ARTICLES

MASTERFUL REHEARSAL, AN ANALYSIS OF THE WORK OF JAMES EDWIN CROFT

Michael Gabriel

Abstract

In the American wind band community, the legacy of James Edwin Croft (Director of Bands, Emeritus of The Florida State University) as a teacher, conductor, and pedagogue is formidable. His work as a band leader and a commissioner of new works for wind ensemble has contributed to the growth of the band genre to the current day. It is the purpose of this document to offer insight on this legacy by analyzing specific instrumental ensemble teaching elements including rehearsal structure and time distribution—mainly through the study of pacing. These resources are offered in light of the fact that relatively few public records exist that document the late Dr. Croft's teaching. When coupled with the discussed rehearsal recordings, this case study should serve as a functional guide for professionals seeking to learn from the master teacher, responsible for producing many high-level performances, new works for the genre, and numerous teachers from his programs.

Overview

Analysis of the teaching techniques of James Edwin Croft will reference the piece *Triumph (1993)* by Michael Kemp Tippett. The document will reference rehearsals of the Florida State University Wind Orchestra under the direction of Croft, video-recorded between the dates of February 10, 1993 and March 16, 1993. Other repertoire was rehearsed by the ensemble in this period, however the following analysis will exclusively study Croft's work on *Triumph*.

Much credit for the existence of this project is due to John A. Lychner, who video recorded all ensemble rehearsals led by Croft during the Spring Semester of 1993 as a practicum project for a graduate course. These tapes, recorded originally in VHS form were converted to DVD by the author.

Because of the subjective nature of rehearsal observation, this chapter is constructed under a specific taxonomy constructed by the author to help the reader discern systematic details within the analysis and make further transfers. This structure is heavily influenced by the literature referenced in the review below.

Review of Literature

The foundational document behind this investigation is the doctoral dissertation of Alan W. Mills, which provides a comprehensive study of Croft's life and teaching career.[1] From an analytical perspective however, the literature review for this project specifically focused on aspects of rehearsal theory relating to pacing. Those resources which the author studied in depth for purposes of terminology and taxonomy for this project are listed below:

Teaching Discipline by Charles and Clifford Madsen[2] functioned as a foundational text for terminology and taxonomy for the experimental/observational portion of this project. Specifically relating to the investigation in this study, Chapter 4 discusses the ideas of classroom cues, contingencies, lesson/disciplinary preparation, teacher approvals and disapprovals, and habit construction. Part II of the text entitled "Behavior Principles Applied" outlines a series of 140 observed classroom behavior scenarios with instructor-applied behavior modification plans. This resource has a specific connection to this project, as Clifford Madsen (Coordinator of Music Education and Robert O. Lawton Professor of Music, Florida State University) served as the Thesis Director for this document.

The Effects of Knowledge of Instructional Goals on Observations of Teaching and Learning by Jacqueline Henninger[3] investigates the habits of teacher observers in evaluative/observational scenarios. This study directly relates

to the nature of this project, as this investigation of Croft is based solely on rehearsal tape observation. "Subjects directed the majority of their attention to the teachers observed. Experienced teachers, in contrast, direct their focus of attention toward student behavior, a result that has been demonstrated in previous research. It is important, then, that music education majors learn to focus on the behavior, performance, and progress of students when observing their own teaching and the teaching of others…This heightened awareness of student behavior and student progress would undoubtedly enhance the quality of their teaching."[4]

Empirical Description of the Pace of Music Instruction by Robert Duke, Carol Prickett, and Judith Jellison[5] is again directly transferable to this project, as it investigates the central rehearsal aspect of this thesis: pacing. "The data from the examples used in this investigation suggest that the perceived pace of instruction in music is proportional to the rate of student performance opportunities, rather than to the overall percentage of class time devoted to student performance…The difference between these two measures of student performance time is not trivial. Of course, if students are to perform more frequently in a given time period, the mean duration of individual performance episodes and episodes of teacher activity must be shorter…This conceptualization of a fast-paced rehearsal or class-frequent, generally brief performance episodes, and brief episodes of teacher activity-is consistent with most conceptualizations about effective instruction…We hope that this research not only provides interesting information about the relationships between various aspects of timing and observers' perceptions of pace, but also suggests a mechanism by which pacing in instructional interactions may be operationalized and quantified."[6] This study is in essence an attempt at such a quantification.

The Perception of Pacing in Music Classrooms and Its Relationship to Teacher Effectiveness and Teacher Intensity by Jason Silveira[7] is an experimental study which investigated teacher pacing in an attempt to identify its relationship with teacher effectiveness and intensity. Based on the data obtained, it appears that these constructs are very closely related; increased pacing in rehearsal is shown to correlate with perceived teacher effectiveness.[8] In effect, this investigation of Croft functions as an outgrowth of this thesis, while also containing the quantification aspect described in the previous source by Duke, Prickett, and Jellison. This study by Silveira additionally contains an extensive literature review for potential further investigation on rehearsal technique and its relation to pacing.[9]

Taxonomy:

Part 1: Rehearsal Chronology:

- Structure
- Time Distribution Analysis
- Pacing Analysis
- Rehearsal Function and Continuity

Part 2: Analysis of Conductor's Musical Priorities

- Verbal feedback/repeated concepts
- Musical elements returned to from the score

Part 3: Analysis of Conductor's Teaching Strategies

- Details of feedback delivery
- Qualitative notes of rehearsal environment/culture

Part 4: Analysis of Gesture

- Qualitative observations
- Conductor's personal reflection

For reference of the reader, *Macro* rehearsal time refers to time in which every ensemble member is playing their part in the given music. *Micro* rehearsal refers to time elapsed in which not every ensemble member plays their part in the given music, as requested by the conductor. *Instruction* refers to time in which the conductor gives any kind of verbal direction, which includes any type of feedback, comment, or instruction. Extended stops in the rehearsal for student questions, errata clarification, or breaks were eliminated from data calculations at the author's discretion and are documented.

