JT: But this has always worked better, with...

JT and HSCF: C and A.

JT: I have experience with it.

HSCF: There are so many songs, you've got a wealth of repertoire.

JT: Even younger kids err like I have taught the youngest was four years old. They really can't do this and hold it properly because of their hands. But with this finger I don't know why, probably because it's stronger or mechanically it's more natural.

IW: It's also the balance thing [consensus] as well isn't it?

Here, JT is also advocating the use of starting on the note C and then moving to the note A to create the minor third interval as recommended by the Kodály method of musicianship. JT believes that using that finger combination is also more 'natural'; again, the theme of naturalism has returned.

JT: So afterwards I start to teach them the cuckoo cuckoo.

HSCF: Yeah that's what I do.

IW: Yeah so, we thought for some little ideas for this kind of like tapping and moving fingers and thought that erm we could do lots of sort of erm finger gym stuff. Erm tapping away from the recorder and really getting a sense of like sort of, maybe that sort of thing ahead of touching the recorder is quite good and raises the sensitivity of the fingertips. But we've thought of some sort of games for fingers. I mean the advanced ones could try the sort of Pac Man thing you know, sort of video-game arcade stuff that Sophie does very well now. Erm that sort of thing but we also thought erm like note pairs so they can pair notes like a telephone G to B, tapping their fingers erm or erm tremolo between the fingers making a telephone noise. Siren, C to a cuckoo F sharp to D and there are some erm there are some scope for some really interesting harmonic combinations of these if you have some trebles as well.

Both JT and HSCF are advocates of the C and A minor third combination of starting notes and then IW brings the subject back to games and this time the idea of 'finger gym'. A strong theme in how to move the fingers is a sense of touch as can be seen again in the above extract. A new theme is now the developments of harmonic combinations in the order pupils learn new notes.

Another idea was starting on a high D which only uses finger two:

GMC: Well we spoke about starting on the other D (GMC and RE). High D.

MN: How much would that affect the sound thing? Because often I find as soon as that thumb is off, it's like, OK now start again because, I know that sounds horrible.

GMC: I think the argument was if you start with that D you have no option but to be balancing and you have no option but to use your right hand and it has a purpose for the right hand [consensus] whereas in all the other notes you don't really have a purpose to using the right hand. There are erm so many options, that's the problem.

There was no consensus on what note is best to start on regarding recorder technique. Both JT and HSCF agreed with the C to A minor third introduction. This came from its links with Kodály musicianship and not physical practicality. It was agreed that starting on B was not ideal and high D would not be appropriate due to the repercussions of introducing the left-hand thumb later on in the learning process. It seems the argument is not

what note to start on but how the fingers move and the other considerations of recorder technique in the other subcategories.

Relaxed playing

The theme of relaxed and natural playing returns in this extract on the subject of how the fingers move on and off the holes.

IW: We wondered about erm, well the idea of the fingers erm falling to the holes, I don't know what you all think about the, but falling to the instrument is is good and then, this robot fingers which I is something that I use a lot erm just in terms of feeling very very neat and mechanical but a bit like with what EF said with the robotic thing there are a couple of issues with that.

IW goes on to explain that the idea of 'robotic fingers' is loaded as it implies a stiffness and unnaturalness, but that fingers need to be mechanical and functional.

IW: So, it's not a very efficient thing to have in people's minds you know but there's yes, mechanical or technically precise. There's something but for me the word robot is a bit loaded in a negative, stiff yeah way that we probably don't really want although we want that efficiency, that mechanical, technological way.

So fingers need to be efficient but relaxed in their movement across the instrument.

RE takes on the idea of finger movement and relaxed hands and naturalisation of recorder technique in this extract.

RE: The only point where Walter develops that idea, he says it's more about opening the hole than closing the hole and that in itself is a relaxing thing. But that's a remark that I've only ever been able to convey to advanced students. I've never been able to convey that to a child but I'm sure there is a way of doing that and my suspicion is that the intermediary element is a foreign body like a broom handle or I don't know or to make finger games and that could lead in brilliantly to finger games that you were describing.

Again, there is the external aid in helping to convey complex issues surrounding recorder technique.

Holding the recorder

An overarching theme emerging from the focus group was that the recorder was made for the human body and not the other way around. As such the body should remain in as much of a natural state as possible. RE explained that the recorder comes to the body and CF carried this idea forward in her experience of the Alexander Technique. Therefore, in holding the recorder one should use a natural and relaxed hand position that is free of all tension but at the same time allows for flexible and nimble access to the instrument.

Natural status of the body

RE: Erm..., I think there's another development and I would like to throw something into the ring here. Holding the recorder. I would say that there's a... there's something to be learnt from the Alexander Technique here which is very fundamental to all kinds of instrumental technique which is: the less that you can change the natural disposition of your body in order to work with the instrument, the better the results are going to be and that's something which is implicit in van Hauwe, erm... and he doesn't develop it as much as he could, and I think that we can do better than that.

CF: There's um, there's a certain sort of an erm, vocabulary that you have, that has been built up to explain certain concepts of the Alexander Technique to young kids. This, sort of age range, um and there's a sort of specific school, where the whole education programme is based on the principles of the Alexander Technique, so one of the things that they talk to the kids about is to first of all before they go into an activity is to stop, and be the boss of their body. So, it's quite a nice idea that, with the instrument: stop and be the boss of your body and bring the instrument to you.

Running concurrently to the idea of maintaining a natural status of the body when playing the recorder was that in order to really achieve this, one has to obtain and balance playing position in the right hand.

EF: Erm... so we were holding the recorder. Blimey, and erm so we decided that balance was the most important thing first, so we felt very strongly about that. Erm, especially in the right-hand thumb and the position of where the right-hand thumb was for erm, for good balance.

The right hand

The position of the right-hand thumb and right-hand little finger is important to achieving a balanced playing position.

GMC: Does anyone want to include the little finger in that?

IW: I was just going to say, it was about, it's just about holding the recorder. Yes, I think it's really important to have the balance, yes, I think it's a really important thing. You could work to have that there as well, it's a balancing act. I'm also wondering if we should also have something, yeah right-hand little finger. That's on the other side to balance it. Opposite the thumb.

The right-hand thumb

One of the issues in the focus group was that tacit information regarding recorder technique was sometimes missed; for instance, no one mentioned the position of the little finger, although there was discussion of where to put the right-hand thumb.

IW: But I think, Georgina, it is good for you to establish where the thumb is going.

GMC: So where would that right, because I know where I would...

IW: I think it's going to be dependent on every child, where each child. It's going to be an individual thing.

CF: Yeah.

HSCF: Is there like an exercise?

GMC: Do we have like err... Erm... a hierarchy? Of where, where would we put the thumb?

RE: No! No, it's err when the child goes 'mine' and makes a fist it's where it comes to.

SC: Really?

GMC: yeah.

RE: That's what determines it. It's never going to be there. No child is ever going to make a fist like that. Because, yeah...

CF: But it could go to the fourth or middle...

IW: Yeah.

RE: Possibly.

The outcome of the discussion about where the right thumb goes in relation to the recorder was in relation to the individual child. When the child makes a fist, where the thumb meets the finger determines which finger the thumb needs to be opposite. CF clarified that this could be either the fourth or middle finger.

Relaxation

A recurring theme across all the coded data was relaxation. This is illustrated in relation to holding the recorder:

MN: I think it's like a relax your hand thing as well because when you ask a kid to hold the recorder this way it's kind of, it's in line for it to be a bit less tense.

IW: Yeah.

[In audible agreement]

RE: That's good.

If the right-hand thumb is in the natural position for the child, then that should be a relaxed and natural state, free of tension for ease of playing. The point is again reiterated by RE.

RE: If I can summarise... The first point is: where did God put your thumb in relation to your other fingers? And in most people it's either going to be opposite that finger or that finger [third or fourth] and if you grasp a broomstick or a pen or pick up something that is where it's going to be there. And the second point is, how am I going to modify my body in order to play the recorder and the point then becomes there's one hole and another hole and that distance is given to you by the instrument. You can't modify it, only if you buy another type of recorder so then, you check whether where the thumb goes. But I think the first thing is where does where go, how your creator made your hand and that could be different in order to who you are.

The right-hand thumb placement is not a fixed spot for all pupils. It can either go behind the fourth or third finger hole and this is determined by the hand span of the pupil.

RE: Can I leave you with a thought, which is going to come out a bit more massive than I would like. Erm I think that, erm, van Hauwe starts off with a really, really good idea that he doesn't develop and if there was a way of developing it might actually help a lot which is again this business of what does the body do if it's just left alone. And what do you have to change? Erm, he has this idea of just letting your hand by your side and looking at it and observing that for most people it's just asking to have a recorder put into it. Erm, and if it's going into the hand it can be a big recorder or a little recorder and then he stops. And I think that there's a lot of scope there...

RE: So you then start with that and then you stretch out your fingers and you hold that for ten seconds and you realise how incredibly exhausting that is and that you don't have to do anything to bring your fingers down, it is just when you relax, it automatically does that. You then make a fist and do the same thing that's also quite strenuous and then relax and it doesn't feel, well in my hand, that it goes back to exactly the same place because the first is a different stretch but comparable with one another. And I think that that could be the starting point for a number of games.

RE: I've never been able to convey that to a child but I'm sure there is a way of doing that and my suspicion is that the intermediary element is a foreign body like a broom handle or I don't know or to make finger games and that could lead in brilliantly to finger games that you were describing.

Natural status of the body

Here RE explained that the natural shape of the hand is the correct shape for correct recorder technique and that the hand does not need to be modified to fit the recorder. The central theme in holding the recorder is to keep the natural shape of the hand as much as possible. This can be explored through games and hand exercises. The recorder was designed for the human hand, not the other way around.

Table 5.2: Subthemes relating to holding the recorder

Holding the recorder	
Subthemes	Summary
Natural status of the body	The recurring theme in 'Holding the recorder' was about the body in relation to the physical element – the recorder. In holding the recorder it is important to be driven by the pupil's body, and therefore the position of the thumb will change for each pupil.
Right-hand thumb	The main element of holding the recorder according to the focus group was the placement of the right-hand thumb. Considering the hand span of the child: where the pupil's thumb meets the finger when making a fist is where the thumb is to be placed on the recorder in relation to the holes on the instrument and their hand.
Right-hand little finger	This is something that was not immediately brought up by the focus group but instead had to be mentioned by the facilitator. The right-hand little finger is to go on the foot joint of the recorder to counter the balance between the thumb and the lips, as mentioned also by Walter van Hauwe.

Starting and ending notes

External and pictorial aids

Straight away JT refers to an external aid in the explanation of articulation. The theme of the use of external aids and preparatory games again becomes even more apparent in all aspects of recorder technique. Articulation is a fundamental point of recorder technique: with no reed, the recorder does not suffer from any degree of resistance and is therefore a directly speaking instrument. Different forms of articulation, different vowel and consonant sounds for example, can have a dramatic effect on the sound of the instrument. This could be why teachers struggle to teach articulation, because its effects can be so dramatic. JT explains that with her pupils she uses 'ti'. It is therefore important that recorder pupils are aware of the vowel and consonant sounds being produced in the mouth and their

transference to the sound of the recorder. At a more basic level, one has to 'speak' into the instrument in order for the instrument itself to, in turn, speak out.

JT: So I always take a tissue because if you blow too hard then the tissue is flying away. So that's also an image for the kids to see where the tissue or how much they blow, too much is too high, so this is also to let them know the airstream. So that for starting and ending notes I was dealing with my students like ti ti ti but erm if they do ti ti ti in front of the tissue then they can see that the tissue is moving. So I think it's kind of one of the games that can be erm yeah.

M develops this theme further.

'Recorder language'

M: Actually, in a lot of German books, erm, we are talking about recorder language and you cannot go just like 'wooooo' into the recorder because that's not really how you would talk. And so, I find it quite important to paint that image that you could use lots of different letters to actually talk and then to really find out which ones are usable and which ones might not work really well. And to trial it out. And then to try and make this recorder language out of it that you always use when you play the recorder.

The theme of relating the unfamiliar recorder to the everyday activities of students and the body again becomes apparent in the subgroup of starting and stopping notes: the idea of recorder language that you play the recorder in the same way that you would speak. Pupils need to develop a recorder 'language'.

Starting with the whole instrument or head joint only

JT asks whether in the teaching of articulation, should the pupil start with the whole recorder or just the head joint?

JT: Oh yeah, we have to kind of bring up a question to everyone. When you're talking about all these games after, to apply them on the recorder, would you prefer a student only holding the head joint to do it? Or the whole recorder? [Pause] It's very, advantages and disadvantages.

CF explains that it could be different for each individual student, that each student has a different level of natural competence with the individual elements of technique.

CF: I think that's different, for different kids, I mean there are some kids that really struggle, maybe coordination is an issue, actually this is really playful and there's loads of stuff you can do without the fingers and perhaps it's a matter of the child. Yeah.

GMC: So, it could be like an option. You can either do it with or without.

N: Or you could do it on the same note?

GMC: Yeah.

But then it becomes apparent that in order for a pupil to learn articulation with the whole recorder, they also need to be able to hold the recorder, which is another skill in the different categories of learning the recorder. What comes first? Holding the recorder or producing sound? This is where, for the first time, the idea of preparatory exercises gets brought into question.

RE: But then, then they're already holding it. [Agreement]

N: But many want to play, and when you then say, 'hey we're not going to play we're doing exercises', they're not happy.

CF: No but if it's a game and it's played, they'll enjoy it.

GMC: And also, it's a language thing. A lot of the time if you're talking to kids and you tell them they're doing an exercise they're like 'oooooh' [miserable] but you could do exactly the same thing and tell them it's a game and they're like 'yay'.

Creativity vs. technique

From the next ongoing conversation, it becomes apparent that working only with the head joint can have its advantages in terms of creativity, not just instrumental technique.

M: Yeah or there are so many amazing stories which you can just tell them that they do the noises to. I think if you can make it interesting...

JT: Yeah, I like doing this movement. I think this is one of the advantages of using only the head joint.

GMC: So like you could do [recorder glissando sound, possibly only head joint?] different games on starting and stopping the note. I'm making a sound story.

M: Yeah exactly.

Mir: Yeah exactly, also I just came from a class erm like first the middle joint and the foot joint without the head joint and you can whisper and like have different sounds like storms or like a little wind and then you can like do soft rain with your fingers and then with just the head joint and having the air experience just woo [blows] without having this weird thing in your mouth. And then with the head joint and that worked quite well.

SC: You can do like bird sounds.

CDP: Remember when we were in Amsterdam and the Royal Winds did a really interactive performance with the kids. The kids were involved either with playing notes or just the mouthpiece. Didn't matter what level they were at. And I found myself starting to use lots of the ideas in workshops for various people. And we just get the kids, you just create a soundscape. And just like that Mir, some are doing exactly as you said, just taking off the head joint and it can be a bird moving or some of them can flutter their tongue. They actually can, they don't know they're doing it but...

It can be deduced that working with only the head joint to develop articulation is advantageous due to its potential for creativity in lessons. As well as being able to work with the head joint for articulation, Mir acknowledges that one can work with just the middle and foot joints to produce games to develop finger dexterity on the instrument.

Developing creativity is a key feature of any instrumental lesson but particularly in preparing young recorder players, early on in the process, for producing florid ornamentation, extended technique and improvisation, which are all key features of recorder playing in the more advanced stages of learning. This idea is developed on by IW:

IW: There's something really nice about the idea that you know, that if you're teaching, if you really are trying to work on that, that there's a kind of piece that you can create. That idea of the soundscape, you know you gradually, through the tutor book, is formulating things that you can use later. Interesting. There's always a place for that kind of music-making. You know whatever is happening on stage.

The conversation then reverts back to the use of pictorial aids in the learning process.

M: And I always think there's a lot you can do with pictures if you want to teach them articulation. And they kind of feel what they have to do. So if you would show them a big river or a night scene they would intentionally play much softer than if you were to show them, I don't know, a ballet dancer that is on their tiptoes, so I think you can make a lot of ideas.

The conversation moves from how one would teach articulation back to the subject of what kind of articulation. JT previously mentioned the use of 'ti' to start notes. The subject moves on to how to end notes, an area of articulation very often neglected but mentioned by Walter van Hauwe. IW is the first to mention the ending of notes:

IW: Erm, one of the things. There's one tutor book that I kind of see that talks really very early on about finishing the notes with the tongue and using tut, as the word. And there's something nice about that being introduced very early on, that idea of stopping notes with the tongue being there, because you know I always think what we have and what's vital in our playing is the articulation. It's our kind of trump card over all other instruments and that's what's kind of and to really evolve that kind of thinking to say, 'we're going to end this note with the tongue' or let it kind of, just have a defined start is something. And then, that word, I find really useful to have a concept that you can actually take care of the end of the note. It's really important.

Mir: Can I say something? I find it, or something I have found very useful to use is nnnn.

GMC: To use what?

Mir: Nnnn no note just nnnn. To experience that the tongue lies flat without any force, added force, I found quite helpful.

IW: Mm yeah. Mmm and T are very closely related. It's the T uses aspiration. It's the N and T that are in the same part of the palate. I think N is, is great. I use that a lot of the time. N, I sense, I sort of pretend to myself that I'm using N to start the note but I'm actually using, I'm technically using T. I'm using it, in my mind thinking N as something soft.

GMC: Do you mean? Like, kids are really in tune to sounds because they learn to read using phonics.

IW: Yeah.

GMC: So they're in tune with... phonics!

CDP: Mir, do you mean using N at the end like using Tun?

Mir: Yeah.

CDP: Yeah.

Mir: Because then you have like, without any extra note at the end.

CDP: Cos I find if we're getting them to say Tut, tut, cos I've said it to some kids before, then just the repetitive word with the starting and beginnings with the same letter they kind of can't, I don't think they can.

Mir: And it also applies that when you want to erm some articulation between notes later on that you don't lose the support like tunnnnn. And then, I also like, show them the movement of the tongue.

The same themes regarding 'recorder language' reappear here, and the link between school-age children being in tune with phonics through the way in which they learn to read at school acknowledges the theme of playing the recorder in a way that is as natural as possible. One has to speak through the recorder using phonics, just as one speaks or learns to read. It can be deduced here that the use of Tut can be problematic, with the added syllable at the end creating an unintentional extra note. Mir acknowledges that the syllable 'tunn' would be a more suitable alternative. The reappearing theme of externally demonstrating internal techniques can also be seen here, with Mir explaining that it is helpful to visually show the movement of the tongue in explaining this action.

The conversation then turns back to the familiar theme of preparatory exercises and games away from the instrument in learning and practising articulation.

IW: Yeah. I also think word games are like good. Like little tongue twisters and things like that that we do but like, everyone, you know like thinking of erm dotty teddy, which is all front strokes and HCF's one that she come up with in a lesson, quite violent but effective, go kick a geeky guy, which is all the back of the tongue, or go kick a kid go kick a kid. Where you're exercising the back of the throat, and then the other one that I use for err double-tonguing, which is you know, way down the line but it's kind of fun to to experiment with what feeling where the tongue is with the take a ticket to Kentucky, take a ticket to Kentucky which is like tk tk erm and that,

just just raising awareness of where in the mouth. I think that's a really important thing just to get a sense of where in the mouth.

RE: Counting of the teddies, sorry counting of the teddies, you know, teddy, teddy, teddy, teddy, and then cross them, teddy teddy kick a teddy kick a teddy [laughter].

In summary, the subthemes within 'starting and stopping notes' were: preparatory games and instruments, the use of recorder language and using external aids to represent internal bodily actions. IW mentions 'raising awareness of where in the mouth'; again, the idea of explicitly explaining the internal action through isolated activities is a recurring theme.

Table 5.3: Summary of remaining emerging themes

Subtheme	Summary
	Sound and articulation, Blowing and breathing
Natural status of the body	The recurring theme in 'Holding the recorder' was about the body in relation to the physical element – the recorder. This again becomes apparent in 'Sound and articulation, Blowing and breathing'.
Explaining and demonstrating internal bodily actions	The trio of natural physicality, external and physical aids and preparatory exercises and games.
Use of a preparatory learning stage with games and exercises to embed the fundamentals of recorder technique	
	Starting and ending notes
Natural status of the body	What vowels and consonants to use when introducing articulation: 'ti' to start the note and adding n at the end to produce 'tin'. Naturally linking articulation to process speech.
Explaining and demonstrating internal bodily actions	The trio of natural physicality, external and physical aids and preparatory exercises and games.
Use of a preparatory learning stage with games and exercises to embed the fundamentals of recorder technique	Tongue twisters and word games.
Head joint or full recorder?	From the above data it can be acknowledged that there is vast benefit to using just the head joint to experiment with sound and to isolate the techniques needed to produce sound and to hold the recorder.

	How to move the fingers
Natural status of the body: relaxed hand position	The recorder was made for the human hand and not the other way around.
	The hand position should be left as natural as possible leading to relaxed but efficient finger movement.
What note to start on	The idea that it is not the note that one starts on that is of importance but rather that the other fundamentals of recorder technique are embedded first.
Numbered fingers vs. visual diagram	
Use of a preparatory learning stage with games and exercises to embed the fundamentals of recorder technique	Use of finger gym and feeling of the holes.

Summary of Overarching Themes across the Fundamental Five

Overarching themes emerging across all of the above were:

Reference to retaining the natural status of the body

The recorder was made for the human body and not the other way around, and this became a mantra for teaching and learning the recorder across all aspects of technique. When holding the recorder, the right-hand placement should be where the thumb naturally meets the finger (this could be finger 2 or finger 3). When moving the fingers, this should be a relaxed movement without strenuous or extreme movement. Covering the holes should be a natural covering, without tension or squeezing. The recorder does not suffer any degree of resistance, and this is unique across all modern woodwind instruments. As such the diaphragm does not need to be engaged in initial recorder lessons and there is no embouchure in order to create sound. To play the recorder one needs to be able to blow and breathe in as natural a manner as a resting breath. With starting and ending notes, alongside sound and articulation it is important to take into consideration each pupil's mother tongue: rather than imposing one standard form of articulation for all students it is

recommended to use a syllable that works for one's pupil. That could be starting with d or t, providing the tongue touches the roof of the mouth when starting and ending notes.

Learning through games

Preparatory games and exercises to be undertaken ahead of learning lots of notes in quick succession including using pictorial and external aids to explain internal bodily actions.

The focus group concluded that when learning the recorder, all fundamental five technical themes should be introduced through preparatory games. Many aspects of recorder learning include internal bodily actions that are not easily explained through vocabulary, therefore the focus group concluded that in order to help learn these internal bodily actions, pictorial and external aids should be used. When learning to hold the recorder, these could be simple games such as picking up a pencil or playing pick-up sticks. This helps the learner to understand the relationship between maintaining the natural status of the body: there is nothing different between picking up a stick or pencil with your right hand and picking up a recorder with your right hand. The relationship between the thumb and the finger is exactly the same. When learning how to move the fingers, this could be done through rhythm exercises physically, with the fingers away from the instruments, the idea being again that the natural status of the body should be maintained and that when playing the recorder, nothing unusual with the body needs to happen. By removing the instrument and playing preparatory games as an exercise, one is trying to explain the maintenance of the natural status of the body. Preparatory games and exercises are not just to reinforce maintaining an actual status of the body; these are also used to put ahead the idea of technique before pitched notes. The focus group was unanimous in deciding that an awareness of good technique was of more importance in the early stages of learning than the acquisition of pitched notes and playing melodies. Playing preparatory games and exercises helps pupils to be fully congruent in the learning experience and to fully understand what the body has to do in order to play the recorder fluently.

Preparatory games and exercises include pictorial aids. Pictorial aids can also help those with special educational needs and English as an additional language. Utilising games and pictorial aids in the learning experience is similar to advice set out by educational practitioners such as Montessori and Piaget. Music education practitioners such as Dalcroze and Kodály also utilise play as a method of learning in the early years.

Recorder language

As aforementioned, the recorder does not suffer a degree of resistance like other modern woodwind instruments, and as such, the vowels, consonants and phonics that are spoken through the instrument by use of articulation and breath can drastically alter the sound of the instrument, for better or worse. The focus group was unanimous that teachers should adopt the phrase 'recorder language' as a way of referencing how to articulate and produce sound on the recorder in a similar linguistic fashion to speaking and learning language. 'Recorder language' should not only be used as a reference to articulation but be used to reinforce how sound is produced when playing the recorder. This again links the recorder to other aspects of pupils' lives, for example learning to read and write at school. By using the phrase 'recorder language', the teacher is using child-friendly terminology to aid the learning experience by relating it to the already familiar, basing learning on pre-existing knowledge.

These overarching themes led to a conclusion that beginner recorder lessons should focus on acquiring a quality of sound and knowledge of how to produce different sounds on the recorder. Quality of sound is of higher importance in the early stages of learning than the acquisition of many notes. This should be taught through play and based on pre-existing knowledge, both physical and cognitive.

Core Elements of the Fundamental Five

This chapter has uncovered the fundamental elements of an effective beginner recorder technique, all taught with an overarching philosophy of promoting and maintaining

the natural status of the body, learning through play, developing a 'recorder language' and sound before melody.

Holding the recorder

The placement of the right-hand thumb should be determined by the hand span of the pupil. This can be established by preparatory games. There should be a balanced and relaxed hand position, aided by a supporting little finger to negate any need for tension.

Moving the fingers

Moving the fingers, like holding the recorder, should be relaxed, and this can be practised through technique games. To aid relaxed playing, sensory relationships between the holes on the recorder and finger pads should be made in the learning process; this can be done through play. Discussions were had about what note to start on, and it was concluded that in the initial learning stages, pupils should start with the head joint only. There was no consensus on what pitched note to start on. This will be discussed more in the 'Starting and ending notes' section.

Blowing and breathing

These are internal actions and should be taught and learnt through games, using external aids, initially away from the instrument.

Starting and ending notes

The focus group decided upon using only the head joint in the initial stages of learning to develop the skill of starting and ending notes. It was decided that the skill of starting and ending notes using the head joint through creative play should be put above learning pitched notes in the learning process.

Sound and articulation

The focus group was unanimous in recommending the use of 'recorder language' and the importance of consonant and vowel sounds (using the tongue) to produce sound

and articulation. Games can be designed to support this, such as tongue twisters and rhymes.

