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Päätoimittaja | Editor-in-chief

Heidi Westerlund, Taideyliopiston Sibelius-Akatemia |
Sibelius Academy of the University of the Arts Helsinki

Tämän numeron vastaava toimittaja | Managing editor of this issue

Guadalupe López-Iñiguez, Taideyliopiston Sibelius-Akatemia |
Sibelius Academy of the University of the Arts Helsinki

Ulkoasu ja taitto | Design and layout

Lauri Toivio

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Sibelius-Akatemia, Taideyliopisto /
Musiikkikasvatuksen, jazzin ja kansanmusiikin osasto
PL 30, 00097 TAIDEYLIOPISTO |
Sibelius Academy of the University of the Arts Helsinki /
Department of Music Education, Jazz and Folk Music
P. O. Box 30, FI-00097 UNIARTS

Sähköposti | E-mail

fjme@uniarts.fi

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Editorial – Special issue: Emerging perspectives on instrumental and vocal pedagogy

A deepened consciousness of their situation leads people to apprehend that situation as an historical reality susceptible of transformation. [...] Any situation in which some individuals prevent others from engaging the process of inquiry is one of violence. (Freire 2020 85)

Inquiry and transformation—the powerful words emphasized in Paulo Freire’s seminal work cited above—have been widely discussed as two of the most important elements of critical pedagogies in any learning field. In music, inquiry should be seen as crucial for the revival, understanding, and preservation of music traditions, but also in the creation of new and artistically unique works that can provide audiences with an inspiring message that resonates with different momentums in their lives. Inquiry-based learning can help both music students and professionals engage in critical questioning of why they do things in certain ways and how they could do them differently (e.g., Costes-Onishi & Kwek, 2023), using the knowledge and skills they have gained across their learning trajectories. Furthermore, inquiry—in the Freirean sense of awakening human consciousness—should also be seen as a key process in confronting abusive, difficult, oppressive, and/or unequal behaviors, which, unfortunately, still occur all too often in the music studio (e.g., Bradley & Hess 2022; Bull, Scharff & Nooshin 2023).

Yet, how can we ensure that music students can innovate in their music making while still appreciating existing music repertoires and, at the same time, are able to resist the power hierarchies and inequalities surrounding them? Which pedagogies would allow for students to inquire (and know and understand) about whether they are sufficiently agentic in their learning and personal/professional/artistic decision-making, or not? And, would such pedagogies lead to a real transformation in the music studio at all levels and in all stakeholders? These questions urgently need answers, particularly knowing that studio teaching is often based on outdated and ineffective pedagogies that tend to prevent students from engaging in such inquiry processes. Furthermore, despite much empirical research highlighting the need for transformative, critical, or otherwise constructive pedagogies, the amount of instruction applied to the development of autonomous, metacognitive, self-regulated, and intrinsically motivated music students is not as common as one may wish for in music education (e.g., Pozo, Pérez Echeverría, López-Íñiguez & Torrado 2022).

It is in the spirit of answering these and other related questions, and confronting the current pessimistic reality of instrumental/vocal education internationally, that this special issue was conceived in the first place. I wanted contributions that not only explore the most recent relevant research to support instrumental/vocal teachers in delivering individualized/group instruction, but also those that would 1) prioritize the physical and psychological health of music students through the inclusion of specific contents and practices related to developing both cognitive and social-emotional skills within a more “humanly compatible” learning environment (concept as defined in Thurman, 2000; see also Musumeci 2005), as well as 2) challenge the overused power hierarchies in the music studio in favor of more constructive and student-centered pedagogies (e.g., López-Íñiguez, Pérez Echeverría, Pozo & Torrado, 2022). I am glad to acknowledge that these topics have now been

approached in this special issue from the perspective of various disciplines and research questions through the valuable insights and contributions of 12 authors from Estonia, Finland, Israel, Norway, Spain, Sweden, and the United Kingdom. This issue is comprised of 5 peer-reviewed research articles, as well as reports of a diverse nature on current issues, that answer the questions I posed above in a variety of ways.

The Articles section of this special issue responds to the call in two main ways, as it not only offers instructional support strategies for teachers and students but also plenty of food for thought for all music education stakeholders regarding different types of social justice. Thus, the first two peer-reviewed papers correspond to recent doctoral research projects (in progress and completed, respectively) that aim at supporting either instrumental group tuition in music schools or individualized instrumental learning at all levels of music education. On the other hand, the remaining three papers by researchers at different career stages report on critical discussions of trauma and abuse in music education settings, or on facilitating training in music education for women who belong to rather closed communities and deserve (and are completely worthy of) a more active role within them. All in all, a collection of new, insightful, and (I dare say) brave perspectives.

The Articles section opens with Ida Knutsson, who—taking the publicly funded Swedish Art and Music Schools as her study context—discusses the concerns and strategies of teachers who want to support their students’ musical progress in group lessons; it seems to be that achieving success in doing so largely depends on the teachers’ pedagogical competencies and philosophical standpoints, which can be strikingly different. Next, Pedro A. Rodríguez Cortés and Amalia Casas-Mas analyze the motivation of pre-professional viola students at a Spanish conservatoire to learn a piece of atonal music from the 20th century, concluding that their pedagogical intervention, meant to support their understanding of different musical interpretations of this repertoire, facilitated the self-regulation processes of these students. In the following article, and as part of her larger doctoral project on the topic, Anna Ramstedt explores sexual misconduct and emotional abuse as experienced in music education settings by Finnish professional women musicians, discussing that this unsolved situation responds to certain sociocultural conditions, traditions, and practices related to the gender hierarchy of heteronormativity. Next, Cristine MacKie, Elizabeth Francis Edwards, and Helen Pote present an in-depth analysis of the psychological wellbeing of senior international piano teachers engaged in one-to-one tuition in higher education, particularly attending to how their earlier experiences of trauma as former students transferred to their teaching; in the light of their study, the authors acknowledge that the field of instrumental pedagogy is well behind the research that advocates for such humanly-compatible and student-centered perspectives described above. Finally, in her (auto-)ethnographic research, Naomi Perl presents the implications of a first-of-its-kind teacher education program to train women instrumental teachers from Israel’s Haredi, an ultra-Orthodox Jewish community—a teacher training initiative that can be well-considered a real transformative act of social justice for women who belong to a patriarchal, highly traditional, anti-individualist, and minority group in Israel.

The Current Issues section includes a *Lectio Praecursoria* presenting a recent Sibelius Academy-based doctoral dissertation by a Finnish researcher, Tuula Jääskeläinen, whose dissertation, *Music students’ experiences of workload, stress, and coping in higher education*, was successfully defended on April 15th, 2023 at the Helsinki Music Centre, and has produced multiple peer-reviewed articles of relevance for higher music education institutions. Jääskeläinen’s work, which has been recognized in the form of various international awards, identified specific challenges associated with music students’ coping with workload and stress, offering curriculum-oriented and policy-related recommendations to tackle the identified challenges at the university level. The *lectio* is naturally followed by the rich and thorough

statement on the dissertation by its opponent, Biranda Ford, who highlights the implications of the research for the entire music education community.

Finally, the Reports section offers an overview of the results of the Sweden-based doctoral dissertation of Carl Holmgren, *Dialogue lost? Teaching musical interpretation of western classical music in higher education*, which, framing his research within the Swedish higher education context, contributes to a better understanding of how dialogical interactions between students and teachers regarding the learning of musical interpretation should be strengthened to empower students in their artistic choices and professional endeavors. This is followed by Estonia-based doctoral candidate Kaisa J. Vähi from the Sibelius Academy's Mutri Doctoral School, who offers a comprehensive review of a recent Springer book for practitioners, *Learning and Teaching in the Music Studio—A Student-Centred Approach* (edited by J. I. Pozo, M. P. Pérez Echeverría, López-Íñiguez and Torrado), which, following a socio-cognitive constructivist framework, advocates for a radical change in the ways that music is taught and learned from infancy to adulthood, in individual and group situations, formally and informally, and with the aid of various repertoires and technologies.

