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Perceptual evaluation of violins: a psycholinguistic analysis of preference verbal descriptions by experienced musicians

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Conceptualization of violin quality by musicians

In this paper, we investigate how the notion of violin quality is conveyed in spontaneous verbalizations by experienced violinists during preference judgments. The aims of the study were to better understand how musicians conceptualize violin quality, what aspects of the sound and the playing experience are essential, and what associations are formed between perceptual evaluation and physical description. Upon comparing violins of varying make and age, players were interviewed about their preferences using open-ended questions. Concepts of violin quality were identified and categorized based on the syntactic and linguistic analysis of musicians' responses. While perceived variations in how a violin sounds and feels, and consequently conceptualization structures, rely on the variations in style and expertise of different violinists, the broader semantic categories emerging from sensory descriptions remain common across performers with diverse musical profiles, reflecting a shared perception of physical parameter patterns that allowed us to develop a musician-driven framework for understanding how the dynamic behavior of a violin might relate to its perceived quality. Implications for timbre perception and the crossmodal audio-tactile sensation of sound in music performance are discussed.

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1 I. INTRODUCTION

2 When evaluating violins, performers spontaneously describe perceived quality characteristics
3 calling upon a diverse vocabulary, for example, rich sound, responsive instrument, even sound
4 across strings, and clear notes. This lexicon, shared not only by violinists but also by other in-
5 strumentalists, is traditionally communicated from teacher to student and between musicians and
6 instrument makers. In the present study, we adopted a psycholinguistic approach to investigate
7 how violin quality is conceptualized in the mind of the violinist as reflected in free verbalizations
8 collected from experienced musicians during playing-based preference ranking and attribute rating
9 tasks, using a method that relies on theoretical assumptions about cognitive-semantic categories
10 and how they relate to natural language.

11 In the context of relating the dynamic behavior of a violin to its perceived quality, a number
12 of studies have tried to match such verbal attributes with features of structural dynamics measure-
13 ments or recorded audio signals. Analyzing radiation measurements, [Meinel \(1957\)](#) and [Dünnwald](#)
14 [\(1991\)](#) each suggested similar divisions of the violin's frequency response into four quality-critical
15 regions: high-amplitude resonances at low frequencies below about 800 Hz give full sound that
16 carries well; the more weak the response in the vicinity of 1.5 kHz, the less nasal the sound is;
17 a strong peak around 2–3 kHz (today known as the bridge hill) is associated with brilliance and
18 effective radiation; and low-amplitude resonances at high frequencies above about 3 kHz allow a
19 soft and clear sound.

20 Based on observations from bridge mobility measurements on over 100 violins with “a wide va-
21 riety of tone and playing qualities, as described by their owners-players,” [Hutchins \(1989\)](#) argued
22 that violins with a difference of less than 40 Hz between the $B1^+$ and $A1$ resonances were easy to
23 play with little projection; violins in the 55–70 Hz range were more powerful in terms of projec-
24 tion; and above 100 Hz instruments were harsh and hard to play. According to [Schleske \(2002\)](#),
25 violins with $B1^+ < 510$ Hz versus > 550 Hz are soft versus harsh, less versus more resistant, and
26 characterized by dark versus bright sound.¹

27 In a study on violin sound projection by [Loos \(1995\)](#) strong lower partials in a note appeared
28 to enhance its perceived nearness. In another study by [Štěpánek and Otčenášek \(1999\)](#) it was ob-
29 served that violin notes described as sharp and narrow were associated with higher and lower spec-
30 tral centroid values, respectively, while a perception of rustle was attributed to temporal changes
31 of the spectral energy around the $A0$, $B1^-$ and $B1^+$ modes. [Łukasik \(2005\)](#) proposed that the first

32 cepstral coefficient is associated with the bipolar linguistic pair strained:light; the spectral centroid
33 with bright:dark; the tristimulus 1 and 3 with deep/full:flat/empty; and a coefficient of steady-state
34 envelope fluctuation with smooth:coarse, but listening tests did not confirm the scheme. In one of
35 our previous studies, we found that low spectral centroid and high tristimulus 1 and 2 values are
36 likely associated with a rich sound (Saitis *et al.*, 2015). Hermes *et al.* (2016) reported evidence
37 of a strong positive correlation between the harmonic centroid of a violin note and its perceived
38 clarity.

39 Fritz *et al.* (2012a) had violinists arrange 61 sound-descriptive adjectives on a two-dimensional
40 map, so that words with similar meanings lay close together and those with different meanings
41 lay far apart. Multidimensional scaling revealed three perceptual dimensions (acoustical inter-
42 pretations proposed by the authors): warm/rich/mellow:metallic/cold/harsh (spectral balance, un-
43 desirable qualities associated with excessive high-frequency content or too little low-frequency
44 content); bright/responsive/lively:muted/dull/dead (“amount of sound” produced by the instru-
45 ment, particularly in the middle and upper ranges); and even/soft/light:brash/rough/raspy (noisy
46 character, width of distribution of spectral energy). A listening experiment using virtual violin
47 sounds with modified amplitudes of vibration modes in five one-octave wide bands showed that,
48 in contrast with Meinel and Dünwald’s observations, increased brightness and clarity were associ-
49 ated with moderately increased modal amplitudes in the 1520–6080 Hz region, whereas increased
50 harshness was associated with a strongly increased modal level in the 1520–3040 Hz band.

51 A potential issue with interpreting the outcomes of these studies is that the investigated verbal
52 descriptors are part of a lexicon that is often taken for granted in the design of perceptual evalua-
53 tion studies, as opposed to identifying relevant semantic descriptors emerging from a systematic
54 linguistic analysis of the verbalizations spontaneously used by musicians to describe instrument
55 quality. Fritz *et al.* (2010) were the first to carry out such an analysis of violin quality perception,
56 but only collected data from three musicians.

57 Relationships between measurable physical properties of sound-producing objects, such as mu-
58 sical instruments, and their perceived characteristics rely on cognitive representations of both audi-
59 tory and haptic phenomena, which, however, cannot be accessed in a direct, quantitative way. The
60 psycholinguistic analysis of how people spontaneously describe their experience of acoustic and
61 vibrotactile stimulations can be considered as one way to study these representations empirically
62 (Dubois, 2000). Instead of starting from physical properties of sounds or their sources to describe
63 cognitive representations, semantic categories are identified first through the analysis of linguistic

64 descriptions. Language can be seen as mediating between collective knowledge and individual
65 representations conveyed in discourse. From what is being said (content analysis) and how it is
66 being said (psycholinguistic analysis), relevant inferences about how people process and concep-
67 tualize sensory experiences can be derived (semantic level) and further correlated with physical
68 parameters (perceptual level).

69 Psycholinguistic studies of urban soundscape quality have shown that the meanings attributed
70 to sounds in everyday sensory experiences act as a determinant for evaluations, in addition to or
71 independently of physical parameters of the acoustic signal (Guastavino, 2006; Dubois *et al.*,
72 2006). Semantic-linguistic analyses of musical instrument quality descriptions have revealed
73 that structural properties or audio features traditionally used to describe certain perceptual at-
74 tributes cannot always explain the cognitive categories emerging in the musicians' verbaliza-
75 tions, which in turn can provide novel insights into defining meaningful and unambiguous qual-
76 ity descriptors to distinguish one instrument (or one performer) from another—for example, se-
77 mantic synonyms and opposites, or relations between gestural control and desired sound (Faure,
78 2000; Rioux and Västfjäll, 2001; Traube, 2004; Bellemare and Traube, 2005; Bensa *et al.*, 2005;
79 Cheminée, 2009; Bernays and Traube, 2013; Lavoie, 2013; Paté *et al.*, 2015).