Focus Group Final Summary

These are core elements as discussed and produced by alumni, current students and professors of recorder at the GSMD. In summary, according to the focus group, when teaching beginner recorder players, teachers must encourage pupils to maintain the natural status of the body. The focus group recommended doing this through preparatory technique games and also by using props (such as drinking straws for demonstrating breathing). If teaching is in line with focus group recommendations, teachers should place importance on the acknowledgement of pupils' use of language in starting and stopping notes when playing the recorder. When holding the recorder, pupils should have a counterbalance between their right thumb, right little finger and the bottom lip; this will help in producing 'clearer' sounds. In order to produce 'clearer' sounds, fingers should be relaxed in line with maintaining the natural status of the body. Linked to this, the production of sound should be placed above the acquisition of pitched notes.

Essentially the focus group is endorsing a constructive style of teaching and learning of beginner recorder technique, where learning is determined by the starting point of the pupil and knowledge is gradually built upon. It has been suggested that learning recorder technique is tailored to the individual, with thumb position determined by the pupil's hand span and articulation chosen by the pupil.

The focus group points towards recommending a constructionist style of learning. It points towards a style of learning that focuses on the pupil truly understanding the physicality of how to play the recorder, instead of merely copying teacher modelling (which was the second most popular activity in the beginner recorder lesson).

The focus group has highlighted a recommended approach to the teaching and learning of recorder, with four main elements. It suggests activities in which these aspects of

technique can be taught and learnt in the beginner recorder lesson. It has clarified, specifically, how to physically play the recorder.

The next chapter will compare technique advice set out in recorder tutor books and will help to answer the question: 'How do the views of recorder experts in teaching technique compare with the wider teaching community?'

Chapter 6: Analysis and Comparisons of Recorder Tutor Books

Introduction

This chapter compares four best-selling recorder tutor books across the 20th century.

Table 6.1 shows an alphabetical order list of tutor books that were analysed for this chapter.

Table 6.1: List of tutor books with authors and year of publication

Title of tutor book	Author (alphabetical order)	Year of publication
<i>Enjoy the Recorder</i>	Brian Bonsor	1983
<i>Me and My Recorder</i>	Marlene Hobsbawn	1989
<i>Recorder from the Beginning</i>	John Pitts	1980
<i>Red Hot Recorder</i>	Sarah Watts	2003

Table 6.1 shows the four books, their author and the date of first publication of the tutor books that were analysed using thematic analysis.

This chapter contextualises why tutor books were chosen to be analysed for this thesis. It then summarises general key themes of tutor books, themes relating to beginner recorder technique, and themes relating to music theory and musicianship. From there, the themes of the tutor book will be summarised in relation to the Framework for Teaching and Learning Beginner Recorder Technique, as devised from studying learning theories in chapter 2 and the Fundamental Five aspects of recorder technique as devised from focus group analysis in chapter 6. Further comparisons and analysis will be made between recorder tutor books and the newly devised Framework for Teaching and Learning Beginner Recorder Technique and the Fundamental Five aspects of recorder technique in chapter 8.

Evidence cited in the opening chapters of this thesis showed that traditional instrumental teaching is forced into a situation of behaviourist learning that is at odds with the way the NC is organised. The teacher survey showed that teachers' most-used activities in recorder lessons are note reading and teacher modelling. This suggests a master–apprentice style of recorder learning, in line with behaviourist principles. The focus group, however, suggests a style of learning that promotes sequential and thorough understanding of the physicality of playing the recorder, through games. The focus group promotes the understanding of how to play the recorder ahead of copying teacher actions. The focus group prefers a more constructivist style of learning.

The teacher survey suggested that teachers still use tutor books. Teachers expressed a demand for more 'recorder technique'-focused teacher training, which also points to a lack of recorder-technique knowledge held by recorder teachers. Given the low level of qualifications held by the majority of teachers in the survey, they cannot be classed as wholly professional recorder player-teachers. In light of this and evidence from the literature review, it can be presumed that most recorder teachers get their teaching information from tutor books. This chapter will now present general themes across the sample of tutor books.

Summary of General Themes and Layout

Table 6.2 compares general themes across the sample of tutor books. All of the tutor books are aimed at primary-school children and are designed to be used in conjunction with an inexperienced teacher. *Enjoy the Recorder* is also aimed at adults wishing to teach themselves. *Red Hot Recorder* does not give an intended audience. All of the books contain repertoire that is based around folk music, Christian hymnal repertoire and simple WCAM, with the exception of *Red Hot Recorder* which entirely consists of original compositions in the style of jazz and pop. There is no reference to canonical recorder repertoire or broken-down arrangements of any Renaissance or Baroque music. Neither is there a suggested further listening or playing repertoire list. *Enjoy the Recorder* is the largest book, with 294

Table 6.2: Familiar themes across tutor books

Theme	<i>Enjoy the Recorder</i>	<i>Me and My Recorder</i>	<i>Recorder from the Beginning</i>	<i>Red Hot Recorder</i>
Audience	Children and inexperienced teachers	Children and inexperienced teachers	Children and inexperienced teachers	N/A
Repertoire	Folk, Christian hymnal and Western Art Music	Folk, Christian hymnal and Western Art Music	Folk, Christian hymnal and Western Art Music	Original jazz/pop compositions
Pages	90	39	47	31
Pieces	294	35	45	32
Standard	ABRSM Grade 2	Below prep test ABRSM	Prep test ABRSM	Below Grade 1 ABRSM
Backing tracks/ accompaniments	No	Chord symbols	Chord symbols, piano, classroom percussion and CD backing tracks	Piano book and CD backing tracks
Fingering diagrams	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Author introduction	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Author farewell	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

pages, and the smallest *Me and My Recorder*, with thirty pages. The books contain an average of thirty pieces per book, which equates to roughly a piece of music per page. With an academic year of around thirty-five weeks in England, one could hypothesise that the publishers equate this with a year's worth of learning for a primary-school pupil. There are no structured lesson plans and none of the books feature differentiated learning or pieces of music; it is a 'one size fits all' approach to learning the recorder.

All of the books except *Enjoy the Recorder* are both large-print and colourful, which is both appealing and practical for children. Half of the books contain CD backing tracks and three out of four books come with accompanying instrumental accompaniment. None of the books contain anything where learners could listen to a real recorder or find out more information on the instrument they play.

Linking to educational theory, the general layout of tutor books does not promote an enculturated approach to learning. With the exception of *Enjoy the Recorder*, none of the books show any interesting facts about the recorder or show other instruments of the recorder family. The books do not explicitly promote a positive image of the recorder in wider society, or show any signs of aiding a process of enculturation.

Suggested Framework for Teaching and Learning Beginner Recorder Technique in Relation to Tutor-Book Themes

Table 6.3 shows which elements of the suggested Framework for Teaching and Learning Beginner Recorder Technique are present within the sample selection of recorder tutor books.

Table 6.3: Suggested Framework for Teaching and Learning in Beginner Recorder Technique in relation to tutor-book themes²⁴

Learning experience	<i>Enjoy the Recorder</i>	<i>Me and My Recorder</i>	<i>Recorder from the Beginning</i>	<i>Red Hot Recorder</i>
Experimentation and curiosity	Includes experiments in producing sound			
Play				
Improvisation				
Movement				
Conversation, social interaction and scaffolding				
Independent learning and discovery				
Learning based on familiar material				
Mentorship				
Enculturation	Includes information about the recorder outside of a classroom context			

The table shows that following thematic analysis, the tutor books do not correspond to the suggested Framework for Teaching and Learning of Beginner Recorder Technique as devised through focus group discussions. Due to these elements lacking from the sample, the following sections will detail prevalent pedagogical themes that became present through thematic analysis. In addition, all of the tutor books are supposedly suitable for self-study and non-specialist teachers, so therefore this is why I am including a comparison of the elements of music theory. The inclusion of music theory will also provide a broader

²⁴ This table is mainly empty to emphasise the missing learning experiences in the tutor book sample

comparison of analysis of all the tutor books' approaches to learning the recorder.

Comparisons between tutor-book data and the data from the teacher survey in relation to the suggested Framework for Teaching and Learning in Beginner Recorder Technique will be discussed further in chapter 8.

Prevalent Themes in Sample Tutor Books – Music Theory and Musicianship

This section will present themes relating to music theory and musicianship, including:

1. Approaches to reading pitch and rhythm;
2. Comparisons of the presentation of metre and in what order each metre is introduced;
3. Comparisons of general music theory;
4. Presentations of clefs and transpositions within the sample tutor books.

This section ends with a summary of music theory and musicianship themes, before presenting data around beginner recorder technique in the sample tutor books.

Table 6.4 shows that each book has a different method of presenting how to read pitch and rhythm.

Table 6.4: Comparison of tutor books' approaches to reading pitch and rhythm

Book	Theme	Description of theme
<i>Enjoy the Recorder</i>	Pitch reading	Introduces notes on the lines and spaces.
<i>Me and My Recorder</i>	Pitch reading	Starts with only rhythm reading with pitch-letter names written underneath. The pitch is shown in a visual at the top of the page on the stave but not explained to the learner. Pitch is shown visually through a series of tunes learnt with arrows pointing to each note. The arrow goes up to signify a higher pitch and goes down for a lower pitch. After learning to play A, G, B and E, the stave and treble clef are introduced.
<i>Recorder from the Beginning</i>	Pitch reading	Does not explain how to read music but it does describe the treble clef. The notes are displayed at the top of the page on the stave and labelled.

<i>Red Hot Recorder</i>	Pitch reading	Introduces each note separately on a large stave at the top of each page where the pitch note is introduced.
<i>Enjoy the Recorder</i>	Rhythm reading	Introduces crotchets and minims and then dotted minims very quickly. (Pitch and rhythm are learnt at the same time.) Crotchet rests on page 18 and quavers on page 19. Semiquavers learnt on page 56. Dotted notes on page 60. Upbeats explained and used.
<i>Me and My Recorder</i>	Rhythm reading	Rhythm reading is learnt before putting the notes on the stave. The rhythm is learnt through little poems until page 15, a page called 'Timings'. It explains minims, crotchets and a pair of quavers. This page also explains that music has a steady beat. Page 16 and 17 assign sounds for crotchets and quavers: tick tick for crotchets and tick-a for quavers.
<i>Recorder from the Beginning</i>	Rhythm reading	Teaches rhythm by using word poems and introduces crotchet and quaver patterns in four-bar patterns first. It explains the length of a crotchet and a quaver. Crotchet rest is introduced on page 15, followed by the dotted minim on page 16. Simple syncopated rhythms are introduced on page 21.
<i>Red Hot Recorder</i>	Rhythm reading	Introduces the crotchet and crotchet rest first. Crotchet is explained as 'do'. Minims and minim rests and semibreves are introduced on the next page as 'dah'. Each rest and beat has its beats explained. Rests are accompanied by 'sh'. Four pages later, crotchets are introduced with the sounds 'doo-ee'. A page after, with the introduction of 3/4, there are dotted minims. On page 25 dotted crotchets are introduced. At the end of the book there is the dotted quaver-semiquaver pattern. With the introduction of each new rhythm there are 'practice patterns': patterns of around four bars to practise the new rhythm on one or two notes.

Not every book explicitly explains how to read music, implying that the teacher will need some prior knowledge or that the learner will either have some prior knowledge or a teacher that does.

Every book except *Me and My Recorder* starts playing the recorder immediately, with pitches and rhythms written on the stave. None of the books explains notes in the lines and notes in the spaces and the logical process of reading pitch. Instead, two of the books visually isolate the pitch being learnt with an illustration of the note (a crotchet) on the stave. The illustration is labelled as the pitch of the note. None of the books except *Me and My Recorder* label the notes during the book, instead relying on the one annotated illustration of the isolated pitch. *Me and My Recorder* is distinctly different as it starts with reading rhythm

and then adds the letter names of the pitches underneath. There are also lines depicting the direction of the pitch of the note, helping the reader to follow their eyes up and down in preparation for reading full notation. Only later is full notation on a stave introduced.

In *Me and My Recorder* and all other books, the rhythm is introduced verbally: not all of the rhythm sounds can be reproduced on the recorder as articulation, such as 'tick' in *Me and My Recorder* and 'doo-ee' in *Red Hot Recorder*. This seems to be a missed learning opportunity to link the learning of rhythm with the learning of articulation. *Recorder from the Beginning* favours using the rhythm of word poems to describe rhythm.

All the books start with crotchets first, before introducing quavers and minims. *Enjoy the Recorder* is the most detailed and *Me and My Recorder* the most basic.

Table 6.5 compares each tutor book's approach to learning metre and in what order each time signature is learnt.

Table 6.5: Comparison of the presentation of metre and in what order each metre is learnt

Book	Theme	Description of theme
<i>Enjoy the Recorder</i>	Metre	The lengths of notes are introduced by the amount of beats each note is worth. The concept of time signatures is introduced on page 19, crotchet rests on page 18 and quavers on page 19.
<i>Me and My Recorder</i>	Metre	The lengths of notes are introduced by the amount of beats each note is worth. The concept of time signatures is introduced on page 1, crotchet rests on page 18 and quavers on page 19. Crotchet rest learnt on page 26 and dotted minim on page 27.
<i>Recorder from the Beginning</i>	Metre	The lengths of notes are introduced by the amount of beats each note is worth.
<i>Red Hot Recorder</i>	Metre	The lengths of notes are introduced by the amount of beats each note is worth. With the introduction of each new rhythm there are 'practice patterns'.
<i>Enjoy the Recorder</i>	Metres learnt in order	4/4, 3/4, 2/4, 6/8, 2/2, 6/8
<i>Me and My Recorder</i>	Metres learnt in order	4/4, 2/4, 3/4

<i>Recorder from the Beginning</i>	Metres learnt in order	4/4, 2/4, 3/4
<i>Red Hot Recorder</i>	Metres learnt in order	4/4, 3/4

Every book explains how many beats each note is worth. With regards to which time signatures are presented, every book starts with 4/4 and/or 2/4 before moving onto 3/4.

Enjoy the Recorder is the only book to include compound time.

Table 6.6 compares the content and explanation of general music theory, including vocabulary, dynamics, clefs and transpositions.

Table 6.6: Comparisons of general music theory

Book	Theme	Description of theme
<i>Enjoy the Recorder</i>	Explanation and/or teaching or general music theory	Bar lines introduced on page 14 along with breath marks. Ties introduced on page 17. Accidentals discussed. 1st and 2nd time bars. Brief explanation of scales and arpeggios.
<i>Me and My Recorder</i>	Explanation and/or teaching or general music theory	Bar lines introduced on page 17.
<i>Recorder from the Beginning</i>	Explanation and/or teaching or general music theory	None
<i>Red Hot Recorder</i>	Explanation and/or teaching or general music theory	There is a 'Need to know info' box at the start of the book that explains a treble clef, the stave, bar lines, double bar lines, crotchets, crotchet rests and time signatures. Throughout the book new concepts are briefly explained as they occur: DS al Fine, repeat signs, fermata, tied notes.
<i>Enjoy the Recorder</i>	Dynamics	f, p, mf, mp and 'hair pins' introduced together on page 17 and used throughout the book.
<i>Me and My Recorder</i>	Dynamics	None

<i>Recorder from the Beginning</i>	Dynamics	None
<i>Red Hot Recorder</i>	Dynamics	p, f, crescendo, diminuendo, mp.

Table 6.6 presents a comparison of general vocabulary linked to structure and musical organisation and mentions all books. These include bar lines, treble clefs, repeat marks, the names of rhythm names, etc. General dynamics are included in two of the books; however, it is not explained how to physically produce these on the recorder.

Table 6.7 highlights how none of the chosen books utilise multi-clef reading or transpositions, which are both key technical concepts for the recorder as a consort instrument. Recorder players regularly read in treble, bass, alto, tenor and French violin clef and transpose up and down octaves, fourths and fifths.

Table 6.7: Table showcasing uses of clefs and transpositions in recorder tutor books

Book	Theme	Description of theme
<i>Enjoy the Recorder</i>	Clefs	Although this is a tutor book for descant recorder, bass clef is introduced on page 25 as part of a paragraph on 'the recorder family'. Apart from this brief introduction, bass clef is not used in the book.
<i>Me and My Recorder</i>	Clefs	N/A
<i>Recorder from the Beginning</i>	Clefs	N/A
<i>Red Hot Recorder</i>	Clefs	N/A
<i>Enjoy the Recorder</i>	Transposition	N/A
<i>Me and My Recorder</i>	Transposition	N/A
<i>Recorder from the Beginning</i>	Transposition	N/A
<i>Red Hot Recorder</i>	Transposition	N/A

Summary of Prevalent Themes in Sample Tutor Books – Music Theory and Musicianship

All tutor books start with 4/4 and also introduce 3/4. Compound time is only used in *Enjoy the Recorder*. Crotchets are always introduced first and then the quaver. Rhythms are kept relatively simple, except in the case of *Enjoy the Recorder*. *Recorder from the Beginning* is the only book to introduce syncopation. None of the books use more clefs than the treble clef, except *Enjoy the Recorder* which presents the bass clef, but the bass clef is not used in the tunes.

The concept of learning to read music is prevalent in many of the books; however, none of the books explicitly teaches the reader how to read pitch or interpret rhythm. Dynamics are mentioned in two of the books, but they do not explain how to achieve these on the recorder.

Recorder players read in five different clefs. *Enjoy the Recorder* explains what the bass clef is but does not use it in the book. None of the other books mention or use any other clef than the treble clef. All of the books remain in treble clef, with no practice of multi-clef reading or transposition.

All of the books in the sample concentrate on the simple fingering of pitches through a visual method of showing seven holes and colouring the holes black when the finger stops those holes. It does not use the numerical method of fingering, more commonplace with recorder players. They all present reading pitched and rhythm notes and contain information on note values, time signatures, structural instructions (such as a coda) and repeat marks. None of the books promote singing as a starting point.

The tutor books do not show the recorder in contemporary society, feature no recorders in backing tracks or contain a suggested listening list. The music does not relate to children's outside lives either. Tutor books are not enculturating the recorder into children's lives. This could go some way into explaining why there is such a negative view of the recorder in society.

All of the books in the sample contain lots of tunes to be learnt and two of them contain backing tracks (with a MIDI recorder sound).

In conclusion, these books do not explicitly teach one how to read music. Although they are intended for people to be able to learn and teach the recorder without any prior knowledge of the instrument, an experienced teacher would probably be needed.

Suggested Fundamental Five Aspects of Beginner Recorder Technique in Relation to Tutor-Book Themes

This section of the chapter will compare the suggested Fundamental Five Aspects of Beginner Recorder Technique devised by the focus group in relation to the themes of recorder technique in the sample tutor books.

Table 6.8 summarises comparisons of the presentation of recorder technique between the sample tutor book and the Guildhall focus group's Fundamental Five Aspects of Beginner Recorder Technique. Each element of the Fundamental Five will now be discussed in more detail, in the order presented in the Tables 6.9 to 6.12.

Table 6.9 compares how each tutor book presents the themes of sound and articulation. It shows that most of the books use the word *tonguing*, instead of articulation. Two of the books use a visual image to help the reader visualise the direction and sound of the air used to produce sound on the recorder. Three of the books demonstrate different types of articulation: *staccato*, *tenuto* and *slurred playing*.

Table 6.10 compares each book's approach to the teaching and learning of blowing and breathing when learning the recorder. The main theme is the use of adjectives to describe how blowing out should be achieved. The main adjectives refer to the out-breath as being 'gentle' and 'steady'. There is no guidance on what this physically feels like, or how to achieve this. *Me and My Recorder* does include a 'Blowing Games' page: it explains how to feel on one's hand the difference between 'steady' and 'unsteady' breath but does not refer

to the temperature or speed of the air. The temperature and speed of air is of particular importance to playing the recorder and there is no resistance to air flow.

Table 6.8: Suggested Fundamental Five Aspects of Beginner Recorder Technique in relation to tutor-book themes

Fundamental Five Aspects of Beginner Recorder Technique	Focus Group	<i>Enjoy the Recorder</i>	<i>Me and My Recorder</i>	<i>Recorder from the Beginning</i>	<i>Red Hot Recorder</i>
Sound and articulation	Explain 'what to do with the tongue', the action of the tongue. Use 'tu' and 'ti' and the word articulation to describe the action. Sound and articulation are heavily linked to starting and ending notes; this needs to be made clear. Use phrases 'recorder language' or 'instrument-speak'. Representation of physical motions and actions using flash cards and drawings. Use games and playful exercises to reinforce learning and understanding. Listening to teachers/professionals: aspirational modelling. Representation of pitch and sound. Being aware of sound. Play the action. Peer mentoring. Natural status of the body.	Explains clearly how to physically make a sound on the recorder using 'doo' by putting tongue behind the teeth. Uses the visual image of a straight and wobbly line to indicate the direction of air needed to create the sound on the recorder. Includes information on slurs, legato playing and staccato.	Uses the word tonguing instead of articulation or recorder language. Doesn't explain how to make different sounds with the recorder but demonstrates staccato and legato playing. For staccato the use of 'tut'. There is no physical explanation of legato tonguing, but it is explained through music theory by using the 'legato symbol' (horizontal line above the note). Introduces slurred ones by using 'doo'.	Says to blow gently. Uses the word 'tonguing' not articulation.	Explains how to use 'd': start with the tongue and not let the recorder touch your teeth. This is under the title 'How to play a note'. Uses language such as slur, legato and staccato but doesn't explain how to physically create the sound.
Blowing and breathing	Internal actions need external help, so use games with props to reinforce learning and understanding. E.g. blowing cotton-wool balls and turning that into a game to demonstrate air speed.	Doesn't explain how blowing or breathing is to be utilised when playing the recorder	On page 29 asks to blow the air 'steadily'. Introduces breath marks on page 20 but no explanation of	Explains to blow gently but does not go into detail.	Explains to breathe through the mouth and to blow gently. Explains that squeaks

	Use hissing games to control air speed and flow. Inhaling and exhaling games. Remember the natural status of the body: blowing and breathing are natural actions. Use pictorial and visual aids.	but does include breath markings.	physically how to breathe.		will occur if the breath is too hard.
Starting and ending notes	Internal actions need external help, so use games with props to reinforce learning and understanding. Explain and develop understanding through games of what to do with the tongue. Use of 'ti' and 'tu' as an introductory form of articulation. Depending on the mother tongue, this may change to 'doo' or 'di', etc. Learning to start from a familiar starting point: what does the child already know? Focus on recognising the 'correct' feeling. Maintain the natural status of the body. Use visual and pictorial aids.	Clearly explains how to make a sound on the recorder; even has a title called 'Starting a Note' and one underneath called 'Ending a Note'. Asks to put tongue behind teeth to stop the air flow to stop the sound.	'Doo' to start notes. Explains to put tongue against teeth to stop notes, which is incorrect. Asks the learner to keep the tongue against the teeth to stop the flow of air.	'Tu'. Doesn't explain tongue movement. Does not explain how to stop notes.	Uses 'd'. Doesn't explain movement of tongue or how to stop notes.
Holding the recorder	Determined by the child's hand span – right thumb either behind the 4th or 3rd finger. Flexible thumbs. Left-hand thumb needs to be flexible to produce octaves. Right-hand thumb will need to be flexible when moving across instruments of different sizes. Both thumbs need to be flexible in order to avoid tension. Little finger on top of the foot joint for balance. 'Robot' finger games. Use visual and pictorial aids to explain finger movement. Bring the recorder to the body, not the other way around. Holding a hamburger could be an ideal way to explain an ideal hand position. Use a marker for thumb position. Natural status of the body.	Explains in detail how to hold the recorder along with hand and finger shape. Gives an approximation of the right thumb going behind the recorder behind what are called holes 4 and 5.	No explanation of balanced playing technique or support finger. No explanation of correct finger shape. Asks the learner to use only the corner of the left thumb to cover the hole at the back of the recorder. Explains the right thumb should 'carry the weight of the recorder'. Recommends using Blu Tack as a thumb rest.	No explanation of balanced playing, support finger or finger/hand shape. Right-hand thumb asked to go opposite the fourth hole.	No explanation of balanced playing, support finger or finger/hand shape. Explains that the left hand must go at the top, with specific reference to left-handed learners. Asks for the left thumb to cover the hole at the back of the recorder and explicitly says the left thumb supports the entire weight of the recorder behind the fourth hole. There is a visual image

					showing the right-hand fingers bunched up around hole four.
How to move the fingers	Closing and opening the holes. Stopping the holes. Maintaining the natural status of the body to avoid tension. Use games and playful exercises.				

Table 6.9: Comparison of creating sound and articulation

Book	Theme	Description of Theme
<i>Enjoy the Recorder</i>	Sound and articulation	Explains clearly how to physically make a sound on the recorder using 'doo' by putting tongue behind the teeth. Uses the visual image of a straight and wobbly line to indicate the direction of air needed to create the sound on the recorder. Includes information on slurs, legato playing and staccato.
<i>Me and My Recorder</i>	Sound and articulation	Uses the word tonguing instead of articulation or 'recorder language'. Doesn't explain how to make different sounds with the recorder but demonstrates staccato and legato playing, for staccato the use of 'tut'. There is no physical explanation of legato tonguing, but it is explained through music theory by using the 'legato' symbol (horizontal line above the note). Introduces slurred ones by using 'doo'.
<i>Recorder from the Beginning</i>	Sound and articulation	Says to blow gently. Uses the word 'tonguing' not articulation.
<i>Red Hot Recorder</i>	Sound and articulation	Explains how to use 'd': start with the tongue and not let the recorder touch your teeth. This is under the title 'How to play a note'. Uses language such as slur, legato and staccato but doesn't explain how to physically create the sound.

Table 6.10: Comparison of presentation of blowing and breathing

Book	Theme	Description of Theme
<i>Enjoy the Recorder</i>	Blowing and breathing	Doesn't explain how blowing or breathing is to be utilised when playing the recorder but does include breath markings.
<i>Me and My Recorder</i>	Blowing and breathing	On page 29 asks to blow the air 'steadily'. Introduces breath marks on page 20 but no explanation of physically how to breathe.
<i>Recorder from the Beginning</i>	Blowing and breathing	Explains to blow gently but does not go into detail.
<i>Red Hot Recorder</i>	Blowing and breathing	Explains to breathe through the mouth and to blow gently. Explains that squeaks will occur if the breath is too hard.

An overenthusiastic gust of fast air when trying to play the lower notes of the recorder will almost always result in failure to produce the pitched note. If the teacher is not a specialist musician or recorder teacher, then this would prove difficult to correct in their student. None of the books explains the process of breathing out or breathing in. Overall the cognitive approach to learning, whereby the student understands the physical process of how to play the recorder, is lacking in the explanation and presentation of blowing and breathing.