To conclude my editorial comments on this special issue, I wanted to take the opportunity to thank the 16 external international reviewers who generously helped me with this issue; their excellent work in ensuring the quality of the articles that the Finnish Journal of Music Education (FJME hereinafter) publishes has been a determining factor in its success. Similarly, I thank the FJME editorial board and production team for the kind invitation to act as editor for this issue, and for a smooth publication process. Last, but not least, I sincerely hope that, considering the contents presented in this issue, the readers of FJME can gain new insights into both the current state and possible future of instrumental and vocal pedagogy. It is imperative that music students, teachers, and institutional leaders at all levels of music education not only acknowledge the need for the kind of (both smaller and larger) radical changes that are discussed in the pages that follow this editorial, but also embrace a critical spirit of inquiry (and action!) for a real, and much needed transformation in the music studio. ■

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Articles | Artikkelit

Learning classical instruments in a group setting: Swedish art and music school teachers' strategies for collective and individual progression

Introduction

Teaching classical instruments has for centuries relied on an exclusively one-to-one tuition within the framework of the established “master–apprentice” tradition of Western music conservatories (e.g., Burwell 2013; Gaunt, López-Íñiguez & Creech, 2021), also when teaching young children (Carey & Grant 2015). This traditional approach, where the teacher is expected to individualise and optimise the tuition, has steered the music pedagogy at Swedish Art and Music Schools (SAMS) since its inception (Tivenius 2008; Rostvall & West 2003), which will be explained in the next section. Lately, however, there has been an increasing political, economic, and educational focus on group tuition as a way to better incorporate the inherent social aspects of music (SOU 2016:69; Burnard & Dragovic 2015). In 2019, it was reported that 69% of SAMS teachers and leaders agreed that group teaching was the most common need for in-service training (Swedish arts council 2019), indicating that the profession might not be prepared for the transition from individual tuition.

The aim of this article is to investigate how instrumental teachers teach in group lessons, and how they verbalise their actions. The following research questions were formulated:

- What kind of pedagogical strategies do instrumental teachers use to develop collective and individual musical progression in their group instruction?
- How do teachers evaluate musical progression?
- How do teachers value the importance of progression?

This study has investigated students solely taught in group. By group teaching, this study refers to four or five students together with one teacher, excluding ensemble playing insofar as it is complementary to individual teaching. This is in contrast to teaching in master-classes which sometimes is labelled as “group teaching”, despite being mostly one-to-one teaching, and as a consequence knowledge is transferred unidirectionally (Hanken 2016; Long et al. 2014; Pozo et al. 2022), while other students listen and supposedly absorb what the master conveys.

With no individual lessons, the goals for group teaching include not only collective progression regarding musical interplay but also individual progression, e.g., regarding instrumental skills.

Background and previous research

The Swedish art and music schools (SAMS) were founded in the 1940s with the aim of giving all children the possibility to learn an instrument or to sing, regardless of socio-economic conditions. Although it is a non-legislated activity, 287 out of 290 municipalities

in Sweden do provide this opportunity (Swedish Arts Council 2020) albeit with different tuition fees and education content. In 2015 the Swedish government issued a commission of inquiry (SOU 2016:69) with the aim of making SAMS more inclusive and accessible to all children in Sweden. One of the recommendations from this commission was that group tuition should be the new norm for teaching. Even though group tuition in SAMS became more frequent in the 1990s, due to financial cutbacks (Holmberg 2010), in 2016 individual teaching was still dominant in SAMS (SOU 2016:69).

Already in 2003, Rostvall and West had criticised individual tuition in SAMS for the asymmetric interaction between the young student and the teacher with fragmentary note-by-note playing, reading from the instrumental method book, and the teacher not playing much during lessons. According to Brändström and Wiklund (1995), the students in SAMS who stated that they enjoyed the teaching in SAMS, did so partly because of the social dimension, which supports Rostvall and West's (2003) suggestion for group tuition.

Teachers' attitudes to group tuition

In the referral responses to the inquiry (SOU 2016:69), many SAMS teachers seemed quite negative to group teaching as the only method for teaching. In previous Swedish studies (on a master's level), instrumental teachers argue that individual tuition is better for developing technical skills, while group tuition is better for social skills (Englin & Lindell 2020; Widing 2019).

A group of students that differ in levels of competency can pose challenges for keeping them in the activity. Students who struggle with learning an instrument (McPherson 2005) or experience physical issues from playing (Kaladjev 2000) have a lower continuation rate. Measuring the continuation rate is one way to evaluate how successful the tuition is (Hallam 2019). It can be difficult to find the optimal level of challenge fitting all group members; learners are unlikely to learn if the workload is too heavy or if there are no challenges. Butz (2019) describes the complexity of teaching in the string classroom since the teacher must assess multiple students' problems and find strategies in situ to help them improve. Thus, it is important to investigate how teachers adapt their teaching to enable individual progress in a group, and not only provide access but also possibility for success. Due to the individual needs within a group, e.g., different abilities and pace of work, the tuition may be adapted, so called *pedagogical differentiation* (Kotte 2018). One strategy for music education is to offer different levels of difficulty through simplified or elaborated parts (Dehli, Fostås & Johnsen 1980; Hallam 1998).

According to Schiavio et al. (2020), teachers who report enjoying group teaching, state that they can share the pedagogical functions dynamically across the whole group, relieving them from some of the responsibility to keep the group going. Other factors for successful group tuition are suggested by Hallam (2019) and Ashton and Klopper (2018). Hallam (2019) states that teachers who are successful in Whole Class Ensemble Tuition in English primary schools, are those who are engaged and committed, well prepared, and have good rapport with students. These teachers also offered opportunities for improvisation and composition. An Australian study shows that successful string instrument teachers agree that the pace of progression in group teaching should be slow and steady (Ashton & Klopper 2018). However, SAMS teachers have expressed that rapid progression is traditionally regarded as a measure of how successful the tuition is (Knutsson 2023).

Extracurricular music teaching as a school activity or leisure activity

Previous research indicates that there are two competing discourses in SAMS—namely the *art and music school as a school discourse* versus the *art and music school as a leisure activity discourse* (SOU 2016:69; Swedish Arts Council 2019). The inquiry (SOU 2016:69) suggests

that SAMS, despite the word *school* in the title, is primarily a leisure activity. In the school discourse, progression is central (Jordhus-Lier 2018) and only a few students are expected to go on to higher artistic studies. This may be seen in relation to concerns about the declining quality of Swedish musicians compared to international standards, where SAMS are mentioned as one important actor striving to reversing the trend (The Royal Swedish Academy of Music 2023). The inquiry (SOU 2016:69) argues that group teaching could lead to more students staying in the activity and that more frequent as well as longer lessons could increase students' instrumental and musical skills.

It is suggested that teachers' skills should be relevant to the level they work on (Jordhus-Lier 2018; SOU 2016:69), indicating that different competencies are required to teach beginner versus advanced levels. There is a widespread view that music educators are failed performers (Bernard 2005), and previous research indicates a tension between the identity of musician and music teacher (Pellegrino 2009; Roberts 1991). Bernard (2005) accounts for three different approaches to the relationship between music teacher and musician: 1) choosing teaching over making music, 2) seeing them as opposites that must be balanced, or 3) resolving the opposition and conflating music-making and teaching, which Bernard (2005) terms "musician-teacher-identity". In her study, all musician-teachers described experiences of making music as fundamental to their identities and to their teaching. Ihas (2006) concluded that having both teacher and artistic education seems to have an impact on teachers' ability to detect errors and correct their students. Guiding students through their instrumental and musical problems is one of the teacher's most important tasks.

Theoretical framework and methodology

To investigate teachers' teaching in a group setting, the sociocultural theory of *Communities of Musical Practice* (CoMP) was applied (Barrett 2005; Kenny 2016). It aims to explain how a community collectively creates knowledge. From this perspective, the community is understood as a way to include the students more actively than in the master–apprentice model. Learning in a CoMP is multidirectional (participant to participant) rather than unidirectional (master to apprentice) (Barrett 2005). Membership in a community makes the individual develop, but at the same time the community changes through negotiation between its members; thus, the transformative potential goes both ways (Wenger 1999). The aim to develop and progress is one of the things that keeps the community together and the members create a positive environment where they can push each other's limits (Kenny 2016).

The data collection techniques were a combination of interviews, observations, field notes, stimulated recall interviews and one focus group interview (see Table 1). Data were collected in April–May 2022. The participants were three instrumental teachers from the classical music tradition at one SAMS. All three have an artistic as well as a pedagogical education, although one of the participants never finished the artistic part of the education. Two of the teachers are actively freelancing as musicians. Due to ethical guidelines and to avoid possible identification of participants, gender, age, and instrument are accounted for separately. Pseudonyms for them, given by the researcher, are Anna, Liam, and Nora. Two participants are female and one male, and the age span is 27–42. One informant teaches string instruments, one brass, and one woodwind. One participant has 5 years of artistic and pedagogical post-secondary education, one 8 years, and one 9 years. Nora's group consisted of five eight-year-old students in their first year as instrumentalists. Anna's group of four nine- and ten-year-old students was in its second year of teaching and displayed a strong group cohesion, even though this was their first year as a group. During the weeks of observation, they were, among other activities, collectively writing their own song, which they were also to play on their instruments. Liam's group of five eleven- and twelve-year-

old students had played in the same group since the very beginning four years ago. This group was interesting since one of the five students was on a noticeably higher level regarding instrumental skills than the others.