Part 1: Rehearsal Chronology

"*The structure of my rehearsals is probably best underscored by the old phrase, 'the best laid plans'...I have always had the best intentions and certainly block out time allotments and objectives, but attribute the problem of suspect planning to discovery: discovering in practice what I didn't in preparation.*"[10]

A. Structure

Rehearsal Calendar

Table 1: Florida State University Wind Orchestra
2/10/1993–3/16/1993 Rehearsal Calendar

Rehears-al	Date of Rehearsal	Length of Rehearsal	Time Spent on *Triumph*	*Triumph* Rehearsal Focus
1	W 2/10/93	1hr 30 min	45 min	Read through
2	M 2/15/93	1hr 45 min	45 min	First 3/4 of the piece
3	W 2/17/93	1hr 45 min	1hr 15 min	In-depth rehearsal of first 2 section; read-through of last 3
4	M 2/22/93	1hr 45 min	30 min	4th and 5th sections
5	W 3/3/93	1hr 45 min	30 min	Full piece read-through. Emphasis on first 3 sections
6	M 3/8/93	1hr 45 min	1hr 45 min	Rehearsal on full piece in continuity
7[11]	W 3/10/93	1hr 50 min	50 min	All-encompassing/in three segments
8	M 3/15/93	1hr 30 min	1hr	Dress Rehearsal
Concert	W 3/16/93	—	16 min	
Total		15hr 20 min	7hr 30 min	

Concert Program

Circus Polka (1942)	Igor Stravinsky (1882-1971) Arranged by Patrick Dunnigan
Heart's Music (1989)	David Diamond (1915-2005)
Triumph (1992)	Michael Tippett (1905-1998)

B. Time Distribution Analysis

1. What is the time comparison between full-ensemble playing (*Macro)* and isolated playing (*Micro*)?
2. How much time was spent in rehearsal on *verbal instruction* (teacher) versus *ensemble playing* (*Macro* and *Micro*)?

3. What is the distribution of *Macro-Directed Feedback* versus *Micro-Directed Feedback?*
4. How much time is spent by the conductor giving *Feedback* versus regrouping the ensemble with no feedback?

Time Distribution Raw Data

Rehearsal	Macro Play Time		Micro Play Time		Instructional Time		
	Total (*minutes*)	Total (%)	Total (*minutes*)	Total (%)	Total (*minutes*)	Total (%)	Average per frame (*minutes*)
1	28:57	68.4	1:07	2.6	11:39	27.5	0:23
2	25:06	54.0	8:18	17.9	13:03	28.1	0:13
3	38:33	52.5	9:21	12.7	25:28	34.7	0:12
4	10:27	35.4	6:54	23.4	12:09	41.1	0:14
5	24:01	66.7	1:57	5.4	10:03	27.9	0:13
6	46:34	49.8	12:09	13.0	34:49	37.2	0:17
7	27:51	57.4	3:03	6.3	17:37	36.3	0:20
8	28:11	55.0	3:09	6.2	19:52	38.9	0:18
Average	*28:43*	*54.9*	*5:45*	*10.9*	*18:05*	*34.0*	*0:16*

Table 2. Time Distribution Raw Data

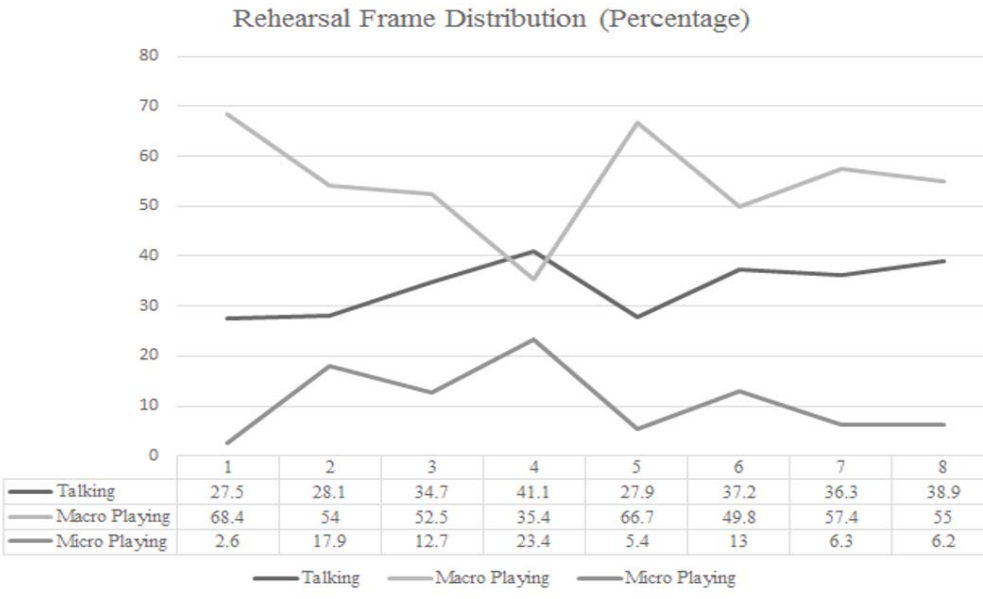
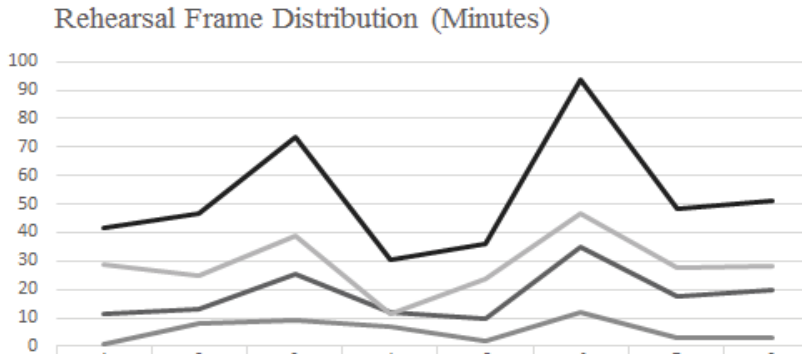


Figure 2: Rehearsal Frame Distribution by Percentage



	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Talking (minutes)	11.7	13.1	25.5	12.2	10	34.8	17.6	19.9
Macro Playing (minutes)	29	25.1	38.6	11.2	24	46.6	27.9	28.2
Micro playing (minutes)	1.1	8.3	9.4	6.9	2	12.2	3.1	3.2
Total (minutes)	41.8	46.5	73.5	30.3	36	93.6	48.6	51.3

Figure 3: Rehearsal Frame Distribution by Minutes

As gleaned from the data of Figures 2 and 3, the majority of rehearsal time over the long term was allocated to allow students to play for a majority of the time (specifically in *Macro* context). On average, this *Macro* playing time constitutes fifty-five percent of a given rehearsal (Figure 3). There are several justifications for this phenomenon. The players of the Florida State University Wind Orchestra are advanced musicians who have been charged by the conductor to maintain a high level of individual preparation for rehearsals; precious ensemble time is not spent fixing elementary issues. With this expectation, the conductor must budget time appropriately to ensure ensemble (rather than individual) progress in rehearsals. In addition, the thin scoring of the work (how instruments are directed to play in certain sections of the music) is conducive to a high amount of full ensemble playing. Almost every measure of this work is chamber music in nature—there is no full-ensemble ("tutti") music until the last note of the piece. Thus, breaking these thin textures down into even smaller rehearsal units in most cases with this piece would be unnecessary. With respect to rehearsal technique, it was also observed that the conductor incorporated *Micro*-directed feedback/instruction in a full-ensemble context, directing attention to specific groups while keeping the rest of the ensemble engaged.