80 When Fritz *et al.* (2010) examined the differences between preference judgments made by three
81 violin players in active playing vs. passive listening situations in conjunction with psycholinguis-
82 tic analyses of free-format verbal descriptions of the musicians' experience, they found that the
83 overall evaluation of a violin as reflected in the verbal responses of the musicians varied between
84 playing and listening conditions, the former invoking descriptions influenced not only from the
85 produced sound but also by the interaction between the player and the instrument.

86 Accordingly, we carried out two violin playing perceptual tests based on a carefully controlled
87 yet musically meaningful protocol. In the first experiment, skilled violinists ranked a set of dif-
88 ferent violins from least to most preferred. In experiment 2, another group of players rated a
89 different set of violins according to specific attributes as well as preference. In both tasks, musi-
90 cians verbally described their choices through open-ended questions. We previously showed that
91 violinists are self-consistent in their (nonverbal) preference judgments and tend to agree on what
92 qualities they look for in a violin, but a significant lack of agreement between individuals was ob-
93 served, likely because different violinists assess the same attributes in different ways (Saitis *et al.*,
94 2011, 2012). A third experiment (Saitis *et al.*, 2015) and studies by Fritz *et al.* (2012b, 2014) and
95 Wollman *et al.* (2014a,b) reached similar conclusions.

106 In this study, we investigated the perceptual and cognitive processes involved when violinists
107 evaluate violins by focusing on the linguistic expressions they use to describe quality character-
108 istics. Expanding on the work of [Fritz *et al.* \(2010\)](#), the free verbalizations collected in the two
109 playing tests were analyzed on the basis of semantic proximities in order to identify emerging con-
110 cepts that could be coded under broader categories acting as psychologically relevant descriptors
111 of violin quality. Semantic proximities were inferred from syntactic context and linguistic markers.
112 The coding process was based on the inductive principle of Grounded Theory, where a system of
113 ideas is constructed not starting from a hypothesis (or a set of hypotheses) but from the data itself
114 ([Strauss and Corbin, 1998](#)). An acoustical interpretation of the semantic categories-descriptors is
115 proposed as a first step in translating the semantics of musicians' expressions into hypotheses for
116 explaining links between perceptual judgments and physical description.

107 II. METHOD

108 A. Musicians, violins and controls

109 Twenty violinists participated in experiment 1 (8 females, 12 males; average age = 34 yrs, SD
110 = 13 yrs, range = 20–65 yrs). They had at least 15 years of violin experience (average years of
111 violin training = 26 yrs, SD = 12 yrs, range = 15–60 yrs). Experiment 2 involved 13 violinists (9
112 females, 4 males; average age = 28 yrs, SD = 9 yrs, range = 21–53 yrs) that had at least 12 years
113 of violin experience (average years of violin training = 22 yrs, SD = 9 yrs, range = 12–46 yrs).
114 In both experiments, musicians were remunerated for their participation. Of the 13 players in the
115 experiment 2, 3 had previously participated in experiment 1. Musical profile information for each
116 violinist is reported in [Table I](#).

117 In both experiments, the tested violins were chosen from several local luthier workshops in
118 order to form, as much as possible, a set of instruments with a wide range of characteristics ([Table](#)
119 [II](#)). The respective luthiers provided the price estimates and tuned the instruments for optimal
120 playing condition based on their own criteria. The fact that some violins may have been less
121 optimally tuned or had strings of varying quality was not a concern, as that should not influence
122 the consistency of the evaluations.

123 Low light conditions and dark sunglasses were used to help hide the identity of the instruments
124 as much as possible and thus circumvent the potential impact of visual information on judgment

125 while ensuring a certain level of comfort for the musicians, as well as safety for the violins. To
126 avoid the potential problems of using a common bow across all participants (e.g., musicians being
127 uncomfortable with a bow they are not familiar with, bow quality), each violinist used their own
128 bow. Sessions took place in acoustically dry rooms to help minimize the effects of room reflections
129 on the direct sound from the violins.

130 **B. Questionnaire and procedure**

131 Taking into account the lingual diversity of Québec, a bilingual questionnaire in English and
132 French was compiled for each study, and participants were invited to respond in the language they
133 felt most comfortable with. To avoid confining the responses into pre-existing categories, very
134 general open-ended questions were formed, wherein no restriction was imposed on the format
135 of the response. Five participants from experiment 1 and three participants from experiment 2
136 chose to reply in French and it was decided not to translate their responses but include them in the
137 analysis directly.²

138 In experiment 1, participants preference-ranked 8 violins in 5 identical trials. Each time they
139 had up to 15 min to play and rank the instruments. Upon completing the first trial, participants
140 justified their choices by providing written responses to the following set of task-specific questions
141 (French version is given in parentheses):

142 A1. How and based on which criteria did you make your ranking? (Avec quels critères avez-vous
143 effectué votre classement et de quelle façon les avez-vous utilisés?)

144 A2. Considering the violin that you ranked as “most preferred,” can you say why? (A propos du
145 violon que vous avez classé comme votre préféré: pourriez-vous nous dire pourquoi?)

146 A3. Considering the violin that you ranked as “least preferred,” can you say why? (A propos du
147 violon que vous avez classé en dernier: pourriez-vous nous dire pourquoi?)

148 At the end of each subsequent trial, musicians could modify their initial response to any of the
149 above questions if they so wished. Upon completing the last trial, participants answered a more
150 general question:

151 B. More generally, what is a very good violin for you? (En général, comment définissez-vous
152 personnellement un très bon violon?)

153 Violinists returned for a second, identical session 3–7 days later, wherein they provided written
154 responses to the same questions. All participants answered questions A1–A3 in up to 4 trials as
155 well as question B in each session.

156 In experiment 2, musicians rated a different set of 10 violins according to ease of playing,
157 response, richness, dynamic range, balance across strings and overall preference (one violin on
158 all scales at a time) in three blocks of repetitions. They had up to 5 min to play and rate each
159 instrument. The attributes were chosen based on a previous, more rudimentary analysis of the
160 verbal responses to question A1 in experiment 1 (Saitis *et al.*, 2012, Sec. II B 4). At the end of the
161 session, all participants provided written responses to question B.

162 In both experiments, violinists were instructed to follow their own evaluation strategy with
163 respect to what and how to play. Prior to the actual tasks, they were encouraged to play and
164 familiarize with the different violins for up to 20 min.

165 C. Analysis

166 In their original conception of Grounded Theory, both Glaser and Strauss acknowledged that
167 “the researcher will not enter the field free from ideas” (Heath and Cowley, 2004), but their views
168 on the role of prior ideas later diverged. Strauss and Corbin (1998) argued that specific under-
169 standings from past experience and literature can be used to inform the development of categories,
170 whereas for Glaser (1978) this is to be avoided in order to maintain sensitivity to the data. In the
171 present study, prior knowledge of the researchers as well as previous findings in the literature and
172 informal discussions with musicians, luthiers and colleagues were considered as per the view of
173 Strauss and Corbin.

174 Grounded Theory relies on several data coding steps, not strictly sequential, which form the
175 so-called constant comparison method. According to Strauss and Corbin (1998) these are: open
176 coding, wherein key concepts are identified; axial coding, wherein concepts are linked based on
177 semantic proximities, yielding semantic categories and inter-categorical associations; theoretical
178 sampling and selective coding, wherein new data are selectively sampled with the emerging con-
179 ceptual framework in mind and integrated to potentially improve it; and theoretical saturation,
180 wherein coding concludes when categories do not develop further (i.e., no new concepts emerge)
181 despite new data.