Table 1. Research design.

	Interview prior to the first observed lesson	Lesson	Observation	Stimulated recall interview	Concluding focus group interview
<i>Anna</i>	15 min	1	45 min	47 min	56 min
		2	49 min	30 min	
		3	47 min	42 min	
<i>Liam</i>	19 min	1	30 min	38 min	
		2	35 min	37 min	
		3	37 min	40 min	
<i>Nora</i>	18 min	1	35 min	52 min	
		2	42 min	40 min	
		3	40 min	51 min	

The interviews prior to the first observed lesson focused on information on the participants and their description of the group, as well as expectancies regarding the study. Three consequential, weekly lessons were observed and filmed, and each stimulated recall interview was performed before the next lesson.

The stimulated recall method usually consists of using video recordings to remind and stimulate the respondents regarding their thinking and decision-making (Bloom 1953; Lyle 2003; Rowe 2009). Thus, the teachers are taking an outsider's perspective, but with the insight of an insider; a combination that can provide a more complete picture of the event than merely interviewing the teachers, since it can be difficult to remember what happened during the lesson. My observations were used for additional analytical interpretation, to confirm or question the teachers' statements. I made fieldnotes (1–2 pages) with time markings that I sent to the teachers. Due to time limitations, a selection of the material was necessary. The teachers could choose what section of the recording to watch and discuss, making sure that the content would be of maximum relevance to them. In each of the teacher's third and last stimulated recall session, I briefly explained the CoMP theory, which gave a new spark to the discussion. The study concluded with a focus group interview (Kitzinger 1995) with the three teachers.

All interviews were audio-recorded, transcribed verbatim and the analysis was performed using the software program NVivo 12. Qualitative content analysis was chosen due to its systematic yet flexible approach (Graneheim & Lundman 2004; Krippendorff 2018; Schreier 2012). Main categories were created from the theory and previous research while sub-categories were derived from the data material in an abductive procedure. The full text was analysed in Swedish, but teachers' quotes presented in the result have been translated into English and slightly edited (e.g., omitting pauses and repetitions) to facilitate reading.

Methodological limitations and ethical considerations

All methods for collecting data in this study have some limitations. The scarcity of research has made it necessary to include also grey literature (Dehli et al. 1980; Hallam 1998) as well as Swedish masters' theses (Englin & Lindell 2020; Widing 2019). As the mere presence of an observer and a camera disrupt the naturalistic setting, it can risk making both teacher and students change their behaviour and perhaps work harder than they usually would. Talking to people gives access to what they say, but not what they think (Säljö 1997). Interview participants could create explanations in hindsight to present themselves more favourably. As in all qualitative research, there is a risk of subjectivity when analysing and reporting the result. To avoid this, I performed member-checks throughout the process consisting of sending all notes and transcriptions to the teachers as well as asking follow-up questions in the stimulated recall interviews.

It can provoke anxiety to be filmed and to watch oneself on video, and being observed can be experienced as being evaluated and assessed. A reflective, thoughtful research design and anticipation of feelings of discomfort were therefore crucial. The recording was used as a tool for collecting the participants' thoughts on the event. The teachers often elaborated on their accumulated experiences and beliefs in the stimulated recall interviews, indicating that they had no negative feelings of watching themselves on video. In the concluding focus group interview, the participants could develop their general thoughts on group teaching based on each other's statements. Despite the risk of peer pressure or unequal disposition of space to speak, the teachers discussed vividly and openly their thoughts and experiences which points to a reciprocal sense of safety.

The strategic selection of choosing only one SAMS was deliberate since it is located in a larger city with many students which makes it easier to form larger groups. Since SAMS have such a strong local touch, it would be difficult to compare two or more schools. The teachers in this particular SAMS share the same school culture. Even though I invited all classical music teachers in that SAMS, due to unfortunate, external circumstances, only three out of eleven interested teachers were able to partake in the study. Despite the small population, the teachers represented a variety, for example regarding gender, age, and musical instruments. The strategic selection, such as turning to only one SAMS, could pose questions of validity. However, the benefit of participants already knowing each other is considered to be a strength in this case because they could express themselves more freely in the focus group interview. The diversity of the groups enriched the focus group discussion, since the teachers could draw from experiences from other groups than the ones in this study. Threats towards the validity of this study may be minimised by triangulation as a way of taking different perspectives (the teachers with the insight of an insider while simultaneously observe as an outsider, as well as my interpretation as an independent observer) and transparency throughout the process.

I have received approval for the study from the Swedish Ethical Review Authority. Information about the purpose of the project and how personal information would be handled was handed out to teachers, students and their parents, and letters of consent were signed.

Findings

In the following section, I will describe the findings from the study regarding what strategies the teachers use in group teaching, and how they verbalise their actions. The most significant result is that the teachers strive to engage all students throughout the lesson and to offer a meaningful experience for all by *keeping the music going*. The teachers' reports of *collective* and *individual progression in group teaching* will be presented. I will account for the *teachers' views on and evaluation of progression* and why they consider progression important. The teachers' personal

beliefs and previous musical experiences affect their teaching to a large degree, which will be described under subheading *a community of musicianship*. Abbreviations are used to denote on which occasion the statements were made (“SR-teacher’s initial-occasion” for the stimulated recall interviews and “FGI” for the concluding focus group interview with the three teachers).

Keeping the music going

To keep all students active and meaningfully engaged throughout the lesson, the music must keep going, and repetition is reported as a successful strategy. To maintain interest Liam uses a recorded backing track. According to Liam, even the ones who are struggling eventually get the hang of it after a couple of play-throughs [SR-L-1]. The fact that the teachers group lessons are longer means that there are more opportunities to play the same piece of music repeatedly than in individual lessons. A strategy to make it possible to play through the song multiple times without being tedious is reported by Nora: “Basically, we do the same thing, but they [the students] don’t perceive it as the same because you add some tasks or alter something in the conditions” [SR-N-1].

Nora describes some of these tricks. For example, in the game “Circus” they add some physical challenge to the playing, such as standing on one leg. Sometimes an invisible “Wizard” comes by and magically makes a tone disappear; when playing a music piece, that particular note must not be played. When watching one film sequence [SR-N-2], Nora described how she there and then realised that one student was having a hard time keeping up and that multiple play-throughs were demanded. While playing, she thought through possible strategies and when the song finally ended, she called “Fruit Salad”, a game where everyone switches seats. Suddenly the atmosphere had changed. Nora states that this spatial movement makes the students forget they just struggled. After each play-through she called “Fruit Salad” (five students and five possible seats meant five play-throughs) and eventually, everybody could play the song through without any obvious problems. As an observer, I did not notice that anyone seemed to think it was boring or repetitive.

Collective progression in group teaching

According to the teachers, there are elements of teaching that are more suitable in a group setting. All three teachers favour that the students clap to enhance the sense of pulse and rhythm but also to take a break from the instruments. Clapping in individual lessons may make students feel exposed or intimidated but, in a group, the student “adapts to the herd” [SR-L-1]. As an observer, this was evident when the students in the first observation clapped a rhythmically difficult bar as an ostinato. Every repetition improved their rhythmic accuracy. Another “herd-effect” is mentioned by Liam: if someone is playing a bit out of tune, the common sound of the group will make this “even itself out” [SR-L-1]. In Anna’s group, the students wrote a song together, building on each other’s musical ideas. One video sequence from lesson 2 shows an interesting collective process where the result grew out of one fragment to which all students contributed.

When the aim is to keep the music going and keep all students active, teaching needs to be modified in comparison to individual tuition, e.g., regarding reading music. In an individual lesson, Liam states that he works hard to teach the student how to read music and the name of the notes, but in a group setting, this is not possible, in his opinion. To allow the students to play right away, he instead writes numbers above the notes before playing, as well as letting the students play by ear and make short improvisations.

One common strategy to increase the level of difficulty, is to alter the tempo on the recorded backing track with the help of a mobile application. Liam says that the students are motivated to increase the speed step by step; this was also visible in Liam’s and Nora’s groups. According to Liam and Nora, often the students suggest altering the tempo, prefer-

ably to the extremes in both directions [FGI]. According to Nora, they could play the same song for 40 minutes if she just changed the tempo back and forth while playing.

