Development of a Rubric for Collegiate Jazz Improvisation Performance Assessment

Kendall R. Moore
University of Miami, kendall@kendallmooremusic.com

Follow this and additional works at: https://scholarlyrepository.miami.edu/oa_dissertations

Recommended Citation
https://scholarlyrepository.miami.edu/oa_dissertations/1604

This Open access is brought to you for free and open access by the Electronic Theses and Dissertations at Scholarly Repository. It has been accepted for inclusion in Open Access Dissertations by an authorized administrator of Scholarly Repository. For more information, please contact repository.library@miami.edu.
UNIVERSITY OF MIAMI

DEVELOPMENT OF A RUBRIC FOR COLLEGIATE JAZZ IMPROVISATION PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT

By

Kendall Ryan Moore

A DOCTORAL ESSAY

Submitted to the Faculty of the University of Miami in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Musical Arts

Coral Gables, Florida

May 2016
DEVELOPMENT OF A RUBRIC FOR COLLEGIATE JAZZ IMPROVISATION PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT

Kendall Ryan Moore

Approved:

Kathryn I. Reid, D.M.A.
Associate Professor of Studio Music and Jazz

Brian E. Russell, Ph.D.
Lecturer of Music Media and Industry

Brian Lynch, M.M.
Associate Professor of Studio Music and Jazz

Dante T. Luciani, M.M.
Lecturer of Jazz Instrumental Performance
Studio Music and Jazz

Raul Murciano, D.M.A.
Associate Dean of Administration
Department of Theory and Composition

Guillermo Prado, Ph.D.
Associate Professor of Studio Music and Jazz
The purpose of this study was to develop a jazz improvisation rubric for the evaluation of collegiate jazz improvisation. To create this measure, research objectives were devised to investigate the aurally-observed performer-controlled components of improvisation, which aurally-observed components should be evaluated in an improvisatory performance, and whether a comprehensive measure could be developed to evaluate such a performance. Published methods on general music performance, jazz improvisation performance methods, jazz pedagogy texts, and statements from jazz educators and performers were content analyzed and cross referenced to determine overarching similarities and create criteria for evaluation. After conducting research, it was determined that the five most frequent component measurement terms used were rhythm, technical facility, tone, articulation, and melodic/rhythmic development. Those components were categorized into the following concepts: Technique/Technical Facility, Expression, Tone/Tone Control, Rhythm, Melody/Motives, Interaction, Harmony, and overall improvisation. A rubric was created using these concepts and included the following dimensions: technique, expression, rhythm, melody, harmony, rhythmic
interaction, melodic interaction, harmonic interaction, and overall improvisation. The quality of each dimension was devised from lowest quality to highest quality: does not meet expectations, below expectations, meets expectations, and exceeds expectations. Suggestions for implementation of the rubric in the collegiate setting were suggested, along with areas for further research to determine the reliability of the rubric.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I INTRODUCTION</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Need for Study</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purpose and Research Objectives</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Delimitations of Study</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II RELATED LITERATURE</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Predictors of Jazz Improvisation Achievement</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Music Performance Achievement</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jazz Performance Achievement</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summary of Literature Review</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III METHOD</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purpose</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Investigation of Jazz Improvisation Pedagogical Materials and Statements</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Analysis of Jazz Improvisation and General Music Performance Assessment Materials</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Categorization of Collected Data</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creation of Jazz Improvisation Performance Rubric</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV RESULTS</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purpose</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aural Performer Controlled Components of Jazz Improvisation</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aurally Observed Improvisation Skills to Assess in Jazz Performance</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Construction of Jazz Improvisation Rubric for Pitched Instruments</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Performer Controlled Components of Jazz Improvisation Achievement</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aurally Observed Improvisation Skills</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creation of Rubric</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussion of Research Questions</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Complex Constructs in Jazz Improvisation</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Implication for Teachers</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suggestions for Further Research</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conclusion</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>References</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APPENDIX A</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APPENDIX B</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APPENDIX C</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APPENDIX D</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APPENDIX E</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APPENDIX F</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APPENDIX G</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APPENDIX H</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Performance assessment is an integral part of the music education process, and is one of the most important topics in music education today.¹ Students use the assessments as an opportunity to receive feedback from instructors about their progress. Educators utilize the information gathered from these assessments for multiple purposes, such as entrance into programs, ensemble placement, scholarships, and assessment of performance achievement. To this date, research on jazz performance assessment implementation is limited.

Universities and colleges base jazz performance curriculums on the study of improvisation. Courses in improvisation give students an application based learning platform for creativity and an opportunity to demonstrate musical knowledge in a performance setting. Programs, performance ensembles, and scholarships use the assessment of improvisations to determine student achievement and merit based on performances. However, the complexity of improvisation complicates the evaluation of student achievement because of its inherent subjectivity.

Need for Study

There is a high level of interest in investigating the evaluation of jazz improvisation achievement.² Studies have been conducted on determining the predictors of jazz improvisation achievement in vocal and wind instrumental music.³⁴⁵


such as self-evaluation of skill, jazz theory knowledge, and aural imitative ability are positively correlated with jazz improvisation achievement. Unfortunately, research specific to music performance based components of jazz improvisation is limited.

Examination of general music performance assessment research suggests that identifying the performance components of jazz improvisation is possible. Performance assessment research has successfully created valid and reliable measures for the purposes of assessing music performance for brass, woodwinds, guitar, voice, and strings. Performance components have also been examined and identified across the general instrument categories of strings, brass, woodwind, and voice.

---


4 Patrice Madura, “Relationships among vocal jazz improvisation achievement, jazz theory knowledge, imitative ability, musical experience, creativity, and gender.” Journal of Research in Music Education 44. no. 3 (October 1996): 256.


Unfortunately, research concerning the investigation of underlying causal components of improvisatory jazz performance is limited. Measures that have been created for the evaluation of jazz performance achievement have not been designed for the purpose of integration into the jazz performance curriculum. Research-based performance criteria could allow evaluators to give clearer diagnostic feedback and provide more objectivity into a subjective process.

A rubric can be defined as a “well defined rule, guide, or standard”\(^{13}\). They are used in the general field of education as a tool to set clear and defined guidelines on evaluating assignments such as essays, speeches, or in any other situation where criteria-based, diagnostic feedback is necessary on the completion of a task\(^{14}\). More recent studies constructed rubrics for the evaluation of elementary music performance, musical compositions, collegiate level vocal performance achievement, and collegiate level instrumental music performance achievement.\(^{15,16,17}\) A rubric created to measure jazz improvisation interaction suggests that constructing a measure for jazz improvisation achievement is also possible.\(^{18}\)

\(^{13}\) Richard Colwell and Carol P. Richardson, *New Handbook of Research On Music Teaching and Learning: A Project of the Music Educators National Conference* (Cary: Oxford University, 2002), 1135.


would help to create a measure that is valid, reliable, and easily integrated into the collegiate jazz improvisation performance assessment process. Having measures, such as rubrics, for assessments can provide added efficiency to evaluations. Rubrics provide the ability to efficiently document the processes of education that are already in progress. A well-designed rubric would provide jazz departments a standardized, objective way to evaluate an inherently subjective process.