Table 6.11 compares the amount and order of notes learnt and how each book describes and/or teaches how to start and stop notes.

Table 6.11: Comparison of notes learnt and starting and stopping notes

Book	Theme	Description of Theme
<i>Enjoy the Recorder</i>	Order of notes learnt	B A G E C' D' D F sharp E' C sharp' C F natural B flat (13)
<i>Me and My Recorder</i>	Order of notes learnt	A G E B C (5)
<i>Recorder from the Beginning</i>	Order of notes learnt	B A G E D C (6)
<i>Red Hot Recorder</i>	Order of notes learnt	B A G E D F sharp C D C sharp F natural (10)
<i>Enjoy the Recorder</i>	How to start and stop notes	Clearly explains how to make a sound on the recorder; even has a title called 'Starting a Note' and one underneath called 'Ending a Note'. Asks to put tongue behind teeth to stop the air flow to stop the sound.
<i>Me and My Recorder</i>	How to start and stop notes	'Doo' to start notes. Explains to put tongue against teeth to stop notes, which is incorrect. Asks the learner to keep the tongue against the teeth to stop the flow of air.
<i>Recorder from the Beginning</i>	How to start and stop notes	'Tu'. Doesn't explain tongue movement. Does not explain how to stop notes.
<i>Red Hot Recorder</i>	How to start and stop notes	Uses 'd'. Doesn't explain movement of tongue or how to stop notes.

The most prevalent theme across all books is note learning. Above all, the books concentrate mostly on learning notes and playing tunes. Table 6.11 shows that the books range from learning five to thirteen notes. All the books start with the note B, with the exception of *Me and My Recorder* which starts on A. The most common order of notes to learn is B, A, G and E. All the books start without using the right hand, which is in contrast to Walter van Hauwe's advice. None of the books include alternative fingerings, trill fingerings or introduce any other fingering systems such as F, G or D systems.

The second most prevalent theme in the books is starting notes. Table 6.11 shows that the most popular way to do this is by using the syllable 'doo' and, second, 'tu'. Stopping notes is usually mentioned further on in the book by putting the tongue behind the teeth. Only *Enjoy the Recorder* includes how to stop the notes at the beginning of the learning process.

Table 6.12 illustrates the comparison of how each tutor book describes how to hold the recorder.

Table 6.12: Holding the recorder

Book	Theme	Description of Theme
<i>Enjoy the Recorder</i>	Holding the recorder	Explains in detail how to hold the recorder, along with hand and finger shape. Gives an approximation of the right thumb going behind the recorder behind what are called holes 4 and 5.
<i>Me and My Recorder</i>	Holding the recorder	No explanation of balanced playing technique or support finger. No explanation of correct finger shape. Asks the learner to use only the corner of the left thumb to cover the hole at the back of the recorder. Explains the right thumb should 'carry the weight of the recorder'. Recommends using Blu Tack as a thumb rest.
<i>Recorder from the Beginning</i>	Holding the recorder	No explanation of balanced playing, support finger or finger/ hand shape. Right-hand thumb asked to go opposite the fourth hole.
<i>Red Hot Recorder</i>	Holding the recorder	No explanation of balanced playing, support finger or finger/hand shape. Explains that the left hand must go at the top, with specific reference to left-handed learners. Asks for the left thumb to cover the hole at the back of the recorder and explicitly says the left thumb supports the entire weight of the recorder behind the fourth hole.

		There is a visual image showing the right-hand fingers bunched up around hole four.
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Table 6.12 demonstrates that a purposeful right hand is neglected at the start of the learning process. None of the books describe a flexible right-hand thumb placement, determined by the hand span of the learner. Holding the recorder in all of the books is vaguely mentioned at the start of each book but never referred to further on in the learning process. Hand placement or finger shape is not mentioned. The movement of the fingers is also neglected. As with previous themes, the physical understanding of how to hold the recorder from the viewpoint of the student is lacking.

Summary of Prevalent Pedagogical Themes – Technique

All of the books have an overriding theme of acquiring pitched notes and developing the playing of melodies. They focus on this element above the acquisition of instrumental technique. All of the books are for descant recorder and all of the books except *Me and My Recorder* start with the note B. All of the books start by using the left hand first.

All of the books focus on the use of ‘tonguing’ to produce sound on the recorder, either with the consonant T or D. The focus group recommends teaching flexible articulation from the first lesson, as not all students will be able to start notes with a T and not all students will be able to start notes with a D. None of the books include information or practice exercises on the movement of the tongue when starting notes. Only two of the books explain how to end notes. However, within this, all of the books with the exception of *Me and My Recorder* expect students to be able to play legato and staccato notes, without any explanation of how to start a note at the start of the learning process. The books do not explain how to create staccato or legato tonguing either.

All books focus on using the finger pads to cover the holes, with pictorial diagrams to show what holes the fingers must cover. The general consensus from the tutor books is that

fingers should remain 'flat'. Alongside this it is also widely mentioned that fingers should have 'rings' on them of the impressions of the holes onto one's fingers.

All of the books recommended blowing gently; again, they do not explain how to breathe, or how to breathe out. There are no blowing and breathing warmups.

There are finger exercises and sometimes rhythm exercises to practice new pitched notes or rhythms, but no technique games or warmups.

In summary, the technique advice in all the books selected is vague and, in some areas, misleading. An example of wrong technique is the thumb position in *Me and My Recorder*. Therefore, it is assumed that the tutor books are to be used in conjunction with an experienced teacher who has secure knowledge of how to play and teach the recorder.

Summary of Key Technique Themes in Sample Tutor Books

With the exception of *Enjoy the Recorder*, each of the above tutor books focus on five broad elements of recorder playing:

- Fingering – acquisition of pitched notes;
- Pitch and rhythm reading;
- Learning of melodies;
- Tonguing;
- Left hand at the top and right hand at the bottom.

Within these broad elements, other similarities include:

- Blowing gently;
- Using finger pads to cover holes;
- Pictorial diagrams (over numerical system) to show new fingering;
- A 'tune a page';
- Large print and colourful layout.

Chapter 7 will build upon the statements made in chapter 6 by comparing how views on beginner recorder technique compare between professional recorder player-teachers and the wider teaching community.

Chapter 7: Discussion Part 1 – How Do the Views of Professional Recorder Player-Teachers on the Teaching of Beginner Recorder Technique Compare with Those of the Wider Teaching Community?

The Place of the Tutor Book in Recorder Pedagogy Today

The importance of recorder tutor books is indicated by the fact that 80% of the teachers surveyed stated that they used one. Before looking at how recorder tutor books present beginner recorder technique, I consulted with a panel of expert recorder players and teachers. This identified good practice of teaching and learning of the recorder, along with the 'framework' devised from the literature review which will now be brought into discussion. Comparisons will be made between the recorder-teacher survey, the Guildhall focus group and tutor-book analysis.

Each of them is typical in their layout. Although *Enjoy the Recorder* is more detailed in both instruction and content, it still has a typical layout of the tutor book as described by Sally Chappell, who says that beginner lessons focus on tutor-book work and learning to read notation (Chappell, 1999). All four of the above tutor books in Table 6.1 are specifically aimed at the non-music-specialist. This includes the non-recorder player. Whilst there is much research on the pedagogy of teaching notation and musicianship across families of instruments, there is no research on the teaching and learning of recorder technique.

In the same article, Chappell is explicit on the negative after-effects of learning by a note-by-note basis through tutor books, at the expense of instrumental technique (Chappell, 1999). This puts responsibility for instrumental technique onto the teacher, and in the case of the recorder, where even the tutor-book authors presume the teachers to be not even a

specialist in music, let alone the recorder, this could leave 'physical problems for pupils' going undetected far beyond childhood learning and on into adulthood.

Constructivism recommends that instrumental learning builds on prior learning by starting with something well known to the pupils, proceeding to something known but unfamiliar, and then to something entirely unknown; however, the sample tutor books do not use immediately familiar material. In terms of learning technique, physical constructs would be gradually built upon to ensure that the physical elements to recorder playing are systematically learnt. The sample tutor books focus on the acquisition of pitched notes, playing tunes and music theory, as opposed to the physical constructs of playing the recorder. The theme of maintaining the natural status of the body found in the focus group exemplifies a constructivist style of learning; this is missing from the sample tutor books.

The GSMD focus group strongly and repeatedly emphasised the importance of conscious technique: being aware of one's body and being completely conscious and aware of the bodily actions required to produce specific technical details on the instrument. The focus group recommends a series of preparatory technique games to supplement learning, but these were not present in the sample tutor books. This is an area lacking in book-based learning as classified by Chappell, who says that children who learn through a purely book-based curriculum have no understanding of what they are playing, which leads to a stagnation in progression (Chappell, 1999).

One of the main problems with the tutor book's role in the social status of the recorder is that because they are aimed at non-specialist music teachers (who are not trained recorder players) or recorder players (who are not trained teachers), as mentioned previously, teachers rely on the technique advice in the books. Therefore, there is no aural modelling for students and teachers as to how any given note should really sound. Although some of the books come with CD backing tracks, these are created with MIDI and not live recorder playing. Therefore, it is unclear what sound teachers and recorder players are trying to emulate.

The GSMD focus group aims to break down the barrier between amateur and professional playing by recommending a 'guided listening' list of the recorder. This guided listening could give a platform to showcase the recorder's virtuosic capabilities, breadth of repertoire and long cultural history to teachers, learners and families. It is clear that the tutor books are aimed at non-music, non-recorder-specialist teachers, but the books are also written by non-recorder specialists and contain limited explanation or knowledge of professionally informed instrumental technique.

Professional recorder player-teachers learn their technique from their own teachers, whether at Grade 1 or BMus level. As seen by the results of the teacher survey, many recorder teachers have tertiary degrees in the recorder from conservatories. The GSMD focus group on recorder technique shows clear differences in approaches and actualities in recorder technique between recorder tutor books and the technique used and utilised by professionals.

Insight into the parallel cultures of professional and amateur recorder players is integral to an understanding of the social image of the recorder in education. There is a tacit recorder technique being taught in conservatories and utilised by professionals that is not being filtered down into elementary recorder education. As tutor books continue to be published, it is reasonable to suppose that many, perhaps most, pupils learn notation, fingering and repertoire from them, at least initially. A large proportion of teachers from the teacher survey say they would not wish to have further training in recorder teaching. Therefore a supplementary book of recorder technique games and facts in the form of a teacher's guide and a further pupil's workbook could be vital in improving recorder pedagogy, leading to improvements in outcomes for young recorder players and potential to repair the recorder's societal image. As a result of a professional reluctance to communicate, much of what follows has never before been published or discussed outside individual one-to-one lessons and masterclasses.

The GSMD focus group suggests a change around the sharing and development of good practice. It also signals a change to the culture of recorder players that has existed since the introduction of the recorder tutor book, bringing professional technique into the beginner recorder lesson.

Commonalities in the Teaching of Beginner Recorder Technique

The descant (soprano) with C fingering is the most popular type of recorder taught to beginners, and the data below is related to the descant recorder. Recorder technique is not a very popular lesson focus in beginner recorder lessons, and this could be because only 33% of teachers strongly agree that there is a specific recorder technique. It has already been mentioned that the recorder is a popular instrument to be taught in WCET, and nearly 100% of WCET teachers surveyed for Music Mark reported that students acquiring an instrumental technique was a factor of a successful WCET programme. In contrast, Sally Cathcart's PhD (Cathcart, 2013) reports that in beginner piano lessons, technique is one of the most regular aspects. There are no technique books for beginner recorder players. Several factors point towards recorder teachers being underqualified in instrument-specific knowledge, such as the fact that the recorder is a woodwind instrument yet, according to the teacher survey, only 79% of teachers regularly teach breathing in beginner recorder lessons. In contrast, 89% regularly teach articulation and 85% teach a balanced playing technique. The GSMD focus group's recommendations for the teaching of beginner recorder technique are consistent with informal learning and constructivist learning styles. Finer elements of instrumental technique identified by the GSMD focus group were entirely different from the technique advice set out in tutor books. 41% of surveyed recorder teachers did not believe there was a specific recorder technique. The finer elements of recorder technique, such as the Fundamental Five (as set out in Table 6.8), are new knowledge to a field which has not been thoroughly researched or published since Walter van Hauwe in the 1970s. There are, however, wider implications for instrumental teaching and learning across instruments and

settings. This is the recommendation of a constructivist style of learning that incorporates informal pedagogical framing using an embodied learning approach to pedagogy.

Table 7.1 is adapted from Table 2.2 in chapter 2 which now includes the elements of embodied learning, and cross-references these with the GSMD focus group's recommendations of how to approach the teaching and learning of beginner recorder technique. It cross-references different learning theories within this thesis and shows that the GSMD focus group's recommendations correlate positively with educational theorists and constructive and embodied learning theories that go against traditional, behaviourist principles currently employed in WCET and recorder tutor books. Educational theorists promote learning through play, social interaction and scaffolding, improvisation and movement, using age-specific materials and familiar starting points. These points are shared with the GSMD focus group's recommendations that learning should start from what the child already knows (in terms of producing recorder technique using the body).

The GSMD focus group produced the Fundamental Five points of beginner recorder technique, including holding the recorder, moving the fingers, blowing and breathing, starting and ending notes, and sound and articulation. Not all of these themes were found in recorder tutor books. Tutor books focused on the acquisition of pitched notes, using pictorial diagrams of a recorder to show fingering patterns in order to quickly learn to play melodies. In terms of technique, tutor books focused entirely on 'tonguing' to start notes (not to end notes), putting the right hand at the bottom and the left on top without any consideration of hand position or shape. Less prevalent tutor-book technique themes included blowing gently and using the pads of fingers to cover holes.

The GSMD focus group was adamant that children should know how to physically play the recorder with awareness of the natural body. In order to imbed this understanding,

Table 7.1: Learning experiences present in different theories of learning in this thesis

Learning experience	Present in behaviourism	Present in constructivism	Present in education theory	Present in music education theory	Present in informal learning practices	Present in embodied learning	Present in Guildhall focus group recommendations
Experimentation and curiosity		x	x	x	x	x	x
Play		x	x	x	x	x	x
Improvisation		x	x	x		x	x
Movement			x	x		x	x
Conversation, social interaction and scaffolding		x	x	x	x	x	x
Independent learning and discovery		x	x	x	x	x	x
Learning based on familiar material		x	x	x	x	x	x
Mentorship		x	x	x	x	x	
Enculturation		x	x	x	x	x	

they drew their own conclusions that linked with educational theory. The focus group endorsed use of play, pictorial aids and age-appropriate 'props', and linking articulation to language as taught in primary schools.

The teacher survey uncovered that only 33% of recorder teachers believe there is a specific recorder technique. This was backed up by low levels of teachers teaching basic techniques such as breathing, articulation and balance.

The GSMD focus group of professional recorder player-teachers regarded ensuring that pupils fully understand how to physically play the recorder as the top priority in beginner lessons. It seems certain, unfortunately, that few recorder teachers are currently able to do this – show how to physically make a sound on the instrument, provide fully embodied guidance, etc. – given that a large percentage of them do not have adequate qualifications in recorder playing or teaching. However, the fact that so many expressed a willingness to develop their skills shows that they are aware of this inability.

There is a difference between the views of trained recorder player-teachers on the one hand and the wider recorder-teaching community on the other, created by the different levels of qualification, subject knowledge and technical ability of the two groups. Many teachers look to a tutor book for help and advice, but technique and pedagogy advice are lacking in these books and, where they are present, are in many cases inaccurate.

Teachers also requested training on recorder curricula. There is a lack of pedagogical or instructional material for recorder teachers. Before this research was undertaken, there was a tacit, unspoken recorder technique, unavailable in any books, publications or online. The work of the GSMD focus group represents the beginnings of a handbook on the teaching and learning of beginner recorder technique, compiled by professional recorder player-teachers, ready to be shared with the wider teaching community.

Suggested Framework for Teaching and Learning of Beginner Recorder Technique in Relation to the Recorder-Teacher Survey

The teacher survey showed that the most prevalent activity within the first ten beginner recorder lessons was note reading, with 89% of teachers choosing this answer. This links to the tutor-book analysis, as all tutor books display note learning as the principal learning activity throughout the course of each book. This does not show experimentation, curiosity or play. Teacher modelling was the second most popular activity reported in the teacher survey. Other answers in the teacher survey and tutor-book analysis suggest that this is of pieces from the tutor book. Such an approach does not show a philosophy of mentorship in the learning process as advocated by the suggested Framework for Teaching and Learning of Beginner Recorder Technique. Listening skills was the third most popular activity, with 78.1% of teachers explaining this is a feature of their teaching. Listening skills could come under enculturation, learning based on familiar material and conversation, social interaction and scaffolding: the survey did not delve deeper into what these listening skills activities contained and therefore this theory cannot be proven. 74% of teachers explained that they use games in their lessons, and this is recommended in the suggested Framework for Teaching and Learning of Beginner Recorder Technique in relation to the recorder-teacher survey. Learning pieces in the first ten beginner recorder lessons was also popular, with 66.4% of teachers responding to this statement.

82% of teachers replied to say that their pupils regularly play with other young recorder players. This could relate to the fact that the teacher survey and literature found that most beginner recorder lessons happen not in individual lessons but in group lessons. This shows that there could be an element of peer mentorship present in beginner recorder lessons. The teacher survey and literature review, however, showed that the recorder is often used as a preparatory instrument, and only taught for a limited period of time before children move onto a 'real' instrument. The teacher survey also noted concern by teachers

that there is a lack of appropriate progression routes and ensemble opportunities for young recorder players. These latter statements could suggest fewer opportunities for peer mentorship between absolute beginners and older children learning the recorder. In turn, a lack of 'community recorder role models' for beginning young recorder players to look up to could suggest a deprivation of enculturation opportunities for beginner recorder players to see the recorder being utilised outside of the classroom environment.

Nearly half (40%) of the teachers surveyed responded to say that they used improvisation in the first ten lessons. The teacher survey did not ask specifically whether teachers promoted experimentation, curiosity, movement, conversation, scaffolding, social interaction, independent learning, discovery, learning based on familiar material or enculturation. These themes did not appear in qualitative analysis either. Teachers did specify that they would like further training in large-group teaching, differentiation and lesson planning, as these were things they found difficult.

Table 7.2 shows a summary of the suggested Framework for Teaching and Learning of Beginner Recorder Technique in relation to the recorder-teacher survey.

Table 7.2: Summary of the suggested Framework for Teaching and Learning of Beginner Recorder Technique in relation to the recorder-teacher survey

Framework for Teaching and Learning of Beginner Recorder Technique	Present in teacher survey data
Experimentation and curiosity	x
Play	x
Improvisation	x
Movement	
Conversation, social interaction and scaffolding	
Independent learning and discovery	
Learning based on familiar material	

Mentorship	x
Enculturation	

An 'x' shows that the theme was present in survey data. This shows that under half of the suggested themes, according to learning and music pedagogy theory, are present in beginner recorder lessons in 21st-century England.

Towards a New Framework for Teaching and Learning Beginner Recorder Technique

Table 7.3 shows that the focus group discussion broadly follows the same philosophy as educational and music pedagogy theory. This suggests that professional recorder player-teachers have more of the skills required to teach the recorder more successfully than non-recorder specialists. This is demonstrated by the comparison of the elements present from the Framework for Teaching and Learning of Beginner Recorder Technique that also appeared in the teacher survey and focus group discussion.

Table 7.3: Summary of the suggested Framework for Teaching and Learning of Beginner Recorder Technique in relation to the focus group discussion

Framework for Teaching and Learning of Beginner Recorder Technique	Described in focus group discussion
Experimentation and curiosity	• 'Rubbing or smearing'²⁵ fingers to experiment with how fingers feel over holes. • Experimenting with how the recorder feels in a child's hands by building sensory relationships between instrument and body through tactile exploration. • Experimenting with producing sound with only the head joint before using the whole of the instrument to produce pitch and 'organised' rhythm. • Explorative games using blowing and breathing.
Play	• Using games for children to learn instrumental technique instead of teacher-directed instruction.

²⁵ Direct quotes from focus group transcript.

	• Games modelled on 'pick up sticks' to learn hand positions. • Use of finger games. • Blowing games to bring awareness of breath needed to play recorder. • Tongue twisters to develop articulation. • Using abstract visual games such as recreating the sound of different weather, in relation to flash cards.
Improvisation	• Improvising sound to stories. • Improvising sound in playful games. • Improvising sound to visual pictures.
Movement	• Being aware of the movement of the body when playing the recorder. • Keeping a 'natural status of the body'.²⁶
Conversation, social interaction and scaffolding	• Using sound games. • Using 'recorder language' to develop vocabulary and articulation. • Using 'props' in games such as tissues to demonstrate blowing, etc. • Adapting the recorder: using head joint only, covering holes with tape to aid scaffolding.
Independent learning and discovery	• Learning through games instead of teacher direction. • Using games children can play on their own. • Using games to let children discover their own learning rather than being teacher-directed.
Learning based on familiar material	• Using the 'natural status of the body' so that children recognise that they do not have to do anything drastically different with their body to play the recorder. • Using 'recorder language' linking to school phonics. • Using child-friendly and appropriate stories to develop technique. • Using child-friendly visual images to develop technique.
Mentorship	• Not explicitly present in data
Enculturation	• Not explicitly present in data

Summary: How do the Views on the Teaching of Beginner Recorder Technique Compare between Professional Recorder Player-Teachers and the Wider Teaching Community?

Following literature review research, the survey of recorder teachers, focus group discussions, and analysis of and comparisons between recorder tutor books, this section will now summarise key findings to draw conclusions on how views on the teaching of beginner recorder technique compare between professional recorder player-teachers and the wider

²⁶ Term developed through focus group analysis.

teaching community. To do this, I will use the Framework for Teaching and Learning of Beginner Recorder Technique and the Fundamental Five aspects of beginner recorder technique which were both developed as a part of researching for this thesis.

Table 7.4 shows that five out of nine points of the Framework for Teaching and Learning of Beginner Recorder Technique are present within the wider teaching community. A lack of independent learning and discovery, learning based on familiar material and enculturation could be a reason behind low levels of continuation with recorder learning into secondary school and the instrument's low social status.

Table 7.4: How the views on the teaching of beginner recorder technique compare between professional recorder player-teachers and the wider teaching community in relation to the Framework for Teaching and Learning of Beginner Recorder Technique

Framework for Teaching and Learning of Beginner Recorder Technique²⁷	Evidence from teacher survey data²⁸	Evidence from analysis and comparisons of recorder tutor books
Experimentation and curiosity	• 59.6% of teachers use playing by ear. • 49.3% of teachers use improvisation. • 25% of teachers use composition.	N/A
Play	• 74% of teachers use games.	N/A
Improvisation	• 49.3% of teachers use improvisation. • 25% of teachers use composition.	N/A
Movement	• Survey did not ask this specific question, but there was no evidence of movement in lessons through qualitative or quantitative survey analysis.	N/A
Conversation, social interaction and scaffolding	• No evidence from teacher survey data.	N/A
Independent learning and discovery	• No evidence from teacher survey data.	N/A

²⁷ As derived from focus group discussions with professional recorder player-teachers.

²⁸ Activities in beginner recorder lessons; see Figure 5.12.

Learning based on familiar material	No evidence from teacher survey data.	N/A
Mentorship	82% of teachers responded to say that their pupils play recorder with other children.	
Enculturation	No evidence from teacher survey data.	No evidence from analysis and comparisons of recorder tutor books. Repertoire focused on folk, Christian hymnal, Western Art Music and newly composed popular and jazz-style music.

Table 7.5 demonstrates how the views on the teaching of beginner recorder technique compare between professional recorder player-teachers and the wider teaching community using data from tutor-book analysis and the teacher survey. It shows that, in general, recorder tutor books and recorder teachers do not focus attention on explaining clearly the physical aspects of recorder technique as recommended by the focus group. The teacher survey reported low levels of recorder-specific qualifications among recorder teachers. A mix of low levels of qualifications and a lack of specific information about how to physically play the recorder in recorder tutor books could explain why recorder teachers find the following aspects of recorder playing difficult to teach:

- articulation and tonguing;
- blowing and breathing;
- correct hand and thumb position;
- fingering.

These link directly to the focus group's Fundamental Five aspects of beginner recorder technique.

Table 7.5: How the views on the teaching of beginner recorder technique compare between professional recorder player-teachers and the wider teaching community in relation to the Fundamental Five Aspects of Beginner Recorder Technique

Fundamental Five Aspects of Beginner Recorder Technique	Focus Group²⁹	<i>Enjoy the Recorder</i>³⁰	<i>Me and My Recorder</i>³¹	<i>Recorder from the Beginning</i>³²	<i>Red Hot Recorder</i>³³	Teacher Survey³⁴
Sound and articulation	Explain 'what to do with the tongue', the action of the tongue. Use 'tu' and 'ti' and the word articulation to describe the action. Sound and articulation is heavily linked to starting and ending notes; this needs to be made clear. Use phrases 'recorder language' or 'instrument-speak.' Representation of physical motions and actions using flash cards and drawings.	Explains clearly how to physically make a sound on the recorder using 'doo' by putting tongue behind the teeth. Uses the visual image of a straight and wobbly line to indicate the direction of air needed to create the sound on the recorder. Includes information on slurs, legato playing and staccato.	Uses the word tonguing instead of articulation or 'recorder language'. Doesn't explain how to make different sounds with the recorder but demonstrates staccato and legato playing. For staccato, the use of 'tut'. There is no physical explanation of legato tonguing, but it is explained through music theory by using the 'legato' symbol	Says to blow gently. Uses the word 'tonguing' not articulation.	Explains how to use 'd': start with the tongue and not let the recorder touch your teeth. This is under the title 'How to play a note'. Uses language such as slur, legato and staccato but doesn't explain how to physically create the sound.	89.88% teaching articulation Teachers report that they find teaching articulation/tonguing difficult.

²⁹ Guildhall students and alumni professional recorder player-teachers, with an undergraduate or postgraduate degree in recorder performance, teaching across primary, secondary and tertiary education in the public and private sectors.

³⁰ Written by Brian Bonsor, early pioneer of the recorder.

³¹ Written by Margo Fagan, PE and primary-school teacher.

³² Written by John Pitts, composer.