The students often suggest ways to increase the level of difficulty by other means. Anna elaborates on a moment from the recording where they are to play a scale in rounds, as a canon. The students then suggest a three-part canon: “It was obvious that they were saying “we want a tougher challenge” sort of” [SR-A-2].

This indicates that the students appreciate challenges, and Anna takes advantage of their proposals. Another recurring strategy is to give the group members different parts, usually with differing levels of difficulty. All three teachers state that the students must choose for themselves what part they want to play. To assign students to the easy part can cause feelings of inferiority. Anna points out that she never labels the parts as “easy” or “hard”; however, Nora adds that older students will quickly recognise and evaluate the level of difficulty [FGI]. Liam also problematises teaching that requires different parts, since the teacher can only play one part at a time, leaving the other students to “fend for themselves” [SR-L-1].

Individual progression in group teaching

The teachers agree that you cannot teach individually in a group of four or five students unless there is a need for individual help [FGI]. They do not individualise the tuition but rather give general instructions; differentiating level of difficulty is more a way of keeping the group together.

A potential problem with group tuition, raised by the teachers, regards how to establish correct instrumental technique. An inaccurate playing technique may be strenuous and make the playing more difficult. The fact that several peers are watching may be uncomfortable which is why Liam does not act upon the impulse to correct individuals in front of the others. The teacher must let inaccuracy slip through in favour of keeping the music going. Often these things would have been corrected in an individual lesson, according to Liam [SR-L-1].

The teachers' views on and evaluation of progression

All three teachers emphasise the importance of visible progress and mention the instrumental method book as a motivating factor for students, even though Nora and Anna say that it has for a long time been considered as old fashioned to simply follow a book [FGI]. Traditional instrumental method books usually have an increasing level of difficulty. Anna finds classical music's view on progression narrow and problematic; progression can also include dimensions that are difficult to measure or define.

Whether the teacher can or should push progression depends on their personal relationship to the students. According to Liam, it can take longer to get to know the students when they are taught in a group than individually [SR-L-2]. The teacher must know where their limits are regarding musical skills but also how they react to pressure. Progression should be connotated with a positive expectation of success every time, which is, according to Nora, a basic human need. Nora quotes the saying of the Swedish children's book character Pippi Longstocking: “I have never tried that before, so I think I should definitely be able to do that” [SR-N-1]. The method book for Nora's instrument has, in her opinion, a way-too-fast pace of progression regarding the level of difficulty of the songs. That is why she does not introduce the book until the students have played at least 20 songs with a narrow tone range, often from other instruments' beginning repertoire. The feeling of accomplishment is important, and Nora argues that students getting stuck on the first page for months feel discouraged. The musical pieces in the method book Liam uses, however, are so basic that the students can easily play one new song each week, which, according to Liam, appears to be satisfying to them.

Nora tries to make the students have fun, but the endgame is to raise good instrumentalists. Liam agrees and says that children notice clearly if there is no progression, which could make students discontinue tuition altogether [FGI]. Another aspect of the importance of making progress, mentioned by the teachers, is on a higher level: it regards the legitimacy of the activity itself. Nora states that if no progress is made, the students could just as well turn to some other leisure activity.

A community of musicianship

The teachers frequently return to their experiences as musicians—rather than their teacher training—as the basis for their teaching strategies. Both professional ensemble performance and group teaching means working together towards a musical goal. Group tuition thus comes naturally to the participating teachers. They agree upon having a serious attitude to music-making. Nora argues that it is the same thing to play a symphony at the concert hall as when students play simple songs in the school cafeteria—it is only different levels [SR-N-3]. The teachers often end the lesson with something easy and well-known, to bring the feeling of having made music during the instrumental lesson. According to Nora, the students come to the lesson to make music—not to hear a lecture on how to play: “Because this is what music is. The small signals. Someone makes a small *ritardando* and the whole ensemble follows. We sit down, we play, and we listen carefully. Then it works, one communicates on a different level, without words” [SR-N-3].

Nora thus advocates less talk and more music-making during lessons. All three teachers play a lot together with their students to set a good musical example. According to Nora, too much focus on teaching the craft may make one forget why the students chose to learn the instrument in the first place: probably from hearing and enjoying its sound. That motivation and vision are important to keep alive. According to Nora, the beginners’ repertoire (short basic songs with few notes) is not musically inspiring and probably not what they expected when they chose the instrument. Therefore, she often takes the opportunity to play something for the students during lessons.

The findings show that these teachers consider progression as an important aspect of classical instrumental tuition for many different reasons. Making progression visible to the students often means counting the number of songs learnt, since this is easy to measure and can thus be a motivator to the children, but the teachers also value immeasurable dimensions of progression. The students often suggest ways of increasing the level of difficulty, signalling that they appreciate development. To have clear and visible progression also sends a signal to the students that this activity is to be taken seriously although it is extracurricular.

Discussion

In this section, I will discuss the findings in light of previous research and through the theory of community of musical practice (CoMP). First, I will discuss the participating teachers’ competencies. The second point of discussion is how the teachers assess individual and collective progression. Third and lastly, teachers’ and students’ creativity within the music lesson will be highlighted, as well as the teachers’ intuitive and improvised actions.

The teachers’ competencies

The fact that children have experiences from other formal learning communities (e.g., compulsory school) may enhance their peer-learning abilities in music. Both students’ and teachers’ experiences from other communities affect how the community of musical practice is shaped through negotiation and how the teacher designs the lesson. A formal setting

with strict time limits (40–50 minutes per week) can make it more difficult for a well-functioning and self-reinforcing community to emerge. Teachers are responsible for the musical and social development in a group, and viewing it as a CoMP may facilitate the focus on mutual and reciprocal learning. Liam's group is one example of a group that works fine, both musically and socially, despite differing levels.

Even though the teachers in this study graduated several years apart, neither of them state that music teacher education prepared them for group tuition. Rather, they point to similarities to working as a professional ensemble musician. As teachers, they are musical role models and invite their students to join their community as musicians. Additionally, they seem to enjoy group tuition, displaying engagement, self-esteem, and competency, while utilizing a high degree of self-reflection as tool for professional development. These factors are coherent with what Hallam (2019) and Schiavio et al. (2020) has found contributing to successful group tuition. Contrary to the teachers in Rostwall and West's (2003) study, these teachers play much during lessons, and use the instrumental method book to make music; not as note reading exercises. Anna's students compose and Liam's and Nora's students improvise, which are two success factors according to Hallam (2019).

This study agrees with Bernard (2005) that musicianship does not stand in the way of effective teaching, but rather is an important aspect of it. The teachers display no tension or balancing act between identities as musician or teacher; instead, these identities complement each other. Based on this, I would like to problematise the view that there should be different teacher competencies depending on the student's level (Jordhus-Lier 2018; SOU 2016:69); one type of teacher for lower levels (presumably in group), and another type on a higher level (presumably individually). According to this argument, teachers who teach on a higher level should be more skilled musicians. However, downplaying the role of artistic competency for teachers teaching younger children may send signals to them and society that such tuition is not to be taken seriously. As these teachers show, it is possible to have a playful approach to meet the needs of the children, while still having high artistic ambitions in the long run. Additionally, the concept of *quality* must be addressed. What is perceived as quality or successful teaching depends on the dominating discourse. In the school discourse, quality equals progression as increasing the level of difficulty. In line with McPherson (2005), according to the teachers, the students need to get a sense of accomplishment and competence; group tuition may contribute to their continuation rate. However, equating group tuition with inclusion (SOU 2016:69) is not unproblematic, since the students may feel exposed in a group setting. Based on this study, making students continue and feel at ease in a group depends on the teachers' competencies and personal values, but also on their professional reflection and ability to take the child's perspective.

According to recent reports (The Swedish Royal Academy of Music 2023) there are concerns regarding a decrease in the quality of Swedish musicians. Since SAMS are part of the educational path for high-quality musicians, it is important that the activity provides a high level of quality to enable students to go all the way to higher music education. The musician-teachers in this study are artistically competent, which clearly affects their teaching: to motivate the students, they choose to keep the music going in favour of adjusting individual details and to end lessons by playing something easy together. Considering the music group more as an ensemble informs their teaching.