The following figures will lead discussion on the balance of total ensemble playing time versus total feedback time from the conductor. Time distribution and rehearsal pacing will be analyzed in reference to three rehearsal elements: Ensemble *Macro* Playing time, *Micro* Playing time, and Conductor *Instruction* time.

Distribution of Verbal Instruction versus Student Playing

Rehearsal	Instruction (*minutes*)	Total Playing (*minutes*)	Instruction (%)	Total Playing (%)	Ratio (Playing: Instruction)
1	11.7	30.1	28.0	72.0	2.57
2	13.1	33.4	28.2	71.8	2.55
3	25.5	48	34.7	65.3	1.88
4	12.2	18.1	40.3	59.7	1.48
5	10.0	26.0	27.0	73.0	2.60
6	34.8	58.8	31.2	68.8	1.69
7	17.6	31	36.2	63.8	1.76
8	19.9	31.4	38.8	61.2	1.58
Average	*18.1*	*34.6*	*33.1*	*67.0*	*2.01*

Table 3: Distribution of Verbal Instruction versus Student Playing

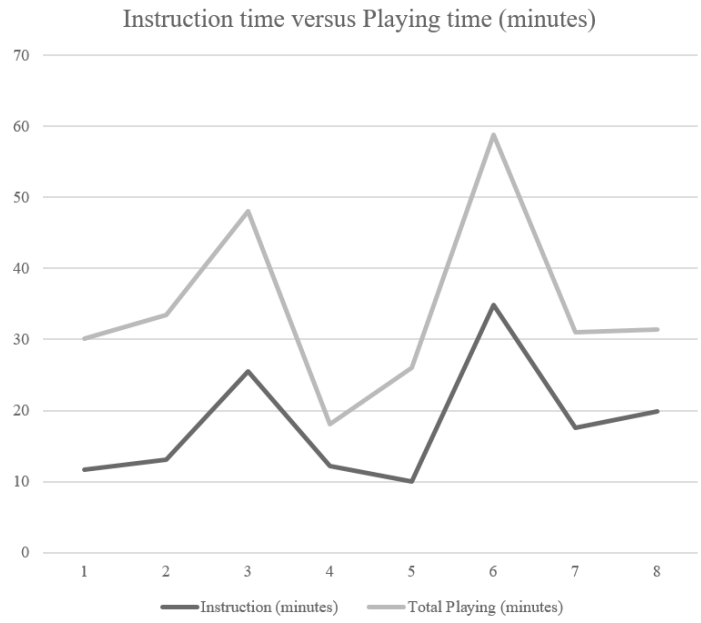


Figure 4: Distribution of Verbal Instruction versus Student Playing (Minutes)

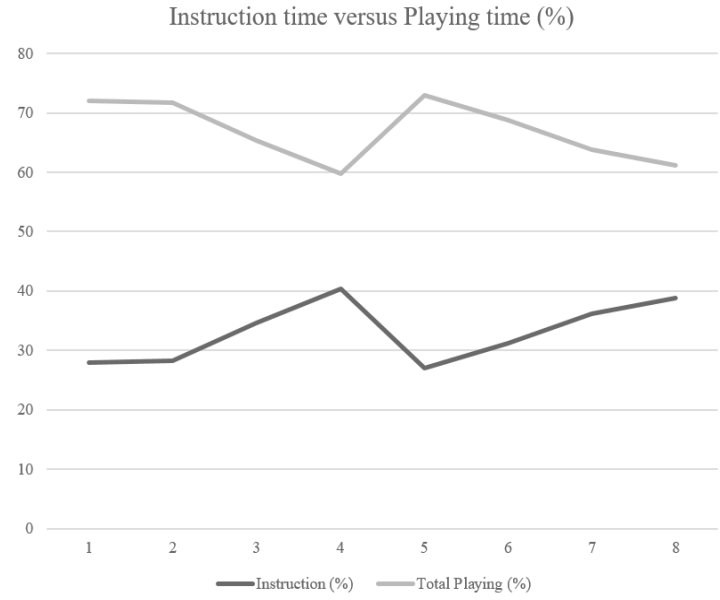
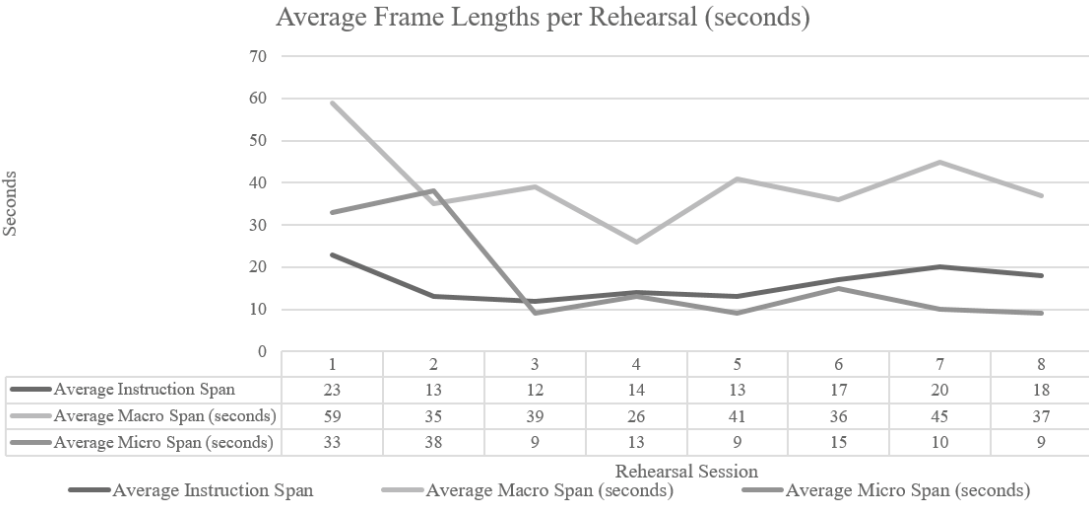


Figure 5: Distribution of Verbal Instruction versus Student Playing (%)

The overarching observation from this data shows that playing time consistently holds a critical mass of these rehearsals, averaging 67% of their total length.

Pacing Analysis



	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Average Instruction Span	23	13	12	14	13	17	20	18
Average Macro Span (seconds)	59	35	39	26	41	36	45	37
Average Micro Span (seconds)	33	38	9	13	9	15	10	9

Figure 6: Average Rehearsal Frame Length

All *Macro* playing frames are relatively long, averaging 40 seconds in length. The two outliers from this mean fall under *Rehearsals 1* and *4*. As expected, *Macro* frame lengths in the first rehearsal were significantly higher than the average (59 seconds) because this rehearsal was designed to function as a read-through for the players to establish performance tempos and hear the piece in relative continuity to aid their preparation. Excessive rehearsal activity in the read-through would likely prove ineffective. The other variation from the mean falls under *Rehearsal 4*, where *Macro* frames are significantly shorter than the mean (26 seconds). As visualized by Figures 4-6, *Rehearsal 4*, this means that the session was very detail-oriented and quickly paced: there was ample instruction with particularly short frame lengths.