³³ Written by Sarah Watts, bassoonist.

³⁴ 35.19% of teachers surveyed do not have a qualification in the recorder. An experienced cohort, with 42.9% having taught the recorder for over eleven years. 64.10% teach the recorder in a primary school. Only 58.97% believe there is a specific recorder technique.

	Use games and playful exercises to reinforce learning and understanding. Listening to teachers/professionals: aspirational modelling. Representation of pitch and sound. Being aware of sound. Play the action. Peer mentoring. Natural status of the body.		(horizontal line above the note). Introduces slurred ones by using 'doo'.			
Blowing and breathing	Internal actions need external help, so use games with props to reinforce learning and understanding. E.g. blowing cotton-wool balls and turning that into a game to demonstrate air speed. Use hissing games to control air speed and flow. Inhaling and exhaling games. Remember the natural status of the body: blowing and breathing are natural actions. Use pictorial and visual aids.	Doesn't explain how blowing or breathing is to be utilised when playing the recorder but does include breath markings.	On page 29 asks to blow the air 'steadily'. Introduces breath marks on page 20 but no explanation of physically how to breathe.	Instructs to blow gently but does not go into detail.	Instructs to breathe through the mouth and to blow gently. Explains that squeaks will occur if the breath is too hard.	70.48% teach breathing. Teachers report they find teaching breathing difficult, including children blowing too hard.

Starting and ending notes	Internal actions need external help, so use games with props to reinforce learning and understanding. Explain and develop understanding through games of what to do with the tongue. Use of 'ti' and 'tu' as an introductory form of articulation. Depending on the mother tongue this may change to 'doo' or 'di', etc. Learning to start from a familiar starting point: what does the child already know? Focus on recognising the 'correct' feeling. Maintain the natural status of the body. Use visual and pictorial aids.	Clearly explains how to make a sound on the recorder, even has a title called 'Starting a Note' and one underneath called 'Ending a Note'. Asks to put tongue behind teeth to stop the air flow to stop the sound.	'Doo' to start notes. Instructs to put tongue against teeth to stop notes, which is incorrect. Asks the learner to keep the tongue against the teeth to stop the flow of air.	'Tu'. Doesn't explain tongue movement. Does not explain how to stop notes.	Uses 'd'. Doesn't explain movement of tongue or how to stop notes.	Teachers report finding tonguing difficult to teach.
Holding the recorder	Determined by the child's hand span – right thumb either behind the 4th or 3rd finger. Flexible thumbs. Left-hand thumb needs to be flexible to produce octaves. Right-hand	Explains in detail how to hold the recorder along with hand and finger shape. Gives an approximation of the right thumb going behind the recorder behind what are called holes 4 and 5.	No explanation of balanced playing technique or support finger. No explanation of correct finger shape. Asks the learner to use only the corner of the left thumb to cover the hole at the back of the	No explanation of balanced playing, support finger or finger/ hand shape. Right-hand thumb asked to go opposite the fourth hole.	No explanation of balanced playing, support finger or finger/hand shape. Explains that the left hand must go at the top, with specific reference to left-handed learners. Asks for the left	85.16% teach a balanced playing technique. Teachers report finding the thumb position and left hand on top difficult.

	thumb will need to be flexible when moving across instruments of different sizes. Both thumbs need to be flexible in order to avoid tension. Little finger on top of the foot joint for balance. 'Robot' finger games. Use visual and pictorial aids to explain finger movement. Bring the recorder to the body, not the other way around. Holding a hamburger could be an ideal way to explain an ideal hand position. Use a marker for thumb position. Natural status of the body.		recorder. Explains the right thumb should 'carry the weight of the recorder'. Recommends using Blu Tack as a thumb rest.		thumb to cover the hole at the back of the recorder and explicitly says the left thumb supports the entire weight of the recorder behind the fourth hole. There is a visual image showing the right-hand fingers bunched up around hole four.	
How to move the fingers	Closing and opening the holes. Stopping the holes. Maintaining the natural status of the body to avoid tension. Use games and playful exercises.					Teachers report teaching fingering is difficult and getting children to cover the holes is difficult.

In conclusion, the main difference in viewpoint on the teaching and learning of beginner recorder technique between professional recorder player-teachers and the wider recorder-teaching community is that because there has never been an in-depth study of beginner recorder pedagogy, or any available literature specifically focused on the teaching and learning of beginner recorder technique, the wider teaching community, who did not receive a specialist recorder education or training, have been unable to access appropriate and tailored information for them to develop their own skills in playing the recorder and teaching instrumental pedagogy. This study, for the first time since the recorder's revival in the early 20th century, paves the way for a handbook on instrumental technique for the teachers and parents of beginner recorder players, specifically in primary schools.

The following chapter will build on the information in this chapter and start to answer the remaining research questions by drawing together literature-review evidence and data from the survey of recorder teachers, focus group discussions and analysis and comparisons of recorder tutor books.

Chapter 8: Discussion Part 2

This chapter starts by following the same structure as the literature review, discussing themes emerging from the literature review in relation to the remaining research questions, the recorder-teacher survey, focus group data and tutor-book analysis.

This thesis has focused on closing the gap in research around social attitudes towards the recorder in education and links to wider music education. New knowledge in the field was acquired through literature discussions, a teacher survey, and a technique focus group with professional recorder player-teachers and tutor-book analysis in order to answer the remaining research questions:

1. To what extent has the recorder's role in education affected its society's perceptions of the instrument?
2. How is the recorder taught in 21st-century England?

This chapter considers the findings, enquires into the trends and relates them to the above research questions. Reference will be made to the research literature and parallels explored. The impact of the research within the recorder-teaching community and the wider paradigm of English music education will be examined, as will the limitations of the study. This chapter will lead to the final chapter, which will discuss the implications of the research, and areas for further research will be identified. Multiple themes emerging from the data are interlaced; this means that it can be difficult to segregate them. Each theme will be addressed as the chapter proceeds.

The structure of this chapter will consist of addressing themes emerging from the literature reviews in light of the research questions. A significant contribution to the field has been made in understanding how the recorder's role in education has affected its perception in society. Assessing the wider perceptions of the recorder in public discourse on the instrument has shown the extent to which its role in education has affected its social

perceptions. This was a previously under researched area. Existing literature on the socio-cultural history of the recorder was reviewed in order to start answering the research question. Reference was made to online social media ‘memes’ and blogs where the recorder in education is discussed. Using social media was a way to gather information around public discourse of the recorder without having to survey the public. This is the first time that publicly available statements on social media have been used to assess society’s perceptions of the instrument. These contemporary sources were put into context within the backdrop of the development of the recorder in education, and conclusions have been reached.

This chapter will now follow the same structure as the opening literature review and address emerging themes from the literature review in order to research conclusions on the remaining research questions. This research has confirmed suggestions that the recorder’s role in education has had a negative impact on the social perceptions of the instrument. This conclusion has been reached following analysis of internet memes, historical literature reviews and the teacher survey. Hallam (2019) confirmed Ehrlich’s (forthcoming, p. 76) presumptions that the recorder is predominantly taught in primary schools, in large classes, by non-recorder specialists. New data was collected from the teacher survey that also confirmed this: whilst 54% of surveyed teachers responded to say that the recorder was their first instrument, 35% of the same set of teachers answered that they did not have any formal qualifications in the recorder.

Specialist vs. Non-Specialist Recorder Teachers

There has been a continuous debate around who should teach primary-school music (Holden & Button, 2006). The definition of ‘non-recorder specialists’ in this thesis is now defined by results from the recorder survey that highlighted low levels of tertiary qualifications in music in general or specifically the recorder among recorder teachers. This is in contrast to the American band system, where undergraduate music-education programmes train potential new teachers to teach a multitude of wind and brass instruments.

The teacher survey showed that just over a third of recorder teachers surveyed had no qualifications on the recorder such as ABRSM exams, and only just over half had a tertiary-level degree in music. 75% of trainee primary-school teachers had no qualifications in music prior to starting their ITT, and only 69% of trainee teachers had some music training during their ITT (Holden & Button, 2006).

This is echoed by data explaining that 47% of non-specialist, general primary teachers use musical textbooks and teacher guides, whilst 69% of the same group of teachers use published music schemes and books (Holden & Button, 2006). A report from the Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music found that in general, 94% of instrumental and vocal teachers they surveyed in the UK had a tertiary-level qualification in music or higher (ABRSM, 2014).

In the teacher survey, 45% of teachers believe it is socially acceptable to teach the recorder without any prior training, which suggests a perception of facility where teachers are under an illusion about their own abilities; 56.8% of teachers teach up to Grade 5, whilst at the same time, only 59% of teachers believe there is a specific recorder technique. This contrasts to teachers surveyed for the Music Mark report into WCET when 90.9% of teachers replied that a mark of a successful WCET programme was that pupils obtained a good instrumental technique. 48% of recorder teachers have had no prior training in teaching the recorder, yet when asked what they found most challenging about teaching the recorder, teachers responded to say that the negative social perceptions of the recorder were the most difficult thing about the profession. In a similar fashion, when asked what kind of training they would like to receive, teachers responded that they would like training in how to plan different styles of curriculum, not in how to physically teach the recorder.

My research would seem to confirm the dominant view of the recorder as an instrument taught predominantly in primary schools. The teacher survey shows a sizable drop in the numbers of surveyed recorder teachers teaching either outside a primary-school setting or teaching children above the primary-school age (age 11). New knowledge has

been brought to light regarding how primary school is the most popular place for recorder teachers to teach and that for these teachers, recorder teaching provides only part-time working hours.

What makes the recorder different, according to the teacher survey, is that it is not unusual for a person to teach the recorder, for profit and as a profession, devoid of any tertiary qualifications in music.

Even when teachers have had access to teacher-training programmes, as reported by Biasutti et al. (2015) and Holden & Button (2006), there is still an underconfident workforce of music teachers, whether qualified music specialists or qualified general primary-school class teachers. 52% of teachers responded to say that they had received some training in how to teach the recorder. The most popular form of training for teaching the recorder (as stated in the teacher survey) was a module on pedagogy during university or conservatoire study. Generalist primary-school teachers think that the recorder teachers teaching their class are 'specialists'. The recorder-teacher survey has uncovered that although the idea of a highly qualified 'recorder specialist' could be seen regularly by general primary teachers hiring expertise from a Music Education Hub, the reality is that 'recorder specialists' are rare. Adding to the theory of the recorder's negative social image, if the bought-in 'recorder specialist' has had no training in how to play or teach the recorder, it leaves questions about the quality of recorder teaching and learning in England. This was echoed in 2009, when Ofsted rated the majority of music provision in schools to be inadequate and found that teachers were not kept up to date with developing trends in music education and that they lacked appropriate opportunities for continuing professional development (Ofsted, 2009).

This research has highlighted the unregulated nature of instrumental and vocal music teaching in England where there is no recognised qualification leading to QTS for instrumental or vocal music teachers. Over half of the teachers who responded to the survey teach the recorder at a primary school. Some of the limitations of the teacher survey were

that it did not ask respondents if they had qualified teacher status or how they were employed (only where they taught). Whilst 64.1% of respondents replied to say they taught in a primary school and slightly higher said they only teach the recorder part-time, this is in contrast to the ABRSM 2014 report that said that over 80% of teachers taught in primary schools. In both cases Hallam notes an immediate need for better CPD and training opportunities for all that teach music in English schools (Hallam, 2019). This new research from the teacher survey suggests strongly that the majority of initial recorder teaching is delivered in school classrooms. But this does not mean that it is being undertaken by teachers who hold QTS and are held accountable to English teaching standards.

When asked how much they charge for lessons, 78.36% of recorder teachers said over £5 per lesson, suggesting instead that they are instrumental teachers, brought into classrooms by head teachers as specialists (or supposed specialists) to replace or supplement trained generalists.

This is echoed by Hennessy who reports that whole-class ensemble tuition 'has reinforced the view that music in primary schools should be taught by specialists' and not generalist primary-school teachers (Hennessy, 2017). She goes on to explain that the implementation of WCET in primary schools has left primary teachers excluding music from their professional duties. Hennessy reports that 'while visiting experts have been employed to lead the work in schools, many class teachers... have taken a step back, considering their involvement adequate or unnecessary' (Hennessy, 2012, p. 267).

The situation is thus one in which instrumental and vocal music teachers in private practice face little if any accountability. I would suggest that in the case of instrumentalists' classroom work, responsible individuals such as head teachers are little able to monitor what is taking place for the very same reasons that they are hiring specialists in the first place. I shall return in subsequent sections to the consequences of this both for recorder teaching itself and for the status of the recorder, and I shall later offer some recommendations.

Recorder-Teacher Identity

This thesis has made continued reference to four cross-sections of music teachers who teach the recorder:

1. General primary class teachers: usually with QTS, employed by primary schools to teach the NC across multiple subjects, including music.
2. Music specialists: a catch-all term to describe any person who self-identifies as a music teacher. This could also include a general primary class teacher.
3. Recorder specialists: teachers trained to tertiary level in the recorder.
4. Non-specialist recorder teachers: teachers that teach the recorder without a tertiary-level training in the instrument.

Garrett explains that negative perceptions of music education held by teachers could link back to teachers' own experiences of learning music at school and that unconscious bias towards certain subjects can undermine a teacher's view about said subjects and the manner in which they approach their teaching of it (Garrett, 2019). Sachs (2001) and Connelly and Clandinin (1990) explain that a teacher's own educational experience can form their identities as teachers themselves and that negative constructs follow into the construction of teacher identities. In addition, information from the literature review, cross-referenced with tutor-book analysis, shows that there has been a lack of recorder pedagogical development within the past hundred years, therefore it is probable that the style of recorder teaching and pedagogy prevalent when they were a child is still the same when they become teachers.

Lack of pedagogical development in recorder teaching can also be linked to teacher identity. Isbell reports that specialist music teachers also construct their own identity as a teacher through past, lived and learnt experiences and that this continues into their teaching through an *apprenticeship of observation* rather than formal teacher training (Isbell, 2008). He goes on to say that musicians have firm views about what and how to teach based on their own experiences of learning (Isbell, 2008). Hallam's acknowledgement of a lack of

teacher-training opportunities for music teachers could be a direct cause of the stagnation of recorder pedagogy throughout the 20th and 21st centuries. This, in turn, has led to primary-school leaders 'buying in' perceived recorder specialists due to their own dislike of learning the recorder as a child.

Music Teacher Identity in Relation to Online Memes

Memes, as presented in chapter 1, suggest the recorder is thought of negatively in society, in particular in relation to the recorder's use in education throughout generations. Chapter 2 highlighted research by Shifman (2013), who acknowledged the role of internet memes in the creation of self-identity and sense of belonging to social groups. He explained how internet memes can help researchers decipher social, political and cultural processes in self-identity.

Eschler and Menking (2018) identify memes as having negative effects on social groups, while Massanari argues that memes lead to toxic technocultures that result in 'othering' of social groups (Massanari, 2017). It is my theory that internet memes and related negativity towards the recorder in education have heightened an already prolific culture of othering within recorder teaching and playing communities.

Connelly and Clandinin (1990), Garrett (2019) and Isbell (2008) argued that a teacher's own experience comes forward into their own teaching practices and that their past experiences form their teacher identity. The teacher survey showed that recorder players find other people's perceptions of the recorder one of the most difficult things about recorder teaching. Online social media networks where memes are shared foster intimate relationships where shared experiences can result in group behaviour where other groups are discriminated against. In teaching and parenting groups where memes regarding the recorder in education are widely shared, there is a shared social identity of the recorder of negative past experiences of learning the recorder in school.

The teacher survey showed that it was not just parents or teachers that held negative perceptions about the recorder but music competition adjudicators, music examiners, fellow teaching and musician colleagues and wider society. The teacher survey showed clear examples of othering between passionate recorder teachers who enjoy teaching the recorder. They feel it should be respected and have their own held beliefs about what others thought about their profession and the recorder in education. This was amplified by answers from the survey that said that managing parental expectations was also a difficulty when teaching the recorder. The teacher survey showed that parents, influenced by their past experiences of learning the recorder at school or influence from their involvement in social media where recorder memes are shared, regarded the instrument as a 'starter' instrument and that parents often pressured their children to move onto a 'real' instrument.

The teacher survey also expressed that the negative perceptions of the recorder were also present within the 'workforce', in environments such as Music Education Hubs. Teachers expressed a lack of ensemble opportunities compared to other instruments, a lack of funding for recorder opportunities and 'selling' the recorder to parents and schools as a starter instrument before moving onto a 'real' instrument.

The survey showed that tutor books remain popular; however, teachers expressed a desire for more training and development in how to build appropriate recorder curriculums and how to teach instrumental technique. Tutor-book analysis showed that all tutor books were similar in layout, with similar pedagogical and musical content, despite being selected from varying points of the late 20th to early 21st centuries. I argue that one of the reasons for a stagnation in recorder pedagogy development has been the instrument's negative positioning in society and non-recorder-specialist teachers' social identity linked with their own past negative experiences, linked with widely shared social media memes re-emphasising similar value concepts.

Returning to Shifman (2013), internet memes along with literature research and the teacher survey in this thesis have shown how social and cultural processes in self-identity in

recorder music teachers are intrinsically linked with society's negative perceptions of the recorder in society.

Social Identity Theory with Recorder Teachers

Holliday (2011) explained that membership of online communities, such as those where social media memes are shared, result in the formation of groups where 'others' are demonised in order to support an idealised sense of self. Due to the recorder's use in education, recorder teachers are subject to 'othering' in relation to online memes. The recorder in education and people involved with recorder education activities became victims of 'othering' behaviours even before the advent of online social media.

Spivak identified three dimensions of othering, which have become present within recorder-teaching communities due to the recorder's role in education (Spivak, 1985).

- The Power Dimension
- The Superiority Dimension
- The Master of Knowledge Dimension

The Power and Superiority Dimensions of Othering with Recorder Players

Mary Williams (2005) details that in the early days of the Early Music Revival, there were two opposing opinions of the recorder. One opinion was held by Early Music pioneers such as Arnold and Carl Dolmetsch, who saw the recorder as a high-art instrument, and the other opinion was held by audiences, who saw it as an oddity. She says that Arnold Dolmetsch exclaimed that audiences would not understand the recorder, and that is why the recorder received negative reviews in concerts. She also cites that he claimed that 'ignorant' people would find the instrument easy to play at first. Williams continues to explain that in the early 1900s, only 'intellectuals' appreciated the recorder (Williams, 2005). As late as 1938, with the recorder becoming more popular as an educational tool, Edgar Hunt was quoted as saying 'I had not imagined recorders being used in "council" schools' (Williams,

2005, p. 131). In the 20th century, these were the first demonstrations of the Power Dimension of othering. Early Music pioneers othered those who questioned the validity of the recorder's status as a high-art instrument on a par with the orchestral and contemporary instruments of the times. This othering remains when, through the teaching survey, it was apparent that recorder teachers found negative perceptions of the recorder difficult to deal with, when they mentioned specific other groups such as non-recorder-specialist colleagues, 'ignorant'³⁵ music competition adjudicators, music examiners and parents.

This also links to Spivak's Superiority Dimension, when recorder teachers expressed concerns about examiners' and adjudicators' lack of knowledge, leading to 'inappropriate' and 'negative' comments about recorder performances.³⁶ In addition, teachers' dismay at the lack of progression routes and ensemble activities available for the recorder in relation to other instruments showed that recorder teachers could reside in the Superiority Dimension by questioning why the recorder is not worthy for such activities in relation to other instruments. When recorder teachers in the survey noted that they find 'losing' their students to 'the saxophone teacher down the hall'³⁷ and recognise that other instruments were seen as more serious instruments than the recorder, this annoyance could also be a statement of the Superiority Dimension of othering.

In contemporary English WCET teaching, the issue of the 'visiting recorder teacher' or 'bought-in specialist' could relate to the concept of othering, as each teacher sees each other as 'the other'. This is an area that requires more research.

Othering with Recorder Players

In the literature it was found that Robert Ehrlich (forthcoming) demonstrated a culture of othering within the recorder teaching and performance community when he said there was an element of distrust between amateurs and professionals in the field. He went on to

³⁵ Response from teacher survey.

³⁶ Responses from teacher survey.

³⁷ Response from teacher survey.

explain that professional recorder-specialist teachers were susceptible to undercutting of lesson pricing by less-qualified competitors. The teacher survey showed an element of othering within the Master of Knowledge dimension of othering, with recorder teachers mentioning exasperation with ignorant comments from examiners and adjudicators with regards to their lack of knowledge about the recorder and its techniques. Recorder teachers were unanimous in the survey that the most difficult thing about teaching the recorder was the instrument's negative social perceptions and working with colleagues who, in their judgement, 'don't know how to play the recorder'. This shows a large element whereby recorder specialists see themselves as the master of knowledge of other non-specialist recorder teachers. Yet the England branch of the European Recorder Teachers Association still has a relatively small membership, and none of the sample of recorder tutor books was written by a recorder specialist. In addition, recorder technique and pedagogy have not been researched or published on since Walter van Hauwe's collection of manuals in the 1970s (van Hauwe, 1984). A key part of the Master of Knowledge dimension of othering is that the master's knowledge shall remain tacit with the inferior other. The recorder's role in education has negatively affected its social status, yet recorder specialists have not shared their knowledge, until now, with the wider education community. This epitomises the Master of Knowledge dimension.

Amateurs vs. Professional Recorder Players – A Legacy of Othering

Galpin's early-20th-century experiments with the recorder being used as a method of moral improvement with his parishioners paved the way for adult amateur recorder activities in England which, along with the recorder's involvement in education, have turned the two opposing groups' opinions around (Williams, 2005). Moving into the middle of the 20th century, Mary Williams declares that the recorder is the instrument of choice for amateurs and The Society of Recorder Players has been at the forefront of amateur recorder playing since its inception in 1937 (Williams, 2005). The Society of Recorder Players affords its

members the opportunity for social music-making, with no minimum standard to join. As discussed by Robert Ehrlich, amateur recorder players in the 21st century are fiercely loyal to their unique branch of social music-making and are dubious of professional players. 'Amateur players can be vocal in expressing their independence from, and occasional distrust of, professionals' (Ehrlich, forthcoming, p. 76).

It is an assumption in contemporary recorder circles that amateurs are suspicious and untrusting of professional recorder players, whereas until the middle of the 20th century the opposite was true. The Society of Recorder Players limits its activities to supporting and encouraging amateur players. Enthusiastic and passionate amateur recorder players have affected the recorder's social perceptions by maintaining that the recorder should have its roots in amateur, social, ensemble playing and rejecting the recorder as an instrument worthy of serious study. At the start of the Early Music Revival, the power, in the Power Dimension of othering, was held by professional performing artists. The inauguration of The Society of Recorder Players as a once-powerful and large collective of amateur recorder players turned the amateurs into the superior collective, in the Superiority Dimension of othering. Amateurs can see themselves as superior to professionals.

Massanari (2017) notes that online memes and social networks can create 'toxic technocultures' where othering is prevalent. Amateur recorder playing is still hugely popular, with the Facebook page 'Recorder Players 'n' Enthusiasts' having 7,500 members. On this page, amateur recordings and videos are widely shared, with far more likes than professional videos and recordings. Heated discussions around amateur vs. professional recorder performances are regularly held within this social network, and as research around social identity within social networks is growing, this may be an area of additional research.

One possible method of raising the social perceptions of the recorder could be to try to eliminate othering in recorder communities by recorder organisations working together to positively promote the recorder on social media communities, online forums and sharing spaces. This could help recorder teachers to enculturate their pupils into the recorder, and to

help recorder pupils see that recorder-playing activities happen outside of the classroom, both professional and amateur, but most importantly, in the community with people of all ages, cultures and backgrounds. This would help to bring one element of informal pedagogical framing into the classroom.

Informal Pedagogical Framing

Hallam et al. highlighted a need to develop an informal music-learning approach to emulate the way in which popular musicians learn as a possible way to raise levels of engagement with music into and throughout secondary-school learning (Hallam et al., 2017). They argue that continuing levels of declining engagement with music at secondary school has been historically blamed on poor teaching, and therefore teachers need to look in new pedagogical directions by taking a more informal approach to music education (Hallam et al., 2017). Green (2002), Folkestad (2006) and Vasil (2019) showed that informal pedagogical framing can result in pupils being more likely to continue with musical involvement later in life. Results from the teacher survey show that most recorder learning happens during primary school and that there is a significant drop in numbers of children continuing to learn the recorder in secondary school. This matches with more general data from Music Mark 2017 and ABRSM 2014 that also shows lower numbers of children learning musical instruments after primary school. Below I list the following elements of informal learning and how these relate to the recorder: pupil autonomy, enculturation, mentorship above teaching and explorative learning.

Pupil autonomy

Green (2002), Folkestad (2006), O'Flynn (2011) and Vasil (2019) have shown that pupils rarely choose the instrument they learn in whole-class instrumental lessons and that instead, schools choose their instrument for practical reasons. Ross in 1995 explained that in informal learning situations, children chose for themselves what musical instrument to learn to play (Ross, 1995). In addition, Fautley et al.'s 2017 report for Music Mark shows that

pupils do not get to choose the instrument they learn in WCET projects, where the recorder is the fourth most popular instrumental choice (Fautley et al., 2017). The recorder, however, is still a widely learnt instrument in England, with the ABRSM's 2014 Making Music report showing the recorder to be the third most popular instrument, just below the piano and keyboard (ABRSM, 2014).

The lack of pupil choice has been a mainstay of the recorder's leading role in whole-class instrumental lessons since its inception into classrooms in the 1930s. Chapter 1 showed negativity to the recorder in education from the perspective of teachers and parents, identifying that this lack of autonomy over instrumental choice has negatively affected the recorder's social perceptions. Anderson and Barton-Wales note 'the importance of parental choice in continuation' of instrumental lessons after the initial experience of WCET has ended (Anderson & Barton-Wales, 2019).

The teacher survey noted that many parents, as well as WCET programmes, see the recorder not as an instrument that one chooses to play for longevity, but as a starter instrument before learning a 'real' instrument. This is also noted by Hallam (2006) and the teacher survey. The teacher survey also showed that parents encourage children to move onto a 'real' instrument after starting out on the recorder, implying that for children outside of WCET programmes, starting the recorder was a parental decision, not a child's choice.