Attaining and assessing progression

Finding the optimal pace of progression is said to be difficult due to the students' different needs and abilities (Kotte 2018). An in-depth analysis of the teachers' verbal reports and my observations show that both slow and fast progression are present, although not explicitly expressed. A rapid, visible, and measurable progression (such as being able to play

many songs) may increase the children's motivation. At the same time, the approach is slow since multiple play-throughs give everyone a chance to keep up. Playing many songs on the same level of difficulty is also a strategy that could be viewed as a slow and steady approach. The teacher's concern for the success of the weaker students does not mean that the rest of the group stands still and ceases to develop. They can still develop on the same level of difficulty, gaining a surplus in learning such as automatised motoric skills and refined tone production. In Liam's group, the more advanced student still seemed to be motivated and challenged during the lessons. However, the idea of a possible collective progression through multiple play-throughs must be problematised. There is no guarantee that all students ever catch up with the more advanced. Even if the group progresses collectively, there are still differences in individual progression. Individual and collective progression can be seen as two parallel processes, containing both measurable and immeasurable dimensions. Voluntariness is key, according to the teachers, but they also point to the importance of knowing their students to determine how much they can push collective and individual progression.

One of the cornerstones in the theory of CoMP is the fact that there must be some sort of progression. The teachers in this study agree that progression is a motivator for children to stay in the activity, which is supported by the inquiry's report on SAMS (SOU 2016:69); in the report, many children said that they refrained from the activity because they felt that they did not learn anything. To legitimise SAMS, it is important to stress students' musical progression. Otherwise, it can be difficult to defend heavily subsidised instrumental tuition just on the ground that the children think it is a fun activity.

Creativity and intuitive decisions

Group tuition may be rendered difficult by students' differing levels of competencies (e.g., regarding reading and technique), but the teachers in this study display ways of addressing these difficulties creatively when planning, performing, and evaluating lessons. Students also shape the teaching through creative suggestions and initiatives in order to increase the level of difficulty (increasing the tempo, dividing a canon into additional parts), which signals a strong CoMP.

These strategies may make students realize that playful creativity is an important part of making music (e.g., Barrett 2005). According to previous research presented in Swedish masters' theses, teachers may view individual teaching as superior to group teaching in order to convey musical skills to students (Englin & Lindell 2020; Widing 2019). Even though the teachers in this study detect inaccuracies in their students' playing, they refrain from correcting them since it is not their primary concern. The teachers state that their intuitive decisions are based on their interpretations of students' implicit signals. During playing, the teachers actively evaluate what to do to help the students align. There are multiple needs and wishes to balance which forces the teachers to be more creative. They experience this as a positive force since it provides an opportunity for professional reflection and development.

Implications

Many of the referral responses to the inquiry (SOU 2016:69) were quite negative toward group tuition. The teachers in this study, on the contrary, display satisfaction when teaching groups of students. The inquiry (SOU 2016:69) stipulated that group tuition is one way to include more students in SAMS. However, students who do not follow the average pace of progression in a group risk either falling behind or becoming bored (and eventually quitting in both cases). So, how to *keep* the students included, and how to provide room for everyone in extracurricular group tuition in SAMS? This depends largely on the teacher's pedagogical competencies and philosophical standpoints. Teacher training programmes perhaps

need to address group teaching more thoroughly and emphasise its value, as well as to provide competence development for active teachers. Parts of the methodology for this study (stimulated recall combined with focus group interview) shows potential for in-service training within the teaching staff.

Analysing a group of children and their teacher as a community of musical practice has revealed insights into the possibilities of group teaching as a pedagogical approach more than merely a method, for example, to teach the group as a group instead of multiple individuals. More research is needed to investigate how the students' progression go hand in hand with creating a healthy environment and increase the children's well-being. The children's own voices would be a good contribution to that kind of student-centered research (Pozo et al., 2022). ■

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Abstract

For centuries, teaching classical instruments has exclusively relied on one-to-one tuition also when teaching young children. While this form of teaching has dominated Swedish Art and Music Schools (SAMS), lately there has been an increasing political, economic, and educational interest in group tuition. SAMS are publicly funded by the municipalities to be affordable also for children whose parents have limited economic resources. Since group teaching requires fewer teacher resources it may reduce the fee. However, teachers have raised concerns of how to make musical progress when teaching multiple students simultaneously. The aim of this article is to investigate how instrumental teachers teach in group lessons, and how they verbalise their actions. This qualitative, multiple methods study (stimulated recall, observations, and interviews) investigates teaching in an instrumental group through the theoretical framework Communities of Musical Practice. The results show that musical progression such as skills development and adding songs to the repertoire is made possible by extensive play and by applying different strategies to keep all students active during group lessons. ■

Keywords: classical instruments; extracurricular music education; group tuition; musical progression; Swedish Art and Music Schools.

Self-regulation and motivation as key factors for learning a musical piece from the 20th century in pre-professional music studies

Background

The position of contemporary music is especially complex as it is constantly in the process of social fading and strives to take a place as opposed to the other, dominant aesthetics (Vesic 2020), those which are traditionally taught in schools and music conservatories, i.e.: music from the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Due to this fact, it is often said that contemporary music—which is understood in this study as that which has an academic nature developed in the field of conservatories from the 20th century to the present—has drifted off track in relation to previous music, or that it has attained a degree of complexity which makes it inaccessible (Meyer 2009). However, avoiding contemporary music in education not only makes its comprehension harder to reach, but also denies young students the possibility of enjoying it and, thus, sharing it with others in musical performances. In this sense, creating learning situations where contemporary music is studied will enrich students with broader experiences of musical knowledge and will increase their sensitivity for art, regardless of its aesthetics.

In music, at least in the context of formal education, a fundamental part of the learning process depends on reading and understanding sheet music (e.g., López-Íñiguez & Pozo 2014). Sheet music has evolved, growing in complexity, as a result of the different aesthetic or technical demands that stem from the evolution of music itself as well as of other arts. The complexity often attributed to understanding contemporary music is due to its departure from the music composed over the 18th and 19th centuries, in which regularity tends to be the norm (Meyer 2009)—thus being the possible cause for the predominance of this repertoire, to the point that research studies on musical learning, focused primarily on studying the quantity and quality of musical practice (Casas et al. 2019), are mostly based on music from these eras. For this reason, there is a need to take action towards a deeper study of the process of learning music from the 20th and 21st centuries, in order to improve its understanding, enjoyment, and teaching.

Learning processes in the context of music have been a subject of interest for research in recent years (e.g., Chaffin & Imreh 2001; McPherson 2005; Pozo et al. 2022a), with a particular focus on the type of practice the musician performs with their instrument—since this practice is considered to be a key factor in the development of musical skill (How et al. 2021; MacNamara et al. 2008; Miklaszewski 1995). In addition, from an educational perspective, there is a very close relationship between motivation and learning processes, from which it can be deduced that motivation and self-regulation processes for learning are also considered key factors in the teaching-learning process of musical skill (Campayo & Cabedo 2018).

Motivation, understood as a general process by which a behaviour is initiated and directed towards the achievement of a goal (Edel 2003), is combined with the need to proactively control the relationships between person, behaviour and environment through self-observation, self-judgement and self-reaction, which refers to the concept of self-regulation (McPherson et al. 2019).

Regarding instrumental learning, several authors (e.g., Jørgensen & Lehmann 1997; Jørgensen & Hallam 2016), bring light on the relevance of two variables, which are closely related to the progress of music performance: quantity and quality of the study. These variables are then subject to the previous knowledge and acquired skills of the students and influenced by particular features—such as the type of repertoire, or other cross-cutting aspects, which include a more or less sophisticated conception of learning, the level of creativity involved in coming up with solutions to encountered difficulties, and the degree of motivation towards succeeding in a particular task.

In this article, we aimed to delve into the learning processes that a group of viola students went through in order to approach a piece of atonal music from the 20th century—an aesthetic context with which they were not yet familiarised. In this context, it is intended to know the key factors that determine a greater achievement of success in the study of this musical aesthetic.

Theoretical Frameworks

Comprehension of Sheet Music

It has been observed that within an academic context of musical education, which mainly takes place at conservatories, students on a more advanced level of instruction—as opposed to those on elementary stages—generally tend to show more sophisticated conceptions of learning (Marín et al. 2014). In other words, this means that students in more advanced levels show a more complex level of understanding of the piece, which allows them to establish not only various study strategies according to musical parameters found in the score, but also a level of referential processing to understand the musical text, in which symbolic or notational elements converge with other dimensions (communicative, aesthetic, stylistic, expressive, etc.), not present in the score (Bautista et al. 2009).

Although students in more advanced levels might have developed a more holistic approach to instrumental practice and learning, it is possible to find, among students of any academic level, learning habits that do not lead to establishing a learning process focused on an efficient resolution of the study, which stalls the improvement in performance quality (Marín et al. 2012). Among these obstructing habits, we can include establishing an invariable speed to study the piece, along with the tendency to play continuously from start to finish, or practising repeatedly without acknowledging or reflecting upon the errors that might occur (Jørgensen & Hallam 2016).

