

The length of the phrase segments (notes tied together) and their placement in time is identified by digits and colours (figure 3). The meter is represented by the vertical lines quantified into three subdivisions per measure.

Visualizations of this kind forms the basis of comparison regardless of how the phrasings are produced or what produces them, cf. strokes on a Jew's Harp lamella, plectrum movements on the a langeleik, bowings on a fiddle and the usage of vocal chords and lungs in Hulling. The system also allows the empirical data to be quantified, which in turn provides the opportunity for comparative analysis of large amounts of data.

Preliminary results

There are important idiomatic differences between the instruments. This furnishes the musician with unique options and constraints. For instance, while the human voice is limited by the capacity of the lung, the striking of the lamella on a traditional Norwegian Jew's Harp produces a tone that is practically manipulable for approximately one second. In this perspective one could think that such differences would have led to the development of unique phrasing practices tied to the idiomatic constraints of each instrument. However, the preliminary analysis suggests that phrasing practices cannot be interpreted solely on the basis of idiomatic properties and that additional musical logics need to be taken in to account. Several interesting questions arise from this observation.

A: How do instrument specific characteristics influence playing technique and phrasing practices on the sl tte instruments? B: To what extent does the data support the notion of a fundamental shared phrasing practice governed by principles that are not directly linked to the instruments? C: If the phrasings to a certain extent are shared, is there a dominating influencer behind these practices, such as the fiddle? Or, would it be more fruitful to discuss whether a common phrasing practice is a result of a long and ongoing negotiation between instruments and humans that extends beyond the historic limitation of specific instruments.

A comprehensive discussion of these issues is too extensive for the present format. Instead, the presentation offers insights into an ongoing investigation and presents some preliminary results and methodological considerations that purportedly also might be of more general relevance to the study of traditional musics. The musical examples presented will consist of traditional tunes for Jew's Harp and Hulling (Lilting/Diddling) played by the author and from archive recordings, along with visual analysis of phrasing patterns.

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