Green (2002), Folkestad (2006), O'Flynn (2011) and Vasil (2019) argued that children not only know what kind of instrument they may like to play, but also the type of repertoire they would like to play. The teacher-survey results made no reference to children electing to play their own choice of repertoire in answer to any of the questions raised. The tutor books analysed showed a range of precomposed, folk, traditional and hymnal repertoire and gave no opportunities for children to choose repertoire that they would like to play.

The focus group recommended a child-centred, playful approach to learning instrumental technique, in opposition to a more traditional, teacher-directed style of

pedagogy advocated by the tutor books. This lends itself to elements of pupil choice in a selection of play-based activities to learn instrumental technique.

The recorder's role as an instrument of educational obligation for generations has negatively affected its social perception. The recorder's compulsory role in education has, positively, kept recorder specialists in employment and given many teachers their first route into an educational career. However, the literature review widely acknowledged that when children are enculturated into music, which includes knowing the type of instrument they would like to play, they are more likely to continue with music-making into adult life.

Enculturation

As well as the above-mentioned researchers into informal pedagogical framing, O'Flynn (2011) and Cawley (2013) explain that children are immersed in music in their everyday lives. As Ross, they acknowledge that children elect to play a musical instrument based on their initial connection with sound and how it relates to the music they already engage with. John Banister's 1681 publication was one of the first examples of a recorder tutor book that would be still recognisable to recorder teachers in 2020 (Banister, 1681). It contained a mix of folk and hymnal repertoire as its core repertoire for learning. *The School Recorder Book*, first printed in the first half of the 20th century, in terms of repertoire, was very similar (Priestley & Fowler, 1962). Research from this thesis shows that recorder tutor books still lack contemporary repertoire and focus on traditional folk, hymnal and original compositions. Kodály recommends using folk music as a basis for starting the music-learning process. His argument for this was that he believed that children were enculturated into the music of their homelands. England is not a monocultural society, and finding folk music that all children can relate to and have been enculturated into is not always going to be possible. Keith Swanwick identified the 'sub-culture of school music' in the 1990s, when the music being taught in schools does not relate to children's outside lives. The recorder suffers from being in that subculture, and this research shows that little has been done by way of pedagogical advancements to combat this.

As already mentioned, the survey did not show any teacher using enculturation as a strategy for engagement with recorder learning; instead teachers used goal-orientated teaching to engage their students with exams, assessments and target setting.

Furthermore, enculturation into a subject or interest requires input from the wider community; the recorder has to be seen to be a part of wider society, not just a school-based activity. The recorder does not occur positively in wider society, so this section of enculturation is also missing and adds to Swanwick's theory of a musical subculture. Enculturation by and with people and the community links closely with the idea of mentorship above direct and didactic teaching within informal pedagogical framing.

Mentorship

Mentoring learning relationships are present across many musical cultures, including popular music and jazz (Green, 2002), Indian classical music (Neuman, 1990) and traditional Irish music (Cawley, 2013). Dewey also acknowledges the role of mentorship in learning (Garhart Mooney, 2013, p. 16). Vygotsky (1896–1934) similarly believed that children learn through conversations between both peers and adults.

ABRSM 2014, Music Mark 2017 and this teacher survey show that year on year, fewer children continue learning a musical instrument as they get older. With the recorder being used as a starter instrument, these figures of discontinuation can be presumed to be higher than the general surveys of 2014 and 2017 present. Wenger explains that mentor relationships in musical learning are not always between adult and child, but can be equally as effective between peers (Wenger, 1999). I argue that community mentorship in recorder learning is key to enculturation within the learning process that Green et. al have presented as crucial to the success of continuation with musical learning. With recorder learning being only for a year within WCET projects (Hallam, 2011), this leaves a void for peer and community mentorship, adding to a lack of enculturation opportunities for recorder learning.

The teacher survey also raised concerns about the recorder being used as a starter instrument and a lack of progression routes and ensemble opportunities for young recorder players, compared to other instruments. This leaves a void for opportunities where peer mentorship could occur because children are not being encouraged to continue learning the recorder. Hallam (2011) explained that MEHs widely sell the recorder as a 'pre' instrument and that WCET largely lasts for no longer than a year. In addition, the teacher survey also reported parents that thought similar things. Institutionally, the recorder is used as a starter instrument as a result of its negatively held social perception by educators, Music Education Hubs and parents.

Tutor books do not give any opportunities for group play-based activities in order to learn the recorder; this is ironic given that the teacher survey and literature review showed that most recorder learning occurs in large groups. This shows a lost opportunity to encourage peer mentorship through play in group recorder lessons. By contrast, the focus group promotes a play-based, enquiry style of learning instrumental technique that serves as a vehicle for peer mentorship.

I argue that professional organisations such as The Society of Recorder Players, the European Recorder Teachers Association, the National Youth Recorder Orchestra and conservatories need to collaborate with grassroots recorder players similar to the Fédération Internationale de Football Association (FIFA). They explain that their mission is to 'ultimately improve the football experience of those who wish to play the game. Building the skills and capacities of the individuals responsible for providing this football experience is therefore key to this objective' (FIFA.com, n.d.). Mentorship can act as a sharing of knowledge which can lead to explorative learning.

Explorative learning

Explorative learning through trial and error by learning, listening, copying, experimenting and improvising is something that is integral to informal pedagogical framing,

but these themes are also prevalent in educational psychology and learning theory. This theme closely relates to all three research questions.

Explorative learning is closely linked with enculturation and the role of the mentor, as children learn through experimenting by observing what those within their communities are doing and wishing to copy. It has already been discussed how the lack of continuation with recorder learning leaves a gap for community or peer mentorship, but this also leaves out mentors to exploratively copy through play.

The recorder is commonly taught in primary schools, in large groups, directed by a teacher and often with a tutor book. This displays formal and behaviourist learning practices which leave out many elements of informal learning practices. Tutor books do not include explorative warmups, games or improvisation, and instead focus on the acquisition of pitched notes and learning to read music. There was no evidence of explorative learning practices in either the Music Mark (2017) report on WCET lessons or the teacher survey in this thesis. Explorative learning is closely linked to the final two research questions, where the topic will be discussed at greater length.

The focus group promotes a framework for explorative recorder learning following the Fundamental Five aspects of recorder technique.

Summary – To What Extent Has the Recorder’s Role in Education Affected Its Special Perceptions?

In summary, the following things have negatively affected the recorder’s role in education:

- A lack of pedagogical development of technique resources for beginner recorder players and their teachers.
- Insufficient recorder teacher-training opportunities or opportunities for recorder-specific CPD.

- A historical legacy of othering between different subsections of the recorder/music-education community.
- Disregard of the need to enculturate children and teachers into the recorder outside of the classroom, educational or amateur contexts, which may lie behind the rise of negative online memes.
- The recorder being presented as compulsory educational provision in primary schools.
- The recorder being used in whole classes as a starter instrument, with insufficient pathways for progress or ensemble opportunities, in contrast with other instruments.
- Children not having positive peer or adult recorder mentors to look up to and be inspired by.
- Historical reliance upon behaviourist, teacher-directed instruction.

How is the Recorder Taught in 21st-Century England?

The recorder in 21st-century England is taught by a largely underqualified selection of teachers, to children in large groups in primary school where pupils do not get a choice of what instrument to play. Ehrlich's initial view that tutor books are popular with music teachers was confirmed by literature that reported that 47% of non-specialist, general primary teachers use musical textbooks and teacher guides, whilst 69% of the same group of teachers use published music schemes and books (Holden & Button, 2006). Although responses to certain books in the teacher survey were not unanimous, there were 152 responses to the tutor-book question, which gives further evidence that tutor books are popular with recorder teachers. These behaviourist-style tutor books and methods of learning are the antithesis not only of the recommendations of educational psychologists such as Dewey, Vygotsky and Montessori, but also of instrumental pedagogues such as Kodály and Suzuki.

This research has evidenced how and what teachers teach in beginner recorder lessons. Linked to the popularity and contents of the recorder tutor book, note reading was the most common activity to happen in the beginner recorder lesson, with 89% of teachers teaching note reading in beginner recorder lessons, compared with just 66% of teachers that teach instrumental technique. This could be linked with the teacher's lack of knowledge around instrumental technique and, as will be discussed later, information in recorder tutor books.

Other common activities in beginner recorder lessons include teacher modelling (83%), listening (78%) and games (74%). The least popular activities included composition, improvisation, scales, sight singing, flexible fingerings, transposition and consort work. 82% of teachers replied to say that their students regularly play with other students on recorders, yet consort work rated very low in lesson activities. This could suggest either that ensemble work is additional to classroom lessons, despite most recorder lessons happening in large groups, or that the recorder teacher surveyed did not understand the term 'consort work'. The latter possibility could indicate that these teachers lack wider recorder knowledge.

Summary: How Is the Recorder Taught in 21st-Century England?

- The descant (soprano, C) recorder is the most popular instrument taught.
- It is taught in whole classes in primary schools.
- It is not as popular in secondary schools.
- It is taught by underqualified, part-time, non-recorder-specialist teachers.
- There is no 'agreed' concept of beginner recorder technique.
- The most common starting note is B.
- Tutor books promote a note-by-note, tune-learning approach to learning the recorder.
- Note reading is the most popular activity in beginner recorder lessons.
- Pupils are not enculturated into the recorder.
- The most popular aspects of technique taught are tonguing, breathing and fingering.

The final chapter will review the research questions and methodology of this thesis before summarising conclusions of the research and presenting its implications and suggestions for future research.

Chapter 9: Conclusions and Implications

This study aimed to acquire new knowledge in the field of recorder education and pedagogy. After suggestions of the recorder having negative social perceptions, only being taught in primary schools, I set out to see if this was true, and how these social perceptions came about. In addition, having taught the recorder, noticing a lack of pedagogical information in recorder education resources and myself having been taught by a non-recorder specialist, I wanted to assess what the similarities and differences were in approaches to teaching and learning beginner recorder between professional recorder player-teachers and the wider recorder-teaching community.

In order to do this, I chose a mixed-methods approach to data analysis in the following areas:

- Literature review research to report on existing literature in the field of music education in England, learning and social identity theory, social media and a historical account of the recorder in education.
- A survey of recorder teachers using Google Forms that was posted on social media and distributed through my own professional network. This consisted of open and closed questions, resulting in quantitative and qualitative data sets. The qualitative data was analysed using thematic analysis.
- A focus group with professional recorder player-teachers who were current students, alumni and professors at the GSMD. The participants had experience of teaching beginner recorder in a range of different contexts, including primary- and secondary-school teaching in the private and state sectors, in groups and individually, through MEHs and private practices. Data was then transcribed and extracted from the focus group before being thematically analysed.

- Four best-selling recorder tutor books from the 20th and 21st centuries were selected for analysis and comparisons. These tutor books were analysed through thematic analysis according to their familiar general themes, approaches to musicianship, theory and recorder technique.

This chapter will now present the key findings from this research in relation to the research questions.

To What Extent Has the Recorder's Role in Education Affected Its Social Perceptions? The Impact of This Research

Implications derived from literature reviews

There is a general lack of existing literature around perceptions of the recorder. The small amount of existing research was used for this thesis to draw conclusions as to why the recorder has a negative social perception. In order to do this, historical sources needed to be consulted to track trends across time. The recorder has very little resources aside from recorder tutor books and historical treatises. Although this had initially an implication for starting research, it has become a key argument into understanding why the recorder has such negative connotations.

Professional organisations' perceptions of the recorder

Society's negative perception of the recorder is not purely limited to online social media content creators. Professional musical organisations do not view the recorder as a serious instrument either. Music examination boards underestimate recorder players and the instrument's capabilities. Recorder players are only required to play the descant and treble recorder from Grade 5 onwards, even though there are multiple other fingering systems to be able to play. These underestimations are not limited to technical or theoretical skills. Recorder players tend to specialise in music pre-1820 and post-1920; there is a distinct lack of graphic-scored or aleatoric repertoire in exam syllabi, even though it is a generic part of a recorder player's skill set. This points towards a larger debate around what skills are

assessed across instruments in regulated music exams. To conclude, professional organisations such as the Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music are perpetuating the myth that the recorder is easy to play, with few skills to be developed. Neither the Music Mark (2017) nor ABRSM (2014) reports differentiated between different types of recorder in their surveys.

This was a factor highlighted by the teacher survey as the thing teachers found most difficult: society's perceptions of the instrument. This included perceptions from other teaching colleagues, competition adjudicators not taking the instrument seriously, examiners not understanding the techniques available on the instrument, and parents and families not valuing the instrument.

Society's negative perceptions of the instrument permeate almost every aspect of a recorder education, including recorder teachers. Only 26% of surveyed teachers disagreed that they encourage their students to progress onto another instrument, and some teachers said that the most difficult thing they encounter as a recorder teacher is families and competing colleagues expressing a wish to progress onto a 'real' instrument. This could be because the recorder does not have any repertoire between the end of the Baroque period and the mid-20th century. This could be one element as to why the recorder is not thought of as a 'real' instrument. As mentioned previously, recorder players, however, have a collection of skills not recognised by examination boards. One of the impacts of this research is to encourage professional associations such as examining boards to re-assess their recorder syllabi to include clef-reading, transposition and the requirement to play in three fingering systems in the more difficult examination grades. Examining boards could also be encouraged to include historical ornamentation skills into their syllabi, similar to improvisation skills in jazz exams. This would bring the recorder in line with other instruments where these skills are assessed. It would, however, require a vast number of current recorder teachers to develop their skills, beyond treble-clef descant and treble recorder playing. Bringing the recorder in line with other instruments in national music

exams, in terms of raising the requirements for higher-level exams, would help to change the image of the recorder among teachers, examiners, students and parents as more than just a 'school' instrument. The teacher survey uncovered many implications for general primary music teacher training as well as specialist recorder teacher training in England. Linking back to why music education organisations offer to teach the recorder when there is a lack of recorder specialists and continuing professional development in recorder teaching, this research has highlighted that organisations such as the European Recorder Teachers Association would be well placed to support non-specialist recorder teachers' professional development.

Impact on practice

This research has the potential to be significant for recorder teachers and wider music educational professionals and institutions. Comparisons between the Guildhall focus group and recorder tutor books show vast differences in approaches. The Guildhall focus group promotes learning through play and exploration that fosters a constructivist learning style, whilst tutor books rely on teacher-directed, behaviourist-style learning through the quick acquisition of pitched note production. There is now an opportunity for recorder teachers to reflect on their practice and 'upskill' using these new approaches. Recorder teachers will need to be prompted and supported to be reflective practitioners in order to improve their skills and knowledge. Developments in recorder pedagogy, both in its most basic form and also in how existing recorder pedagogy among experts is transmitted, for the first time since the Baroque period, will help to combat negative views of the recorder in society and improve standards in recorder playing in schools and beyond. Publishers can look towards this research as a means to develop new recorder-teaching material based on the needs of teachers (as demonstrated in the teacher survey) and also based on the pedagogical developments created by the Guildhall focus group. Professional recorder player-teachers can use this research to work in partnership with exam boards, professional

associations and publishers to spread these advancements in recorder pedagogy to help to boost the recorder's public image in regard to education.

Implications for Policy and Practice

Teacher training and regulations

This thesis has raised questions about the validity and quality of instrumental teaching: an unregulated industry where practitioners can teach any instrument regardless of their level of musical qualifications. This thesis has uncovered a large selection of people who regard themselves as professional recorder teachers, who are practising teachers in primary schools, who do not have any qualifications in the recorder, and in some instances lack any higher qualifications in music, or any degree at all. This is in direct contrast to England's teaching standards.

It has highlighted the difference in standards between the official teaching standards that state teachers should have 'secure' subject knowledge and that they should keep abreast of developments within their subject and promote the value of scholarship. The teacher survey showed that many recorder teachers lack adequate subject knowledge about the recorder and have not formally developed their recorder teaching skills since their time in higher-education study.

This research points to professional associations such as Music Mark and ERTA to develop and widely promote opportunities and/or training courses for continuing professional development, specifically for recorder teachers and teaching the recorder. Professional associations should work together to question the regulatory systems of the music-teaching industry and work towards some form of accreditation to ensure quality musical education, particularly in light of the forthcoming update to the NPME. As a matter of course, professional organisations are well positioned to work together to create a set of teaching principles and standards for independent instrumental teachers, working with instrument specialists to create such documents.

Pedagogy

This research highlights an outdated model of instruction that needs to change. Keith Swanwick identified musical subcultures within school music in the 1990s, and efforts have been made to include informal pedagogical framing within NC music lessons within the genre of popular music with the Musical Futures initiative.

To aid in producing such principles and teaching standards, professional organisations can look towards this research in producing a set of teaching standards for the recorder. For the first time since the Baroque period, significant developments have been made in beginner recorder pedagogy. The newly developed Fundamental Five readily translate to the beginnings of a set of standards for beginner recorder teaching and learning. New insights surrounding approaches to recorder teaching and learning point towards leaving behind a tradition of behaviourist instrumental instruction and moving towards a constructionist style of playful learning through experience. The focus group recommends learning the recorder by starting with games to teach the Fundamental Five, such as a 'pick-up sticks'-style game to learn how to hold the recorder and using straw-blowing games to demonstrate the action of blowing. The focus group suggested leaving behind a note-based music-reading curriculum promoted in tutor books and instead replacing it with a 'playful technique-first' approach to learning the recorder based on preparatory games, in order to learn first how to physically create sound and play with the instrument in the child's hand. This is not unusual in certain already-existing musical pedagogies, such as the movement-based Dalcroze and the singing games of Kodály. The Musical Futures approach to learning is also the antithesis to a note-by-note approach to learning a musical instrument, instead embracing informal pedagogical framing by learning whole pieces of music through a peer-based trial-and-error approach to musical exploration.

These preparatory games should be based on each pupil having an awareness of the body, and curriculum planning should follow the playful and constructivist principles of educational theory as advocated by the likes of Montessori, Piaget and Dewey. Comhaltas

Ceoltóirí Éireann's soon-to-be-published, one-term tin-whistle learning programme draws on the traditions of traditional Irish music pedagogy and uses play and an awareness of the body to give an introduction to tin-whistle learning.

The goal of the focus group's intention for the development of recorder pedagogy is that this new style of 'Playful Technique First' nurtures an explorative, improvisatory approach to creating sound on the recorder whilst ensuring that through a constructivist style of learning, children are fully aware of how to physically play the recorder. The focus group's aim for the future of recorder teaching and learning is that teachers and pupils will have a thorough knowledge of how to create and produce sound through blowing and breathing, how to start and stop sound using the tongue, how to hold the instrument in relation to the hand span of each individual child, and how to correctly move the fingers in order to create pitched notes and sounds through engaging in explorative, improvisatory play.

The focus group's goal is that if pupils start to construct new knowledge based on prior, already-known knowledge, they will become more proficient recorder players in the future. They believe that teaching and learning the recorder through an experienced-based curriculum will result in pupils having a better understanding of the skills required to play the recorder and better execute them. In turn, their expectation is that young recorder learners of the future will produce a better standard of playing and help to better the social perceptions of the instrument. In addition, by nurturing learners' curiosity in the early stages of learning the recorder, it is hoped that the explorative, improvisatory skills needed to be a fluent recorder player in the more advanced stages of learning (through Baroque ornamentation and contemporary improvisation) will already be imbedded and developed.

Aside from recorder-specific advantages to a constructivist-style, 'Playful Technique First' curriculum, adopting this approach to learning would bring the current opposing styles of pedagogy between the constructivist-style NC for Music with its holistic mix of listening, performing and composing and the traditionally behaviourist, 'master-apprentice'-style of

instrumental learning together, to create a more cohesive music education experience for primary-aged children in England.

The music publishing industry

Music publishers have been marketing the recorder as an easy instrument to play – marketing, saleable tutor books with the same *tune-a-day*, *start on B* and *learn as many notes as possible*. These tutor books tell students, teachers and parents that the recorder is easy to play, an easy instrument to start with before moving onto a ‘real’ instrument. This has to change. Publishers now have the opportunity to develop recorder tutor books to destabilise the recorder’s position in the music education subculture and promote the recorder as an instrument worthy of serious (but still fun) study. For the recorder alone: not because it’s easy, not because it’s cheap, not because it translates well to orchestral wind instruments, but because it’s the recorder. An instrument worthy of study based purely on its own merits, with a research-informed approach to pedagogy, framed within a constructivist-style curriculum.

Evidence from the teacher survey shows that the tutor book remains a popular choice. Tutor books provide a range of progressive repertoire and can aid in learning to read music. The sample of tutor books in the tutor-book analysis did not contain a book authored by a recorder player. This could explain why there is very little information regarding recorder technique, and in most cases any technique advice contained within the sample was incorrect.

In the teacher survey, teachers responded to say that they wanted training on ‘new’ curriculums for the recorder. Music publishers now have an opportunity to work with professional recorder player-teachers to use the findings of this research to produce a scheme of work to teach the recorder in whole classes. These schemes of work should be produced in order to support MEHs and musical associations teaching government-funded WCET. These schemes of work should take a *technique first* approach to learning the

recorder using the Fundamental Five strands of recorder technique, taking a constructivist approach to curriculum design, including a playful approach to learning the recorder.

In addition, none of the recorder tutor books sampled contained the sound of a real recorder in their backing track resources. 83% of teachers responded to the survey to say that they regularly modelled recorder playing to their pupils, but the majority of them do not have any qualifications in the recorder. It can be presumed, through evidence from social media memes, that the recorder in education does not always sound 'good'; this is not unusual in comparison to other instruments, however, the recorder is different because the evidence points to the recorder in education not sounding 'good' from teachers and students. Any resources produced by music publishers should contain recordings by professional recorder players on real recorders and not MIDI recorder sounds. The Suzuki method does contain recordings with real recorders, although Suzuki recorder teacher training is very expensive and not widely available. Including ear training in terms of promoting a sound-quality awareness of the recorder could help to improve the recorder's social perception.

Social Perceptions of the Recorder and Questions about WCET

This research has proved that the recorder's role in education has damaged its social perception. Negative links to the recorder only as an instrument for amateurs or primary-schools classes permeates every aspect of the recorder in education, which is why the recorder is thought of negatively in society. Underqualified teachers, poor public performances, lack of pedagogical development, diminishment of pupil choice in the instruments offered through WCET, behaviourist-style learning and lack of enculturation into the recorder as a 'real' instrument have all contributed to the demise of the recorder as a 'serious' instrument of the Western Classical canon. This research questions the success of WCET throughout recent educational practice in England. A teacher-led, behaviourist, master-apprentice style of education in instrumental tuition is at odds with the constructivist make-up of the NC.

This thesis draws together pedagogical and sociological thinking about the way traditional instruments are introduced into the classroom through WCET. The recorder was a test case for compulsory whole-class instrumental lessons in primary schools. In contemporary English music education, the same is happening once again. The recorder is not the problem as to why children don't continue to learn an instrument into secondary school, or why beginner instrumentalists don't sound like virtuosos straight away, but instead it is a symptom of outdated pedagogical practice. The recorder has been a part of generations of unsuccessful music education policy in England, but this thesis provides the opportunity to look towards a progressive, research-led innovation in instrumental instruction for and beyond the recorder.

Limitations

There are a number of limitations in the research of this thesis: firstly, the lack of existing literature to draw on for a literature review and to base research questions upon. If I were to undertake this thesis again, I would take a more sociological stance and look at aspects of high and low culture to identify where the recorder sits in classical music and music education. This would give a clearer understanding of how the recorder is viewed across society within different sociological groups such as parents, teachers and other, different, sections of society.

The teacher survey was carried out via an online Google form in 2016. This had its advantages in allowing easy access to a self-selecting sample of recorder teachers, but there were a number of limitations to the approach. The survey presents a one-dimensional view of the data, as the sample was possibly those who were already interested in recorder teaching. Carrying out interviews with some participants would, in the first instance, have clarified and verified a number of points, and secondly, it would have opened up a wider variety of recorder teachers, teaching in different locations and with varying levels of experience and qualifications. For example, the correlation between the levels of qualifications held by portions of the sample and the levels of belief in an actual recorder

technique could have been explored in more depth. The number of responses to the teacher survey, whilst positive in that it was self-selecting, was still a small sample at 169 responses. Recruiting a balanced cohort of recorder teachers with varying levels of qualifications and experience to interview may have resulted in richer data.

Whilst this self-selecting sample did not respond to say they felt underskilled or underqualified, their responses proved to the contrary. In future research I would like to explicitly target and interview a sample of people teaching the recorder who are not 'traditionally' thought of as teachers, for example volunteer parents and community members who teach recorder in schools. I would also like to interview generalist primary-school teachers who have taught the recorder to garner their views of the perception of the recorder and their views on their own competencies as a recorder teacher. This thesis did not ask whether participants had any teaching-specific qualifications, and this may go some way to explaining low levels of recorder or music qualifications. On reflection the teacher survey should have asked if respondents had QTS, but as there is no QTS for instrumental/vocal teachers at the time of devising the survey, this was omitted. As such the sample was small and did not wholly capture the demographic I was hoping for. If I was doing this again, I would target individual primary schools where they teach the recorder to gain access to a less 'specialised' cohort of respondents. In addition, the questions were designed by me and I brought my own perspective to the design of questions and the interpretation of the qualitative data. This could have resulted in the data being skewed towards a viewpoint I already had. In addition, the survey used some recorder-specialist language that not all portions of the sample may have correctly interpreted.

I am a recorder teacher and invariably brought my own perspective to the interpretation of qualitative data. The idea of imposing the researcher's existing views onto data has been discussed by Bryman in 2012, and it is a widely accepted view that the researcher's existing views can unavoidably bleed into interpretation of qualitative data.

Another limitation of the survey was that it contained specialist vocabulary linked to the recorder. The pilot of the survey was sent to music teachers within my network who would have been familiar with recorder vocabulary. On reflection, potentially not all respondents to the survey shared the same specialist vocabulary. The teacher survey did not gain a clear picture of what tutor books were being used. Instead I took a broad selection of in-print publications that spanned the course of the late 20th century to the present day. I also used my own knowledge of the field to select books that I know are being used by colleagues in primary schools. I did not select any online services such as Charanga or free YouTube tutorials to analyse in detail because their approach to recorder pedagogy is extremely similar to tutor books: note- and theory-led.

The focus group was exclusively people who trained and/or taught at the Guildhall. Whilst this can seem like a limitation, the panel came from across Europe and had a wide and varied professional portfolio of teaching and performance beyond the Guildhall.