Deliberate Practice and Strategic Learning

In order to fulfil these learning needs, students should be oriented towards developing an effective practice, defined as “that which achieves the desired end-product, in as short a time as possible, without interfering negatively with longer-term goals” (Hallam 1997, 181). This, referencing the definition of deliberate practice proposed by Ericsson et al. (1993), would require designing a series of practical activities for the students to perform in each session. The concept of deliberate practice could be described as a structured set of activities considered by experts in a particular field to be relevant to achieve high levels of performance (Lehmann et al. 2018). However, the concept of deliberate practice admits multiple definitions and nuances (Macnamara & Maitra 2019) in which, according to Jørgensen (2008), we should include the use of strategies, since they refer to structured and individual practice that aims to achieve a specific goal.

Regarding the concept of strategy, it has been defined by several authors (Pozo 2008; Mateos 2001) as a sequence of deliberate and planned actions carried out as a response to a learning problem—where problem is understood as a learning situation in which the

learner is facing a difficulty with no clear solution. In these situations, from a constructivist point of view, students should be encouraged to “arrive at meaning by actively selecting, and cumulatively constructing, their own knowledge, through both individual and social activity” (Holland 2015, 25). This way, either individually or in a social context, students can construct their own knowledge in a significant way, thus overcoming one of the challenges of musical education: leaning towards the development of autonomous learning (McPherson & Zimmerman 2011; Pozo et al. 2022a). In order to do so, students need to learn to balance the components that make up their learning process in a reflective way, which involves the use of self-regulation.

Self-regulation of Musical Learning

According to McPherson et al. (2019) and Zimmerman (2000), the process of self-regulated learning consists of a cycle of three phases. In the first phase, or *Forethought* phase, the student analyses the task to complete by means of a series of self-motivating beliefs that serve as a base for musical practice. During the second phase, *Performance*, the student applies different self-control and self-observation techniques that help them to focus their attention and willpower on the music they practise. Lastly, there is a third phase of *Self-reflection* in which the student evaluates what worked during the previous phase, motivating self-critical comments and reactions that influence planification (as a part of the Forethought phase), with the aim of refining future practices, thus restarting the cycle process.

Learning processes, as well as self-regulation processes in learning, have been approached and studied in different musical education contexts by means of a predominantly tonal repertoire, in which case the students or professional musicians (e.g., López-Íñiguez & McPherson 2021) carry out the study of a piece of music from an aesthetic with which they are familiarised. However, as Jofré i Fradera (2003) points out, the representation of musical notation systems has grown progressively more complex as a consequence of the technical and aesthetic demands that stem from the evolution of music in general. This evolution seems to have led to the creation of a new code that requires a specific knowledge or vocabulary, and adapted applications of self-regulated learning strategies.

Aims of the Study and Research Questions

Taking this study’s frameworks into account, and with the intention of delving into learning and self-regulation processes, a study was carried out on a group of viola students, of ages 14 to 18, which analysed how they performed the study of a piece of 20th century music, particularly the first 43 bars of the first movement of Sonata for Viola and Piano, op. 147 by D. Shostakovich. This analysis aimed to respond the following questions:

- How do viola students approach the study of a piece of music from the 20th century?
- Are viola students aware of the different possibilities regarding fingerings and bowings when performing the piece? Will they decide on these possibilities according to musical criteria or, rather, motivated by biomechanics comfort?
- Which will be the most decisive factors for obtaining a better interpretation result when learning a piece from a non-familiar aesthetic context?

These questions give rise to three specific goals which base the development of the present study.

The first goal was to know the ways in which viola students approached the individual instrumental practice of a piece from the 20th century. This aesthetic seems complex for students because they base their music comprehension on a series of rules determined by

tonality, therefore all music that does not abide by these rules is perceived as strange or lacking in order.

The second goal was to learn—after the practice and interpretation of the piece—about the decision-making processes concerning the strategies used during the practice, as well as how the students evaluated their own experience of the study, which allows to reflect on their ability to solve difficulties found in the score and to observe the self-regulation processes involved in learning the piece.

Finally, the third aim of the study was to compare the strategies and motivation of two participants whose study processes resulted in opposite levels of interpretation quality—judging from the perspective of a viola expert—, in order to understand the possible reasons why different students may obtain different quality of results in the same learning session for a piece of academic music from the 20th century.

Method

Design

This study has an ex post facto prospective design (García-Celay & León 2002); it studies an independent variable that cannot be manipulated by the researcher (since it is already given), within a research context in which the group sample is selected based on its value for the variable subject of study (instrumental learning in pre-professional music studies) and then the differences in the dependent variable (interpretation result) among the group sample are analysed.

Participants

The participants were 4 students from the same music conservatory of pre-professional music studies (hereafter PPMS), corresponding to an intermediate level, in Spain. This group constitutes 100% of the students enrolled in the specialty of Viola. They were all the same biological sex (women). Regarding age and academic level, they classify as follows: Student 1 (age 14, 2nd year), Student 2 (age 15, 2nd year), Student 3 (age 16, 3rd year), and Student 4 (age 18, 6th year).

Materials and Tasks

Data was gathered on three different stages within the same session: first, an individual practice session of a maximum of 60 minutes long for each student was recorded. Then a video of the interpretation result for the proposed piece was also recorded individually. Lastly, a semi-structured interview with each student was carried out, in order to analyse their own assessment of the study. This semi-structured interview was organised in three areas (see Table 3, Annex 1):

- a) questions regarding the learning experience (questions 1–2). These questions aimed to know whether the participant valued the learning session as a positive or negative experience, as well as the level of difficulty or effort they gave to the task performed;
- b) questions regarding the interpretation result (questions 3–6). These aimed to obtain a self-evaluation from the students of their own interpretation of the piece and their degree of understanding of the musical discourse; and
- c) questions regarding the learning process (questions 7–14). These aimed to understand the different learning strategies implemented by each student, the learning difficulties encountered, and the solutions proposed.

The musical fragment selected for these learning sessions corresponds to the first 43 bars of the first movement of Sonata for Viola and Piano, op. 147, by D. Shostakovich. This fragment was selected by an expert instrumentalist and viola instructor, based on its technical and musical requirements, considering that its interpretation allows for different possibilities of fingering and bows and that these requirements are appropriate for PPMS level.

Procedure

The on-site learning sessions took place in the school, upon receiving participation consent by the participants' legal guardians. The study's ethicality was reviewed by the Ethics Commission of Jaume I University in Castellón, Spain. The participants were not required any kind of special preparation for the study and were only asked to bring their instruments and the same materials usually used in class (tuner, pencil, metronome...). Participation was voluntary and not rewarded.

The duration established for the learning session was equivalent to an ordinary viola session in PPMS (60-minutes). Once time was over or the student decided their individual practice was completed, they performed the proposed fragment, with or without the score, in a similar fashion of an audition. After the performance, the semi-structured interviews were carried out.

Once this first stage of the research was finished, the next step was to pseudonymise the recorded data of the interpretations and ask a viola expert to rank those results in descending order based on global quality of the interpretation in the context of pre-professional music studies. Fidelity towards the musical text (i.e., rhythm precision, presence of false notes) and knowledge of technical aspects (i.e., position changes, sound quality, tuning) were also taken on account for this assessment.

Once the anonymous results were ranked, the study processes and evaluations of the students with different degrees of efficiency were analysed and compared, in order to determine the differential factors that caused this variation in the quality of the interpretation.

Data analysis

The pseudonymised transcriptions of the semi-structured interviews, as well as the recordings of study sessions were analysed by means of a replicable systematic coding process, which was developed according to the context of the data gathered. The data corresponding to the study session recordings was analysed first, following the SAPEA coding system (A System for the Analysis of Instrumental Learning and Teaching Practices), proposed and validated by Pozo et al. (2022b). This system proposes an analysis of what happens inside the classroom from a multidimensional approach, which considers results, processes, and conditions of learning that respond to different levels of practice analysis—that is to say, not only considers verbal interactions but also instrumental and embodied actions.

By means of this analysis system it was possible to establish three categories into which the study sessions were codified: musical production, symbolic production, and non-musical content production.

Musical Production (MP): The musical piece was divided into sections according to its formal structure, classified as follows: A-Part 1 (bars.1–9), A-Part 2 (10–17), Bridge-AB (18–20), B1-Part 1 (21–27), B1-part 2 (28–38), Bridge-B1B2 (39–43).

Symbolic Production (SP): Alludes to every verbal, gestural or written action that precedes, interrupts, or accompanies musical production. In this case it included annotations related to fingering/bows on the score, the combination of the interpretation with gestures or vocal intonation, and self-regulation learning processes.

