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Two Participant Online Practice Research Challenge: Collaborative Practice Exploration Through Video Exchange

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We use this protocol and it's working

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Abstract

This protocol establishes a structured method for collaborative practice research between two music practitioners through asynchronous video exchange. Participants independently develop proposals and create 10-minute videos exploring a practice concept, technique, or approach. Videos are exchanged, prompting each participant to create a second 10-minute response exploring how their partner's work stimulates new directions in their own practice. The process concludes with a 20-minute filmed discussion analysing interpretative choices and outcomes. The protocol produces a 60-minute $\pm 10\%$ compiled video (10+10+10+10+10+10 structure) serving as peer-reviewed, DOI-allocated practice research output via JISC Octopus. This method makes tacit practice knowledge explicit and generates transferable insights into practice innovation.



Guidelines

For Participants:

- Film the actual exploration, not polished performances
- Show unsuccessful attempts alongside successes
- Document thinking through voiceover/annotations
- Respond genuinely to the partner's work
- Film in landscape format
- Maintain sufficient audio/video quality for analysis

For Coordinators:

- Frame the Research Problem clearly
- Set timelines and deadlines appropriate to the challenge
- Match participants thoughtfully
- Provide clear technical specifications
- Call For Participants should link to the upload platform for completed video sections and final edit
- Facilitate discussion scheduling

Quality Indicators:

- Clear articulation of practice goal
- Systematic exploration - although 'happy accidents' should also be documented, flagged and explained
- Visible development over time
- Thoughtful engagement with partner's ideas
- Honest reflection on outcomes



Materials

For Participants:

- Musical instrument(s) or relevant music practice tools
- Video recording device (smartphone minimum)
- Tripod or stable mount
- Adequate lighting
- Video editing software (free options acceptable)
- Internet connection for file transfer
- Video conferencing access (Zoom/Teams)

For Coordinators:

- Secure file transfer system (eg: onedrive, googledrive etc)
- Communication platform
- Video conferencing with recording
- Video editing software (for technical support if needed)
- Timeline management system
- Proposal and submission information to send to participants
- Short title video for participants to add at the start



Troubleshooting

Problem

Participant struggles to generate ~10-minute content

Solution

When possible, focus on the process, not perfection. Using a voiceover to explain the thought process can be valuable in providing insights. Consider showing incremental developments. Including "failures" and happy accidents, can also be insightful.

Problem

Technical quality is inadequate

Solution

Review lighting and camera position. Test audio levels before the main recording to ensure suitable clarity and be free from extraneous noise. Consider an external microphone when possible. Multiple takes are acceptable. The research coordinator can also offer technical support.

Problem

Difficulty connecting to partner's work

Solution

Don't force direct imitation of the partner's work. Look for conceptual stimulation as a catalyst for connection to the work. Small connections are valid. Documenting an honest response, even if minimal, is suitable.

Problem

Discussion runs over/under time

Solution

If over time, edit down to the required length ($\pm 10\%$). Gentle timekeeping during discussion is encouraged. The coordinator can prompt additional points if needed. Focus on quality over strict timing.

Problem

Participant Withdrawal

Solution

Data protection requires the ability to withdraw. Try to find a replacement if it's early in the process. This may result in individual rather than paired output. Document the circumstances in the method publication.

Problem

Scheduling conflicts for discussion

Solution



The coordinator provides multiple format options. Allow an extended window for scheduling. Consider a written alternative if filming is impossible. May extend timeline if needed.

Problem

Video compilation exceeds 66 minutes or under 54 minutes

Solution

Edit discussion segments to adjust length. Ensure the title video is appropriately brief. The coordinator assists with the final edit if needed. Document the final length in the results publication.