Future Research

Groundwork has been laid for further research into how social media can influence society's perceptions around instruments and its effects on teacher and student instrument choices. This research could lead to further exploration as to why primary schools, Music Education Hubs and teachers elect to teach the recorder, even though it has such a negative social perception. In addition, why do music education establishments elect to offer the recorder as an instrument to be taught when there is a lack of recorder specialists or continuing professional development opportunities in recorder teaching?

The debate around legislation and teaching qualifications of instrumental/vocal teachers has been highlighted as an area that still needs further research, and this thesis calls into question the disconnect between the standards employed schoolteachers are held to and the unregulated industry of instrumental/vocal teaching. Further research could be

made into the availability and success of recorder teacher-training programmes and continuing professional development in recorder teaching.

Over half of the teachers who responded to the survey teach the recorder at a primary school. Some of the limitations of the teacher survey were that it did not ask respondents if they had qualified teacher status or how they were employed (only where they taught). Whilst 64.10% of respondents replied to say they taught in a primary school and slightly higher said they only teach the recorder part-time, this is in contrast to the ABRSM 2014 report that said that over 80% of teachers taught in primary schools. In both cases Hallam (2019) notes an important need to improve CPD and training opportunities for all that teach music in English schools (Hallam, 2019).

There is limited research on instrumental pedagogy. Cathcart's and Creech's theses are two pieces of work that have explored the piano and violin, respectively. This thesis also shows how there is a lack of research around individual instrument pedagogy and highlights a further disconnect between educational research that is classroom- and school-based and practice-based research around primary-school instrumental pedagogy. How instruments are taught in large groups alongside the NC is an area of research that I would like to continue from this thesis. This thesis has shown that although a system of teaching and learning through whole-class ensemble tuition exists, it is not always successful, despite its continued practice in England. This could be because of the way it is situated against the NC for Music in a dual and often confusing system. Further research around how to integrate instrumental tuition into the NC is not only a further area of research, but an area of further research to develop political planning around the future direction of primary music education in England.

Conclusion

Table 9.1 shows the conclusions as to how the recorder is taught in 21st-century England, acknowledging how the recorder in education has affected its social status,

strategies to improve recorder teaching and learning, and society's perceptions of the instrument.

Table 9.1: How the recorder is taught in 21st-century England

Effect on recorder's social perceptions	Recommendations for improvement	Intended audience
A lack of pedagogical development of technique resources for beginner recorder players and their teachers. Historically, reliance upon behaviourist, teacher-directed instruction.	Use the Fundamental Five and Framework for Teaching and Learning of Beginner Recorder Technique to develop new recorder teaching and learning resources for beginner recorder players and their teachers.	Beginner recorder players Recorder teachers European Recorder Teachers Association Music Education Hubs Publishers Continuing professional development providers
Insufficient recorder teacher-training opportunities or opportunities for recorder-specific continuing professional development.	Use the Fundamental Five and Framework for Teaching and Learning of Beginner Recorder Technique to develop new recorder teaching and learning resources for beginner recorder players and their teachers.	Continuing professional development providers Recorder teachers European Recorder Teachers Association Music Education Hubs Publishers
A historical legacy of othering between different subsections of the recorder/music education community.	Subsections of the wider recorder community to work together to promote a working and collaborative relationship to 'rebrand' the recorder.	Society of Recorder Players European Recorder Teachers Association National Youth Recorder Orchestra Music Education Hubs, working in collaboration with school-based teachers Conservatoires

Disregard for the need to enculturate children and teachers into the recorder outside of the classroom, educational or amateur contexts, which has led to a rise of negative online memes.	Institutions and individual teachers to develop positive public relations and marketing strategies for the recorder, focusing on online teaching and parenting groups, early music and recorder groups, and music education groups.	Society of Recorder Players European Recorder Teachers Association National Youth Recorder Orchestra Music Education Hubs, working in collaboration with school-based teachers (to better promote recorder-playing activities in their communities) Conservatoires Recorder makers/manufacturers Publishers
The recorder being presented as 'compulsory' educational provision in primary schools.	Give children a choice of what instrument to play and the repertoire they would like to learn. Present the recorder in a fun, engaging and enculturating manner.	Schools Music Education Hubs Department for Education
The recorder was used in whole classes as a starter instrument with insufficient pathways for progress or ensemble opportunities, relative to other instruments. Children not having positive peer or adult recorder mentors to look up to and be inspired by.	Recorder communities to work together to provide affordable, available, accessible and engaging opportunities for young recorder players to play in ensemble with peers, older children and the wider community.	Society of Recorder Players European Recorder Teachers Association National Youth Recorder Orchestra Music Education Hubs, working in collaboration with school-based teachers (to better promote recorder-playing activities in their communities) Conservatoires

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Appendices

Appendix A: Focus Group Declaration and Information Sheet

Recorder Technique Focus Group

Circle as appropriate

Current undergraduate / current postgraduate / undergraduate alumni / postgraduate alumni
/ undergraduate and postgraduate alumni / HE professor

Brief details of recorder teaching experience. Age ranges, employers (include self-employed), preferred books, methods, etc.

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Objectives of the focus group

- 1) What are the fundamental aspects of recorder technique and how can we introduce these techniques to beginners in a way that incorporates playful and independent learning?

Who or what will these findings be for?

- 1) For the submission of PhD thesis
- 2) To produce a handbook of recorder technique games and warmups, advice, etc. for both specialist and non-specialist recorder and music teachers. For use with small groups, large groups and individual tuition as appropriate.
- 3) Target age group of between 7 and 11 years.

Why have you been invited to take part in this focus group?

You have been invited to take part in this focus group as you are either a current Guildhall recorder student, alumni or Guildhall recorder professor who is currently teaching the recorder in a variety of different fields. This ensures that all participants of the focus group come from the same 'school' of recorder technique.

Do you have to take part?

No! Participation is voluntary; you can elect to leave the focus group at any time.

Data Collection

This focus group will be audio-recorded and transcribed via conversational analysis. All participants will be kept anonymous. Data will be kept secure and password-protected. No participant will be recognisable in published transcripts.

Declaration of participation

I understand what is involved in being a participant in this focus group on Monday 16th November 2016 16.30 – 18.30 in Milton Court, Barbican, London. I understand that this focus group will be audio-recorded and transcribed. I am aware that all participants will be kept anonymous in the publication of transcripts for the submission of PhD and also other possible publications in the form of journals, articles etc. I agree to keep findings of the focus group discreet until final publication and award of the PhD degree. Any public recognition of the work of this focus group should be appropriately referenced and/or attributed.

Signed..... Date.....

Appendix B: Recorder Technique Focus Group Transcription

16th November 2016 at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama.

Participants Present: GMC, RE, IW, LG, EF, CDP, HSCF, JT, MM, SC, CF, N.

Length of Recording: 1 hour, 15 minutes and 15 seconds.

IW: Georgina, just so you have a record, sort of

GMC: Erm yeah

IW: orderly, shall we recap what we've just done? So, you've listed some areas from, Walter's book erm, how to hold the recorder etc. and we're now about to make the mind map, erm

RE: this is the list from Walter's book and then we made some quite significant corrections to those

IW: Yeah

GMC: Yep

RE: I think which will make them a lot more interesting

GMC: I'm going to take all of these [lists] home, I'm going to take pictures of them and put them in the appendix 'cause I think it's important that the process is documented. OK, so, we've worked out that that's a good basis, so... shout things out about, what are our most important things recorder technique-wise

[Pause with inaudible whispering]

IW: So, holding the recorder

GMC: Shall we just write all of these same ones down?

ALL: mmmhmmm

GMC: [same as in WVH's book]. So, holding the recorder, I'm going to put blowing versus breathing [sound of pen drawing]

IW: Do you mean versus or do you mean...

CF: Blowing out

IW: Blowing out

GMC: Yeah, blowing and...

IW: Sounds like you have a, err [laughter], struggle to overcome [laughter]

GMC: Articulation... What have I missed?

JT: What to do with the sound

Focus group reply in unison: What to do with the sound.

IW reply: What to do with the sound

IW: What to do with the tongue

JT: yeah what to do with the tongue

GMC: How to move fingers [writing on board] how to move fingers, what to do with the tongue

CF: Instead of articulation

JT: [in agreement] yeah instead of ar...

IW: Starting and ending notes

[The sound of writing on the board]

GMC: yep

RE: There are two things I don't agree with here. One is the adjective 'good', I think it's too early to define that

GMC: yep

RE: it's to get them thinking about sound. I think it's too early to be thinking about sound and the other thing is, what to do with the tongue. I can imagine that it would be possible to start and end notes without using the tongue, so I think that's also... erm, something that comes later. So therefore I think it's starting and finishing notes and it's not tonguing yet

LG: Really? Do you mean the word or the action?

RE: Erm, I mean the word at this concept stage

IW: Oh I see, yeah yeah

RE: 'Cause we what, err these are, sort of, excuse me, the the the, totally abstracted things

IW: Yeah

RE: It's like, for example: how to move the fingers I find much much better than erm, what used to be in the School Recorder Book One; closing the holes.

[Mutual agreements uttered and laughter heard]

IW: Yeah, actively stopping the holes

[Pause]

IW: So do you think that it's... erm... does, yes, starting and ending the notes is enough to cover... what you are fundamentally doing with the articulation without using that complicated word, articulation and in fact really kind of

RE: Recorder language

N: Yeah, recorder language, how to make the instrument speak, or something

RE: I think that's very important but I think that's also one stage later

[Pause]

GMC: Does anyone want to elaborate on, for example err, what is good practice, because we have said how to move the fingers but how do you actually move the fingers. [Pause] and we've said things like, holding the recorder. Well how do you actually hold the recorder, and I know these things for us are quite tacit but for other people they're not, because we just take for granted that we know, and I'm sure, well, we might not all agree actually, even though we all come from the same technical place. So I think it's quite important that we unpick this because otherwise we risk doing exactly the same as what has come before. Do we all agree?

IW: Yeah

RE: I have an ideological view on this

GMC: yeah

RE: I think before, in my own personal opinion, before we say anything specific about what to do with the recorder

GMC: yeah

RE: Erm, I think there's another development and I would like to throw something into the ring here. Holding the recorder, I would say that there's a, there's something to be learnt from the Alexander Technique here which is very fundamental to all kinds of instrumental technique which is: the less that you can change the natural disposition of your body in order to work with the instrument, the better the results are going to be, and that's something which is implicate in van Hauwe, erm and he doesn't develop it as much as he could and I think that we can do better than that.

GMC: Yep

RE: So, maybe one possible step in that would be bringing the recorder to the body and not bringing the body to the recorder and that's something that you can do games with. Say, if the recorder is lying on the floor, should the kid lie on the floor in order to play the recorder
[Laughter]

RE: No, stupid, pick up the recorder and then that can be brought into a didactical con, err, context in that, in that way.

[Writing on the board]

CF: There's um, there's a certain sort of an erm, vocabulary that you have, that has been built up to explain certain concepts of the Alexander Technique to young kids. This, sort of age range, um and there's a sort of specific school, where the whole education programme is based on the principles of the Alexander Technique, so, one of the things that they talk to the kids about is to first of all before they go into an activity is to stop, and be the boss of their body. So it's quite a nice idea that, with the instrument: stop and be the boss of your body and bring the instrument to you. Um, they have things like: letting the head go up like a floating balloon, running across the shoulders, there's all kinds of little, erm, you know, imagery that can be really nice but I think that's erm yeah, taking charge for yourself is um,

N: There's a recorder method in Germany that is very much err, used now, it's um, its, um, also interesting they say it's like a, um, stand like a King, or big, like a tree, and they have lots of different concepts like, so it might be interesting also for you to have a look at it.

[Pause]

GMC: Does anyone have, I'm just thinking really we don't have a lot of time, and I did have the idea that once we kind of had some specific areas that some people might be more, erm have more of an interest in one area than the other, which is why I brought the paper to kind of erm speed up, not speed up the process but make it more efficient. Erm is there, if we got into groups, or pairs, and if we're happy with these kind of areas, broad-brush areas, if we got into, I think it would be better in pairs or groups and we kind of did 10 minutes on your pieces of paper erm about different games and how we can the how we do these things I'm not sure if it's too early to do this now but I'm wondering if that's a good idea to do that now

IW: yep

GMC: So, erm, I'm just going to stay out of it because I have to be conscious of the fact that I don't want to be seen as biased. Which, I think I might be partial to doing. So I don't know? Who wants to do, how to move the fingers first, so, what we'll do is, we'll do think, pair, share, so in the words of teachers, we've done the thinking, now we're going to do the pairing and then we'll do the sharing! So erm, if everyone can get, there are loads of these things, I can think of so many, err so if I could get into groups and take one area, so I don't know if some people want to work in one area...

IW: Allocate us, I think that's going to be easier

GMC: Allocate? OK. How many have we got? 1, 2, 3, 4 areas? 5. Right so if 1 2 3 4 5, 1 2 3 4 5 it works out perfectly. So if all the ones get together 2 get together shall I do that again. 1 2 RE 3 N, 4 MN, 5 SC, 1 IW, 2 no

IW: yeah

GMC: 3 4 5

N: 3 4 5

GNC: or you could do it with the person next to you

N: Ok we have can we get together

GMC: So

IW: I don't know if

GMC: All the ones do how to move the fingers, all the twos do blowing and breathing, all the threes do holding the recorder, all the fours do... [Inaudible] and all the fives do starting and ending notes, although starting and ending notes might be... I'll do that again. All the ones do the fingers, I feel like I'm at school! Listen, I'm having to say things twice [laughter]. One is the fingers, two's blowing and breathing, three holding the recorder, four sounds and five on articulation. I'm aware of the sound and articulation you might want to work together.

SC: You guys go together and we'll go together so we don't

M: cool, so one two three

GMC: If I give you ten minutes on each area, so you've got ten minutes. If I was at school I would have a timer.

[Group conversations from 10.49 – 11.10]

GMC: So if you get ready to swap your things round in a minute. We'll do two more minutes on this and then swap them round. We have ten minutes on each. We're going to move the papers around and build on what everyone has done

IW: or shall we just move them round one step?

GMC: That's what I mean, yeah, sorry, just move it round, that's what I mean, move it one step along

H: Or can we not just share, some of this is cryptic

EF: Errrrm I mean we both agree that right is really important. It's when you

GMC: So if we move them up one and we have like, a brief explanation where you explain, if you move them

IW: Shall we do it like, in front of everyone?

GMC: You want to do it in front of everyone?

IW: Yeah, it might be more, you might get more, it might generate more

GMC: OK shall we do that? And I'll write these on the board too

CF: Yeah

GMC: So we've got five haven't we?

IW: Do you want a sheet per

GMC: Yeah. So if we start with. So holding the recorder EF what have you come up with?

IW: Hang on the focus group isn't focusing

EF: Erm, well, we had holding the recorder. And...

GMC: It's just like being at school isn't it!

EF: I wouldn't know! Erm... so we had holding the recorder. Blimey, and erm so we decided that balance was the most important thing first, so we felt very strongly about that. Erm, especially in the right-hand thumb and the position of where the right-hand thumb was for erm, for, good balance. And... err what N does is she always puts a tape marker to show where the thumb should go on the right hand. And then, the game idea which N suggested, was something that she does quite often with her students which is that they hold the recorder in place with their right thumb and do things like walk around, shake hands, kneel down and stand up to show that they've got a really good balance there. Erm and I suggested that maybe if you put their left hand up behind their back, erm, I for one always find it quite fun for things where it's, like you only have to do it with your right hand. That kind of makes it seem more exciting in a way. Erm I don't know why and the other game I had in mind, where we did something like this at NYRO [National Youth Recorder Orchestra], a couple of years ago was that erm the idea that you're robots and you've got both hands in position, kind of down here, and you erm move it up into position in one fluid movement and we didn't do it as robots then but erm I was trying to think of what you could pretend to be that might be fun to practise to practise that movement and I thought well if you did it like a robot that might work. Erm and then I just had a discussion point which was quite interesting because we didn't agree with that which I thought was really good. Erm, is how important it is to introduce good thumb position in the left hand really early. Erm cos at the moment I'm having quite a lot of problems with a pupil up in Scotland who is doing really strange things with her left-hand thumb and I'm thinking maybe if I'd focused more on that area earlier on it wouldn't be that much of an issue now. Erm but now we really felt that the right hand was more important.

N: Erm for holding the instrument, err of course it's important to have a good thumb position

MN: Would that come under moving your fingers though?

N: Yeah, it's not our job

[Laughter]

GMC: Does anyone want to include the little finger in that?

IW: I was just going to say, it was about, it's just about holding the recorder. Yes I think it's really important to have the balance, yes I think it's a really important thing. You could work to have that there as well, it's a balancing act. I'm also wondering then if we should also have something, yeah right-hand little finger. That's on the other side to balance it. Opposite the thumb

GMC: Because you can't balance with just your thumb, well you kind of can. I take that back.

JT: I think you didn't mention the shape. How

N: yeah

JT: because I think that it is quite important too. Do people do this, or do this, or do this

IW: yeah

JT: I think this is important. I always say it's like holding a hamburger and it always works.

Whatever instrument has a right hand, even for flute, clarinet, whatever, it always works.

[Writing on board]

M: yeah and I think if you are going to include that it is important to include the left hand as well because they can do so many strange positions with their thumb that they kind of suddenly hold it with the left hand and the right thumb is kind of doing whatever they...

[Someone tries to open door] GMC: You just have to pull it down

CDP: Sorry

GMC: Can you fill this out for me please

CF: This might come into moving the fingers more than this, I don't know, but there's a lot of problems with people having incredibly hypermobile thumbs these days. I mean there are some people that have incredibly hypermobile fingers generally and that can often be erm a problem, might be a problem for people that they find it very difficult to keep the thumb straight because the thumb will bend so

[General agreement]

CF: yeah exactly and erm but also with teaching that kind of thing it's becoming incredibly problematic

GMC: Shall we move on and come back to it or does anyone else have anything to add to?

SC: The hypermobile thumb thing, like what would you do to rectify it?

IW: That might not be a question for right now, is it?

GMC: Who's next in the line?

HSCF: Where do you buy the marker for the thumb?

[General questioning of what was said]

HSCF: where do you put the marker for the thumb?

GMC: You see these are things that we all probably know but we haven't said

IW: yeah

N: I do it like this with the recorder and then you find it a good position and then put a little tape so they can see

IW: yeah so they can see, which is what a lot of violinists do with their bowing

RE: With their bow as well. In my opinion the exercises in Walter van Hauwe are the best, tucking your thumb and then erm you notice where the child's fingers are facing a different way then it's pretty obvious.

IW: But I think Georgina is good to you know establish where the thumb is going

GMC: So where would that right because I know where I would

IW: I think it's going to be dependent on every child, where each child is. It's going to be an individual thing.

CF: Yeah

HSCF: Is this like an exercise?

GNC: Do we have like err... Erm... a hierarchy? Where would we put the thumb?

[Err]

RE: No! No, it's err when the child goes, 'mine' and makes a fist it's where it comes to

SC: Really?

GMC: yeah

[Yeah]

RE: That's what determines it. It's never going to be there. No child is ever going to make a fist like that. Because, yeah...

CF: But it could go to the fourth or middle...

[Yeah]

RE: Possibly

MN: I think it's like a relax your hand thing as well because when you ask a kid to hold the recorder this way it's kind of, it's in line for it to be a bit less tense

IW: yeah

[In audible agreement]

RE: That's good

N: I think you do this hold, and you see what's best for the child and see what's best for the thumb

RE: mmm?

N: So first do the fingers and try to do a hamburger and then or a vegetarian hamburger and then you go like, and then you go erm, you can like feel what feels comfortable and it's always good to have a hand flexible so when people play a lot their thumb is really hard and heavy so when the thumb blocks it's not so good but I wouldn't say this is the first lesson.

GMC: Can you write it on your big page because I don't know how I would articulate that

N: It's the flexible thumb and also the... hand

GMC: Because I don't know, I don't know how I would articulate that in my

RE: If I can summarise, I think N makes a very good point. The first point is: where did god put your thumb in relation to your other fingers? And in most people it's either going to be opposite that finger or that finger and if you grasp a broomstick or a pen or pick up something that is where it's going to be there. And the second point is, how am I going to modify my body in order to play the recorder and the point then becomes there's one hole and another hole and that distance is given to you by the instrument. You can't modify it,

only if you buy another type of recorder so then, you check whether where the thumb goes. But I think the first thing is where did where do, how did your creator make your hand and that could be different in order to who you are.

GNC: Cool, anything else

IW: Shall we?

GNC: Move on? I'd hate to be short to have to do that. Whose next MN and SC

MN: Erm the thing we thought was most important was erm to just have a, being aware of the sound and we're not saying you to have a good sound but just a quality of sound that you know to be aware of it. Erm and how to do this we thought of two ways. The first way was representing the sound in terms of physical motion. So M do you want to explain this one?

MN: well I think maybe you?

SC: Oh oh OK. Well err maybe representing it in terms of flash cards or drawings and we came up with these two things. So this one is a kind of sampler. So straight line and then this one that kind of bends and drops down. And err or like a block and a bulgy block. Like this one versus this one. I'd say like, OK we were saying don't like, err beyond initial exploration of the subject so don't encourage it. So first time we'd be like OK so play this sound and now this sound but don't be like, like on a certain note... you know encourage it. Because they'll think it's hilarious. But erm err and then also representing that with physical motions so erm erm

MN: like a droopy like floppy sound would sort of be like like physical

GMC: Like play the action?

MN: Precisely. Although they're sort of, yeah I mean welcoming exploration within the understanding the limits of their instrument

SC: Like if you want to explore it further without getting them to make horrible sounds you would like maybe you do the horrible sound and get them to show a flash card of what it is. Or like, do the hand thing.

GMC: yeah

MN: We also thought like listening is obviously really vital. Who they listen to is obviously dependent on the lesson situation but their teacher if they're any I don't know good I don't mean if they're any good [laughter]... Or peer mentoring is really useful, you know, like what they can learn from correcting each other. You know what I mean.

SC: Playing to each other. But if you were not a recorder player and were just teaching the recorder as a non-professional erm then I would say that listening to recorder actual recorder players...

IW: I think that, that the huge advantage of representation of pitch of the sound is that erm I think anyone can pick that up and get a sense of what not to do with the sound. I think that that's in one of those early Dolmetsch books. That comes up. And I remember sort of being you know working through that book myself. Because actually we didn't really have a teacher at school. We sort of just myself and a bunch of friends actually just got lots of instruments and we kind of taught ourselves. That was the thing, actually, that really helped. So I think that that's a really important element of the sound and erm, kind of teaching sound. And also it does give you sort of a very black and white this good and this is not desirable.

SC: And it's also kind of if you ask someone to just exhale they're not gonna be like [exhales in manner of recorder] they're gonna be like [exhales strongly]. That's kind of [laughter] but that would be erm where it ties in with the whole erm making it, kind of, how far away do you go from, the very natural like I can't remember your exact words but trying to make it as natural as possible for any instrument but having something you have to change because you can't exhale as you normally would.

CDP: I think it's quite difficult for children of certain ages to understand, erm, the natural way of breathing in cos you'd say to them 'what happens to your tummy when you breathe in?' And they go 'it goes in!' It's really hard and even if you say, OK try and play your recorder and make your tummy stick out, that concept is still really difficult and think that probably takes years to

IW: Yeah and if they have to squeeze through a small gap

CDP: Oh yeah

IW: you know, breath in

CDP: Oh yeah that's true.

IW: To get through, to breathe in to get through that gap. Well actually, sorry just on.

GMC: Anything else

IW: Well actually on sound, is a little bit related to that because the other sort of things about you know, blowing out across a table and that sort of thing, yes blowing and breathing are related

SC: They are synced, breathing and blowing [and sound].

GMC: I think we will go on. Do you want to go to the last link and we'll link it over

SC: We were like, will we be treading on their toes [laughter]

GMC: Shall we then go onto blowing and breathing then?

[Laughter and general chatter]

GMC: So, blowing and breathing

RE: OK, so we started off with erm again what does, what does the kid know? And what does the kid not know? And how can we change as little as possible until we absolutely have to and so and we had to find the connection to the recorder and the recorder is unfamiliar and the kid might think I've got to do something really special to do this. So, we don't take a recorder, we take a drinking straw and, err, the first exercise could be breathing in through the drinking straw and feeling the resistance that that has and then blowing out through the drinking straw and realising that you can't blow out as fast, through the drinking straw as you can. And it sort of feels different. You can blow bubbles in the water in the glass, that sort of stuff. Lots of things. So that's about getting the feeling for resistance erm without having the recorder to hold, so just with the straw. Second exercise could be playing with a cotton-wool ball along the table. Erm controlling the speed erm and then take away the straw and purse your lips so you're moving the point of the resistance step by step into the body and the first one would be like that. The third exercise would be hissing like this [demonstrates] Like a snake, moving the point of resistance to the point of where it is more likely to happen when

you're actually playing the recorder. So that prepares the point for the articulation, excuse me that is within somebody else's control. You're hissing like a snake, and then you can ask: is it a little tiny snake? [Demonstrates air flow] Or is it a great big long snake? [Demonstrates air flow]. Which opens up other fields. So just to recap of those three exercises: they are about developing the feeling for controlling the airstream, with the external aid, with the lips, and then with the tongue, which is getting quite close to orthodox recorder technique. Then, how to experience the the the body because every child breathes because otherwise you wouldn't be around to teach it. Erm so how can we develop the feeling for that without feeling that we have to do something really really really special to play the recorder? So we're going to do 'oooooooooooo' erm so we take a drinking straw again and get them to exhale fully through the drinking straw without going 'oooooooooooo' which is where we might use some of the Alexander pictures of the balloon and so on. And then, take the straw away and relax. And what happens is that the air flows back to the body. Turn that one, one hundred and eighty degrees. Inhale fully through the straw take it away and then relax and the air comes out. And that leads us to the point where it would be very interesting to develop this into other exercises in the median point where you're fully relaxed where you can then breathe in or breathe out around that point. And then I think that movement, it would be a good idea to pass on to the starting and stopping notes crew erm because that is the if you like tap or the valve I'm sure you've got all sorts of ideas about that. To the control that process.

[Rustle of paper]

JT: Errrrr with my experience of teaching young kids erm with the straw it's nice. But especially with a cup of water, they will make a mess so that in fact I invent another way to do it and it always works and sometimes we don't always have time to prepare other, other tools but we always have tissues in our bag. So I always take a tissue because if you blow too hard then the tissue is flying away. So that's also an image for the kids to see where does the tissue or how much they blow, too much is too high, so this is also to let them know the airstream. So that for starting and ending notes I was err dealing with my students like ti

ti ti but erm if they do ti ti ti in front of the tissue then they can see that the tissue is moving.