182 Appropriately, our analysis started from the verbalizations collected in experiment 1. First,

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183 group of words indicating a concept of violin quality, henceforth called verbal units, were extracted
184 from musicians' responses to questions A1–A3 and classified in semantic categories (open coding).
185 Inter-categorical associations were then established (axial coding), at which point a tentative core
186 for our conceptual framework had been formed. We next scanned the verbal responses to question
187 B (theoretical sampling). New concepts were identified and the core was updated to fit with the
188 new data (selective coding). The analysis was then extended to the verbal responses collected in
189 experiment 2 (question B only) on the basis of the updated core (theoretical sampling), wherein
190 no further concepts emerged. Consequently coding was stopped as theoretical saturation had been
191 reached.

192 Each verbal unit corresponded to a semantically distinct violin quality characteristic. Semantic
193 proximities were assessed through syntactic context and linguistic markers such as the use of appo-
194 sition, opposition, reformulation, explanation, comparison, or negation. For example, the phrase
195 “*a rich, velvety tone*” contained two verbal units, namely “rich” and “velvety,” whereas the phrase
196 “*can cut across a hall but not to such an extreme that it sounds shaved on the top*” constituted a
197 single unit which, however, comprised two manifestations of the same quality characteristic with
198 opposite meanings, namely “can cut across the hall” (positive connotation or desirable quality)
199 and “sounds shaved on the top” (negative connotation or undesirable quality). In total, 766 verbal
200 units were extracted from the responses collected in experiment 1 (20 musicians, 4 questions, 38
201 units per respondent on average) and 62 units (13 musicians, 1 question, 5 units per respondent on
202 average) in experiment 2, and were classified in eight distinct semantic categories.

203 We provide some examples from the collected verbalizations to better illustrate the analysis
204 method. One participant said: “*Essentially I was looking for ... flexibility (i.e., the ease with
205 which I could produce a variety of different sounds and timbres) and a kind of resonance that seems
206 to last well beyond each note. Beyond that, balance across all the strings is also important (i.e.,
207 the timbre and power remain even across all the strings).” Here it was inferred that: “flexibility”
208 and “ease” are semantically very close; “resonance” is associated with the sustain level of a played
209 note; “balance” and “even” are also related to one another.*

210 Another violinist commented: “A weaker violin will tend to sound as if there is something in-
211 hibiting the sound - the sound will sound strangled or will break or scratch under bow weight.”
212 In this example, it was first inferred that “weaker” and “inhibiting” are: related to one another;
213 related to “strangled” and thus associated with sound intensity; related to “break” and “scratch”
214 and thus associated with sound production and the interaction between musician and instrument.

215 It was further inferred that “break” and “scratch” are semantically very close.

216 Illustrating the polysemy often found in lexical semantics, a final example shows a relationship
217 between “clarity of sound” and articulation (i.e., successive notes played quickly do not “meld”
218 together). From another musician’s response: *“I also listened for a muddy sound. Some of the
219 less well made violins have this sort of blurry sound, where even if you play notes quickly they
220 meld together, while the instruments with the brighter sound seem to sound clearer.”* Here it was
221 inferred that “muddy” and “blurry” are semantically close to one another and opposites of “clearer”
222 and “brighter,” respectively, in the context of articulation. It was also inferred that “clearer” and
223 “brighter” are related to one another.

224 III. RESULTS

225 A. Objects of reference and directed attributes

226 Semantic categories of violin quality evaluation emerged from the syntactic and linguistic
227 analysis of musicians’ verbal responses by progressively examining the cognitive objects of
228 reference—What is being evaluated?—the linguistic resources directed to these objects—How
229 is it evaluated?—and the semantic dimensions underlying the used lexicon—What does it mean?
230 There were primarily two distinct cognitive objects of evaluation for the violinist in the present
231 corpus, namely the violin-player interaction, as the physical direct interaction with the instrument,
232 and the produced sound, as the perceived result of this interaction.

233 The emerging semantic dimensions of the lexicon used to describe perceptual attributes of the
234 sound can be summarized as texture (e.g., round, complex, muddy), luminance (e.g., clear, bright,
235 blurry), mass (e.g., full, deep, hollow), action-presence (e.g., powerful, present, strangled), balance
236 [across strings] (e.g., even, balanced, uneven), and interest (e.g., beautiful, interesting, irritating).
237 Referring to material object properties, the texture, luminance and mass dimensions indicate an
238 evaluation of structural (i.e., related to timbre and intensity) attributes, for example relative amount
239 of high-frequency content or total spectral energy. The more abstract dimension of action-presence
240 suggests an assessment of “how much sound” comes out of the violin based on estimated spatial
241 attributes (e.g., projection), but also on the “amount of felt vibrations” from the body-bow system
242 (i.e., vibrotactile cues). Interest assumes a cognitive evaluation of the subjective-affective value
243 of the played sound, an axiological evaluation. The balance dimension indicates a comparative

244 evaluation of structural attributes between different notes and strings. The dimensions of interest
245 and balance emerged also in descriptions referring to the violin-player interaction. Central to the
246 latter were the concepts of ease and speed of response (e.g., responsive, quick, rigid), indicating
247 an evaluation of proprioceptive (i.e., reactive force) attributes.

248 As an example, one participant commented: “*An instrument that is good needs to feel comfort-*
249 *able, sound interesting and round, with enough complexity in the sound (i.e., overtones) that I can*
250 *get a variety of sounds with ease.” Here “comfortable” and “ease” refer to proprioceptive attributes*
251 *of the physical interaction of the performer with the instrument, whereas “interesting” describes*
252 *an affective value attributed to the played sound and “round” and “complexity” refer to its spectral*
253 *content (structural attributes). Two of the preference criteria reported by another violinist were:*
254 *“ . . . projection of that sound, vibrancy of the sound, . . .”* In this example the played sound is
255 evaluated through the attribution of spatial (“projection”) and vibrotactile (“vibrancy”) character-
256 istics. In describing their idea of a good violin, one musician said “*It doesn’t need to be perfect*
257 *across the board, but it needs to respond interestingly to different approaches.”* and another re-
258 marked that “*It is . . . consistent in playability and tone.”* Here “perfect” and “interestingly” denote
259 subjective-affective values attributed to the violin-player interaction, while “consistent” signifies
260 that proprioceptive and structural attributes are assessed comparatively across notes and strings.

261 **B. Semantic categories**

262 The resulting categorization is summarized in Table III. The label for each category, hereafter
263 reported in SMALL CAPITAL letters, was chosen either among the words of the respective category,
264 often being the one most frequently used by the musicians, or based on the main underlying seman-
265 tic dimension (see previous section). Unique phrases from verbal units are reported together with
266 the number of occurrences across all verbal units coded in the respective category (i.e., a verbal
267 unit may contain more than one unique phrase). Morphological variants were transformed from a
268 descriptive noun, adverb, or verb into adjectival form and grouped together (e.g., ease of playing
269 → easy to play, richness → rich). When unambiguous, French expressions were considered to-
270 gether with their direct English translations (e.g., *facile a jouer* → easy to play, *richesse* → rich).
271 Cognitively these unique phrases represent *microconcepts*—the most basic concepts (i.e., minimal
272 elements of knowledge) activated by a stimulus object (here the violin sound or body-bow response
273 and vibrations) which are not meaningful on their own but instead yield meaning when assembled

274 into broader semantic patterns-categories (Bassili and Brown, 2005; Conrey and Smith, 2007).