Non-Musical Content Production (NMP): This includes every digression or pause on musical production that does not have any specific musical content nor falls into the category of

symbolic production. In particular: asking the researcher for a metronome or a pencil or pausing to rest or relocate the instrument.

The data from the semi-structured interviews was analysed using the category system for the analysis of cognitive and emotional processes presented in SAPEA (Pozo et al. 2022b). The codes used are listed in Table 1.

Table 1. Musical learning processes (Adapted from Pozo et al. 2022b).

Category	Definition
Literal retrieval	Verbalizations from the student where previously learned knowledge is requested or alluded to
Retrieval with transfer	Verbalizations from the student where knowledge which has already been acquired (past) is requested or alluded to so as to use as an anchor for a new learning
Repetitive-revision learning	Verbalizations from the student which allude to the repetition of a musical fragment or motor skill action with or without the instrument to consolidate this learning
Comprehensive learning	Verbalizations from the student, which promote the creation of knowledge, and which cannot be included in any other category, e.g., prioritising, associating, comparing, or selecting information
Planning	Verbalizations from the student aimed at establishing a plan through which to organise the acquisition of a piece of knowledge
(Positive and negative) Assessment	Verbalisations of the student aimed at making a judgement on the action undertaken, which may–or may not–allude to the achievement–or lack of–of the objective at that time

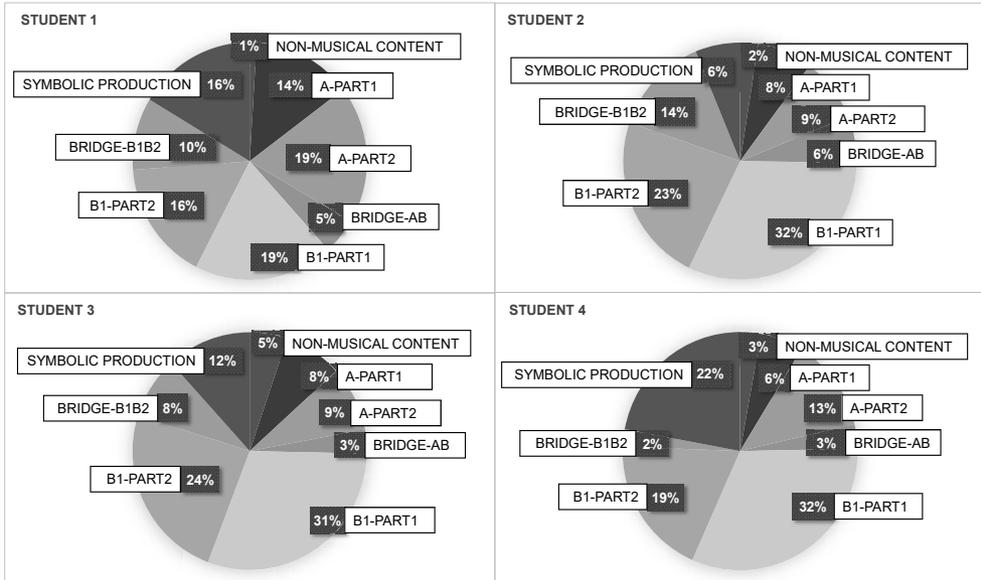
Findings

After analysing the type of production of each student during the learning sessions, we obtained the results presented below, sorted into the following categories: time distribution of each type of production, students' assessments, expert evaluation, successful learning strategies, and comparison between the participants who obtained different levels of quality according to the expert.

Time invested by the students on each type of production during the learning sessions

A visual synthesis of the distribution of time dedicated to each type of production can be found on Figure 1, which shows the global percentage of time invested on each type of production by each student. This means that the percentages represent the total time dedicated to each type of production along the whole session, regardless of chronological distribution. It can be observed how Students 2, 3, and 4 show a more heterogeneous distribution, with irregular dedication and a significant predominance of time dedicated to codes B1-Part 1 and B1-Part 2. In contrast, Student 1 exhibits a more homogenous distribution, with a certain regularity on the time dedicated to each code. In addition, Student 4 was the participant with the highest percentage of symbolic production.

Figure 1. Percentage of time destined to each type of production during the learning session of each student.



On the other hand, Table 2 includes a more detailed list of the time dedicated by each student to each type of production, with a comparison between the codes of each student. This table also includes the total duration of each of the learning sessions. This shows how Student 2 was the only participant who used almost all of the time available for individual practice, while the rest of participants required approximately half the time or even less—as in the case of Student 3—, since they decided at which point they considered their learning session to be over.

Table 2. Comparison of time distribution and total duration of each learning session.

Codes	St. 1	St. 2	St. 3	St. 4
	%	%	%	%
Non-Musical Content Activity	0.94	2.50	5.18	2.84
A-part 1	13.76	7.65	8.02	5.86
A-part 2	18.78	8.71	8.86	12.66
Bridge-AB	4.89	6.35	3.27	3.33
B1-part 1	19.19	31.98	30.48	31.98
B2-part 2	16.27	23.1	24.05	18.96
Bridge-B1B2	9.82	13.51	8.43	2.34
Symbolic Production	16.35	6.20	11.71	22.03
Total time	40' 34"	55' 8"	15' 48"	37'

Students' assessments of the learning experience, the musical piece selected and the difficulty level of the task.

The data gathered from the semi-structured interviews shows several aspects in which there was a certain level of agreement among all the participants. Firstly, all participants described the experience of the study as positive. Moreover, one of them particularly attributed it to the fact that the piece selected came from a different repertoire than usual, which represented a break from routine. Secondly, none of the participants recalled encountering any unknown technical or musical aspects which could have obstructed the study of the proposed fragment. Besides, they all agreed that the most difficult bars were the ones corresponding to sections B1-Part 1 and B1-Part 2. Lastly, they all considered the proposed fragment as generally easy, assigning it a value of 4–5 in the case of Students 1 and 3; and of 5–6 in the case of Students 2 and 4, on a scale of 1–10.

Expert evaluation of the interpretation results

The evaluation of the interpretation results by a viola expert was carried out taking on account the quality of the interpretation and the level of command of the techniques used. These results are represented on a scale from 1 to 100, as follows: Student 1 (20), Student 2 (60), Student 3 (30) and Student 4 (80).

Successful learning strategies

A very relevant piece of data for this study was the personal account of Students 4 and 2 on the strategies they used during their individual practice, which will be analysed in detail in the following sections. The following quote shows how Student 4 has reflected upon and adapted her fingerings to favour the musical intentions of the piece:

When the bow started, that's when I started on the first but since it begins in A... an A on an open string didn't... didn't sound right for a consistent start, so I thought... 'then I'll start on the third', and I kept through the G also in third and then I went down... but I thought 'it sounds wrong to go down there'... cause I don't like how that sounds, so I thought I'll do it all on the third until I find a place where I can go down well and that it sounds right, so I did that, I continued a bit on the third and then I said 'ok, here I'll go in second' because the second and third fingers work better for me than fourth and third, for example. [Student 4]

For her part, Student 2 expressed in the next quote how she had an action plan for the learning process of the piece, by which she uses intonation or solfège before starting to practise with her instrument. In addition, in the last part she also mentions learning processes based on repetition.

The first thing I did was sing it in my head, not with intonation, but the rhythm especially because it has syncopation and all that, and sometimes that's hard, so the first thing I do is look at the rhythm and then I tried to play it once to see which parts were the hardest... until I noticed that there was a G-Clef... so then I played it up to there, the beginning was very easy so I focused on the bars I found the hardest, and when I more or less had them figured out I continued with the other parts. Then I just went over it, over and over again. [Student 2]

Comparison between the students with the highest and the lowest quality score according to the expert evaluation.

The aim of this section is to establish a comparison between the processes that led to the best and the worst interpretation results, corresponding to Student 4 and Student 1, respectively.

Firstly, as shown in Table 2, the distribution of time was more homogenous in the case of Student 1 as opposed to Student 4. This could indicate a more efficient time distribution by the latter, which destined the most time to practise the sections that all participants classified as the most difficult, rather than dedicating the same amount of time to all sections.

Secondly, Student 4 exhibited more sophisticated learning strategies, with a more advanced symbolic production that indicates more reflection upon the procedures chosen to achieve the best result (see Figure 1 and quote in the previous section). The most significant among these strategies is the use of self-regulation, predominantly on the self-reflection and performance phases (McPherson et al. 2019).