So I think it's kind of one of the games that can be erm yeah

M: Actually in a lot of German books erm we are talking about recorder language and you cannot go just like 'wooooo' into the recorder because that's not really how you would talk.

And so I find it quite important to paint that image that you could use lots of different letters to actually talk and then to really find out which ones are usable and which ones might not work really well. And to trial it out. And then to try and make this recorder language out of it that you always use when you play the recorder. What else did we have? Erm

JT: Oh yeah, we have the kind of bring up a question to everyone. When you're talking about all these games to after, to apply them on the recorder, would you prefer a student only holding the head joint to do it? Or the whole recorder? [Pause] It's very, advantages and disadvantages.

RE: I think, I would suggest and I judicial exercise in the middle of what you were saying erm, I would take the straw again and put my finger against the end of it and the the child should take their finger and put it on the end, and then they move their finger and 'oh' the air comes out. How do I stop it? Put my finger back. And then try to make the connection of that, coming closer to the body and they purse their lips and they go [blow] and then moving it back another inch to, what's your name? Tom. Tom: That [language and blowing] is connected.

IW: You just have to hope you don't teach Xavier. [Laughter]

CF: But you'd have a nice friend!

JT: So... Yeah, I think the our doubt is about, head joint or the whole recorder how we apply

CF: I think that's different, for different kids, I mean there are some kids that really struggle, maybe coordination is an issue, actually this is really playful and there's loads of stuff you can do without the fingers and perhaps it's a matter of the child. Yeah.

GMC: So it could be like an option. You can either do it with or without.

N: Or you could do it on the same note?

GMC: yeah

RE: But then, then they're already holding it. [Agreement]

N: But many want to play, and when you then say, 'hey we're not going to play we're doing exercises', they're not happy.

CF: No but if its games and its play they'll enjoy it.

GMC: And also it's a language thing. A lot of the time if you're talking to kids and you tell them they're doing an exercise they're like 'oooooh' [miserable] but you could do exactly the same thing and tell them it's a game and they're like 'yay'

M: yeah or there are so many amazing stories which you can just tell them that they do the noises to. I think if you can make it interesting

JT: Yeah, I like doing this movement. I think this is one of the advantages of using only the head joint.

GMC: So like you could do [recorder glissando sound, possibly only head joint?] different games on starting and stopping the note. I'm making a sound story.

M: Yeah, exactly.

Mir: yeah exactly, also I just came from a class erm like first the middle joint and the foot joint without the head joint and you can whisper and like have different sounds like storms or like a little wind and then you can like do soft rain with your fingers and then with just the head joint and having the air experience just woo [blows] without having this weird thing in your mouth. And then with the head joint and that worked quite well.

SC: You can do like bird sounds.

CDP: Remember when we were in Amsterdam and the Royal Winds did a really interactive performance with the kids. The kids were involved either with playing notes or just the mouthpiece. Didn't matter what level they were at. And I found myself starting to use lots of the ideas in like workshops for various people. And we just get the kids, you just create a soundscape. And just like that, some are doing exactly as you said, just taking off the head joint and it can be a bird moving or some of them can flutter their tongue. They actually can, they don't know they're doing it but...

IW: There's something really nice about the idea that you know, that if you're teaching if you really are trying to work on that, that there's a kind of piece that you can create. That idea of the soundscape you know you gradually, through the tutor book, are formulating things that you can use later. Interesting. There's always a place for that kind of for music-making. You know whatever is happening on stage.

M: And I always think there's a lot you can do with pictures if you want to teach them articulation. And, they kind of feel what they have to do. So if you would show them a big river or a night scene they would intentionally play much softer than if you were to show them, I don't know, a ballet dancer that is on their tiptoes so I think you can make a lot of ideas.

IW: Erm, one of the things. There's one tutor book that I kind of see that talks really very early on about finishing the notes with the tongue and using tut, as the word. And there's something nice about that being introduced very early on, that idea of stopping notes with the tongue being there because you know I always think what we have and what's vital in our playing is the articulation. It's our kind of trump card over all other instruments and that's what's kind of and to really evolve that kind of thinking to say, 'we're going to end this note with the tongue' or let it kind of, just have a defined start is something. And then, that word, I find really useful to have a concept that you can actually take care of the end of the note. It's really important.

Mir: Can I say something? I find it, or something I have found very useful to use is nnnn

GMC: To use what?

Mir: nnnn no note just nnnn. To experience that the tongue lies flat without any force, added force I found quite helpful.

IW: Mm yeah. Mmm and T are very closely related. It uses aspiration. It's the N and T that are in the same part of the palate. I think N is, is great. I use that a lot of the time. N, I sense, I sort of pretend to myself that I'm using N to start the note but I'm actually using, I'm technically using T. I'm using it, in my mind thinking N as something soft.

GMC: Do you mean? Like, kids are really in tune to sounds because they learn to read using phonics

IW: yeah

GMC: So they're in tune with... Phonics!

CDP: Mir do you mean using N at the end like using Tun?

Mir: yeah

CDP: yeah

Mir: Because then you have like, without any extra note at the end.

CDP: Cos I find if we're getting them to say Tut, tut cos I've said it to some kids before then just the repetitive word with the starting and beginnings with the same letter they kind of can't, I don't think they can

Mir: And it also applies that when you want to erm some articulation between notes later on that you don't lose the support like tunnnn. And then, I also like, show them the movement of the tongue.

IW: yeah. I also, word games are like good. Like little tongue twisters and things like that that we do but like, everyone, you know like thinking of erm dotty teddy which is all front strokes and HCF's one that she came up with in a lesson, quite violent but effective, go kick a geeky guy which is all the back of the tongue or go kick a kid go kick a kid. Where you're exercising the back of the throat and then the other one that I use for err double-tonguing which is you know, way down the line but it's kind of fun to to experiment with what feeling where the tongue is with the take a ticket to Kentucky, take a ticket to Kentucky which is like tk tk erm and that, just just raising awareness of where in the mouth. I think that's a really important thing just to get a sense of where in the mouth

RE: Counting of the teddies, sorry counting of the teddies you know teddy, teddy, teddy, teddy, and then cross them teddy teddy kick a teddy kick a teddy [laughter]

IW: raising a generation of violent recorder players [laughter]. George, do you want us to look at the fingers thing?

GMC: Yeah. I forgot about fingers, which I always do. Erm, what did we call it?

General Consensus: How to move the fingers.

GMC: Sorry I forgot about that one.

HSCF: errrrrrrm. Yeah, we came up with lots of words that we thought were good for us to get in there early. So relaxed and tension-free, natural hands, or efficient, gentle fingers, erm

IW: We like the idea of numbered fingers, you know, whether that's a bit contentious or whether we should really already start numbering, you know thumb 0, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 but erm that that could be incorporated into some games. You know where you have to, you shout a number and children maybe tap that hole. I don't know. Erm it's nice

GMC: I really like that

IW: To sort of think, maybe further down the line, that concept of really knowing which fingering goes

GMC: We do fingering maths so like 1 plus 2 equals G and teachers really like that because I do that as a starter. So if I'm doing wider opps and everyone's there, I just put fingering maths on the board. Which sounds really bad! I'll write that down because I'll forget that I do it.

IW: And sort of, fingers belonging to a hole erm that there's a sense of

GMC: That fingers live at a hole?

IW: Erm yeah, that they don't wander up and down the instrument. You'd like to have a good sense of the feeling of the hole as well so maybe smearing the fingers just to kind of get a sense of the edge of the hole really try to maximise the touch sensitivity of the fingers.

CDP: err can I ask a question about that because it's something that's come up before about tension and yeah you're meant to be relaxed but if you're too relaxed when you're a kid the sound is not going to come out. So I end up saying, press the holes. I vowed I would never say that but I do. Erm because for me, I only teach whole class so for me it's a bit different but I actually end up saying that because otherwise they're just there's going to be bits of holes missing so for them to be able to feel the edges of the holes I think they do need to actually press down, at least a small bit anyway.

GMC: That's a really good thing, that sensory thing, because a lot of kids they just float or I see a lot of kids float because they don't, they're not in touch with how it feels. Do you have like, cos I can never think of a way...?

IW: yeah it's what I find really fascinating is that you know children, you know their fingers are so touch sensitive because that's how you learn. You know you learn ooo I'll never touch that again because it's hot. So you learn it is, it's really interesting that you are asking with the young ones. I mean it's the first time they are having to deal with moving the fingers independently because they mostly, you know it's quite grabby. It's tricky but I I I think that's sort of rubbing and smearing fingers across erm I don't know err was it erm sorry

RE: And what note are you starting on?

IW: I've tried everything. My issue with the note B to start with that in order to, if you haven't set up the holding the recorder properly what happens is that you end up with that [demonstrates incorrect right-hand technique] and I've seen plenty of people you know, further down the line and that comes from astonishingly good finger memory, touch sensitivity. That's they they somehow manage to hold the recorder like that to play B and then that's how they remember to hold the recorder.

GMC: That's how they write.

IW: Yeah so it's

RE: So

HSCF: So start on? Sorry, so I start on C. I teach them C just because my preferred is C and A and so this is just Kodály background that, you've got so much

JT: But this has always worked better, with

JT and HSCF: C and A

JT: I have experience with it.

HSCF: There are so many songs, you've got a wealth of repertoire

JT: Even younger kids err like I have taught the youngest was four years old. They really can't do this and hold it properly because of their hands. But with this finger I don't know why, probably because it's stronger or mechanically it's more natural.

IW: It's also the balance thing [consensus] as well isn't it?

JT: So afterwards I start to teach them the cuckoo cuckoo

HSCF: yeah that's what I do

IW: Yeah so we thought for some little ideas for this kind of like tapping and moving fingers and thought that erm we could do lots of sort of erm finger gym stuff. Erm tapping away from the recorder and really getting a sense of like sort of, maybe that sort of thing ahead of touching the recorder is quite good and raises the sensitivity of the fingertips. But we've thought of some sort of games for fingers. I mean the advanced ones could try the sort of Pac Man thing, you know, sort of video-game arcade stuff that SC does very well now. Erm that sort of thing but we also thought erm like note pairs so they can pair notes like a telephone G to B, tapping their fingers erm or erm tremolo between the fingers making a telephone noise. Siren, C to a cuckoo F sharp to D and there are some erm there are some scope for some really interesting harmonic combinations of these if you have some trebles as well.

GMC: how do you spell cuckoo? Cuckoo! Oh yeah!

IW: erm put a C before the K. So there was scope for building up some interesting combinations of notes that you could actually start to do to get some harmonic sounds and so on. We wondered about erm, well the idea of the fingers erm falling to the holes, I don't know what you all think about the, but falling to the instrument is is good and then, this robot fingers which I is something that I use a lot erm just in terms of feeling very very neat and mechanical but a bit like with what EF said with the robotic thing there are a couple of issues with that. I'm not sure about using something like such a stiff image in teaching is good. And the other thing is that most videos of robots that I've seen these days, they're falling over. So it's not very efficient thing to have in people's minds you know but there's yes, mechanical or technically precise. There's something but for me the word robot is a bit loaded in a negative, stiff yeah way that we probably don't really want although we want that efficiency, that mechanical, technological way.

[Inaudible muttering]

IW: What was that?

GMC: Puppet. Like you're being moved by someone else

RE: Georgina I'm really sorry I've to go.

GMC: you can go

RE: Can I leave you with a thought, which is going to come out a bit more massive than I would like erm I think that erm van Hauwe starts off with a really really good idea that he doesn't develop and if there was a way of developing it might actually help a lot which is again this business of what does the body do if it's just left alone. And what do you have to change? Erm he has this idea of just letting your hand by your side and looking at it and observing that for most people it's just asking to have a recorder put into it. Erm and if it's going into the hand it can be a big recorder or a little recorder and then he stops. And I think that there's a lot of scope there. So you then start with that and then you stretch out your fingers and you hold that for ten seconds and you realise how incredibly exhausting that is and that you don't have to do anything to bring your fingers down, it just when you relax it automatically does that. You then make a fist and do the same thing that's also quite strenuous and then relax and it doesn't feel, well in my hand, that it goes back to exactly the same place because the first is a different stretch but comparable with one another. And I think that that could be the starting point for a number of games that might lead into your question here about lifting the holes or closing or opening holes because that's the only point where Walter develops that idea, he says it's more about opening the hole than closing the hole and that in itself is a relaxing thing. But that's a remark that I've only ever been able to convey to advanced students. I've never been able to convey that to a child but I'm sure there is a way of doing that and my suspicion is that the intermediary element is a foreign body like a broom handle or I don't know or to make finger games and that could lead in brilliantly to finger games that you were describing,

IW: I mean long before you even know the concept of notes these can be done, you know knowing the number of holes and you do that and it's that idea of you are actively opening.

RE: And what I was wondering was is there some kind of toy or computer or something which is less than specific than covering a hole but when you move your finger you do something. Sorry I'm not being very precise about this but there is, this is not a good example but those things with a little piano keyboard that you can blow into yeah and then if you move ooh it makes a difference. There must be something better than that that you can take.

N: And the hardest thing is like the independence of the fingers and for, when you have just one student you can like do catching games like this and the student runs away and you can try again and then you also play with this or this and its but like maybe in a group it will be too much and too loud and everyone is or you can do it in pairs maybe or like this or like this if it's needed

CF: I think it's also the hand, the natural hand position for a child is more open than for us because of our hand span which is why those games are useful for exploring.

CDP: I think erm, the Suzuki method starts with all hands down and they lift don't they

IW: I think they start with a D. And I think if you start with both hands on the instrument you get a really good sense of

GMC: Well we spoke about starting on the other D (GMC and RE). High D

MN: How much would that affect the sound thing? Because often I find as soon as that thumb is off, it's like, OK now start again because, I know that sounds horrible

GMC: I think the argument was if you start with that D you have no option but to be balancing and you have no option but to use your right hand and it has a purpose for the right hand [consensus] whereas all the other notes you don't really have a purpose to using the right hand. There are so many options, that's the problem.

Mir: Erm I just saw something at the erm exhibition in Greenwich because low D is very difficult to start with because it doesn't sound because there is always something leaking, but what they did is like covering the holes with sellotape like very thin sellotape

GMC: yeah I think that's the Suzuki method [consensus]

IW: Yeah

Mir: Yeah, exactly the Suzuki method.

CDP: I knew there was something else

Mir: And so you can actually play a D and it sounds nice like not a squeaky high sound but it doesn't matter because if it's a little bit leaky

IW: I've done that with the thumb hole before because that's often the problem one. Just starting people with the thumb hole

GMC: I think for this project I'd have to stay clear of that because it's clearly Suzuki (yeah) and I'd get done for plagiarism! Even if I referenced it, it's not very original.

RE: You can still say that that's a method

GMC: yeah

RE: What about pentatonics? Erm D is very difficult E is very difficult, C and then you have [sings a pentatonic scale] then you can do an awful lot of really nice tunes with that an an and it also gets you out of any cross-fingering

GMC: erm

IW: Yeah

N: Can they cover the third hole? At the beginning?

IW: No I think that's, I mean I often re-set people's hand positions with the third finger

RE: Like what we were talking about earlier with the measuring hands.

IW: yeah but but I use that one as the first finger that goes onto the recorder and then the thumb and then these ones just fall and actually it's kind of when you unroll the recorder the hands just like that there's not that that often happens as a result. So set with finger three, thumb and then just let the others just fall down. And they do hang over.

CDP: I think you taught me that before when I was playing

IW: And I, I think I've done it with Georgina as well. We re-set your hand position, that way and it just made

GMC: We re-set everything [laughter]

IW: A huge difference

GMC: Cool thank you for coming. I think we've kind of, that was a lot quicker than I expected apart from the what note to start on that I think will always be there. Always will be a debate but the school that I've picked to trial. So there two trials basically. From all of this I will collect the data and condense it, well not condense it but collaborate it or organise it in such a way that we put all the ideas together and get a load of games all under different headings erm and I will have a look at my new GCSE students who don't play anything to play a bit of recorder and erm and we're going to do some informal learning and I'm going to get them to feedback on it and I'm going to ask them because a lot of them have younger brothers and sisters to trial it on them as in an enculturation thing and erm give me feedback as the 15-year-old beginners they are because they should in theory articulate. And the whole project with informal learning with an awareness of good technique, it's a catchy title but I'm working on an even catchier one is going to trial unfortunately not until June erm cos that's when the school do recorder. It's at a primary school in Bedford that is diverse in the true sense of the word that it really is diverse it's got kids from all different types of backgrounds but they're unique in the fact that they have a music specialist and it's a state primary school which is amazing and she's an oboist which I thought was helpful because she's not a total non-musician and she's an oboist which is wind but totally different so we can do a comparative study. She will teach recorder like she usually does because she teaches recorder every year, to one class and then another class in the same class will do our methods and we're going to compare kind of technique so I'll get a list of what we have decided is good technique. We'll video them, we'll look at it and see which class has better technique, we'll do an enjoyment scale so the kids will fill out a survey about how much they enjoyed the process about each once and they'll also write their own little manual on how to play the recorder to test their understanding which I think is the main point, if you understand what you do. So that's the plan so by this time next year we should have some results. Thank you so much for coming. I'm not sure if anyone wants to add anything else or ask any questions.

N: erm yes

GMC: Yeah

N: Erm but I think that I have also learnt some informal learning for recorder but erm from most of the time it's the environment so when it's the so it's like when you meet the people you meet you ask them it's more like a creative environment, how is it working in school because how is it working in school it's not just the lesson it's what they see and hear and what they're doing and then how do you

GMC: yep so the plan is that that class will come down here and we'll do a concert or

Woodwork might go up there see if we can get some funding to get us all up to Bedford to do a concert up there not at the school but outside the school and they'll do recorder of the week and recorder fact of the week so they'll be listening to good stuff on YouTube every week.

IW: Are you going to provide a playlist?

GMC: yeah and erm working in their friendship group is the main thing for enculturation also.

So there'll be lots of things that one group has and the other doesn't.

N: Oh OK

GMC: Thank you for coming

Appendix C: The Analysis of the Theme Sound and Articulation, Blowing and Breathing from the Focus Group

Sound and articulation, blowing and breathing

The recorder does not suffer a degree of resistance, as with other woodwind instruments such as the clarinet or oboe, therefore there are many ways to produce sound and the articulation used can have a drastic effect on the quality of sound. Linked to this is blowing and breathing; with a lack of resistance, knowing exactly how to breathe and blow on the recorder is of vital importance, as it is very simple to either under- or overblow. This is especially true with the beginner learner. Below details the acquisition of the subthemes within this category.

Relating back to RE's message on the use of adjectives in beginner learning, here we can see the subgroup on sound and articulation stress the importance of an awareness of sound, not a *good* sound, and the focus on a quality sound. They explain that the way to do this is through visual aids and physical motions. The production of sound on the recorder is internal and therefore a pupil cannot physically see what is going on with their body, so an external aid was recommended by this subgroup.

MN: Erm the thing we thought was most important was erm to just have a, being aware of the sound and we're not saying you to have a good sound but just a quality of sound that you know to be aware of it. Erm and how to do this we thought of two ways. The first way was representing the sound in terms of physical motion. So M do you want to explain this one?

MN: well I think maybe you?

SC: Oh oh OK. Well err maybe representing it in terms of flash cards or drawings and we come up with these two things. So straight line and then this one that kind of bends and drops down. And err or like a block and a bulgy block. Like this one versus this one. I'd say like, OK we were saying don't like, err beyond initial exploration of the subject so don't encourage it. So first time we'd be like OK so play this sound and now this sound but don't be like, like on a certain note... you know encourage it. Because they'll think it's hilarious. But erm err and then also representing that with physical motions so erm erm

MN: like a droopy like floppy sound would sort of be like like physical

GMC: Like play action?

MN: Precisely. Although they're sort of, yeah I mean welcoming exploration within the understanding the limits of their instrument

SC: Like if you want to explore it further without getting them to make horrible sounds you would like maybe you do the horrible sound and get them to show a flash card of what it is. Or like, do the hand thing.

We can also see in this extract the use of exploration on the instrument, and getting to know the limits of one's instrument in the early stages of learning: what can your instrument do? Then bringing this learning experience back from experimentation to fully understand the 'correct' manner in which to produce sound on the instrument.

MN: We also thought listening is obviously really vital. Who they listen to is obviously dependent on the lesson situation but their teacher if they're any I don't know good I don't mean if they're any good [laughter]... Or peer mentoring is really useful, you know, like what they can learn from correcting each other. You know what I mean

SC: Playing to each other. But if you were not a recorder player and were just teaching the recorder as a non-professional erm then I would say that listening to recorder actual recorder players...

In order to know what sound to produce, teacher and student modelling can play a role. However, the quality of the teacher was taken into account here, 'Who do they listen to?' being dependent upon the teacher and 'if they [the teacher]'re any... good'. The nuance is that the aural awareness and ultimately the sound of the pupil will be determined upon the aural environment the pupil has been exposed to. Here it has been made explicit that if a 'non-professional' is teaching the recorder, then listening to 'actual recorder players' is a must in order to develop true recorder sound. This can be seen as external modelling from sources other than the teacher and/or other pupils.

Related to this is the idea of peer mentoring and discussing each other's production of sound in lessons, and the pupils co-teaching and scaffolding each other.

IW: I think that the huge advantage of representation of pitch of the sound is that erm I think anyone can pick that up and get a sense of what not to do with the sound. I think that that's in one of those early Dolmetsch books. That comes up. And I remember sort of being you know working through that book myself. Because actually we didn't really have a teacher at school. We sort of just myself and a bunch of friends actually just got lots of instruments and we kind of taught ourselves. That was the thing, actually, that really helped. So I think that that's a really important element of the sound and erm, kind of teaching sound. And also it does give you sort of a very black and white this good and this is not desirable.

The production of sound and articulation is an internal act and not visible to the pupil; IW relates the idea of sound to pitch. On the recorder, the more you blow the sharper the note, and then the opposite is true, when the less you blow, the note becomes flatter. The Dolmetsch book in question uses this representation of pitch and sound visually. Again, this brings the theme back to exploration of the instrument, getting to know the limitations of the instrument in order to find the middle ground where the desired sound can be found.

One of the main themes underpinning every aspect of recorder technique is the idea of the body being in the most natural state possible. This is discussed also under sound and articulation in relation to breathing when playing the recorder. The recorder is a member of the woodwind family, and in order to play the instrument one needs to have an awareness of breathing and blowing.

SC: And it's also kind of if you ask someone to just exhale they're not gonna be like [exhales in manner of recorder] they're gonna be like [exhales strongly]. That's kind of [laughter] but that would be erm where it ties in with the whole erm making it, kind of, how far away do you go from, the very natural like I can't remember your exact words but trying to make it as natural as possible for any instrument but having something you have to change because you can't exhale as you normally would.

CDP: I think it's quite difficult for children of certain ages to understand, erm, the natural way of breathing cos you'd say to them 'what happens to your tummy when you breathe in?' And they go 'it goes in!' It's really hard and even if you say, OK try and play your recorder and make your tummy stick out, that concept is still really difficult and think that probably takes years to...

Again the theme of internal bodily devices being difficult for pupils to obviously dissect in the learning process appears here, under sound and articulation.

In the focus group, sound and articulation were split into two categories: starting and ending notes and sound and articulation. In the analysis of the transcription, it became clear that there was much crossover between the two categories that overlapped and could be joined together for analysis purposes.

IW: Well actually on sound, is a little bit related to that because the other sort of things about you know, blowing out across a table and that sort of thing yes blowing and breathing are related [to sound and articulation]

SC: They are synced, breathing and blowing [and sound].

With blowing and breathing the same theme was first to be mentioned, this time by

RE:

RE: OK, so we started off with erm again what does, what does the kid know? And what does the kid not know? And how can we change as little as possible until we absolutely have to and so and we had to find the connection to the recorder and the recorder is unfamiliar and the kid might think I've got to do something really special to do this.

Blowing and breathing is something all humans do subconsciously, and therefore it should not be altered too much in order to play the recorder.

Again, the theme of internal bodily function determining the sound and overall action of playing the recorder comes to light, and this time, the addition of an external aid to help get to grips with this feeling and action is discussed in relation to teaching and pedagogy.

RE: So, we don't take a recorder, we take a drinking straw and, err, the first exercise could be breathing in through the drinking straw and feeling the resistance that that has and then blowing out through the drinking straw and realising that you can't blow out as fast, through the drinking straw as you can. And it sort of feels different.

Here the idea of doing 'natural' and 'everyday' activities to relate to the naturalness of the action of playing the recorder is used as a pedagogical tool. Keeping everything as natural as possible is becoming the increasingly dominant theme across all aspects of

recorder technique. The internal 'struggle' from a teacher's perspective of how to explain the inner workings of the body in order to achieve a correct instrumental technique is explained through everyday activities and the use of external aids. This is linked also to the subgroup discussing sound and articulation that recommended the use of visual aids as a stimulus to achieving a desired sound.

Whereas instruments of the string or keyboard family have largely gross motor visual attributes to their techniques, it is becoming increasingly clear that the challenge for recorder teachers is the demonstration and explanation of the internal workings of the body, possibly more familiar with a singing pedagogy than that of string or keyboard families of instruments. This becomes an increasingly important theme when looking at alternative methods such as Suzuki and MusicBabies that have been derived from their string-based origins.

The themes of using external aids derived from everyday activities to harbour the physical feelings and actions of the body to play the recorder become important in the teaching and learning of the recorder. This is something mentioned neither by Walter van Hauwe or any tutor book currently on the market.

RE: You can blow bubbles in the water in the glass, that sort of stuff. Lots of things. So that's about getting the feeling for resistance erm without having the recorder to hold, so just with the straw. Second exercise could be playing with a cotton-wool ball along the table. Erm controlling the speed erm and then take away the straw and purse your lips so you're moving the point of the resistance step by step into the body and the drinking straw one would be like that.