275 Manifestations of the same quality characteristic with opposite meanings were coded in the
276 same category. For each microconcept, its positive (+) or negative (-) orientation was inferred
277 from the syntactic and semantic context wherein it occurred (see Sec. II C). The smaller number
278 of “negative” versus “positive” expressions might have been a result of the particular way ques-
279 tions were formatted. When asked to explain their preference criteria (question A1), justify their
280 most preferred choice (question A2), or describe their idea of a very good violin (question B),
281 participants naturally focused on discussing desirable quality features. Problems and unfavorable
282 qualities were largely commented only when musicians were asked to explain why they chose
283 violin X as their least preferred (question A3).

284 Under RICHNESS are verbal expressions referring to the amount of spectral content as in the
285 perceived number of partial frequencies present in a violin note. Desirable attributes are associated
286 with an abundance of partials, where it is possible for the performer to produce “different sounds”
287 based on musical (repertoire) and affective (emotion) intentions. Also referring to spectral content,
288 expressions grouped under TEXTURE direct to the distribution of partials between the bass and
289 treble registers in a played note. Undesirable qualities are associated with disproportionately more
290 treble or not enough bass frequencies. On the whole, RICHNESS and TEXTURE encompass steady-
291 state timbre characteristics of the sound.

292 RESONANCE groups together verbal descriptions that refer to the intensity of the radiated sound
293 “under the ear” as perceived crossmodally through two physical channels: total energy in the
294 acoustic signal during sustain and release, and felt vibrations (i.e., motions and deformations of
295 skin mechanoreceptors) from the violin body and bowed string. Spectral energy further evokes
296 a different category of verbal expressions, which describe the intensity of the radiated sound in
297 terms of spatial attributes, i.e., transmission from the instrument to the performance space. These
298 are summarized by the meta-criterion PROJECTION.

299 RESPONSE comprises descriptions of how quickly the violin responds to different configura-
300 tions of bowing parameters (force, velocity, position on the string, tilting with respect to the string)
301 in terms of transients, dynamics, and fast passages (articulation), and thus how easy and flexible
302 it is for the violinist to interact with the instrument and control the played sound. Grouped here
303 are also descriptions referring to the size and weight of the violin, including the string height or
304 action, as design factors contributing to the instrument’s response. Physically, expressions such
305 as “easy to play” and “responsive” indicate that the player feels the reactive force (proprioceptive

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306 feedback) from the violin body in the right hand (via the bow) and assesses its amount and how
307 fast it emerges in relation to how “good” the resulting sound is.

308 CLARITY captures verbalizations that refer to (the lack of) audible artifacts in the played note,
309 such as wolf tones (i.e., oscillating beat when note frequency too close to the resonance frequency
310 of the violin body), “buzzing” coming from loose or faulty fittings in the different parts of the in-
311 strument, slow and deficient buildup of partials in bowed string attacks and transients, the “meld-
312 ing” together of successive notes when played quickly (here articulation is evaluated based on
313 audio information rather than proprioception), or different notes masking each other due to over-
314 lapping content. A sound is described as “clear” when perceived as having more distinct and well-
315 defined spectral components. CLARITY and RESPONSE incorporate aspects of the instrument’s
316 playability as evaluated based on auditory and haptic information, respectively.

317 BALANCE sums up expressions referring to the lack of striking differences across notes and
318 strings in both the physical response of the violin (e.g., one or several strings being harder to
319 play or slower to respond to varying gestures than the others) and the timbre and intensity of the
320 produced sound (e.g., notes played on one string having too much or too little frequency content
321 or spectral energy compared to those played on the other strings).

322 INTEREST groups together verbalizations describing the subjective-affective state of the musi-
323 cian in response to their physical interaction with the violin and the acoustical characteristics of its
324 sound, as well as abstract, context-free references to sound quality such as “timbre” of the strings,
325 “color” of the sound, or “tone quality,” where it was not possible to identify associated concepts.
326 To illustrate this difference, one violinist said “*Again, the easily-producible singing quality of this*
327 *instrument made it stand out from the others.*” (attributive reference), while another responded “*I*
328 *liked the tone quality of my first choice.” (abstract reference). While semantic categories identified
329 until now describe sensory attributes, INTEREST refers to affective or hedonic qualities that do not
330 reflect the perception of certain physical parameters.*

331 A microconcept can be recruited into many different evaluations depending on context and thus
332 coded in more than one semantic categories or as both positive and negative within the same cate-
333 gory. In the present corpus, the word “even” was used to denote either a balanced spectrum with
334 no excessive high-frequency content or a consistent sound and playing sensation across different
335 notes and strings. “Bright” had three distinct meanings: lively (lots of energy), clear (well-defined
336 spectral components), and warm (balanced spectrum). In the same semantic category as warm,
337 bright was also used negatively to denote excessive high-frequency content. The adjective “weak”

338 described either structural (not enough energy in the spectrum) or spatial (inadequate projection)
339 attributes of the sound. The antonym pair “small-big” referred either to the physical dimensions
340 of a violin (with small being preferable to big) or to how much sound it produces (here small was
341 valued negatively). The phrase “muted overtones” indicated a short number of activated partials,
342 while “muted sound” meant lacking in total spectral energy. Finally, the French noun “*focus*”
343 meant either clarity (well-defined partials) or balance across the strings (referred to both the sound
344 and the playing behavior).

345 Table I reports the musical profile of each participant along with information on whether they
346 used verbal expressions within a given category. No obvious relationship between having a certain
347 style and/or level of experience and attending to particular attributes was observed. Consequently,
348 Table IV summarizes the across musicians distribution of semantic categories within each and over
349 all responses to the different questions. In experiment 1, distributions were comparable between
350 trials in each session as well between sessions, so occurrences were collapsed respectively. The
351 proportion of verbal units referring to the sound versus those describing the violin-player inter-
352 action in each of the two experiments, as well the distribution of attribute types directed to each
353 of the two cognitive objects of evaluation in either corpus is shown in Table V. In experiment 1,
354 occurrences were further summarized across questions due to similar trends.

355 IV. DISCUSSION

356 A. The perspective of the violinist

357 The present analysis offers novel insights into the perception of violin quality by performers.
358 The psycholinguistic analysis of their spontaneous verbalizations produced in playing-based vio-
359 lin preference judgments showed that they conceptualize violin quality on the basis of semantic
360 features and psychological effects that integrate perceptual attributes (i.e., perceptual correlates of
361 physical characteristics) of both the sound produced and the somatosensation experienced when
362 playing the instrument.

363 As Traube (2004) noticed, the perspective of the player is at the same time that of a musi-
364 cian and a listener. To the bowing of the string, the violin responds by providing information
365 communicated to the player-musician via vibrotactile and proprioceptive channels (RESONANCE,
366 RESPONSE, BALANCE) and by producing a sound processed by the player-listener though the au-

FIG. 1. Placed approximately here.

367 ditory modality (RICHNESS, TEXTURE, CLARITY, RESONANCE, PROJECTION, BALANCE). The
368 combined audio-haptic sensory information is also perceived in a subjective-affective dimension
369 related to musical and emotional situations relevant to the player-musician-listener (INTEREST).
370 The perception of quality is thus elaborated not only from sensations linked to physical input, but
371 also from non-sensory contextual factors associated with previous experience such as memory and
372 training, and interpretation processes such as aesthetics and intention (Fig. 1).