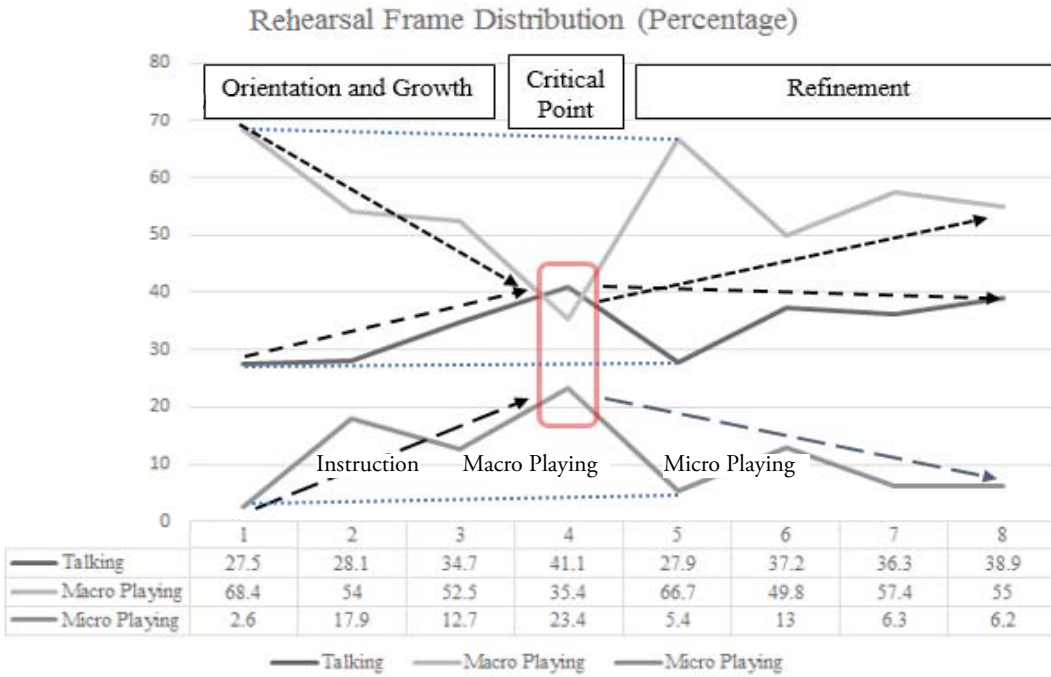
Instruction (feedback) spans are consistently short across the rehearsal cycle, averaging 16 seconds in length, suggesting that there was an overall quick pace to all rehearsals in this cycle. This data demonstrates consistent and efficient rehearsal technique: the conductor gives an instruction, the ensemble reacts,

and the conductor provides feedback with a new instruction. This cyclic application is consistent across all recorded rehearsals with very little variation. It is the author's conclusion that this consistency is the critical aspect of efficient pacing and keeps ensemble members engaged, even over rehearsals stretching over ninety minutes (for one piece).

C. Rehearsal Function and Continuity

"Every rehearsal must have variety, challenge, and that moment of satisfaction that provides performers with a sense that this has been a worthy use of time and effort. This is the same affect that keeps those of us who have had long careers recalling past moments with such pleasure."[12]

The figure below plots distribution of rehearsal elements in context of the



	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Talking	27.5	28.1	34.7	41.1	27.9	37.2	36.3	38.9
Macro Playing	68.4	54	52.5	35.4	66.7	49.8	57.4	55
Micro Playing	2.6	17.9	12.7	23.4	5.4	13	6.3	6.2

Figure 7: Rehearsal Frame Distribution by Percentage

Data plotted from this cycle reveals an identifiable long-term shape in three stages:[13]

Stage 1: Orientation and Growth

Rehearsal 1, as previously discussed within the context of *Macro* frames,

served as an orientation to the piece: Croft's main objective was to give the players an understanding of the structure and tempos of the work. Because of the intricacy of the piece, it is important for the players to have this type of "immersive" experience with the music before taking the significant amount of time necessary to perfect their individual parts.

Compare *Rehearsals 1* and *2* in Figure 7 and notice the trends in the three rehearsal data points. *Macro* rehearsal percentage decreases: the ensemble has already been oriented to the piece, which eliminates a need for playing through for sake of comfort. *Micro* rehearsal percentage increases dramatically, which represents the initiation of a detail-oriented rehearsal process. Instructor feedback remains nearly constant between the first and second rehearsals. This represents a trend for the entire rehearsal cycle: the conductor's feedback and directions serve simply as guidance to the players, with no over-explanations to complicate the task.

Rehearsal 3 follows the same general trend as *Rehearsal 2*, with slight variations. Note the steeper incline of the Feedback curve (slope 6.6) of Figure 7, and its nearly-inverse relationship with the declining *Micro* curve (slope -5.2). This inverse relationship suggests that the time not used in detailed micro-ensemble playing was supported by increased explanations and feedback from the conductor.

Stage 2: Critical Point

Rehearsal 4 is key in the continuity of the rehearsal process: it is the most intensive rehearsal in the entire cycle with regard to pacing and detail, and functions as the pivot point of the cycle. Notice in Figure 7 that *Rehearsal 4* functions either as a peak or valley point for each of the three sets of rehearsal element data: it is the lowest point of *Macro* playing, and the highest point for *Micro* playing and conductor *feedback*. This inversion of the typical rehearsal time distribution demonstrates the intensive nature of the session. *Micro* playing and conductor *feedback* percentages are high in this session because there is a high attention to detail, requiring frequent stops and corrections: the majority of the rehearsal (64.5%) is spent decontextualizing the music and addressing details.

A fast rehearsal pace accompanies the detailed nature of this rehearsal. This promotes efficiency in time management, and keeps players engaged/on task in a stage of the rehearsal process that many may consider tedious. Notice the supportive data of Figure 6: rehearsal frame segments (*Micro* and *Instruction* frames) on average last no greater than fourteen seconds: the conductor gives

focused instruction, to which the players respond. The players either execute the task correctly or incorrectly. If performed incorrectly, the conductor will either give more specific feedback, or simply have the players try again. When the task is eventually performed correctly, the conductor acknowledges the correction and continues on to a new instruction, either initiating another detail-oriented rehearsal frame (*Instruction* to *Micro* to *Instruction*/*Feedback*) or prompting the entire ensemble to regroup and play until the next detail-oriented frame is prompted (*Instruction* to *Macro* to *Instruction*/*Feedback* to *Micro* to *Feedback*, etc.). A key assumption in this task with players of this caliber is that the conductor music be insistent on appropriate correctness; one will note in observing the rehearsal process throughout the entire cycle that Detail-Oriented Rehearsal Frames, depicted below, (Figure 8) will be repeated liberally until the conductor is satisfied with the result.