In this extract one can clearly see how the external aid of the drinking straw is used to produce games away from the instrument in preparation for the recorder to become a natural extension of the pupil's body. This would relate to van Hauwe's message: '**All** recorder methods... are based on getting instant results: a short explanation about the position of the hands, the thumb-hole half opened...some air, a tongue, and "hey presto" the first tune can be produced.' But the neglect of the fundamentals of recorder technique at the start of the learning process can actually be counterproductive. He says that the approach

whereby one teaches lots of notes in quick succession to provide quick results means that quality sound-making is left behind. If more time was taken over ensuring correct technique as opposed to learning lots of notes, recorder playing will become easier and more efficient for the learner in the long term.³⁸ The early acquisition of correct recorder technique ensures that pupils understand exactly how to play the recorder.

The implications of the analysis of the focus group of professional recorder player-teachers suggested that the acquisition of recorder technique should largely focus on the physical relationship between the body and the recorder, almost as a separate and preparatory learning stage to learning to play notes. In the preparatory stages of learning, the recorder pupil would spend much of their lesson engaging in 'pre-play' warmups that could then be holistically introduced into the learning process when notes are added. Learning should be natural. Holding the recorder, producing sound and articulation, and blowing and breathing naturally are all precursors to learning notes on the instrument and are a fundamental stage of the learning process in acquiring a solid technical grounding.

Below, RE clearly demonstrates the step-by-step nature in which this preparatory stage of learning brings each of the exercises closer and closer to actually playing the recorder. RE then demonstrates the holistic use of external and pictorial aids and the need for Alexander Technique visualisation and natural bodywork to all come together in every aspect of recorder technique. The trio of natural physicality, external and physical aids, and preparatory exercises and games became an increasingly important fundamental theme in the teaching and learning of recorder technique.

RE: The third exercise would be hissing like this [demonstrates] Like a snake, moving the point of resistance to the point of where it is more likely to happen when you're actually playing the recorder. So that prepares the point for the articulation, excuse me that is within somebody else's control. You're hissing like a snake, and then you can ask: is it a little tiny snake? [Demonstrates air flow] Or is it a great big long snake? [Demonstrates air flow]. Which opens up other fields. So just to recap of

³⁸ Van Hauwe, Walter. *The Modern Recorder Player. Volume I* (London, 1984), pg7

those three exercises: they are about developing the feeling for controlling the airstream, with the external aid, with the lips, and then with the tongue, which is getting quite close to orthodox recorder technique. Then, how to experience the body because every child breathes because otherwise you wouldn't be around to teach it. Erm so how can we develop the feeling for that without feeling that we have to do something really really really special to play the recorder?

JT develops the idea of external games and exercises. This is a theme that continues through the focus group.

Appendix D: The Analysis of the Theme Starting and Stopping Notes from the Focus Group

Starting and stopping notes

Straight away, JT refers to an external aid in the explanation of articulation. The theme of the use of external aids and preparatory games again became even more apparent in all aspects of recorder technique. Articulation is a fundamental point of recorder technique: with no reed, the recorder does not suffer from any degree of resistance and is therefore a very directly speaking instrument. Different forms of articulation, different vowel and consonant sounds for example, can have a dramatic effect on the sound of the instrument. JT explains that with her pupils she uses 'ti'. It is therefore important that recorder pupils are aware of the vowel and consonant sounds being produced in the mouth and their transference to the sound of the recorder. At a more basic level, one has to 'speak' into the instrument in order for the instrument itself to, in turn, speak out.

JT: So I always take a tissue because if you blow too hard then the tissue is flying away. So that's also an image for the kids to see where does the tissue or how much they blow, too much is too high, so this is also to let them know the airstream. So that for starting and ending notes I was err dealing with my students like ti ti ti but erm if they do ti ti ti in front of the tissue then they can see that the tissue is moving. So I think it's kind of one of the games that can be erm yeah

M develops this theme further:

M: Actually in a lot of German books erm we are talking about recorder language and you cannot go just like 'wooooo' into the recorder because that's not really how you would talk. And so I find it quite important to paint that image that you could use lots of different letters to actually talk and then to really find out which ones are usable and which ones might not work really well. And to trial it out. And then to try and make this recorder language out of it that you always use when you play the recorder.

The theme of relating the unfamiliar recorder to the everyday activities of students and the body again becomes apparent in the subgroup of starting and stopping notes: the

idea of recorder language that you play the recorder in the same way that you would speak. Pupils need to develop a recorder 'language'.

JT asks whether in the teaching of articulation the pupil should start with the whole recorder or just the head joint:

JT: Oh yeah, we have to kind of bring up a question to everyone. When you're talking about all these games after, to apply them on the recorder, would you prefer a student only holding the head joint to do it? Or the whole recorder? [Pause] It's very, advantages and disadvantages.

CF explains that it could be different for each individual student, that each student has a different level of natural competence with the individual elements of technique.

CF: I think that's different, for different kids, I mean there are some kids that really struggle, maybe coordination is an issue, actually this is really playful and there's loads of stuff you can do without the fingers and perhaps it's a matter of the child. Yeah.

GMC: So it could be like an option. You can either do it with or without.

N: Or you could do it on the same note?

GMC: yeah

But then it becomes apparent that in order for a pupil to learn articulation with the whole recorder, they also need to be able to hold the recorder, which is another skill in the different categories of learning the recorder. What comes first? Holding the recorder or producing sound? This is where, for the first time, the idea of preparatory exercises gets brought into question.

RE: But then, then they're already holding it. [Agreement]

N: But many want to play, and when you then say, 'hey we're not going to play we're doing exercises', they're not happy.

CF: No but if its games and its play they'll enjoy it.

GMC: And also it's a language thing. A lot of the time if you're talking to kids and you tell them they're doing an exercise they're like 'oooooh' [miserable] but you could do exactly the same thing and tell them it's a game and they're like 'yay'

From the next ongoing conversation, it becomes apparent that working only with the head joint can have its advantages in terms of creativity, not just instrumental technique.

M: yeah or there are so many amazing stories which you can just tell them that they make the noises to. I think if you can make it interesting

JT: Yeah, I like doing this movement. I think this is one of the advantages of using only the head joint.

GMC: So you could do [recorder glissando sound, possibly only head joint?] different games on starting and stopping the note. I'm making a sound story.

M: Yeah, exactly.

Mir: yeah exactly, also I just came from a class erm like first the middle joint and the foot joint without the head joint and you can whisper and like have different sounds like storms or like a little wind and then you can like do soft rain with your fingers and then with just the head joint and having the air experience just woo [blows] without having this weird thing in your mouth. And then with the head joint and that worked quite well.

SC: You can do like bird sounds.

CDP: Remember when we were in Amsterdam and the Royal Winds did a really interactive performance with the kids. The kids were involved either with playing notes or just the mouthpiece. Didn't matter what level they were at. And I found myself starting to use lots of the ideas in like workshops for various people. And we just get the kids, you just create a soundscape. And just like that Mir, some are doing exactly as you said, just taking off the head joint and it can be a bird moving or some of them can flutter their tongue. They actually can, they don't know they're doing it but...

From this it can be deduced that working with only the head joint to develop articulation is advantageous due to its potential for creativity in lessons. As well as being able to work with the head joint for articulation Mir also acknowledges that one can work with just the middle and foot joints to produce games to develop finger dexterity on the instrument.

Developing creativity is a key feature of any instrumental lesson but particularly in preparing young recorder players early on in the process for producing florid ornamentation,

extended technique and improvisation, which are all key features of recorder playing in the more advanced stages of learning. This idea is developed by IW:

IW: There's something really nice about the idea that you know, that if you're teaching if you really are trying to work on that, that there's a kind of piece that you can create. That idea of the soundscape you know you gradually, through the tutor book, are formulating things that you can use later. Interesting. There's always a place for that kind of for music-making. You know that whatever is happening on stage.

The conversation then reverts back to the use of pictorial aids in the learning process:

M: And I always think there's a lot you can do with pictures if you want to teach them articulation. And, they kind of feel what they have to do. So if you would show them a big river or a night scene they would intentionally play much softer than if you were to show them, I don't know, a ballet dancer that is on their tiptoes so I think you can make a lot of ideas.

The conversation moves from how one would teach articulation back to the subject of what kind of articulation. JT previously mentioned the use of 'ti' to start notes. The subject moves on to how to end notes.

IW: Erm, one of the things. There's one tutor book that I kind of see that talks really very early on about finishing the notes with the tongue and using tut, as the word. And there's something nice about that being introduced very early on, that idea of stopping notes with the tongue being there because you know I always think what we have and what's vital in our playing is the articulation. It's our kind of trump card over all other instruments and that's what's kind of and to really evolve that kind of thinking to say, 'we're going to end this note with the tongue' or let it kind of, just have a defined start is something. And then, that word, I find really useful to have a concept that you can actually take care of the end of the note. It's really important.

Mir: Can I say something? I find it, or something I have found very useful to use is nnnn

GMC: To use what?

Mir: nnnn no note just nnnn. To experience that the tongue lies flat without any force, added force I found quite helpful.

IW: Mm yeah. Mm and T are very closely related. It's uses aspiration. It's the N and T that are in the same part of the palate. I think N is, is great. I use that a lot of the time. N, I sense, I sort of pretend to myself that I'm using N to start the note but I'm actually using, I'm technically using T. I'm using it, in my mind thinking N as something soft.

GMC: Do you mean? Like, kids are really in tune to sounds because they learn to read using phonics

IW: yeah

GMC: So they're in tune with... Phonics!

CDP: Mir do you mean using N at the end like using Tun?

Mir: yeah

CDP: yeah

Mir: Because then you have like, without any extra note at the end.

CDP: Cos I find if we're getting them to say Tut, tut cos I've said it to some kids before then just the repetitive word with the starting and beginnings with the same letter they kind of can't, I don't think they can

Mir: And it also applies that when you want erm some articulation between notes later on that you don't lose the support like tunnnn. And then, I also like, show them the movement of the tongue.

The same themes regarding 'recorder language' reappear here, and the link between school-age children being in tune with phonics through the way in which they learn to read at school acknowledges the theme of playing the recorder in a way that is as natural as possible. One has to speak through the recorder using phonics, just as one speaks or learns to read. It can be deduced here that the use of 'tut' can be problematic with the added syllable at the end, creating an unintentional extra note. Mir acknowledges that 'tunn' would be a more suitable alternative. The reappearing theme of externally demonstrating internal techniques can also be seen here, with Mir explaining that it is helpful to visually show the movement of the tongue in explaining this action.

The conversation then turns back to the familiar theme of preparatory exercises and games away from the instrument in learning and practising articulation.

IW: yeah. I also, word games are good. Like little tongue twisters and things like that that we do but like, everyone, you know like thinking of erm dotty teddy which is all front strokes and HCF's one that she come up with in a lesson, quite violent but effective, go kick a geeky guy which is all the back of the tongue or go kick a kid go kick a kid. Where you're exercising the back of the throat and then the other one that I use for err double-tonguing which is you know, way down the line but it's kind of fun to to experiment with what feeling where the tongue is with the take a ticket to Kentucky, take a ticket to Kentucky which is like tk tk erm and that, just just raising awareness of where in the mouth. I think that's a really important thing just to get a sense of where in the mouth

RE: Counting of the teddies, sorry counting of the teddies you know teddy, teddy, teddy, teddy, and then cross them teddy teddy kick a teddy kick a teddy [laughter]

IW mentions 'raising awareness of where in the mouth'; again, the idea of explicitly explaining the internal action through isolated activities is a recurring theme.

Appendix E: The Analysis of the Theme How to Move the Fingers from the Focus Group

How to move the fingers

The first thing to be mentioned in how to move the fingers is about obtaining as natural a playing technique as possible, again proving the overarching theme of naturalism in playing the recorder.

HSCF: errrrrrrm. Yeah, we came up with lots of words that we thought were good for us to get in there early. So relaxed and tension-free, natural hands, or efficient, gentle fingers, erm

Directly after this statement more information is brought out in relation to preparatory games and exercises, another theme that is apparent across all areas of recorder technique:

IW: We like the idea of numbered fingers, you know, whether that's a bit contentious or whether we should really already start numbering, you know thumb 0, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 but erm that that could be incorporated into some games. You know where you have to, you shout a number and children maybe tap that hole. I don't know. Erm it's nice

GMC: I really like that

IW: To sort of think, maybe further down the line, that concept of really knowing which fingering goes

GMC: We do fingering maths so like 1 plus 2 equals G and teachers really like that because I do that as a starter. So if I'm doing wider opps and everyone's there, I just put fingering maths on the board. Which sounds really bad! I'll write that down because I'll forget that I do it.

IW: And sort of, fingers belonging to a hole erm that there's a sense of.

Wrapped into this game, however, is where the fingers go in relation to the holes on the recorder. Most recorder tutors use a visual representation of the recorder and its holes and then colour in the holes that are meant to be covered for each note. Here we see the contradiction in themes between using pictorial aids to explain internal techniques such as articulation and blowing and breathing, and the visual act of putting fingers on holes. Here it is suggested that a numerical system would be better than a pictorial aid. Given the

overarching theme of using pictorial aids, one may suggest that using both a numerical and a pictorial system in explaining the placement of fingers on holes may be a more holistic way of teaching finger placement.

The theme of naturalism in recorder technique comes up once again in the extract below by CDP. This is related to the adjectives used to describe how to move the fingers at the top of this subgroup.

CDP: err can I ask a question about that because it's something that's come up before about tension and yeah you're meant to be relaxed but if you're too relaxed when you're a kid the sound is not going to come out. So I end up saying, press the holes. I vowed I would never say that but I do. Em because for me, I only teach whole class so for me it's a bit different but I actually end up saying that because otherwise they're just there's going to be bits of holes missing so for them to be able to feel the edges of the holes I think they do need to actually press down, at least a small bit anyway.

Here, in the whole-class setting, being able to get all children to cover the holes and be relaxed is proving a difficult situation.

GMC: That's a really good thing, that sensory thing, because a lot of kids just float or I see a lot of kids float because they don't, they're not in touch with how it feels. Do you have like, cos I can never think of a way...?

IW: yeah it's what I find really fascinating is that you know children, you know their fingers are so touch sensitive because that's how you learn. You know you learn ooo I'll never touch that again because it's hot. So you learn it is, it's really interesting that you are asking with the young ones. I mean it's the first time they are having to deal with moving the fingers independently because they mostly, you know it's quite grabby. It's tricky but I I I think that's sort of rubbing and smearing fingers across erm I don't know err was it erm sorry

GMC and IW bring along a new theme in how to move the fingers: sensory relationships. Gaining the overarching theme here is preparatory training and exercises to be learnt and practised ahead of learning lots of notes. It is important a pupil can feel the holes on the recorder in order to accurately cover them and also produce the desired fingering patterns. If this is to be achieved then preparatory work has to be made in feeling the holes,

finding where they are. The idea of rubbing and smearing fingers over the holes has been brought by IW.

Intrinsically linked to how to move the fingers and finger holes is playing the notes. Interestingly, this is one of the final things to come up in the 'how to move the fingers' subgroup, another indication that the acquisition of correct recorder technique should happen in the preparatory stages of learning.

RE: And what note are you starting on?

IW: I've tried everything. My issue with the note B to start with that in order to, if you haven't set up the holding the recorder properly what happens is that you end up with that [demonstrates incorrect right-hand technique] and I've seen plenty of people you know, further down the line and that comes from astonishingly good finger memory, touch sensitivity. That's they they somehow manage to hold the recorder like that to play B and then that's how they remember to hold the recorder.

Most recorder tutors and methods start with the note B. Suzuki method starts on low D but puts tape over the holes so the pupil only has to fully cover one hole. The sellotape is removed gradually over time to allow the pupil to gradually learn to cover the holes. This is discussed in this extract:

CDP: I think erm, the Suzuki method starts with all hands down and they lift don't they

IW: I think they start with a D. And I think if you start with both hands on the instrument you get a really good sense of

GMC: Well we spoke about starting on the other D (GMC and RE). High D

MN: How much would that affect the sound thing? Because often I find as soon as that thumb is off, it's like, OK now start again because, I know that sounds horrible

GMC: I think the argument was if you start with that D you have no option but to be balancing and you have no option but to use your right hand and it has a purpose for the right hand [consensus] whereas all the other notes you don't really have a purpose to using the right hand. There are so many options that's the problem.

Mir: Erm I just saw something at the erm exhibition in Greenwich because low D is very difficult to start with because it doesn't sound because there is always

something leaking, but what they did is like covering the holes with sellotape like very thin sellotape

GMC: yeah I think that's the Suzuki method [consensus]

IW: Yeah

Mir: Yeah, exactly the Suzuki method.

CDP: I knew there was something else

Mir: And so you can actually play a D and it sounds nice like not a squeaky high sound but it doesn't matter because if it's a little bit leaky

IW: I've done that with the thumb hole before because that's often the problem one. Just starting people with the thumb hole

MusicBabies for recorder starts on C and introduces the minor third, as is advocated by HSCF:

HSCF: So start on? Sorry, so I start on C. I teach them C just because my preferred is C and A and so this is just Kodály background that, you've got so much

JT: But this has always worked better, with

JT and HSCF: C and A

JT: I have experience with it.

HSCF: There are so many songs, you've got a wealth of repertoire

JT: Even younger kids like I have taught the youngest was four years old. They really can't do this and hold it properly because of their hands. But with this finger I don't know why, probably because it's stronger or mechanically it's more natural.

IW: It's also the balance thing [consensus] as well isn't it?

Here, JT is also advocating the use of starting on the note C and then moving to the note A to create the minor third interval, as recommended by the Kodály method of musicianship. JT believes that using that finger combination is also more 'natural'; again, the theme of naturalism has returned.

JT: So afterwards I start to teach them the cuckoo cuckoo

HSCF: yeah that's what I do

IW: Yeah so we thought for some little ideas for this kind of like tapping and moving fingers and thought that erm we could do lots of sort of erm finger gym stuff. Erm tapping away from the recorder and really getting a sense of like sort of, maybe that sort of thing ahead of touching the recorder is quite good and raises the sensitivity of the fingertips. But we've thought of some sort of games for fingers. I mean the advanced ones could try the sort of Pac Man thing, you know, sort of video-game arcade stuff that SC does very well now. Erm that sort of thing but we also thought erm like note pairs so they can pair notes like a telephone G to B, tapping their fingers erm or erm tremolo between the fingers making a telephone noise. Siren, C to a cuckoo F sharp to D and there are some erm there are some scope for some really interesting harmonic combinations of these if you have some trebles as well.

Both JT and HSCF are advocates of the C and A minor third combination of starting notes, then IW brings the subject back to games and this time the idea of 'finger gym'. A strong theme in how to move the fingers is a sense of touch, as can be seen again in the above extract. A new theme is now the developments of harmonic combinations in the order pupils learn new notes.

Another idea was starting on a high D which only uses finger two:

GMC: Well we spoke about starting on the other D (GMC and RE). High D

MN: How much would that affect the sound thing? Because often I find as soon as that thumb is off, it's like, OK now start again because, I know that sounds horrible

GMC: I think the argument was if you start with that D you have no option but to be balancing and you have no option but to use your right hand and it has a purpose for the right hand [consensus] whereas all the other notes you don't really have a purpose to using the right hand. There are so many options that's the problem.

There was no whole consensus on what note is best to start on regarding recorder technique. Both JT and HSCF agreed with the C to A minor third introduction. It was agreed that starting on B was not ideal and high D would not be appropriate due to the repercussions of introducing the left-hand thumb later on in the learning process. It seems the argument is not what note to start on but really how the fingers move and the other considerations of recorder technique in the other subcategories.

The theme of relaxed and natural playing returns again in this extract on the subject of how the fingers move on and off the holes:

IW: We wondered about erm, well the idea of the fingers erm falling to the holes, I don't know what you all think about the, but falling to the instrument is is good and then, this robot fingers which I is something that I use a lot erm just in terms of feeling very very neat and mechanical but a bit like with what EF said with the robotic thing there are a couple of issues with that.

IW goes on to explain that the idea of 'robotic fingers' is loaded, as it implies a stiffness and unnaturalness, but that fingers need to be mechanical and functional:

IW: So it's not very efficient thing to have in people's minds you know but there's yes, mechanical or technically precise. There's something but for me the word robot is a bit loaded in a negative, stiff yeah way that we probably don't really want although we want that efficiency, that mechanical, technological way.

So fingers need to be efficient but relaxed in their movement across the instrument.

RE takes on the idea of finger movement, relaxed hands and naturalisation of recorder technique in this extract:

RE: The only point where Walter develops that idea, he says it's more about opening the hole than closing the hole and that in itself is a relaxing thing. But that's a remark that I've only ever been able to convey to advanced students. I've never been able to convey that to a child but I'm sure there is a way of doing that and my suspicion is that the intermediary element is a foreign body like a broom handle or I don't know or to make finger games and that clod lead in brilliantly to finger games that you were describing.

Again there is the external aid in helping to convey complex issues surrounding recorder technique.

Appendix F: Questions Included in the Teacher Survey

Is the recorder your first study instrument?

☐ Yes

☐ No

Academic Qualifications

Please state your highest general qualifications (if appropriate)

☐ Post Graduate (music)

☐ Post Graduate (non-music)

☐ Graduate (music college)

☐ Graduate (university music)

☐ Graduate (university non music)

☐ Other:

Please state your highest qualification in the recorder

☐ MA (principal study recorder)

☐ MMus (principal study recorder)

☐ BA (hons) (principal study recorder)

☐ BMus (hons) (principal study recorder)

☐ Diploma Recorder

☐ Grade 8 Recorder

☐ Grades 5 - 7 Recorder

☐ Grades 1- 4 Recorder

☐ None

☐ Other:

How many years have you been teaching the recorder

☐ 0-1

☐ 2-5

☐ 6-10

☐ 11-15

☐ 16+

Employment

Employment

Please tick the appropriate statements

- ☐ I teach recorder full time
- ☐ I teach recorder part time
- ☐ Recorder teaching is my main source of income
- ☐ Other:

Please tick the as many as possible appropriate statements



- ☐ I teach recorder at a Secondary School
- ☐ I teach recorder at a Primary school
- ☐ I teach recorder at an Early Years Provider
- ☐ I teach recorder at a Conservatoire
- ☐ I teach recorder at a University
- ☐ I teach recorder at another institute of higher education
- ☐ I teach the recorder for a Music Hub (Music Service)
- ☐ I teach recorder at my home
- ☐ I teach recorder at pupil's homes
- ☐ I teach recorder at a private studio
- ☐ I teach recorder at a specialist music school
- ☐ I teach recorder at multiple schools
- ☐ Other:

How much do you charge for individual recorder lessons per hour?

- ☐ £0-£5
- ☐ £6-10
- ☐ £11-£20
- ☐ £21-£30
- ☐ £31-£40
- ☐ £41+

Do you teach individually or in groups?

Please tick as many as apply to you

- ☐ Individually
- ☐ Groups up to 3
- ☐ Groups 3-6
- ☐ Groups 6-10
- ☐ Groups 10+

Do you teach recorder first access (wider opportunities)?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

How many recorder students do you currently teach?



- ☐ 0-3
- ☐ 4-10
- ☐ 11-15
- ☐ 16-20
- ☐ 21-30
- ☐ 30+

Beginner Recorder Teaching

Which of the following would you use within the first twelve lessons with a beginner?

Please tick as many as apply to you

- ☐ Aural Training
- ☐ Composition
- ☐ Consort Work
- ☐ Duets
- ☐ Flexible Fingering Practice
- ☐ Games
- ☐ Improvisation
- ☐ Inner Hearing
- ☐ Listening Skills
- ☐ Memorisation
- ☐ Teacher Modelling (playing music to students)
- ☐ Aspirational Modelling (playing or watching clips of professional recorder players)
- ☐ Musical Knowledge & History
- ☐ Musicianship
- ☐ Note Reading
- ☐ Pieces
- ☐ Playing by ear
- ☐ Scales
- ☐ Sight Reading
- ☐ Sight Singing
- ☐ Singing tunes to be learned
- ☐ Technique
- ☐ Theory
- ☐ Transposition
- ☐ Tutor Book (for beginners)
- ☐ Other:

When teaching beginners what instrument do you introduce first?

- ☐ descant
☐ tenor
☐ bass
☐ G alto
☐ voice flute
☐ descant and treble
☐ Other:

When do you start teaching flexible fingerings (i.e the introduction of treble, G alto, etc).

Please specify an age, approximate grade, level of musicality or other factors which determine your decision for each instrument

Grade examinations (ABRSM, Trinity etc) are a regular feature of my teaching

Please indicate your level of agreement or disagreement

Which fingering systems do you teach?

- ☐ C (descant and tenor etc.)
☐ F (treble and bass etc.)
☐ D (voice flute and sixth flute etc.)
☐ G (G alto and bass etc.)
☐ Other:

When do you teach multi clef reading skills (treble and bass etc.)?

- ☐ Immediately
☐ Within the first year
☐ Within the first two years
☐ Within the first five years
☐ Never

I regularly teach breathing technique

Please state your level of agreement or disagreement

I regularly teach articulation technique

Please state your level of agreement or disagreement

It is important to have a balanced playing technique

Please state your level of agreement or disagreement

I believe there is a specific recorder technique

Please state your level of agreement or disagreement

Which tutor book(s) which do you use?

- ☐ Razamajazz: Sarah Watts
- ☐ Recorder Boppers: David Moses and Jane Sebba
- ☐ Recorder from the Beginning: John Pitts
- ☐ Red Hot Recorder: Sarah Watts
- ☐ Suzuki Recorder Book 1
- ☐ I don't use a tutor book
- ☐ Other:

My students regularly play with other recorder players

Please select your level of agreement or disagreement

Which age ranges do you currently teach?

Please tick as many as appropriate

- ☐ 2-5 yrs
- ☐ 6-8 yrs
- ☐ 9-12 yrs
- ☐ 13-16 yrs
- ☐ 17-19 yrs
- ☐ 20+ yrs

At which level do you currently teach recorder?

Please tick as many as appropriate. Grade refers to ABRSM, Trinity etc. not the North American schooling system

- ☐ Pre Grade 1
- ☐ Grades 1-2
- ☐ Grades 3-5
- ☐ Grades 6-8
- ☐ Diploma
- ☐ Higher Education

Have you ever had any training in how to teach the recorder?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

If 'yes' please explain what kind of training?**If 'no' would you like training in how to teach the recorder?**

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

What kind of training in recorder teaching would you like to receive?

It is socially acceptable for a person to teach the recorder without any recorder specific qualifications
Please state your level of agreement or disagreement

What do you find most challenging about recorder teaching?**What do you find most rewarding about recorder teaching?**