Before start

Coordinators Complete:

- Define and publish the Research Problem on Octopus
- Create a call for participants with upload platform links
- Establish timeline and deadlines (tailored to each challenge)
- Set up file sharing infrastructure
- Match participant pairs
- Brief participants on protocol
- Create a short title video for participants

Participants Confirm:

- Read the Research Problem publication
- Understand the complete protocol
- Test recording equipment
- Verify editing software capability
- Confirm adequate practice space
- Review deadlines

Proposal Development

1 **Begin proposal writing (Rationale/Hypothesis)**

Timeline: Set by coordinator

Objective: Create a theory-informed proposal for practice exploration

Proposal Structure ≈ 200-300 words:

1. Practice Goal (c. 50-75 words)
 - Specific technique/approach to develop
 - What prompted this exploration
2. Theoretical Framework (c. 50-75 words)
 - Relevant pedagogical/theoretical perspectives
 - Why this approach should yield results
3. Proposed Method (c. 50-75 words)
 - Specific practice activities
 - Variations to explore
 - Progress indicators
4. Expected Outcomes (c. 50-75 words)
 - Anticipated functional changes
 - Success criteria
 - Potential challenges

Submission:

Submit to coordinator (NOT to partner)

- Becomes Rationale/Hypothesis in Octopus chain
- Work in complete isolation from the research partner at this stage

Coordinator Action:

- Collect proposals
- Provide feedback if clarification is needed

Initial Video Creation

2 **Practice Exploration and Documentation**

Timeline: Set by coordinator

Objective: Explore the proposal through practice and document the process

Suggested activities are as follows:

2.1 Initial Exploration

- Begin working with the proposed approach
- Try variations and experiments
- Note what works and what doesn't
- Don't worry about filming yet, explore freely

2.2 Focused Documentation

- Film practice sessions showing:
 - Initial attempts
 - Refinement process
 - Unexpected discoveries
 - Both successes and failures
 - Happy accidents (flagged and explained)
- Accumulate 30-60 minutes of raw footage
- Continue refining technique/approach

2.3 Review and Selection

- Review all footage
- Identify key moments showing development
- Select material demonstrating:
 - Your initial idea
 - How experimentation generated new insights
 - What didn't work and why
 - Emergent results and happy accidents

Video Editing (First Video)

3 Timeline: Set by coordinator

Objective: Create a coherent ~10-minute video

Recommended content is as follows:

3.1 Introduction (1-2 minutes)

- Briefly state your practice goal
- Reference theoretical framework if relevant
- Explain what you're attempting

3.2 Exploration Process (5-6 minutes)

- Show experimentation sequence
- Include unsuccessful attempts
- Demonstrate how ideas evolved
- Flag and explain happy accidents



- Use voiceover or annotations to explain thinking

3.3 Emergent Results (2-3 minutes)

- Demonstrate what you've developed
- Need not be polished, instead show a coherent idea
- Explain implications or potential applications

3.4 **Technical Specifications:**

- Duration: Approximately 10 minutes ($\pm 10\%$ acceptable)
- Format: MP4, MOV, or AVI
- Resolution: Minimum 720p (1080p preferred)
- Audio: Clear enough for analytical listening
- Orientation: Landscape
- File size: Under 2GB (if possible)

Editing Guidelines:

- Can combine multiple camera angles
- Use titles, annotations, arrows, and circles as needed
- Voiceover or on-screen text for explanation
- Don't over-produce, authenticity > polish
- Ensure audio sync

Quality Checklist:

- Shows initial idea clearly
- Documents the experimentation process
- Includes unsuccessful attempts and happy accidents
- Demonstrates emergent outcome
- Runs approximately 10 minutes ($\pm 10\%$)
- Audio/video quality adequate
- Filmed in landscape
- Title video added

First Video Submission

- 4 Deadline: Set by the coordinator

Submission Process:

1. Upload video to the coordinator's designated platform
2. Filename format: `[YourName]\_Video1\_[Date].mp4`
3. Confirm receipt with the coordinator

Coordinator Action:

- Verify all videos received
- Check technical specifications



- Match pairs for exchange
- Prepare for distribution

Video Exchange and Response

5 Receiving Partner's Video

Timeline: Set by the coordinator

Suggested Process:

1. Coordinator sends partner's Video 1
2. Watch the video in full without interruption the first time
3. Watch again, making notes on:
 - What interests you
 - What stimulates your own thinking
 - Connections to your practice
 - Questions or curiosities raised

Important:

- Approach with genuine curiosity
- Don't feel obligated to imitate
- Look for conceptual stimulation, not just technical copying
- Note surprising or unexpected elements

Reflection Questions:

- What aspect of their work most intrigues you?
- How might their approach inform your practice?
- What would happen if you applied their logic differently?
- What connections do you see to your own exploration?