**Purpose and Research Objectives**

The purpose of this study was to develop a jazz improvisation rubric for the evaluation of collegiate jazz improvisation. To create this assessment measure, the following research objectives were developed in order to synthesize and codify necessary jazz skills:

1. What are the aurally observed performer controlled components of jazz improvisation achievement?
2. What aurally observed improvisation skills should be assessed in an improvisatory jazz performance?
3. Can a comprehensive performance measure for the purpose of evaluating an improvisatory jazz performance be developed?

---


Delimitations of the Study

The focus of this study was to construct and validate a rubric for the purposes of evaluating collegiate level jazz improvisations of individual performers. Its evaluative purposes were designed to be applicable to woodwind instruments, strings, brass, voice, and pitched percussion instruments. This study does not test reliability, as the constructed measure was not tested.
CHAPTER II

RELATED LITERATURE

The purpose of this study was to create a rubric for the evaluation of collegiate level jazz performance assessment. In this section, literature will be reviewed that supports the goal of this study. In the first section, literature investigating jazz improvisation achievement will be examined. In the second section, studies exploring factors involved in measuring general music performance achievement are described. Finally, existing jazz performance achievement measures will be presented.

Predictors of Jazz Improvisation Achievement

Although several variables have been thought to predict improvisation achievement, many of these variables have not been found to be statistically significant. Current research suggests that aural imitation, self-evaluation, and self-efficacy can be considered adequate predictors, because they have strong correlations with measures of improvisation achievement. In addition, creativity has sometimes, but not always, been found to correlate with improvisation achievement.

There have been several studies that investigate the predictors of Jazz improvisation achievement in the area of Vocal Jazz improvisation. In the same field, Greenagel sought to find correlates in jazz improvisation achievement using 30 Vocal Jazz Majors. Participants were given Gordon’s Advanced Measure of Music Audiation, a researcher designed creativity assessment, and a survey that collected data on their self-reported grade point average, prior experience performing with any jazz ensemble, frequency and duration of time spent listening to jazz improvisation each week, and self-

---

rating as an improviser. A panel of three judges was used to evaluate improvisation achievement on two choruses of a twelve-bar blues chord progression. Statistical analysis of the data found self-rated performance and creativity to be significant predictors of jazz vocal improvisational achievement.

Patrice Madura conducted an exploratory study of vocal jazz improvisation to identify factors that may be related to improvisatory achievement. Correlations between creativity, aural imitation, jazz theory knowledge, jazz experience, and improvisation achievement were examined using college students in vocal jazz classes (N = 101). Jazz improvisation was measured by the following aspects: intonation, correct notes, language, variety, motivic development and unity, rhythm, expression, variety of dynamics, and variety of range. These aspects of achievement were measured using a five-point rating scale for two different tasks — a blues progression improvisation and a ii-V-I chord progression. The predictor variables in the study were jazz theory achievement, aural imitation, jazz experience, previous instrumental lessons, gender, and general creativity. In her results, Madura found that the best order of predictors for jazz improvisation achievement were jazz theory knowledge, imitative ability/aural imitation, and jazz experience. Madura did not find that instrumental lessons, voice lessons, gender, and creativity were significant predictors of improvisation achievement, and suggests that this may be because vocal jazz and instrumental jazz improvisation are not so dissimilar.

---

22 To review a list of referenced chord progressions, please see Appendix G.

24 Ibid, 264.
In a more recent study of vocal jazz improvisation, Madura investigated vocal jazz improvisation and its relation to a vocalists’ musical background. Participants in this study included vocal jazz students in Australia and the United States (N = 102). A questionnaire used in Madura’s previous study in 1996 was used to assess the extent of the participants’ previous jazz and classical music experience and to determine correlations between those experiences and vocal improvisation. The number of tasks was increased to include 4 tasks: improvisation on a twelve- bar blues chord progression, improvisation on a rhythm changes harmonic progression, improvisation on the chord progression for the jazz standard *Summertime* composed by George Gershwin, and a free vocal improvisation of a length of their choosing. The free improvisation was only measured using components of creativity designed by the researcher. The results suggest that there is a correlation between jazz experience, listening, and vocal improvisation achievement. The results were inconclusive as to the correlation between vocal jazz improvisation achievement and creativity.

May referenced research in vocal jazz improvisation to identify potential predictors of instrumental jazz performance. Undergraduate instrumental Jazz majors (N = 85) were recruited to complete a series of measures. These included a

---


26 To review a list of referenced chord progressions, please see Appendix G.


28 Patrice Madura, “Relationships among vocal jazz improvisation achievement, jazz theory knowledge, imitative ability, musical experience, creativity, and gender,” *Journal of Research in Music Education, 44*, no. 3, October 1996, 252

measure to test Jazz theory achievement, a measure to test aural skills, and a measure to test aural imitation (which is a participant’s ability to imitate a musical item, like patterns, motives, chords and scales using their instruments). Participants were also assessed on two jazz improvisation tasks using the chord progressions of a 12-bar F Blues and the jazz standard *Satin Doll* composed by Duke Ellington and Billy Strayhorn. Three judges who were experienced in jazz education and trained on the Measure of Instrumental Jazz Improvisation Evaluation designed by May administered the evaluation. Statistical Analysis of the measures conducted by May found that the scoring between judges was of high reliability. Results of this study indicated that self-evaluation was the single strongest predictor of achievement in improvisation. Consistent with findings from Madura, the second strongest was aural imitation, but it was considerably less significant in comparison to self-evaluation.\(^{30,31}\)

Building on May’s research, Ciorba used previous research to create a model to predict jazz improvisation achievement.\(^{32}\) His research study defined variables to be tested as self-assessment, self-efficacy, motivation, jazz theory knowledge, time spent practicing, music aptitude, academic achievement, sight reading ability, and listening experience. In contrast to May’s use of college-aged students, Ciorba used 102 high school jazz students from three high schools in the South Florida region, and four high schools in Southeast Michigan. The students completed several measures that consisted

---

\(^{30}\) Patrice Madura, “Relationships among vocal jazz improvisation achievement, jazz theory knowledge, imitative ability, musical experience, creativity, and gender,” *Journal of Research in Music Education, 44*, no. 3, October 1996, 42.


of self-assessment, motivation, two measures of self-efficacy, jazz theory, recorded practice logs, music aptitude, sight reading ability, and an inventory of the hours per week spent listening to various styles of music. Participants were then assessed on two improvisation tasks that included a blues and an improvisation on the jazz standard *Satin Doll*. The criteria of his assessment are also similar to May’s: technical facility, rhythm/time feel, melodic/rhythmic development, style, expression, use of harmony, and creativity. Consistent with May’s findings, the results of Ciorba’s analyses found that self-assessment was the best predictor of jazz improvisation achievement. Consistent with Madura’s findings, jazz theory knowledge was also a strong but secondary correlate predictor. In conclusion, findings from both Ciorba and May’s Studies suggest that self-evaluation is a strong and significant predictor of jazz improvisation achievement.