373 More importantly, vibrations from the violin body and the bowed strings (via the bow) are
374 used to provide the player-musician with extra-auditory cues that contribute to the perception
375 of the sound, so that the player can assess their interaction with the instrument crossmodally,
376 often supplementing auditory feedback with vibrotactile signals to better control the played sound
377 (Askenfelt and Jansson, 1992; Chafe, 1993; Woodhouse, 1993; Obata and Kinoshita, 2012).
378 Recent findings particularly illustrate that vibrotactile feedback at the left hand of the violinist
379 can make the played sound perceived as “richer” and “louder” (Wollman *et al.*, 2014a). Indeed,
380 vibrotactile cues are perceptually relevant not only to violin performers but also to non-violinist
381 musicians (Galembo and Askenfelt, 2003; Giordano *et al.*, 2010; Eitan and Rothschild, 2011;
382 Fontana *et al.*, 2014; Paté *et al.*, 2015). A biomechanical explanation for the crossmodal sensation
383 of sound by the ear and the skin during musical performance may rely on structural similarities
384 both in the respective stimuli (what is heard and what is felt both result from the same vibrations)
385 and the particular mechanoreceptors involved (Marks *et al.*, 1986; Orr *et al.*, 2006).

386 **B. A framework for the perceptual evaluation of violins**

387 The lexicon musicians use to describe characteristics of the violin sound and playing experience
388 (rich, mellow, resonant, responsive, clear, balanced, etc.) illustrates the extent to which perceived
389 variations in the structure of acoustic and haptic stimuli generated by the same source (violin),
390 and consequently microconcepts of quality perception, are very subtle. In some cases, the same
391 physical phenomenon can give rise to different concepts (e.g., well articulated notes make a violin
392 perceived as both clear and responsive). Conceptualization structures further rely on the variations
393 in expertise and experience of the different individuals (Bensa *et al.*, 2005). Yet the broader seman-

FIG. 2. Placed approximately here.

394 tic categories emerging from these sensory descriptions remain common across performers with
395 diverse musical profiles, reflecting a shared perception of physical parameter patterns that allows
396 us to form a number of hypotheses for understanding psychoacoustical relationships.

397 Accordingly, Fig. 2 presents a model that may explain how the dynamic behavior of a violin
398 relates to its quality in the mind of the player. Body vibrations, driven by the bowed string and
399 shaped by the physical dimensions of the instrument (i.e., size, weight, action), shape in turn the
400 spectrum of the radiated sound. The quality of the spectral content is then processed in terms of
401 number of partials (conceptualized as RICHNESS) and distribution of energy across the spectrum
402 during sustain (conceptualized as TEXTURE), total energy during sustain and release (conceptu-
403 alized as RESONANCE and PROJECTION), audible artifacts during transients (conceptualized as
404 CLARITY), and how these differ from note to note across the four strings of the instrument (con-
405 ceptualized as BALANCE). The bowed string and vibrating body system further contributes to the
406 quality profile through the amount of felt vibrations in the left hand, shoulder and chin (conceptu-
407 alized as RESONANCE); through assessing the offset (speed) and amount (ease) of reactive force
408 (conceptualized as RESPONSE) from the body in the right hand (through the bow) with respect to
409 the quality and quantity of the heard and felt vibrations; and through comparing these between
410 notes and strings (conceptualized as BALANCE).

411 This is a tentative model and several issues would need to be clarified empirically. Can such
412 standard acoustical measurements as a violin's input admittance or radiation profile capture every-
413 thing significant about the spectrotemporal structure of the produced sound, or about the reactive
414 force and vibration levels felt by the player? If yes, in what ways can this information be extracted
415 (e.g., [Elie et al., 2014](#); [Fréour et al., 2015](#))? Together with the illustration of the violin-violinist
416 system of interactions shown in Fig. 1, this model is proposed as a first step toward a framework
417 for the perceptual evaluation of violins, grounded in psycholinguistic evidence of how musicians
418 conceptualize sound and playing qualities.

419 **C. Implications for the perception of timbre**

420 The use of words associated with texture, mass, and luminance to describe structural attributes
421 of the sound indicates what type of semantic dimensions may explain the perception of timbral
422 nuances in violin sound. Very similar semantic resources are commonly observed in verbal descrip-
423 tions of instrument-specific timbre by experts, for example the trombone (Edwards, 1978), pipe or-
424 gan (Rioux and Västfjäll, 2001; Disley and Howard, 2004), saxophone (Nykänen and Johansson,
425 2003), classical guitar (Traube, 2004; Lavoie, 2013), acoustic piano (Cheminée, 2009; Bernays and Traube,
426 2011), violin (Fritz *et al.*, 2012a; Zanoni *et al.*, 2014), and electric guitar (Paté *et al.*, 2015). They
427 are also evident in verbalized impressions of vocal (Garnier *et al.*, 2007), percussive (Brent, 2010)
428 and electroacoustic (Grill, 2012) timbre, but also in social tagging of “polyphonic timbre” or
429 songs (Ferrer and Eerola, 2011). The recent work of Zacharakis *et al.* (2015) demonstrated that
430 the texture-mass-luminance dimensions may provide a general semantic framework for timbre
431 across different types of musical and non-musical sounds, as well as between different linguistic
432 and cultural groups (the study was conducted with native Greek and English listeners).

433 The metaphorical nature of the lexicon used to describe timbral qualities of the played sound
434 shows that violinists are not familiar with describing sound as a sensory experience in an objective,
435 quantitative way and share little knowledge about the perceptual dimensions of sound. Instead,
436 they conceptualize and communicate sound qualities through different sensory domains—for in-
437 stance, a sound “felt” as soft, velvety, or strong (touch); “seen” as bright, clear, or big (vision); and
438 “tasting” as sweet, raw, or *acide* (gustation). These metaphorical linguistic structures are central
439 to the process of conceptualizing timbre by allowing the musician-listener to meaningfully expe-
440 rience and communicate subtle sonic variations in terms of other domains (Lakoff and Johnson,
441 2003; Wallmark, 2014). As with semantic resources, such cross-domain metaphors are common
442 in sensory descriptions of musical as well non-musical sound experience (the reader is referred
443 to the works cited in the previous paragraph). Furthermore, they exemplify a particular aspect of
444 human perception: we make many synaesthetic-like associations between experiences presented
445 in different sensory modalities, such as matching low-pitched sounds to umami and bitter tastes
446 (Crisinel and Spence, 2010) as well as to big sized objects (Bien *et al.*, 2012). Psychophysiol-
447 ogical evidence specifically suggests that timbral cues can activate attributes or concepts borrowed
448 from other modalities (Schön *et al.*, 2009; Grieser-Painter and Koelsch, 2011).

449 **D. Influence of task and sample constraints**

450 Two final considerations of general methodological significance are necessary about the inter-
451 pretation of these results and thus their importance. First, the analysis presented here adopted a
452 situated approach: semantic categories of violin quality were elicited from spontaneous descrip-
453 tions of preference judgments by experienced violinists collected in playing tests. We took special
454 caution in designing experimental tasks that are empirically valid but also musically meaningful
455 to the violinist. Rather than simply listening to and verbally tagging recorded sounds, violin play-
456 ers thus described the different quality characteristics they perceived inside a more involved and
457 familiar experience.

458 RESONANCE was the second most frequently emerging semantic category in experiment 1, but
459 in experiment 2 such expressions were less prominent. A methodological difference between the
460 two experiments could explain this difference. Whereas experiment 1 involved perceptual judg-
461 ments based on overall preference, in experiment 2 players evaluated violins on five specified
462 attributes—ease of playing, response, richness, dynamic range, balance—none of which was ex-
463 plicitly related to the intensity of the sound. It thus seems plausible that the type of task at hand
464 may affect how quality dimensions are negotiated.