Response Exploration

6 Timeline: Set by coordinator

Objective: Explore what the partner's work stimulates in your practice

Suggested activities are as follows:

6.1 Initial Response

- Experiment with ideas sparked by partner's video
- Don't force connections, follow genuine interest
- May be radically different from their approach
- May extend/contradict/reframe what they did

6.2 Development

- Deepen exploration of stimulated ideas
- Film practice sessions
- Accumulate 20-40 minutes of raw footage
- Note relationship to partner's work
- Document happy accidents

6.3 Review and Selection

- Review footage
- Select moments showing responsive development
- Identify a clear connection to the partner's stimulus

Video Editing (Second Video)

7 Timeline: Set by coordinator

Objective: Create a ~10-minute response video

Recommended content as follows:

- 7.1 7.1 Connection to Partner –(1-2 minutes)
 - Acknowledge what in their work caught your attention
 - Explain what stimulated your thinking
 - Be specific about the connection
- 7.2 7.2 Your Response Exploration –(5-6 minutes)
 - Show how you explored the stimulated ideas
 - Demonstrate the development process
 - Include attempts that didn't work
 - Show how your response evolved
 - Flag happy accidents
- 7.3 7.3 Outcome –(2-3 minutes)
 - Demonstrate what emerged
 - Explain the relationship to your partner's work
 - Note unexpected developments
- 7.4 7.4 Same technical specifications as Video 1 (see 3.4)
 - Duration: Approximately 10 minutes ($\pm 10\%$)
 - Add the title video at the start

Quality Checklist:

 - Clear connection to partner's work articulated
 - Shows genuine exploration (not imitation)



- Documents response development
- Demonstrates emergent outcome
- Runs approximately 10 minutes ($\sim \pm 10\%$)
- Maintains quality standards

Second Video Submission

8 Deadline: Set by the coordinator

Objective: Submit video 2

Submission:

1. Upload to the designated platform
2. Filename: `[YourName]\_Video2\_[Date].mp4`
3. Confirm receipt with the coordinator

Coordinator Action:

- Collect all Video 2 submissions
- Ensure upload folders are only available to the 2 relevant partners (i.e. no looking at other videos until the end)
- Schedule final discussions
- Begin planning compilation support

Reciprocal Viewing

9 **Viewing Partner's Response**

Timeline: Set by coordinator

Suggested Process:

1. Receive partner's Video 2 (their response to your Video 1)
2. Watch the video in full without interruption the first time
3. On second watch, reflect on:
 - How they interpreted your work
 - What they focused on
 - Surprises in their response
 - Connections you hadn't considered

Preparation for Discussion:

- Note questions for partner
- Identify moments to reference
- Consider what you learned from their interpretations
- Reflect on the overall exchange arc



Collaborative Discussion

10 Discussion Scheduling and Preparation

Timeline: Set by coordinator

Coordinator Responsibilities:

- Provide discussion prompts
- Confirm technical setup (recording enabled)
- Brief participants on the structure

Participant Preparation:

- Schedule a 45-minute Zoom/Teams session with partner
- Review all four videos
- Prepare notes on key moments
- Consider discussion questions
- Test video conferencing setup
- Find a quiet location with a stable internet connection

10.1 Discussion Structure (40 minutes + 5 minute buffer):

Part 1: Interpretative Choices (edit down to 10 minutes)

- How did you each interpret the Research Challenge?
- What informed your respective approaches?
- How did you react to each other's work?
- What surprised you about the exchange?

Part 2: Analytical Reflection (edit down to 10 minutes)

- How did your decisions shape outcomes?
- What role did responding to each other play?
- What worked well? What didn't?
- What did you learn about practice research?