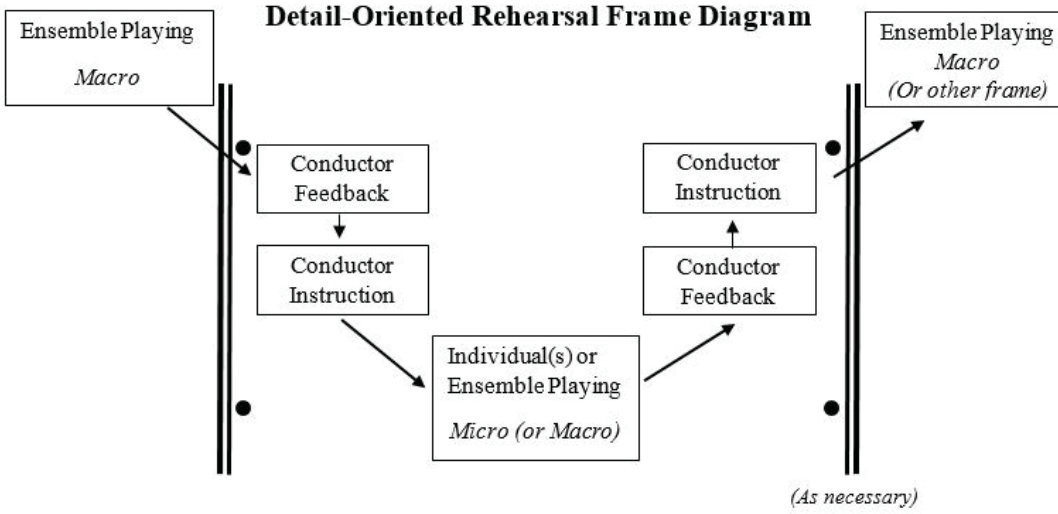


Figure 8: Detail-Oriented Rehearsal Frame Diagram

With regard to pacing, notice additionally that the average length of *Macro* frames drops significantly below its mean in *Rehearsal 4*. This suggests that full-ensemble (*Macro*) playing was additionally used as part of the Detail-Oriented rehearsal technique, often interchangeably with *Micro* playing. This decision whether to rehearse details of a passage with the full group or with a smaller subset was made at the conductor's discretion, depending on the texture of the passage (which instruments are playing), the primary goal(s) of the rehearsal frame(s), and the desired pacing.

Stage 3: Refinement

To achieve equilibrium following the Critical Point of the rehearsal cycle, *Rehearsal 5* focused on integrating the detailed progress made into musical continuity. Notice the radical difference in data points in Figure 7 from *Rehearsals 4* to *5* which reflects this change in structure. As suggested by the superimposed black dashed arrows of Figure 7, the trends in the three data areas invert following the meridian *Rehearsal 4*. This signals a long-term symmetrical structure in time distribution and supports appropriate pacing for an upcoming concert. In support of this trend, observe the relationship between all three data areas from *Rehearsals 5* and *1*; the time distributions between the two sessions are nearly identical. This data suggests that both of these sessions in the long term carry the same function: they are meant to orient the ensemble to the specific work, i.e. *Rehearsal 1*, which functions as an orientation for fresh players, while *Rehearsal 5* re-orients players to the work after the intense saturation of detail work from *Rehearsal 4*. In other words, *Rehearsal 5* functioned as compensation from the meridian (*Rehearsal 4*) of the rehearsal process.

Rehearsal 6 functioned as a slight counteraction to this compensation while still supporting the overall data trends superimposed with black dotted arrows in Figure 7. In a sense, *Rehearsal 5* represents a *continuity* focus; *Rehearsal 6* complements this session with a *detailed* focus. (This statement is not meant to imply that the "continuity" rehearsal is devoid of attention to detail. It is simply underscoring the primary objective of the rehearsal session.) This main focus between continuity and detail oscillates between the remaining rehearsals until the performance--notice how the data trends are approached for each of the three data areas from *Rehearsals 5* through *8*.

With respect to the continuity of data trends, a note should be made regarding the final rehearsal of the cycle (*Rehearsal 8—Dress Rehearsal*). With ensembles containing younger players, it would generally be expected for the time distribution of the group's final rehearsal to mimic the data of *Rehearsal 1*, creating a true symmetry to the overall rehearsal structure. While the time distribution of *Rehearsal 8* is similar to the distribution of *Rehearsal 1*, it is evident in the relatively high percentage of conductor feedback in this dress rehearsal (38.9%) that the session is still in a relatively detail-oriented mode. This somewhat unusual dress rehearsal time distribution is still appropriate given the maturity of the players in the ensemble, as previously discussed. Additionally, the ensemble has already been consistently reinforced in the

continuity of the piece throughout the rehearsal process (namely in *Rehearsal 1)*; another session focusing on simply playing through the work without rest may not be the most appropriate use of time given the skill of the players and the advanced difficulty of the music. Therefore, this functions as the capstone of a continual structural strategy in the rehearsal process: the idea of having one session with intense focus to detail followed immediately by a session to integrate these details into continuity. Here, session integrating *Rehearsal 8*'s details into continuity is the concert.

Part 2: Musical Priorities

To complement the analysis offered in the previous section of this chapter, a time distribution analysis with respect to sections of the selected work (*Triumph* by Michael Tippett) will show a new angle on Croft's rehearsal structure. In lieu of a full analysis, ideas and musical excerpts (reproduced with permission) from the author's musical analysis[14] will be referenced throughout this section. Time distribution analysis will reflect rehearsal time spent on each of the five large sections of Tippett's work. (see Figure 9)

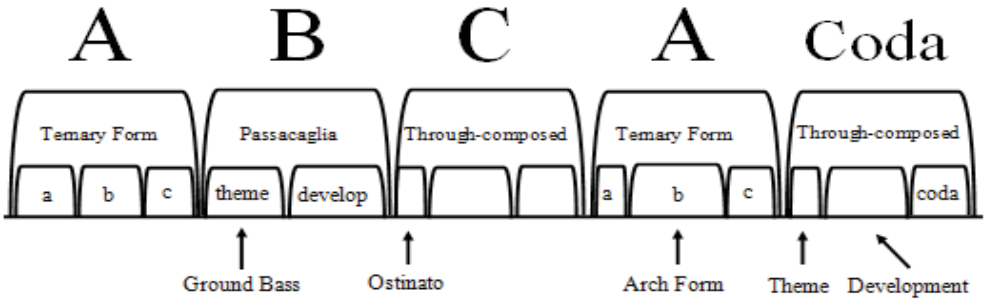


Figure 9: Form Diagram, *Triumph*

Rehearsal Time Distribution Table with Respect to Musical Form (minutes)