**General Music Performance Achievement**

In the study of general music performance assessment, many tools have been created to evaluate various groups of wind instruments. In these peer-reviewed studies, researchers were able to extract statements about general performance, construct measures from those statements, and test these measures for content validity and inter-judge reliability. Existing research was surveyed in the field of choral music, brass, woodwinds, strings, and guitar performance.

Cooksey focused his research in music performance assessment on choral music performances. The purpose of his study was to construct, validate and test a rating scale to judge high school choral performances using a facet-factorial approach. He achieved this by constructing the rating scale, testing it with a group of adjudicators, and then

---

revising the scale again and testing with a different group of adjudicators. Cooksey developed the rating scale based on 618 adjudication sheets containing judge comments on high school performances, fifty-two written critiques written by choral teachers on recordings of high school choral performances, and 12 essays written by choral experts on aural aspects of high school choral performances. The data was then content analyzed to extract statements and placed under the categories of the following categories from the National Interscholastic Music Activities Commission: balance, diction, intonation, technique, tone, interpretation, and musical effect. The resulting 147 statements were then paired with a five-point Likert response scale ranging from “strongly agree” to “strongly disagree”. During the preliminary validation of the rating scale, fifty judges listened to and critiqued 100 high school choral performance recordings. Statistical analysis determined there were eight core factors: diction, unity, balance, precision, tempo, dynamics, tone control, and interpretation/musical effect. The resulting revised rating scale was then officially tested by four groups of judges listening to ten different sets of high school choral ensemble performances. Through statistical analysis, Cooksey found that his study had moderately high inter-judge reliability. In the final test of the rating scale, a new collection of twenty judges that did not participate in previous studies evaluated the third set of high school performance recordings. He found that there was very high inter-judge reliability in scoring the performances. During further statistical analysis, he found that the seven strongest factors of overall choral performance

Bergee conducted a study investigating low brass general music performance. He developed a rating scale for evaluating tuba and euphonium music performance. During the construction of the measure, Bergee surveyed a collection of essays and statements about euphonium and tuba performance, adjudication forms, and previous research and extracted 112 statements from these data through content analysis. He then had fifty judges listen to 100 euphonium and tuba performances with a Likert-type scale. Through statistical analysis, he found that there were four major components in evaluating euphonium and tuba performance: interpretation/musical effect, tone quality/intonation, technique, and rhythm/tempo. These components were included in the resulting measure. The measure was then tested by three panels of judges who listened to three different sets of 10 euphonium-tuba performance recordings. The inter-judge reliability was found to be moderately high ($a=.944$ and $a=.975$, where $a=1.0$ is the highest reliability level).

Saunders and Holahan designed a criteria-specific rating scale to evaluate high school woodwind and brass students auditioning for honors ensembles. The purpose of their study was to determine whether their rating scale was a reliable measure of musical performance. They wanted to know whether or not their criterion specific rating scale would help judges accurately evaluate different levels of performance and what

---


components of instrumental music performance from the measure would best predict the overall brass and woodwind performance scores.

The subjects of this study were all grade 9-12 high school students auditioning for the Connecticut All-State Concert band. The 926 students (546 female and 380 male) were all evaluated by 36 judges with at least a Bachelor’s in music education. In order to properly use the 15-point rating scale, these judges all watched a 15 minute video for instruction. For each audition, the student performed 4 tasks: one chromatic scale, one diatonic major scale and arpeggio, one prepared solo composition, and an unprepared sight-reading piece. To calculate scores from auditions, the total numbers were added up from each performance dimension of the rating scale to give an overall score. A statistical analysis of the data found that the rating scale had moderately high levels of internal consistency of scores among judges (α = .915). In further statistical analysis, they found that the categories of Tone/Technique/articulation, Rhythmic accuracy, interpretation and sight-reading interpretation were significant predictors of overall scores of auditions.

Abeles focused his research on clarinet performance assessment.37 The purpose of his study was to develop and validate a clarinet performance adjudication. In the first stages of development, seventeen instrumental music teachers in graduate music education courses were asked to write a short essay describing the auditory aspects of a music performance by a junior high school clarinet player. After content analysis, the researcher found fifty-four descriptive statements. Those content analyzed statements were then expanded by the researcher and another faculty member at University of Maryland using adjectives that describe music performance. Forty additional statements

were then created and combined with the previous descriptive statements of clarinet performances.

To evaluate the statements, three instrumental music teachers then individually evaluated them to determine whether they were positive or negative statements about performance. Samples of one hundred clarinet performances recorded on tape were then played for judges so that they could describe the performances that they had heard using the descriptive statements. After analysis, six main components of each performance were determined: interpretation, intonation, rhythm continuity, tempo, articulation, and tone. The thirty-item Clarinet Performance Rating Scale (CPRS) was then created from 5 descriptive items assigned to the six components.

To test the reliability of the CPRS, forty-two instrumental music teachers were divided into three equal groups and were provided three sets of ten performance recordings to evaluate using the measure. Each judge was able to listen to the recordings as often as necessary. After analysis of the results, it was found that the measure was highly reliable (group 1 with $a=0.939$, group 2 with $a=.949$, and group 3 with $a=.978$, where $a=1$ being the highest possible reliability).

Zdzinski and Barnes focused their research on solo string performance assessment. The purpose of their study was to construct and validate a valid and reliable assessment measure for string performance. To construct the measure, the two researchers, string education students and string teachers collaborated and came up with statements about aural aspects of stringed performances. Additional statements and descriptors were extracted from existing scales created by Abeles and Bergee. After the

---

statements were extracted, an independent group of three experienced string teachers evaluated the items for whether or not the component was aural in nature. The researchers only kept the statements in which all of the teachers unanimously agreed upon. These statements were then tested by fifty adjudicators who listened to 102 performance recordings, as in the Abeles study. Using statistical factor analysis, Zdzinski and Barnes found that there were five components of string performance assessment: interpretation/musical effect, articulation/tone, intonation, rhythm/tempo, and vibrato. The constructed string performance rating scale was then tested for reliability between judges, and was found to be reliable in accurate assessment (variation between .873 and .936).