465 Descriptions of sound PROJECTION were the least recurrent in both experiments. To a certain
466 extent, in experiment 2 this might have been imposed by the design of the task similarly to the case
467 of RESONANCE. However, the very small proportion of PROJECTION in the corpus of experiment
468 1 may generally reflect a low cognitive priority for this attribute as a result of the difficulty in
469 judging reliably how well the sound is transmitted across the performance space solely by playing
470 the violin—but still musicians consider this an attribute important enough to evaluate even if by
471 estimation (Loos, 1995; Fritz *et al.*, 2014).

472 Second, we expect that there are variations of the language (i.e., the specific lexicon and its
473 meaning) used by musicians from place to place (sometimes resulting from a strong influence by
474 one or more particular teachers in an area). The present analysis might thus be biased toward
475 a verbal tradition specific to the Montreal region. Nevertheless, this research provides a resource
476 that should be consulted by any researchers planning to conduct perceptual studies of violin quality
477 (i.e., when designing the language used in their experiments).

478 **V. CONCLUSIONS**

479 The overall goal of the research presented here is to better understand how musicians evaluate
480 violins within the wider context of finding relationships between measurable vibrational properties
481 of instruments and their perceived qualities. Contrary to the typical approach of beginning with
482 a physical hypothesis based on structural dynamics measurements or audio feature extraction, a
483 method based on psycholinguistic inferences (Dubois, 2000) was used to identify and categorize
484 concepts of violin quality emerging in spontaneous verbal descriptions collected in two experimen-
485 tal studies, whereby a total of 29 musicians played and evaluated different violins and subsequently
486 justified their choices in free verbalization tasks. This method has been previously applied to other
487 instruments such as the piano (e.g., Bellemare and Traube, 2005) and the guitar (e.g., Paté *et al.*,
488 2015), advancing our understanding of how their sound and playing characteristics are perceived
489 by performers. This paper reports the first extensive psycholinguistic investigation of violin quality
490 perception, expanding on an earlier study with only 3 musicians by Fritz *et al.* (2010).

491 The semantic patterns-categories underlying the found concepts can be seen as a first step in
492 translating the semantics of violinists' expressions into perceptually meaningful descriptors of
493 violin quality. Importantly, they demonstrate that violin players with different levels of experience
494 and expertise share a common framework for differentiating the sensory meanings of auditory and
495 haptic information. A schematic depiction of this framework is proposed, which can be useful for
496 future studies aimed at assessing violin quality characteristics (see Fig. 1 and 2). The emergence of
497 shared conceptualization structures between musicians suggests, in line with our previous findings
498 (Saitis *et al.*, 2012, 2015), that interindividual differences in the preference for violins originate
499 from variations in the perception of different violin attributes, rather than from disagreement about
500 what properties a preferred violin possesses.

501 Specifically considering the relevance of playability aspects in overall violin preference judg-
502 ments, more research would be needed on how to describe and assess the control of bowing pa-
503 rameters and their coordination, which allow the player to access the high musical expressivity
504 of a particular instrument. Recent evidence suggests a bowing-based link between the quality of
505 a violin and its range of quiet to loud playing (Sarło *et al.*, 2016). Improving our understanding
506 of how violinists vary bowing parameters to shape their desired sound could help tease apart the
507 effects of individual playing skills on quality evaluation.

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513 **NOTES**

514 ¹ In the open string region, 196–660 Hz, the frequency response of the violin body as measured
515 at the bridge is characterized by the presence of five resonances that are sufficiently separated from
516 the adjacent modes and hence easily identifiable: A0, a Helmholtz-type resonance with $f_{A0} \approx 280$
517 Hz that radiates strongly through the f -holes; CBR, the lowest corpus mode with $f_{CBR} \approx 400$, two-
518 dimensional flexure, usually a weak radiator; A1, a higher cavity mode with $f_{A1} \approx 1.7 \times f_{A0}$ that
519 sometimes radiates strongly but is usually a weak radiator; B1⁻ (mainly motion of top plate) and
520 B1⁺ (two-dimensional flexure), the first strongly-radiating corpus bending modes with $f_{B1^-} \approx 480$
521 and $f_{B1^+} \approx 550$, also radiating strongly through the sound holes.

522 ²The complete original verbal responses are found in the appendix of the first author’s doctoral
523 dissertation (Saitis, 2013, pp. 145–172).
524

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Conceptualization of violin quality by musicians

TABLE I. Musical profile of participants and semantic categories they used.

		Musical profile			Semantic categories							
		Practice (yrs)	Skill	Style of music	Ri	Te	Pl	Cl	Re	Pr	Ba	In
Experiment 1	1	60	Professional	Classical			X	X			X	X
	2	30	Amateur	Classical	X	X	X		X		X	X
	3	25	Professional	Classical	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
	4	46	Professional	Classical, Baroque, Folk, Jazz	X		X		X	X		X
	5	31	Professional	Classical, Folk, Modern	X	X	X		X	X	X	X
	6	32	Professional	Classical, Baroque	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
	7	34	Professional	Classical	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
	8	25	Professional	Classical, Baroque	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
	9	15	Amateur	Classical, Baroque, Folk, Modern	X	X	X	X	X		X	X
	10	27	Professional	Classical, Baroque	X	X	X	X	X		X	X
	11	16	Amateur	Classical, Folk	X	X	X	X	X		X	X
	12	11	Amateur	Classical, Folk	X	X	X	X	X		X	X
	13	17	Amateur	Classical, Baroque, Folk, Jazz	X	X	X		X		X	X
	14	18	Professional	Classical, Folk	X		X		X		X	X
	15	25	Professional	Folk	X	X	X	X	X	X		X
	16	45	Professional	(no style reported)			X		X	X	X	X
	17	20	Amateur	Classical, Baroque	X	X	X		X	X	X	X
	18	15	Amateur	Classical	X	X	X		X	X	X	X
	19	21	Professional	Classical	X	X	X	X		X	X	X
	20	16	Professional	Classical, Folk	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Experiment 2 ^a	1	12	Professional	Classical		X	X				X	
	2	30	Professional	Folk, Jazz, Tango			X		X			X
	3	21	Professional	Classical		X	X	X			X	
	4	25	Professional	Classical			X			X		X
	5	15	Professional	Classical	X	X	X		X			
	6	46	Professional	Classical, Baroque, Folk, Jazz			X					X
	7	26	Professional	Classical		X	X		X			
	8	17	Amateur	Classical, Folk	X	X	X		X			
	9	16	Professional	Classical	X			X				X
	10	16	Professional	Classical, Folk	X	X	X	X				
	11	20	Professional	Classical, Baroque	X		X			X		X
	12	25	Professional	Classical	X		X		X			X
	13	16	Amateur	Classical, Baroque								X

^a Participants 7, 4, and 11 are the same as 4, 19, and 20 in experiment 1, respectively.

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TABLE II. Violins used in the experiments. Ordered by price.

	Violin	Origin	Luthier ^a	Year	Price
Experiment 1	A	France	Silvestre	1840	\$65K
	B	Italy	Cavallini	1890	\$35K
	C	Canada	-	2010	\$16K
	D	Canada	-	2010	\$13K
	E	Canada	-	1976	\$10K
	F ^c	Germany ^b	Unknown	Unknown	\$8K
	G	France	Apparut	1936	\$6K
	H	China	-	2010	\$1.3K
Experiment 2	A	Italy	Gagliano	1770–75	\$250K
	B	Italy	Storioni	1799	\$44K
	C	Germany	Fisher	1787	\$22K
	D	Italy	Sderci	1964	\$20K
	E	France	Kaul	1933	\$20K
	F	France	-	2009	\$17K
	G	France	Guarini	1877	\$11K
	H ^c	Germany	Unknown	Unknown	\$8K
	I	Canada	-	2005	\$6K
	J	China	-	2006	\$2K

^a Names of living luthiers are not provided for confidentiality purposes.