Rehearsal Section	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	Total (hours)	Total (%)
A	8:42	9:48	25:18	**21:48**	**11:00**	10:00	14:36	10:30	1:51:42	26.1
B	**14:00**	**31:48**	**31:00**	11:48	7:00	**24:42**	12:00	**21:24**	**2:33:24**	**35.9**
C	11:54	0:00	10:18	0:00	10:48	23:42	**17:00**	9:18	1:23:00	19.5
A'	5:12	0:00	4:18	0:00	3:20	16:50	0:00	12:30	0:42:10	9.8
Coda	3:42	0:00	6:24	0:00	4:42	10:12	6:30	5:48	0:37:18	8.7
Total	43:30	41:36	77:18	33:36	36:40	**85:26**	50:12	59:30	427:34	100.0

Table 4. Rehearsal Time Distribution Table with Respect to Musical Form (minutes)

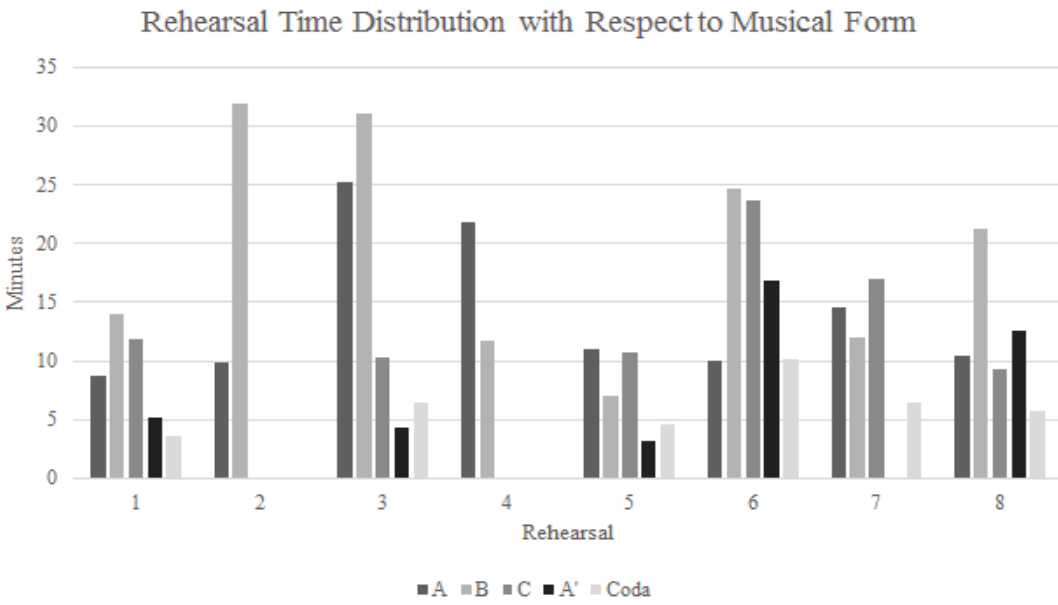


Figure 10: Time Distribution Bar Graph with Respect to Musical Form

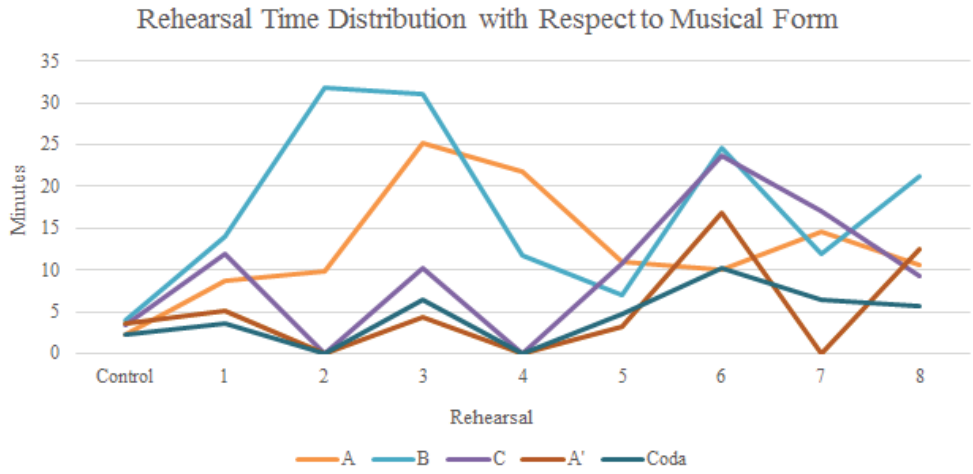


Figure 11: Time Distribution Line Graph with Respect to Musical Form

Rehearsal Pacing with Respect to Musical Form:

As evidenced by the data in time distribution, the conductor determined that *Section B* (Passacaglia) of *Triumph*'s form required the highest degree of attention. It was the first section to receive heavy rehearsal time and was a section that was continuously reinforced throughout the rehearsal cycle.

(Figures 10-11). In an objective sense, this unit of music in itself is the most difficult in the entire work. In sheer duration, it is longer than any other section. It is also set in a complex meter, upon which polymetric elements (two or more rhythmic patterns being played on top of one another) are superimposed, creating substantial difficulty in ensemble coordination. Many of these polymetric elements are very technically demanding, necessitating an even greater need for extended rehearsal time. Rehearsed in tandem with the passacaglia was the ternary form *Section A*. *Section A* was always rehearsed before *B* to retain the piece's continuity, even though *A* generally received less overall rehearsal time than *B* because of its lower demand level: the section is short and, with the exception of chamber-like coordination, did not require extensive rehearsal. These two sections as a unit reflect the musical efforts of the first half of the rehearsal process.