In 2007, Russell focused his research on guitar performance assessment. The purpose of his study was to identify the aural factors of guitar performance by creating a guitar performance rating scale. Similar to Bergee, Zdzinski and Barnes, Russell gathered data focused on statements about guitar performance from a survey of performance literature, previously created rating scales. He also included statements from professional guitar players, guitar teachers, and college guitar students. Through content analysis, he found 99 salient statements that focused only on aural aspects of guitar performance. He then had 67 volunteer judges evaluate 100 recordings of a wide variety of styles of guitar performances and judge them using a Likert-type scale using

---


the statements. Similar to the Zdzinski and Barnes study, evaluators were allowed to listen to the recordings several times as needed to aid in the evaluation of the performances. Through factor analysis, five components were found to be significant criterion for guitar performance assessment: interpretation, tone, technique, rhythm/tempo, and intonation. Reliability for the measure was estimated to be very high ($a = .962$).

In 2010, Russell conducted a study to test a hypothesized model of the aurally perceived performer controlled musical factors that influence assessments of performance quality. He hypothesized that three main factors influenced assessment of performance quality: technique, musical expression, and overall perception of performance quality. Research studies on musical performance, musical achievement, musical expression, and scale construction were examined to extract salient factors that influence assessments of performance quality. He found eight factors: tone, intonation, rhythmic accuracy, articulation, tempo, dynamics, timbre, and interpretation. These eight factors where categorized as either technique or musical expression factors. These items, combined with researcher created items, were then combined to represent the variables of technique, musical expression, and overall perceptions of performance quality. The 44 selected items became part of the Aural Musical Performance Quality (AMPQ) measure and each item was paired with a 4-point likert scale. Fifty eight volunteer adjudicators were recruited to evaluate recordings that represented the categories of brass, woodwind, voice and string. Through analysis, the measure was found to have high reliability ($a = $

---

42 Ibid, 249.

17.977). The results of his study were consistent with the hypothesized model of performer controlled musical factors.

**Jazz Performance Achievement**

There are few published measurements and assessment implementation procedures for jazz performance achievement. Several unpublished doctoral dissertations exist; however, each study has significant limitations with regard to factors such as methodology, validity, and inter-judge reliability.

In an early study, Briscuso constructed a measure of jazz improvisation to evaluate 8th through 12th grade instrumentalists. The factors that he tested were harmonic awareness, rhythmic development, melodic expression, jazz style, and individuality. Through analysis, his study reported low to moderate inter-judge reliability ($r = 0.44$ to $r = 0.73$).

McDaniel also constructed a study measuring the achievement of undergraduate instrumental jazz majors. His measure evaluated melodic conception, harmonic conception, Originality of the solo, direction of the solo, and maturation of ideas as testable components. A limitation of this study was that inter judge reliability was untestable, as judges identified successful improvisations by the students with majority vote.

Pfenninger constructed a study to determine the feasibility of objective measurement of jazz improvisation performance amongst undergraduate jazz.

---

45 McDaniel, William Theodore,. 1974. Differences In Music Achievement, Musical Experience, And Background Between Jazz-Improvising Musicians And Non-Improvising Musicians At The Freshman And Sophomore College Levels. The University of Iowa, 5.
instrumental performance majors. His measure examined harmonic awareness, melodic phrasing, melodic content, rhythm, and style as testable components of jazz improvisation achievement. Through analysis, Schilling found that the measure had moderate to moderately high inter-judge reliability. Unfortunately, the components were found to be highly correlated within the rating scale, suggesting that each dimension of the scale was not being measured independently.

One peer-reviewed measure of jazz improvisation performance achievement was developed by Smith. The purpose of his study was to construct and validate a rating scale for collegiate wind jazz improvisation performance. The Wind Jazz Improvisation Evaluation Scale (WJIES) was constructed and refined through a facet-rational approach to scale development. To create the study, words and phrases that describe wind jazz improvisation were collected through consideration of teaching materials, advisement from jazz educators, published interviews, and research articles.

The study group consisted of five wind jazz students and one professional jazz educator. They were asked to record two improvisations—two choruses of B-flat blues chord progression and one chorus of Benny Golson’s composition *Killer Joe* accompanied by a Jamey Aebersold play-along track. Sixty-three adjudicators with differing amounts of jazz pedagogy experience evaluated the 12 improvisations using the WJIES and the additional measure, the Instrumental Jazz Improvisation Evaluation Measure. The measure evaluated technique/tone quality, structure/development,
rhythm/style, and expression as testable components. After analysis, the results of this study indicated that the reliability of scores were good ($r= .87$ to $r= .95$).

Wesolowski constructed a rubric to evaluate jazz improvisation interaction. The purpose of his study was to examine the cognitive processes related to interaction episodes in jazz improvisation by creating, testing, and validating a rubric to assess interaction in jazz improvisation. To develop the rubric, 8 dimensions were created from a combination of Rinzler’s outline of major degrees of creativity and Berliner’s description of how jazz ensemble members engage in non-verbal interaction during a performance. These criteria are: 1) melodic interaction (three components), 2) Harmonic interaction (two components), and 3) Rhythmic interaction (three components).

Considerations were made in constructing the rubric language based on the work of previous research.

The rubric was pilot tested on freshman and sophomore undergraduate performances, graduate level performances, and professional improvisation performances. Feedback was taken from the initial rubric and revisions were made. For the testing of the rubric, fifty-five expert judges evaluated fifty-five distinct jazz improvisation performances- seventeen undergrad, twenty grad, and eighteen professional performances. The results found that the measure was of high reliability ($a=.91$) and that the three most statistically significant components in order of task difficulty were melodic interaction, rhythmic interaction, and harmonic interaction.

---

Summary of Literature Review

In this review of literature, many different facets of music performance were evaluated to examine jazz performance achievement. First, research on the predictors of jazz improvisation achievement were investigated. The research suggests that aural imitation, self-evaluation, and self-efficacy could be considered adequate predictors. Then, research on general performance measures was surveyed. Measures were investigated that evaluated voice, strings, woodwinds, and brass. The research suggests that reliable measures may be created using educator statements and researcher evaluation, content analysis, review, and testing for inter-judge reliability. Finally, jazz performance achievement measures were evaluated. Although there is a prosody of research that directly evaluates jazz improvisation performance achievement, research in more recent studies suggest that reliable measures can be created.
Chapter III

METHODOLOGY

Purpose

The purpose of this study was to develop a jazz improvisation rubric for the evaluation of collegiate jazz improvisation. To create this assessment measure, the following research objectives were developed in order to synthesize and codify necessary jazz skills:

1. What are the aurally observed performer controlled components of jazz improvisation achievement?
2. What aurally observed improvisation skills should be assessed in an improvisatory jazz performance?
3. Can a comprehensive performance measure for the purpose of evaluating an improvisatory jazz performance be developed?