Facilitation Tips:

- Keep to time allocations
- Reference specific video moments
- Balance speaking time
- Be honest about challenges
- Focus on process, not just outcomes

Wider Interpretation/Reflection

11 Timeline: Set by coordinator

Note: This step is left to the discretion of coordinators. Options include:

Option 1: Paired Discussion

- 45-minute Zoom/Teams session between partners
- Record and edit down to 20 minutes (2×10-minute segments)
- Participants conduct and edit themselves

Option 2: Group Discussion

- Filmed Zoom/Teams discussion with some or all participants
- May include invited experts
- Can happen immediately or asynchronously

Option 3: Written Feedback

- Participants provide written reflections
- May include feedback from invited experts
- Can be submitted after publication of other components

Option 4: Hybrid Approach

- Combination of filmed discussion and written feedback
- Allows for both immediate and considered responses

Technical Setup (if filmed):

- Platform: Zoom or Teams with recording enabled
- Video: Cameras on, good lighting
- Audio: Clear microphones, quiet environment
- Recording: Start before the discussion begins
- Participants are responsible for recording and initial editing

Outlines for conducting the discussion are as follows:

11.1 Part 1: Interpretative Discussion (edit down to 10 minutes)

Opening prompt: "Let's start by exploring how each of you interpreted the challenge. Where do you think your approach came from?"

Discussion points:

- Initial interpretations of the Research Problem
- Sources of inspiration for proposals
- Reactions upon seeing partner's first video
- How exchange shaped thinking

11.2 Part 2: Analytical Discussion (edit down to 10 minutes)

Opening prompt: "Now let's analyse what actually happened, how your decisions and approaches shaped the outcomes."

Discussion points:

- Decision-making process during exploration
- Impact of partner's stimulus on direction
- Unexpected outcomes or discoveries (including happy accidents)
- Insights about practice research methodology
- What would you do differently?

Quality Indicators (if filmed):

- Specific references to video moments
- Honest assessment of process
- Analytical rather than merely descriptive
- Balanced participation
- Insights about methodology

Compilation and Publication

12 Video Compilation

Timeline: Set by coordinator

Note: Participants will have already compiled the edits. Coordinators can offer technical support if required.

Coordinator responsibilities are as follows:

12.1 Technical Support

- Available to assist with compilation if needed
- Guide final assembly
- Review quality if requested

12.2 Materials Provision

- Provide a short title video for the start of the compilation
- Provide descriptions for video platform (Vimeo)
- Provide acknowledgements text
- Ensure compliance with Octopus cookie policy (Vimeo preferred over YouTube)

Assembly Structure (60 minutes, $\pm 10\%$):

- Title video
- Participant A Video 1 (~10 min)
- Participant B Video 1 (~10 min)

- Participant A Video 2 (~10 min)
 - Participant B Video 2 (~10 min)
 - Discussion Part 1 (~10 min)
 - Discussion Part 2 (~10 min)
- OR an alternative discussion format as determined by the coordinator

Final Video Specifications:

- Duration: 60 minutes ($\pm 10\%$ = 54-66 minutes acceptable)
- Format: MP4
- Resolution: 1080p
- Audio: Normalised levels
- Platform: Vimeo (for Octopus compliance)

Octopus Publication Preparation

13 Timeline: Set by coordinator

Publications to prepare are as follows:

13.1 **Research Problem (if not already published)**

- Already created by the coordinator
- Defines the practice research question
- Provides context and rationale

13.2 **Rationale/Hypothesis**

- Compile both participant proposals
- Linked to the Research Problem
- Authored by respective participants

13.3 **Method**

- This protocol (protocols.io)
- DOI from protocols.io
- Linked to Research Problem
- Authored by coordinator (+ participants as contributors if appropriate)

13.4 **Results/Sources of Evidence**

- Upload 60-minute video to Vimeo
- Link video URL in Octopus publication
- Describe conditions: dates, locations, equipment used
- Detail the exact structure of the video
- Note any deviations from protocol
- Authored by both participants