The second half of the work (Sections *C*, *A' [second A]*, and *Coda*), *C* received the heaviest portion of rehearsal for the remainder of the cycle. Sections *A*' and *Coda* received in-depth rehearsal time complementary to *C*, though at a lesser magnitude. *Section C* is more extensive in length and technical demand than the other two sections, and even so the *A'* section is mainly a recapitulation, and need not receive extensive rehearsal when *A* has already been polished. The *Coda*, though virtuosically intense for some instruments, is short and ostinato-based. With proper preparation (mainly from the upper brasses and woodwinds), this section can be rehearsed quickly and efficiently. It is thus the final section in the rehearsal process to be finalized. Beginning with *Rehearsal 5*, the musical focus of the rehearsal process shifts to prioritize sections *C*, *A'*, and *Coda* (Figure 11). Between *Rehearsals 4* and *5*, note the complement to the shift in rehearsal pacing discussed in the previous section of this chapter: similarly to the shift in pacing, there also exists a complementary meridian for musical prioritization. Notice that peaking in *Rehearsal 6*, there is a shift in focus towards the latter three sections of the work. This is complemented by the pacing trends highlighted in the accompanying graph reviewing rehearsal frame distribution (Figures 12 and 13). While *Rehearsal 6* was the most detailed rehearsal for this latter half of the music, it should be noticed that this detail is explored in a way that still serves the purpose of continuity in the *Refinement* section of this rehearsal cycle. This structure requires careful planning before the start of the rehearsal process, assuming that the conductor is able to anticipate how much rehearsal time is necessary to appropriately rehearse the first two sections, so the remainder of rehearsal time (in this case, *Rehearsals 5-8*) can be designed to rehearse the second half of the work while reinforcing continuity on the entire piece.

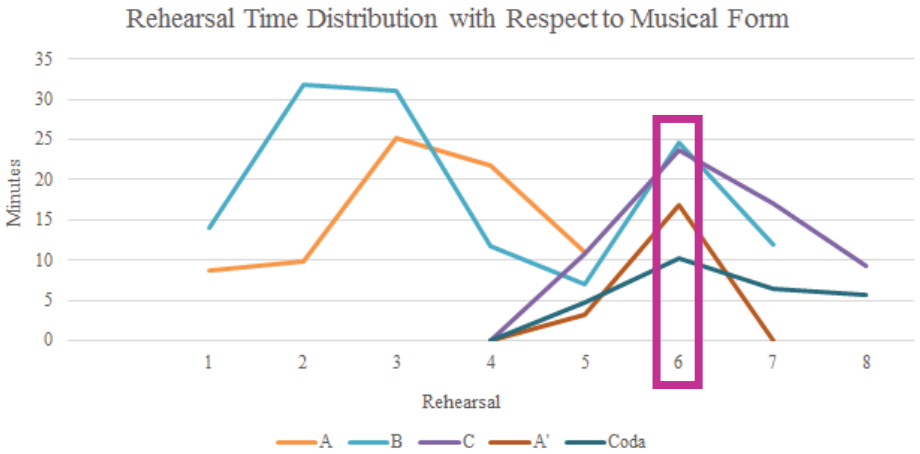


Figure 12: Rehearsal Time Distribution Graph (Reduced and with Analysis)

Discussion:

It is clear through the data analysis that Croft formulated a long-term plan for approaching *Triumph* before the first rehearsal. The "hourglass" *Macro* to *Micro* to *Macro* shape concerning rehearsal time distribution (Figure 17) is common for rehearsal frames/units within particular rehearsals, however it is rare to observe this shape unfold over the course of a concert cycle, especially with the deliberate interweaving of particular sections in the piece's form. (Figure 16) While this rehearsal shape is not always applicable for all rehearsal situations with all musical ensembles (often, groups will have a different length of time to prepare for a performance, or they may be playing literature of a different difficulty level), it may be valuable for teachers and conductors to recognize this rehearsal shape as a planning option. In this particular case, the plan was successful because it was idiomatic to the given amount of rehearsal time (relatively little), musical difficulty (very high) and ensemble skill level (high). At a distance, this rehearsal shape may appear risky to school teachers—conductors would generally opt to have too much rehearsal time rather than too little. However, this rehearsal situation functioned positively in a way that challenged the students, and empowered them to come to rehearsal aptly prepared, with an imminent performance looming.

"Last night [the premiere performance], we gave birth. But it was a premature birth. This was not a fully developed child. There were moments that were

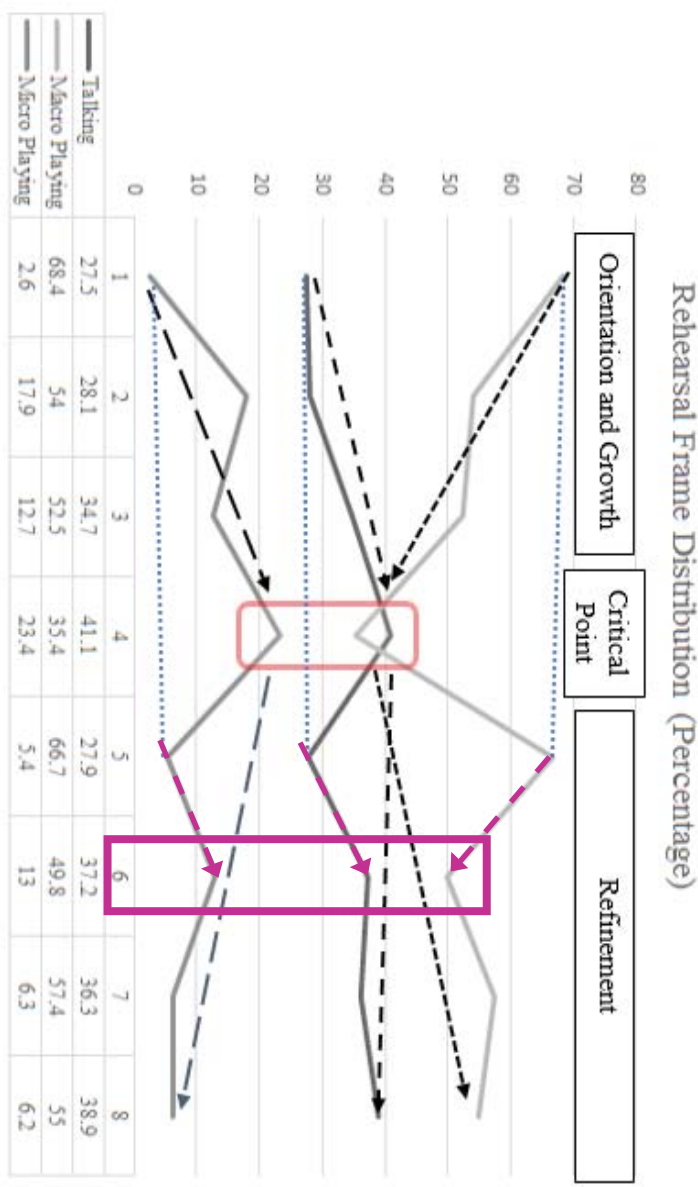


Figure 13: Rehearsal Frame Distribution Graph with Comparison to Musical Form

just wonderful. So as we look at it now, the child is there and it's laid out in its swaddling clothes and we see, thank heavens, the fingers are there and the facial features are all there." [15]

For teachers and conductors reading this document who will likely not have an ensemble/rehearsal situation similar to that of the FSU Wind Orchestra, it

is more important that one adopts *some type* of long-term rehearsal plan/shape devised for their concert cycle, and not just blindly mimic the results above in a way that is not idiomatic to their situation, given variables of repertoire, ability level, and available rehearsal time.