Investigation of Jazz Improvisation Pedagogical Materials and Statements

To investigate the first research question, the researcher content analyzed and categorized jazz improvisation books, statements from jazz educators and performers, and extracted overarching themes pertaining to jazz improvisation performance.49,50,51 Those themes were then be categorized and listed to determine overarching similarities.

Jazz performer and educator statements were selected from a survey of interviews and masterclasses of those who had available examples of instructing collegiate level

students. Collected statements from the texts and from jazz educators and performers were content analyzed to extract performance components for the rubric. The frequency of those components were recorded to develop rubric qualitative descriptions in each performance assessment category.

**Analysis of Jazz Improvisation and General Music Performance Assessment**

**Materials**

In order to address the second research question, the researcher first surveyed existing studies and published materials for conducting a content analysis to extract performance components. Lists were made of performance components and the frequency of the occurrence of these components were recorded across the surveyed literature. The researcher surveyed and collected jazz improvisation performance measures, and general performance measures of string instruments, brass, woodwinds, voice, guitar, piano, and pitched percussion.

**Categorization of Collected Data**

An analysis of existing research on jazz improvisation pedagogical materials, improvisation achievement, performance assessment, and measurement development were conducted and a list of performance variables considered to be influential in the process of jazz improvisation assessment were created. Data collected from jazz performer and educator statements were content analyzed for performance components considered to be influential in the process of jazz improvisation assessment. The researcher compared the tabulated lists of performance components from the statements in the reviewed literature and determined repeated responses and overarching similarities.
to determine criterion to include in the developed rubric in order to establish validity and consistency in structure.

**Creation of Jazz Improvisation Performance Rubric**

To address the final research question, a rubric was created using the categorized data from the literature review and data from the jazz performer and educator statements.\textsuperscript{55,56} Thorough content analysis considering frequency and scope of statements and literature review determined components to consider for inclusion in the rubric. The researcher then compared the statements for any overlapping themes and categorized them. Components determined to be significant from this process were the specific criteria listed for evaluation on the rubric. Performance categories were described using the descriptions of performance provided in the surveys. A description of each rating criteria were listed below each number to clarify each evaluation statement.


Chapter IV
RESULTS

Purpose

The purpose of this study was to develop a jazz improvisation rubric for the evaluation of collegiate jazz improvisation. To create this assessment measure, the following research objectives were developed in order to synthesize and codify necessary jazz skills:

1. What are the aurally observed performer controlled components of jazz improvisation achievement?

2. What aurally observed improvisation skills should be assessed in an improvisatory jazz performance?

3. Can a comprehensive performance measure for the purpose of evaluating an improvisatory jazz performance be developed?

Aural Performer Controlled Components of Jazz Improvisation

In order to address this research question, a survey of published studies on jazz improvisation, published studies on general music performance, and publicly available measures where content analyzed for performance components. 57,58 A list was made of components used in these measures, and their frequency was counted and recorded throughout those three areas. 59 The first instance of the term was recorded and given a tally, and then each time the term was used again in another study, another tally was

57 For a master list of published general performance, jazz improvisation measures used, please see Appendix A.

58 For a table representation of all publicly available measures used, please see Appendix B.

59 For a master list with a table representation of frequency of all measurement terms used, please see Appendix C.
added to the list for each term. The five most frequent component measurement terms used were rhythm, technical facility, tone, articulation, and melodic/rhythmic development. See Figure 1 below.

**Figure 1- List of top 5 component measurement terms**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rhythm</td>
<td>★★★★★★</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technical facility</td>
<td>★★★★☆</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tone</td>
<td>★★★★☆</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Articulation</td>
<td>★★★☆☆</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Melodic/rhythmic development</td>
<td>★★★☆☆</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Once the master list of terms was created, any term that was considered to be a visual component, not directly germane to the aural phenomena of jazz improvisation, or non-performer controlled was removed from consideration for jazz improvisation evaluation. Such terms removed were memory, sight-reading ability, and stage presence. Terms considered to be evaluating the same concept were combined and categorized from the list by the researcher. These most commonly occurring concepts were categorized into the following components: Technique/Technical Facility, Expression, Tone/Tone Control, Rhythm, Melody/Motives, Interaction, Harmony, and overall improvisation.

**Aurally Observed Improvisation Skills to Assess in Jazz Performance**

To address the second research question, jazz pedagogy texts, jazz improvisation methods, jazz ethnomusicology texts, and published statements by jazz performers and educators were content analyzed and categorized for overarching themes in evaluating jazz improvisations. Any themes or concepts that were found in this literature that were
not addressed were also content analyzed and categorized.\textsuperscript{60} The five most commonly occurring concepts in this literature in order from most occurring to least occurring were harmony, melody, technique, expression, and rhythm.\textsuperscript{61} Statements made by jazz performers were also content analyzed and placed into the same categories. The five most frequently occurring concepts found in the literature considered to be unclear, too vague, or not substantiated with available pedagogical material (method books, masterclasses, etc.) were removed from evaluation consideration. Such terms were jazz style, use of humor, and use of emotions.

\textbf{Construction of Jazz Improvisation Rubric for Pitched Instruments}

To address the third research question, a comprehensive performance measure was synthesized into a rubric.\textsuperscript{62} The evaluated categories from the rubric were made from the list of concepts derived from the second research question, and were defined as follows based on the researcher’s content analysis of the researched data of this study:

1. \textbf{Technique}- an improviser’s control of their instrument or voice, not limited to considerations of facility/ease of movement through tessitura/range, tone rhythmic accuracy, and use of diction/articulation.

2. \textbf{Expression}- an improviser’s ability to convey a musical message, not limited to considerations of appropriate style for the music being performed, interpretation of melody, lyricism (sing-able quality to improvisation), and tone control.

\textsuperscript{60} For an annotated bibliography of all Jazz Pedagogy texts, master classes, jazz improvisation methods, and jazz ethnomusicological texts used in this study please see Appendix D.

\textsuperscript{61} For a Master Table representing the reoccurrence of categorized themes in the texts from Appendix D, please see Appendix E.