13.5 **Analysis**

- Link video URL in Octopus publication to discussion segments (Part 1 & 2) or alternative analysis format

- May include additional written analysis if needed
- Summarise key insights without interpretation
- Authored by both participants (and invited experts if applicable)

13.6 Interpretation (Optional but encouraged)

- Participants may submit individual interpretations
- The coordinator may facilitate a group interpretation event
- Can happen immediately or asynchronously after other publications
- Synthesise findings across multiple pairs if applicable
- Consider implications for practice research methodology

13.7 Applications/Implications (Optional)

- Any completed musical works emerging from the process
- Performance documentation
- Pedagogical applications
- Business practice innovations
- Recording techniques developed
- Authored by creators

Peer Review Process

14 Timeline: Ongoing post-publication

Octopus Review System:

- All publications open to post-publication review
- Reviews are themselves publications with DOIs
- Reviewers assess:
 - Clarity of methodology
 - Quality of documentation
 - Analytical rigour
 - Insights generated

Responding to reviews:

- Authors may re-version publications based on feedback
- New versions get new DOIs
- Original versions remain accessible
- Review the history preserved

Data Management

15 File Storage and Sharing

During Challenge:

- Coordinator maintains secure cloud storage

- Separate folders for each participant pair
- Access is limited appropriately (no cross-pair viewing until the end)
- Regular backups

After Publication:

- 60-minute video on Vimeo and the C21MP.ORG website
- Persistent URL for Octopus linking
- Proposals archived with Octopus publications
- Raw footage retained by participants (optional coordinator archive)

Retention Policy

- Published materials: Permanent (Octopus, protocols.io, Vimeo)
- Working files: Minimum 3 years post-publication
- Personal data: Deleted on request or after project completion
- Raw footage: Participants' discretion

Timeline Example

16

Phase	Activity	Example Deadline
Proposal	Write Proposal	2nd Jan
Video 1	Explore and create first video	15th Jan
Exchange	Receive partner's video 1	17th Jan
Video 2	Respond and create second video	25th Jan
View	Watch partner's video 2	29th Jan
Discussion	Schedule and record/write discussion	9th Feb
Compilation	Compile final video	19th Feb



Phase	Activity	Example Deadline
Publication	Prepare Octopus publications	1st March

Variations and Adaptations

17 This protocol can be adapted for different contexts:

Multiple Pairs:

- Same Research Problem, multiple pairs
- Enables comparative analysis in the interpretation phase (see section 11)
- Facilitates group discussion event
- Increases replication evidence

Different Practice Domains:

- Performance practice
- Composition techniques
- Recording and production methods
- Music business practices
- Pedagogical approaches
- Any music practitioner activity

Different Instruments:

- Protocol works across any instrument or practice-based discipline
- Adjust technical specifications for medium (e.g., visual art, dance)
- Research Problem frames the domain

Extended Timeframes:

- Allow longer between videos for complex explorations
- Adjust word counts in proposals
- May produce deeper outcomes but requires commitment

Alternative Discussion Formats:

- Written exchange instead of video discussion
- Asynchronous recorded responses
- Group panel discussion (if multiple pairs)
- Expert commentary alongside participant reflection

Solo Variant:

- Single participant responds to Research Problem



- Creates Video 1
- Self-reflective analysis
- Can contribute to wider interpretation

Expected Outcomes and Impact

18 **Research Outputs:**

- DOI-allocated publications in Octopus chain
- Peer-reviewed practice research
- Replicable methodology documentation
- Potential completed works (music, recordings, business innovations)

Knowledge Contributions:

- Explicit documentation of tacit practice knowledge
- Insights into practice innovation processes
- Evidence for pedagogical approaches
- Transferable research methodologies
- Documentation of happy accidents and unexpected discoveries

Participant Benefits:

- Structured practice development
- Peer learning and stimulus
- Publication credit and portfolio building
- Research skills development
- Community connection

Field Impact:

- Models for practice-based research
- Alternative to traditional publication formats
- Open access knowledge sharing
- Collaborative research culture
- Applicable across all music practice domains

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