^b Based on a luthier's informal appraisal, as there is no information regarding the make and age of this violin.

^c This is the same violin.

Conceptualization of violin quality by musicians

TABLE III. Emerging semantic categories of violin quality concepts (French verbalizations are reported in verbatim).

Semantic category	Microconcepts (+)	Microconcepts (-)	Type of attribute	Object of evaluation
RICHNESS	rich (32), [with many] colors (10), [with many] harmonics (10), [with many] overtones (9), deep (9), full (5), complex (3), <i>expressif</i> (2), thick, different sound qualities, different tonalities, different shades, emotive possibilities, to have substance, to have a weight behind it	hollow (3), colorless, simple, dry, <i>sourd</i> , <i>inexpressif</i> , limited color palette, muted overtones	structural	sound
TEXTURE	warm (15), bright (9), mellow (8), sweet (6), silky (6), smooth (5), round (5), dark (5), velvety (3), singing (3), soft (2), golden, <i>coupant dans le son</i> , a viola type of sound	tinny (9), harsh (6), bright (6), raw (3), rough (3), shrill (2), strident (2), <i>acide</i> (2), <i>grossier</i> , stringy, grating, hard edge to the sound, mechanic	structural	sound
RESONANCE	resonant (28), powerful (19), open (7), vibrant (5), strong (5), <i>puissance</i> (4), volume (4), loud (4), sustain (3), responsive (2), ringing (2), free (2), big (2), bright, brilliant, present, liveliness, sonority, unconstrained, unrestrained, ample, to carry a lot of sound, good sound production, <i>une voix qui "parle"</i> , <i>repondre facile proche de nous</i> , to last after the bow is lifted	muted (9), flat (4), muffled (3), weak (3), compressed (2), tight (2), <i>petit</i> (2), <i>eteint</i> (2), <i>etouffé</i> (2), <i>ferme</i> , strangled, squeezed, thin, dormant, constrained, controlled, <i>terne</i> , <i>nasillard</i> , <i>mince</i> , to lack ability, to get trapped inside, <i>n'avoir aucun tonus</i> , as if there is something inhibiting the sound	structural & vibrotactile	sound
PROJECTION	projection (28), to carry (2), <i>porter</i> (2), to fill [a space] (2), to cut across a hall, to travel, <i>voyager sans forcer</i>	weak, to sound shaved on the top, <i>empêcher de voyager</i>	spatial	sound
RESPONSE	easy to play (66), responsive (23), broad dynamic range (14), light (11), comfortable (8), quick (8), playability (7), flexible (6), ability to create different timbres (6), versatile (4), low action (2), predictable (2), <i>maniable</i> (2), liberty (2), <i>solidité</i> , cushioned, convenient to handle, enough room for control, reflexible, well-adjusted, small, <i>touche agréable</i> , fit bridge, to feel a healthy contact with the bow on the string, <i>répondre au quart de tour</i> , to give a lot back, to take a lot of weight from the bow, to stand up to what the player gives	hard to play (5), heavy (3), uncomfortable (3), more effort (3), difficult to play (2), slow (2), missing of the tuning (2), bulky (2), big, <i>gros</i> , awkward, rigid, too light, labored vibrato, big neck, to fight with the instrument [to produce the desired sound]	proprioceptive	violin-player interaction
CLARITY	clear (29), pure (3), to speak well (3), focus (3), clean (2), <i>consonnes articulées</i> (2), direct, straightforward, defined, bright, to articulate well, the way notes lead into the next, <i>l'ouverture du son</i>	scratchy (10), wolf tone (7), buzzing (7), muddy (5), whistles (3), sore throat (3), hoarse (2), blurry (2), sand (2), noise (2), kettle effects, metallic, tinny, unrecognizable, to break	structural	sound
BALANCE	even (20), balanced (11), <i>égal</i> (8), consistent (6), stable (2), <i>l'équilibre entre les cordes</i> (2), relation between strings (2), focus, strings harmonized best, string differentials, equal	uneven (4), <i>inegal</i> , to not feel as good on the lower strings	structural & proprioceptive	sound & violin-player interaction
INTEREST	beautiful (18), good (8), quality (8), color (7), interesting (6), nice (6), unique (4), pleasant (4), timbre (3), enjoyable to play (3), great (3), pleasing (2), to inspire (2), basic (2), natural (2), to have character, perfect, rare, <i>complet</i> , fascination, satisfaction, preference, to appeal, fun to play, to feel right, to feel great, a sound that I look for	irritating (2), unpleasant (2), <i>sans interet</i> , boring, overbearing, generic, <i>impersonnel</i> , to not like, the sound is like a poor quality recording	affective	sound & violin-player interaction

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TABLE IV. Distribution of categories within and across responses to questions (N = total units; # = coded units; % = proportion).

	Experiment 1										Experiment 2	
	A1 ($N = 240$)		A2 ($N = 189$)		A3 ($N = 169$)		B ($N = 168$)		ALL ($N = 766$)		($N = 62$)	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
RICHNESS	20	8	28	15	11	7	22	13	81	11	8	13
TEXTURE	13	5	36	19	23	14	23	14	95	12	8	13
RESONANCE	46	19	17	9	45	27	24	14	132	17	5	8
PROJECTION	12	5	9	5	8	5	10	6	39	5	2	3
RESPONSE	66	28	45	24	29	17	46	27	186	24	19	31
CLARITY	26	11	13	7	26	15	14	8	79	10	8	13
BALANCE	29	12	12	6	9	5	13	8	63	8	2	3
INTEREST	28	12	29	15	18	11	16	10	91	12	10	16

Conceptualization of violin quality by musicians

TABLE V. Distribution of verbal units by object of reference and directed attribute (N = total units; # = coded units; % = proportion).