\textsuperscript{62} To examine the entire rubric, please see Appendix F.
3. **Rhythm**- an improviser's perceived control within the confines of the pulse of the music observed over the time of the improvisation, including such components as time feel/groove (defined here as a perceived synchronization with tempo), a steady sense of tempo, and the manipulation of time (acceleration/deceleration with or against the pulse of rhythm section)

4. **Melody**- the improviser's presentation of motives within the context of the improvisation, including melodic content and contour/structure appropriate to the style of music being performed, motivic development (defined as the use of sequencing/patterns/intervallic motion), and the use of language/idiomatic material (musical sensibilities or well known motives used that are indicative of the style of music being played).

5. **Harmony**- the improviser’s ability to navigate through the harmonic scheme/structure presented in the context of the improvisation observed by appropriate note choice, chord scale use, use of chromaticism, superimposition of new harmonic structures, and appropriate tensions and resolutions used in melodies.

6. **Rhythmic Interaction**- the improviser’s ability to introduce and respond to new rhythmic ideas made by members of the performing ensemble.

7. **Melodic Interaction**- the improviser’s ability to introduce and respond to melodies and motives during improvisation made by members of the performing ensemble.

8. **Harmonic interaction**- the improviser’s ability to introduce and respond to new harmonic ideas made by members of the performing ensemble.
9. **Overall improvisation**—the improviser’s composite use of rhythmic, melodic, and harmonic structures for musical effect, using a balance of predicable and unpredictable material in the improvisation, often referred to as ‘telling a story’.

To determine the terms used to indicate the scale/quality of each dimension on the rubric, literature about the construction of rubrics were considered. The scale in order from lowest quality to highest quality performance is as follows: 1) Does not meet expectations 2) Below expectations, 3) Meets Expectations, and 4) Exceeds Expectations.

In order to determine the language used about each dimension in each category, the content analysis of pedagogical material and texts about the construction of rubrics were used to develop a preliminary set of statements. The rubric was then given to several professional jazz musicians and jazz educators to review for validity, ease of use, and language used for each dimension of improvisation. After the language content was revised, the rubric was then shown to additional performers and educators for review. See Figure 2 for an example of the Technique dimension.
Figure 2- Excerpt of Performance Rubric

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Technique</strong></th>
<th><strong>Does Not Meet Expectations</strong></th>
<th><strong>Below Expectations</strong></th>
<th><strong>Meets Expectations</strong></th>
<th><strong>Exceeds Expectations</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Improviser does not demonstrate control over instrument/voice. Inconsistencies in rhythmic accuracy, articulation, tone production, range/tessitura, and/or intonation cause a lack of continuity in the performance and do not meet the expectations of the performance.</td>
<td>Improviser demonstrates an emerging control of the instrument/voice, but improvement is needed. The improviser's inconsistencies in rhythmic accuracy, articulation, tone production, range/tessitura, and/or intonation that fall below expectations of the performance.</td>
<td>Improviser demonstrates competent control of the instrument/voice. Improviser's rhythmic accuracy, articulation, tone production, range/tessitura, and/or intonation meet the expectations of the performance.</td>
<td>Improviser demonstrates a command of instrument/voice of a mastery level. The improviser's demonstration of rhythmic accuracy, articulation, tone production, range/tessitura, and intonation exceed the expectations of the performance.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Chapter V

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The purpose of this study was to develop a rubric for the evaluation of collegiate jazz improvisation. A multiple step methodology was implemented to investigate the research questions, and a rubric was designed from the data that was gleaned.

**Performer Controlled Components of Jazz Improvisation Achievement**

The first research question pertained to investigating what the aurally observed performer controlled components of jazz improvisation achievement were. To investigate it, published jazz improvisation achievement measures, and measures on general music performance were content analyzed for overlapping themes. It was determined that the five most frequent component measurement terms used were rhythm, technical facility, tone, articulation, and melodic/rhythmic development.

**Aurally Observed Improvisation Skills**

The second research question related to determining other skills that should be observed and evaluated in an improvisatory performance. A survey of jazz pedagogical materials, ethnomusicological texts, interviews, and masterclasses with jazz educators and performers were content analyzed for over-arching themes. These terms were then categorized with the data from the improvisation and general music measures, and a master list was created. It was determined that the observable skills were technique, expression, rhythm, melody/melodic motives, harmony, interaction, and overall improvisation. The findings from the pedagogical texts, interviews, and masterclasses were consistent in content with previous research into jazz improvisation achievement and are consistent with research in general music performance.
Creation of the Rubric

In order to investigate the final research question, a rubric was constructed using the data from the previous research questions as guidance. The master list that was created from all of the data were used as the dimensions for the rubric. The nine categories were technique, expression, rhythm, melody, harmony, rhythmic interaction, melodic interaction, harmonic interaction, and overall improvisation. Language describing quality was gleaned from content analysis of the jazz performers and educators. The dimensions of quality from highest to lowest were exceeds expectations, meets expectations, below expectations, and does not meet expectations.

Discussion of Research Questions

In the content analysis of improvisation performance measures and general music performance measures, the most common overlapping components were technique and expression. This is consistent with the existing research on general music performance. Unfortunately, the prosody of jazz improvisation achievement measures indicates a need for more study on the subject to confirm this overlap.

Complex Constructs in Improvisation

In the determination of evaluable components of jazz improvisation, it was determined that emotion, and the use of humor were to be eliminated on the basis of a lack of pedagogical materials to support the evaluation. This may have to do with the nature of the phenomena of jazz improvisation. Many prominent jazz performers and critics of jazz education as a whole have been critical of a perceived disconnect of the

---

meaning of jazz music with its codification in academia.\textsuperscript{52,53,54} It may not be possible to devise a method of understanding the entirety of a piece of art due to its inherent personal and dynamic existence.

After performing a content analysis of the written jazz ethnomusicological materials, jazz pedagogical materials and comparing those data with the statements of jazz performers and educators from masterclasses, an interesting difference was found in the frequency of their occurrence. The published materials evaluated in order of most emphasized concepts were harmony, melody, and then rhythm. The direct opposite was found in the materials of interviews with jazz performers and educators that were content analyzed. The concepts in order of most to least emphasized were rhythm, melody, and then harmony. This discrepancy in the findings is consistent with the statements of many performers and educators that often state that jazz is a music that is rhythmic in nature. These findings also suggest that there is a lack of adequate written rhythmic jazz pedagogical materials for pitched instruments.

\textbf{Implications for Teachers}

The rubric created from this research has several different applications that could be efficiently integrated into the jazz education processes. The rubric could be used to focus on one or a few dimensions at a time in small groups or combos. It could also be used by different teachers at juries. It could also be used by students in conjunction with boundaries set by teachers to clarify defining points of studying a particular era of jazz.


music to self-evaluate. In order for the rubric to be reliable, goals and expectations need to be clear to the student and to the evaluators using the measure.