Pacing and Feedback:

Rehearsal pacing in many situations relates directly to student engagement in ensemble settings. In this case study, it was generally regulated in a manner which allowed students to play for as long as possible. Any feedback given to the ensemble was concise (on average 16 seconds in length per instance), and whenever feasible would include vocal modeling. Often times, Croft would model/sing over the ensemble while they played to avoid stopping the music. His vocal modeling was effective mainly because of his conviction in his demonstrations and because his speaking/singing voice carried enough resonance to fill up the rehearsal hall. The conductor avoided drawn-out stories or metaphors in rehearsal. The only instances in which the conductor took extended time for an explanation came in the latter half of the rehearsal process, in which the he read text from *The Mask of Time*[16] for corresponding sections of *Triumph*. Even in these scenarios, Croft was succinct: he simply read the text and then promptly (in the character) and continued with rehearsal, allowing the students to make their own transfers (for younger students, the conductor/teacher would likely have to offer more explanation of simple concepts to allow the transfers to take hold, however Croft was able to afford this lack of explanation given the skill of the group). This pacing strategy can be beneficial for students of all ability levels. On a surface level, it drastically decreases the likelihood of consistent off-task behavior for all age levels. (For school-age children, this will manifest itself through excessive talking/physical behavior. For college/graduate students, this will cause students to mentally disengage from the rehearsal/become passively off-task.)

“This pacing strategy can be beneficial for students of all ability levels. On a surface level, it drastically decreases the likelihood of consistent off-task behavior for all age levels.

Assuming that students enjoy playing their instruments, playing in an ensemble functions as positive reinforcement. When students are stopped in a rehearsal, positive reinforcement is stopped. If players are removed from the musical aspect of rehearsal for long enough, they may even feel that they are being punished (often, students are stopped to be given some type of disapproval anyway). Croft opted to adopt his particular pacing style for those particular

reasons, which guarantees players that they will spend most of their rehearsal time playing and reinforcing musical continuity, while making corrections as needed. This unspoken understanding between the students and conductor is a large part of the conceptual aspect of the environment that Croft creates in his rehearsals.

Limitations:

This document, when coupled with the discussed rehearsal recordings, should serve as a functional guide for teachers seeking to learn from a master teacher. There are, of course, limitations to discuss when attempting to create an image of James Croft holistically as a conductor. Because age of the subject matter (from 1993), the author must rely only on information and resources that have survived the nineteen years between the transpiration of the discussed rehearsals and the beginning of this project. The resources on Croft that are available to the author and relevant to this project include: the 102 video-recorded rehearsals/concerts of Croft's ensembles, the video-recorded interview with Dr. Croft, and assorted books/articles which cite interviews with Croft over the course of his career. These resources are the author's best hope in studying the past, and they are finite. Therefore, it is not possible for the author to have analyzed any rehearsals of Triumph (sectional, or full-ensemble outside of the official calendar) that were not recorded on Dr. Lychner's registry. The author is additionally limited only to gather reflection on the rehearsal process from Dr. Croft's recorded interview and from interviews of his colleagues.

Regarding rehearsal observation and analysis, it should be noted that the author was relatively limited in the scope of classroom observation. Because of camera positioning (in both the front and profile views), video recordings of all rehearsals focus on the conductor, with limited view of the ensemble musicians. Therefore, monitoring student engagement and on/off-task behavior in these settings is not practical. The camera placement and film quality also hinders detailed audio analysis; observers are able to hear the general sound of the ensemble and note improvements, however detailed analysis of musical growth is difficult to monitor in this setting without high-quality recording apparatus positioned in front of the ensemble.

Suggestions for Future Research

Because of the sheer size of the rehearsal tape collection compiled by John Lychner, the author found it practical to only focus on one small component of Croft's auspicious career as Director of Bands at The Florida State Univer-

sity. That component was high level artistry, specifically in one of Dr. Croft's passions: new music for wind ensembles. As the investigation continued and data collected, the author decided to focus a majority of the energy of this project into long-term rehearsal frame structure and time management. Future investigations are recommended to explore the several other ensembles with which Croft was involved in this semester. At the suggestion of Dr. Croft himself, further attention should be paid to the rehearsal tapes with the University Symphonic Band and North Carolina High School Honor Band.

"I think of myself as a teaching personality, with sometimes more ease with the Symphonic Band than I do with the Wind Orchestra. With the Wind Orchestra…you don't want to go in with the same sense of flexibility. I'm much more concerned [with the Wind Orchestra] with not only being on task but making sure that the preparation that I have [is what] that music requires... you really want to go after it a little different[ly]...you don't teach in the same sense… We have to look into that North Carolina All State [Rehearsal Tape series]. You do things a little differently with an All State, because you're not only selling yourself, you're selling what you represent."[17]

Given these statements and Dr. Croft's general affinity for training young students as a veteran school band director, a thorough analysis of his teaching similar to that of this document, but with the subject matter of a younger ensemble, would be a valuable contribution to the research literature. Researchers may also find interest in following the vein of higher-level music making by analyzing rehearsal tapes of the advanced-level Florida State Chamber Winds.

While plentiful resources exist currently documenting James Edwin Croft from a historical perspective, outside of this document there exists no analysis nor investigation of his teaching strategies. It is the intention of this report to present a teaching model for colleagues in the profession; it is furthermore the hope of the author that this thesis will spark further investigation into the techniques and strategies of the late master teacher.

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[4] Henninger, 47-48.

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[6] Duke, Prickett, & Jellison, 274-275.

[7] Silveira, Jason M. (2011). The Life and Career of James Edwin Croft. PhD diss., Florida State University.

[8] Silveira, 83.

[9] Silveira, 5-37.

[10] Crider, Paula. (2010). The Conductor's Legacy: Conductors on Conducting for Wind Band. Chicago: GIA Publications. 65.

[11] Rehearsal 7 was split into three sessions. The first session (duration 4:20) was led by a Conducting Assistant; it was recorded, but its data was not factored in the calculations below. The second and third sessions (23:30 and 28:00 durations respectively) were led by Dr. Croft, and were combined for sake of the calculations below.

[12] Crider, 34.

[13] Gabriel, Appendix D. [referring to author's Honors Thesis]

[14] Gabriel, Chapter 2 [referring to author's Honors Thesis].

[15] James Croft, interview by John A. Lychner, Tallahassee, FL, 17 March 1993.

[16] The original Michael Tippett opera, The Mask of Time, served as source material for Triumph.

[17] James Croft, interview by John A. Lychner, Tallahassee, FL, 17 March 1993.