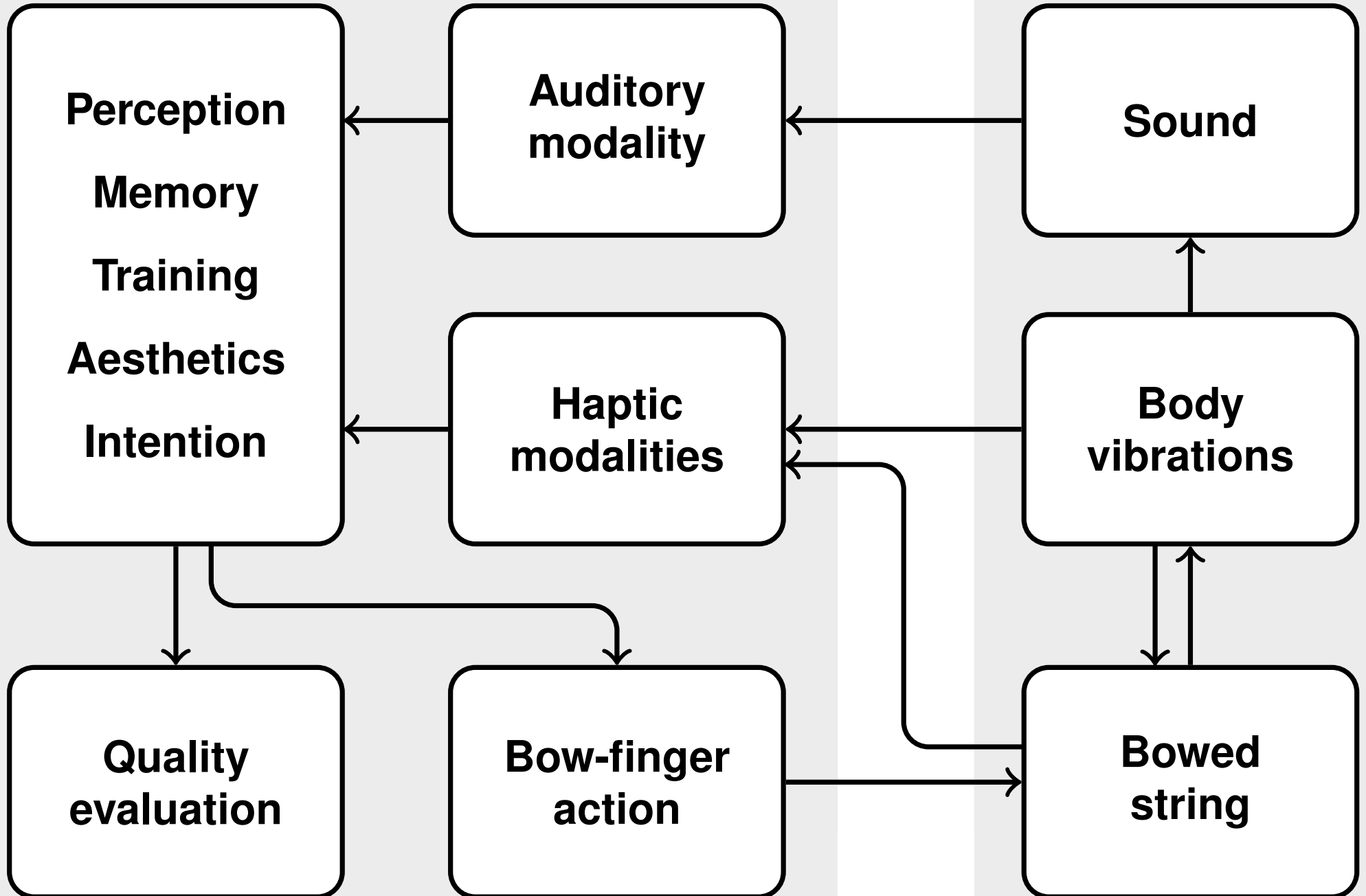
	Experiment 1 ($N = 766$)				Experiment 2 ($N = 62$)			
	Sound		Interaction		Sound		Interaction	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
	# = 546 % = 71		# = 220 % = 29		# = 38 % = 61		# = 24 % = 39	
Structural	388	71			29	76		
Spatial	39	7			2	5		
Vibrotactile	39	7			1	3		
Affective	80	15	11	5	6	16	4	17
Proprioceptive			209	95			20	83

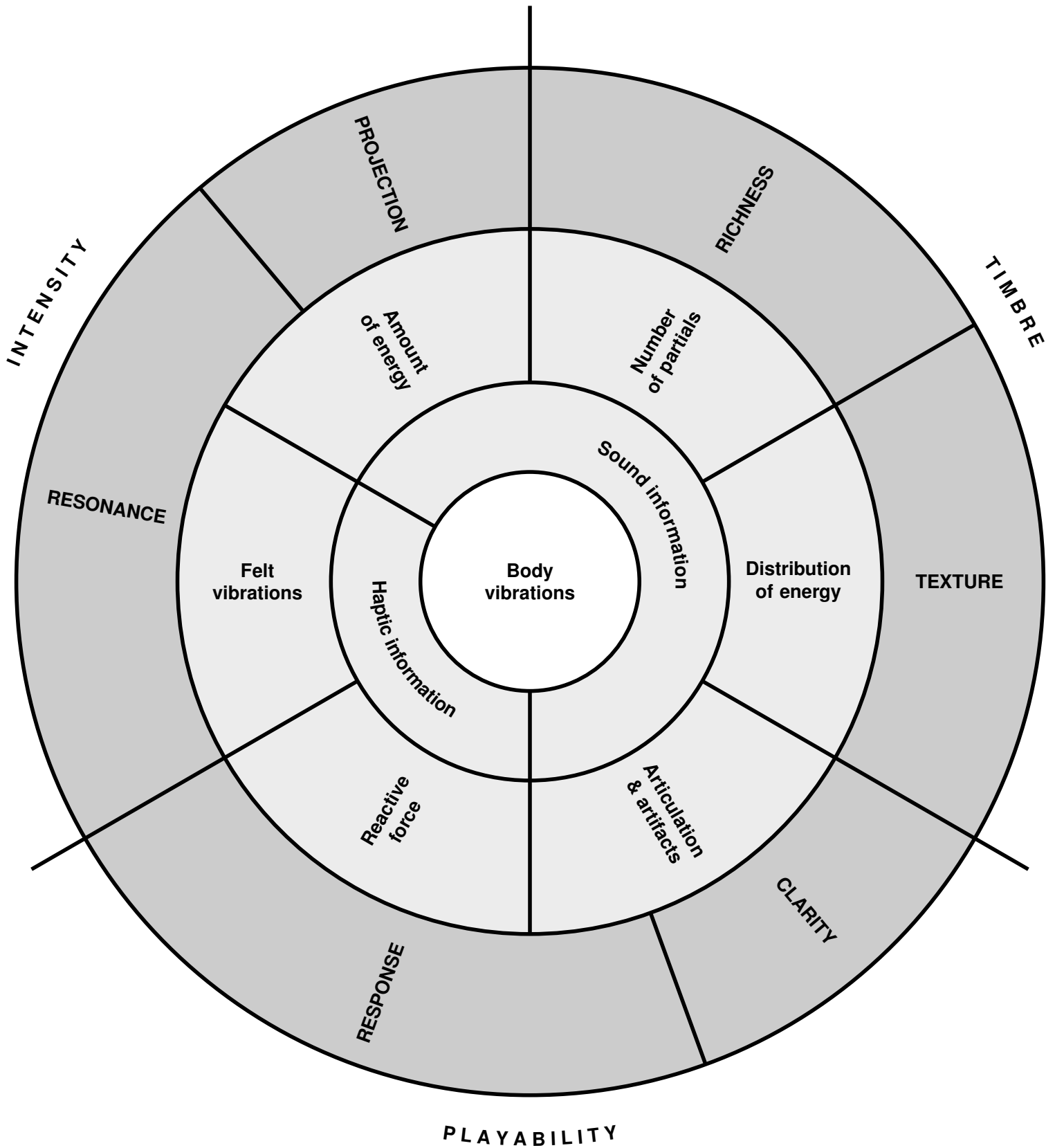
681 Fig. 1 Musician–instrument interaction in violins. Quality evaluations and affective reactions are
682 elaborated on the basis of both auditory and haptic cues (sensory factors) filtered through
683 previous experience and interpretation processes (non-sensory contextual factors). Adapted
684 from [Papetti \(2013, Fig. 1\)](#).

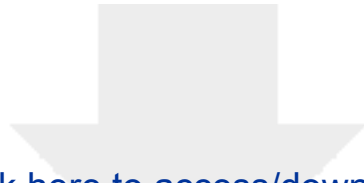
685 Fig. 2 From body vibrations to semantic categories: a model describing how the dynamic behavior
686 of a violin relates to its quality in the mind of the musician.

Musician

Instrument







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