**Suggestions for Further Research**

In order to determine the reliability of this measure, the rubric needs to be tested in the collegiate classroom, with training for teachers and students for its implementation. More research on the creation of projects and ways to inform emotion and meaning in improvisation in the collegiate setting could improve the breadth and depth of the student’s educational experience. Some possible projects include externships of performance with an ensemble and focused ethnomusicological studies of pivotal time periods in jazz music. More studies on the phenomena of jazz improvisation in the collegiate setting may also aid in enriching the experience of learning how to improvise. More focused questions about the cognition of improvisation with jazz educators and prominent performers may glean important information on the phenomena of jazz improvisation. An on-site investigation of jazz improvisation being taught in its element in the collegiate setting may give more insight into the processes of evaluating jazz improvisation.

**Conclusion**

In the ever changing climate of music education, it is important to have versatile evaluation tools to meet the needs of students in academia. Finding a balance between evaluating what the student needs to learn and determining their strengths and weaknesses is an integral part of the jazz improvisation process. A performance only creates an image of what happened in that place and time. This rubric was an attempt to facilitate and streamline a process that already happens at many colleges and universities.
While we may not be able to quite understand everything that constitutes a high quality improvisation, better understanding its components will help define where students need to grow within a structured academic setting, and help teachers guide students toward the concepts that they should be investigating on their own to become better improvisers.
References


APPENDIX A: Published General Music and Jazz Improvisation Measures

**General Music Performance Measures**


**Jazz Improvisation Measures**


APPENDIX B: Table of Publicly available Measures

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tone</th>
<th>*****</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Intonation</td>
<td>***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technique</td>
<td>*****</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Style</td>
<td>*****</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Note Choices</td>
<td>***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Musicality</td>
<td>**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dynamics</td>
<td>****</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phrasing</td>
<td>****</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jazz Style</td>
<td>**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interpretation</td>
<td>**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creativity</td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Style</td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chordscale Theory</td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time Feel /Rhythm</td>
<td>*****</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall Improvisation</td>
<td>***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Range</td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chromaticism</td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Key</td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organization/Architecture</td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Articulation</td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phrasing/ Steady Beat</td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Projection</td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Articulation</td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Melodic/Motivic Development</td>
<td>**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pacing</td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stage Presence</td>
<td>**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Memory</td>
<td>**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interaction</td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Balance</td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Note Resolutions</td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Character (Interpretation)</td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX C: Master List of Components Used in Measure

1. Articulation
2. Balance
3. Character
4. Chord Scale Theory
5. Chromaticism
6. Correct Notes
7. Creativity
8. Diction/Articulation
9. Direction Of The Solo
10. Dynamics
11. Expression
12. Harmonic Awareness
13. Harmonic Interaction
14. Individuality/Originality
15. Interaction
16. Interpretation
17. Intonation
18. Jazz Style
19. Key
20. Language
21. Maturation Of Ideas
22. Melodic Content
23. Melodic/Motivic Development
24. Melodic/Motivic Interaction
25. Melodic/Rhythmic Development
26. Memory
27. Musical Effect
28. Musicality
29. Note Choices
30. Note Resolutions
31. Organization/Architecture
32. Overall Improvisation
33. Pacing
34. Phrasing/ Steady Beat
35. Precision/Accuracy
36. Projection
37. Range
38. Rhythm
39. Rhythm/Time Feel
40. Rhythmic Interaction
41. Sight Reading
42. Interpretation
43. Stage Presence
44. Style
45. Technical Facility
46. Technique
47. Tempo
48. Time Feel /Rhythm
49. Tone
50. Tone Control
51. Unity
52. Use Of Harmony
53. Variety
54. Vibrato
APPENDIX D: Annotated Bibliography of Improvisation Pedagogy Texts


Baker’s Advanced Improvisation book is an expansion on topics discussed in his previous publication (Baker’s improvisation). This text includes models of improvisational concepts to practice in written pattern format and with a play-along cassette.


Baker’s Second Advanced Improvisation book is an expansion on topics discussed in his previous publication (Baker’s improvisation). This text includes models of Rhythmic and harmonic concepts to practice in written pattern format. There is no cassette included with this booklet, but a list of recordings is included that demonstrate each skill emphasized.


Baker’s Jazz improvisation is a method book that covers a wide range of subjects in improvisation with accompanying lists of exercises to practice and reference recordings for exploration. This book touches on several components of improvisation including: nomenclature, use of dramatic devices and effects, improvisational approach, harmonic control, chord scale knowledge, and many other topics.


Baker’s Book, Jazz pedagogy, is a guide designed to help jazz educators and students navigate and operate within a jazz academic curriculum. The text provides many things ranging from implementation of jazz courses, thoughts on the design of course material, logistics of large ensemble and small ensemble set up, and how to teach and evaluate improvisation.


Baker’s practicing Jazz booklet is intended as a supplementary guide to practicing the necessary skills of improvisation. This book covers such topics as Constructive practice suggestions, developing improvisation language, and the act of transcription.

Berg’s Book, The Goal note method, is an improvisation method designed for implementation in a 2 to 4 semester improvisation program sequence. The focus in this text is on the construction of melody through harmonic devices and hierarchy of harmonic tension and resolutions. Each topic addressed has an accompanying play-along for the improviser to practice the topics being addressed, and are sequential in design.


This ethnomusicological text is an investigation into historical, educational, and sociological perspectives on jazz improvisation in America. Many interviews and consultations with several prominent jazz educators and performers were conducted to construct the outlined viewpoints on improvisation. The acquisition of improvisation skills, the role of interaction and conversation in improvisation, and the evaluation of group performances are amongst the many topics covered.


This method book is a series of digital patterns and motives designed to expand the improviser’s knowledge of idiomatic jazz language, and to learn how to construct new materials. This text outlines a series of commonly occurring harmonic progressions and provides rationale and patterns for practicing their navigation.


This book is designed to highlight the architecture of the jazz language and how to develop style in its utilization. Melodic and harmonic material commonly used in improvised jazz solos, along with exercises and patterns to practice are included.


This method book focuses on teaching and developing idiomatic jazz melodic material. Chord Scale examples, interval manipulation, and triad pairs are highlighted with musical examples to teach these concepts.

Coker’s Teaching of Jazz is a Jazz Pedagogy text outlining potential curricula and teaching points for collegiate level jazz improvisation. Topics ranging from rationale for the jazz academic major/study, potential courses and curriculae, and improvisation performance evaluation are discussed in this text.


This book outlines several exercises for improvisers to internalize for performing jazz music. Digital patterns over specific chord changes and practicing methods are outlined to aid in that process.


Coker’s Book is a detailed method of learning how to improvise, with emphasis on learning the appropriate tonal organization on improvising jazz music. This book outlines various cognitive skills deemed necessary to improvise, styles to learn, and accompanying chord scale theory. In order to practice these skills, Coker has included a play along cd for the improviser to play over with melodies highlighting the accompanying theory.


This book attempts to isolate skills and concepts deemed necessary to control while improvising, and provide aural and visual examples to improve those skills. The topics covered in this method include pacing, stretching the time, rhythmic displacement, over the bar phrasing, and non-harmonic triads. An audio CD is included with this method book with performed examples of each topic highlighted, with additional play along examples.


This Method book addresses the phenomena of Free Jazz and improvisation. Outlined in this book are topics such as Free Jazz performance challenges, preparation and context, exercises to practice, performance scenarios. The method concludes with a CD recording of several performance contexts demonstrated with annotations.

This book is a method that was developed by Hal Galper to provide an alternative process in developing a sense of jazz phrasing for the improviser, using his method called “Forward Motion”. This text covers several topics including melody and embellishment, Rhythmic concepts, harmonic concepts, scales, arpeggios, intervallic motion, and superimposition. Several supplemental musical recordings are available online to accompany this text from the author’s website.


This text is a method developed to address the concept of chromaticism in jazz improvisation. Topics outlined in this text include concepts of melodic construction, melodic and harmonic tension and release, tonal and non-tonal chromaticism, practicing ideas, and patterns. Included with these concepts is an audio CD demonstrating these techniques. Along with transcriptions of original improvisations and melodies performed by the author.


Monson’s book is an ethnomusicological research perspective on ascribing meaning in jazz improvisation. Through the compilation of many conversations with jazz performers and analysis of other aesthetic writings on jazz music, this text explores the importance of musical interaction from the analogy of a conversation. Concepts such as thematic interplay, and the exploration of intermusical effects like humor, irony, and cliché are described, and score excerpts of transcriptions are used to illustrate their use in performance.


This book is a jazz improvisation method that includes musical examples and several source recordings. Topics include practicing jazz, solo architecture, use of creativity in improvisation, performance anxiety, and teaching jazz music.


This Text is designed to be a method of acquiring improvisation skills for a jazz vocalist. This method outlines the necessary components of improving the performance and interpretation of the music (the artistry of jazz singing), then walks the student through the mechanics of being a jazz vocal performer, including such tasks as choosing music, writing lead sheets, creating arrangements, organizing a portfolio of music, and rehearsal techniques.
APPENDIX E: Table of Categorized Themes from Jazz Pedagogical Data

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Technique/Technical Facility</td>
<td>**********</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expression</td>
<td>**********</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rhythm</td>
<td>*****</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Melody</td>
<td>************</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interaction</td>
<td>*****</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harmony</td>
<td>************</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall</td>
<td>*****</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technique</td>
<td>Does Not Meet Expectations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improviser does not demonstrate</td>
<td>Improviser demonstrates an emerging control of the instrument/voice, but improvement is needed. The improviser's</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>control over instrument/voice.</td>
<td>incontinuity in rhythmic accuracy, articulation, tonal production, range/tempo, and/or intonation cause a lack of</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inconsistencies in rhythmic</td>
<td>that meet the expectations of the performance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>accuracy, articulation,</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tone production, range/tempo,</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>and/or intonation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expression</td>
<td>Improviser does not demonstrate an appropriate use of dynamics, lyricism, or musical interpretation in the context</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>of the performance and does not meet the expectations of the performance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rhythm</td>
<td>Improviser does not demonstrate an appropriate use of dynamics, lyricism, or musical interpretation in the context</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>of the performance and does not meet the expectations of the performance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Melody</td>
<td>Improviser does not demonstrate an appropriate use of dynamics, lyricism, or musical interpretation in the context</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>of the performance and does not meet the expectations of the performance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harmony</td>
<td>Improviser does not demonstrate an appropriate use of chord scale theory, appropriate note resolutions, and/or</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>sense of harmonic scheme and does not meet the expectations of the performance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rhythmic Interaction</td>
<td>Improviser does not demonstrate appropriate introduction or response to new rhythmic ideas in the context of the performance and does not meet the expectations of the performance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Melodic Interaction</td>
<td>Improviser does not demonstrate appropriate introduction or response to new motivic ideas in the context of the performance and does not meet the expectations of the performance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harmonic Interaction</td>
<td>Improviser does not demonstrate or respond to appropriate harmonic ideas/superimpositions in the context of the performance and does not meet the expectations of the performance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall Improvisation</td>
<td>Improviser does not demonstrate a sense of overall rhythmic, melodic, and harmonic direction in the context of the performance. Performance does not have a sense of continuity/unity and does not meet the expectations of the performance.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX G: Chord Progression List

Bb Blues Chord Progression

F Blues Chord Progression
Summertime Chord Progression

Dm7  Em7(b5)  A7(b9)  Dm  Am7(b5)  D7(13)

Gm7  Em7(b5)  A7(b9)

Dm7  Em7(b5)  A7(b9)  Dm  Gm7  C7

FMaj7  Em7(b5)  A7(b9)  Dm7  Em7(b5)  A7(b9)
Killer Joe Chord Progression

C7   Bb7   C7   Bb7
5
C7   Bb7   C7   Bb7
9
C7   Bb7   C7   Bb7
13
C7   Bb7   C7   Bb7
17  Em7(b5)  A7(b9)  Em7  Ab9  Asus4(b13)
21  A13  Gb/Ab  Ab7  Em7  A13(b9)
25  C7   Bb7   C7   Bb7
29  C7   Bb7   C7   Bb7
Bb Rhythm Changes Chord Progression

Bbmaj7  G7  Cm7  F7  Bbmaj7  G7  Cm7  F7

Bbmaj7  Bb7  Eb7  Ebm7  Bbmaj7  G7  Cm7  F7

Bbmaj7  G7  Cm7  F7  Bbmaj7  G7  Cm7  F7

Bbmaj7  Bb7  Eb7  Ebm7  Cm7  F7  Bbmaj7

D7  G7

C7  Cm7  F7

Bbmaj7  G7  Cm7  F7  Bbmaj7  G7  Cm7  F7

Bbmaj7  Bb7  Eb7  Ebm7  Cm7  F7  Bbmaj7
John Coltrane (1926-1967) Jazz Tenor Saxophone Player


Miles Davis (1926-1991) Jazz Trumpet Player


Hal Galper (1938- ) Prominent Jazz Pianist and Educator


Barry Harris (1929- ) Jazz Piano Player and Educator

Jimmy Heath (1926- ) Jazz Tenor Saxophone Player

Percy Heath (1923-2005) Jazz Bass Player


Hank Jones (1918-2010) Jazz Piano Player


Brian Lynch (1956- ) Jazz Trumpet Player


Clark Terry (1920-2015) Jazz Trumpet Player