On the other hand, when Student 1 was required to recall her interpretation process, her description was less precise. The technical resources used to solve the difficulties found in the piece were those that typically novel students attribute to a “comfort zone”, that is: open strings, first and third position. Besides, when asked specifically about the bars corresponding to code B1-Part 1, where it is technically required to go past third position, Student 1 admittedly reached for that high note just to go back to her most comfortable position as soon as possible, as opposed to Student 4 who ascended progressively from fourth to fifth position, adapting her technique to the musical requirements of the piece.

These differences indicate that the participant with the best result in terms of interpretation quality also exhibits a more mature approach to study, employing more sophisticated processes. This contrast is not surprising taking into account the academic level of both students, since despite the evaluation being based on anonymised audio recordings, the highest score was obtained by Student 4, who was in 6th year, 4 years more advanced than Student 1. For this reason, it is also relevant to compare the results and processes of students in the same academic level, as done in the next section.

Comparison between students in the same academic year

In the ranking assessed by the viola expert, there is a notable difference of 40 points between the second-best rated interpretation, corresponding to Student 2, and the interpretation of Student 1. Unlike in the previous section, in this case both participants were in the same academic year, and therefore could be considered as equals in terms of performing the proposed task. That leads to comparing what has already been discussed about the process of Student 1 with that of Student 2, paying attention to similarities and differences, as well as observing whether there are aspects in common between the learning processes of Student 2 and Student 4 (who achieved the best score).

As shown in Table 2, the time distribution of Student 2 is more similar to Student 4 than to Student 1. Students 2 and 4 exhibit a more heterogeneous distribution of each code, with more time dedicated to code B1-Part 1 than the other participants.

On the other hand, Student 2 was the participant that destined the least amount of time to symbolic production, while at the same time being the participant that required the longest time in total for her practice session. However, the relevant factors are *how* and *when* did she progress on this type of production (Pramling 1996). She started her learning session with symbolic processing, an activity that was not combined with any category of musical production and that, as can be seen on her account of the process, was aimed to implement a learning strategy. In other words, she used deliberate practice, a series of activities destined to set goals in the learning process (Ericsson et al. 1993; Jørgensen 2008; Macnamara & Maitra 2019). Furthermore, in their self-evaluation, both Student 2 and Student 1 stressed the importance of learning strategies based on repetition (Jørgensen & Hallam 2016), as opposed to the self-regulation strategies employed by Student 4.

Students 1 and 2 not only used the same learning strategies based on repetition, but also the same fingerings for the interpretation of the piece. Despite that fact, there are two

notable differences among them. The first difference is that Student 2 recounted the process with more detail and awareness of the strategies used, as opposed to Student 1. The second difference is the presence, in the case of Student 2, of a more diverse set of learning resources that complement repetition (checking tuning by means of open strings, scales, intonation, creative exercises to practise position changes). Besides, despite using the same fingerings, in the case of Student 2 they derived from a process of exploration, testing out different fingerings and choosing the best, whereas in the case of Student 1 this exploration was not present, and the participant just tended to gravitate towards her “comfort zone”.

Finally, regarding the time required to complete the task, it is worth noting that Student 2, upon finishing the study of the piece, asked for a metronome so that she could perfect her interpretation result by making the most of the time available for the practise. This fact, along with a constant habit of checking the tune, indicated that Student 2 exhibited a higher level of motivation towards success in the proposed task.

Discussion

After presenting the results obtained from the observation of the learning sessions and comparing them in relation to improving the quality of the interpretation, the next step is to assess how these results could be connected to the aims and questions proposed for this study. One of the main points of interest for this research was for the students to approach the learning of music that is not familiar to them, which requires them to adapt their knowledge, strategies, and resources to a new context. In relation to this, we could observe how, in the case of a piece of music from the 20th century, obtaining a better interpretation result seemed to be more related to the presence of factors such as self-regulation or motivation than to more traditional factors such as age or academic level. This aligns with the work of Casas & Pozo (2008), who observed that the degree of understanding of music scores seemed to be dependent on whether notation was used in a reproductive way, with the intention of preserving accumulated knowledge, or rather as a tool of organisation, classification, integration, and comparison with other knowledge from the students. Comparing the learning process of a Western Classical piece with one from the 20th century, the students showed more signs of creativity and emotional expression on the latter, since the impression of novelty motivated them to use strategies to find the meaning with a more flexible thought process, as opposed to the more automated, repetitive forms of learning generated by the first piece.

Regarding the decisions and strategies applied in the learning processes, although in general terms all the students in pre-professional music studies learnt a fragment of atonal music from the 20th century, the one in the highest academic level—6th year of PPMS—, showed a more sophisticated conception of learning (Marín et al. 2014). This allowed her to achieve the best interpretation result in comparison to the students on lower levels—2nd and 3rd year of PPMS—whose approach to practise as Jørgensen and Hallam (2016) say, is primarily based on playing sections of the piece continuously without correcting or reflecting upon the possible errors or difficulties encountered along the way. On the other hand, the student with the most advanced level of education questions, reflects upon and adapts her fingerings not depending on her own comfort, but with the idea of favouring the musical intentions of the piece.

Furthermore, it could also be observed how the quality of the study and subsequently, of the interpretation, did not depend as much on the academic level of the student but on other factors such as self-regulation and motivation for learning. This can be seen in the comparison between Students 1 and 2 since, despite being in the same level of education, Student 2 showed signs of motivation and learning strategies that notoriously improved

the quality of her interpretation result in contrast with Student 1. As discussed by López-Íñiguez and Bennett (2020), the development of instrumentalist musicians' capabilities involves a complex web of factors such as vocational concerns, long-held perceptions of success, education systems and, particularly, motivation—which brings them closer to developing an autonomous and self-regulated form of learning (McPherson & Zimmerman 2011; McPherson et al. 2019). The present study underlines the importance of self-regulation processes in learning, which improves the students' autonomy in the study of music from different aesthetics. In this context, this study served to observe how self-regulation processes are also present in learning music from the 20th century which, due to its seemingly aesthetic complexity, is rarely included in the syllabus of pre-professional music studies.

This fact brings light on the social implications the present study may have for the future of musical education, since current students will be the future teachers and performers, and the music from the 20th and 21st centuries will still seem foreign to them for as long as the knowledge and experience of it is not promoted in their education in the present. Therefore, our responsibility as educational agents or agents involved in music in any other form, be it as performers, researchers, or any other nature of participation, is to serve as an example for future musicians. As Sloboda (1986) stated, learners seem to have a natural ability to familiarise themselves with the rules of language and, consequently, of music, as long as they are exposed to examples.

Finally, with regards to the limitations of this research, it is important to note that this study was carried out in a single pre-professional music studies conservatory, so the results obtained are subject to the social and educational context of this particular school. In addition, the number of participants was also very reduced, despite being the entirety of the students enrolled in Viola at the time the data was gathered. Although generalising these results is not intended, there is an invitation to critically reflect upon the findings presented and their similarities with previous studies. The future perspectives of this study are directed towards the consideration of music from the 20th and 21st centuries, not only in the field of musical education but also in what concerns musical research. Delving into the learning processes of music from different aesthetics leads to a more complete perspective on how learning occurs and how students adapt their resources, strategies, and psychological processes to interpret and understand different kinds of music that, despite the aesthetic disparity, have the same constitutional elements, and activate the same processes on the students based on the use they make of the musical text. ■

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Annex I

Table 3. Script for the semi-structured interview.

N°	Question
1	How do you value your experience of the study of this musical piece? Was it a positive or a negative experience?
2	Did you find it easy or difficult? On a scale of 1-10, how difficult did you find it?
3	How would you assess your result on the interpretation of the piece? Which are some positive aspects of your interpretation and which aspects do you think that need to improve?
4	What emotions or adjectives would you use to describe the experience of interpreting this piece?
5	Did you understand what happens in the piece on an interpretative level (in the sense of tension, distension, more or less intensity, where does the music flow...)?
6	Could you describe what happens musically in the piece or what does this fragment represent to you?
7	Which aspects caught your attention first? In what order did you approach the study and why?
8	Which fingerings did you use and why? Could you recount the interpretation process, explaining your fingerings and giving your assessment?
9	Regarding bars 10-20, did you start with the bow up or down? Why? In which position? Why did you use those bowings instead of others?
10	Regarding bars 21-38, how did you plan the way up to bar 25 (fingerings and bowing distribution)? And the descension to bar 38?
11	Did you find any technical or musical aspect that was new or unknown to you?
12	What technical or musical difficulties did you find?
13	Which bar or bars were the most difficult for you? What strategies did you use to overcome that technical difficulty?
14	During the study of this fragment, what concerns or factors were the most important for you (musical aspects, tuning, bow strokes, vibrato, solfège...)?

Annex II

Figure 2. Dmitri Shostakovich (1906–75): Sonata for Viola and Piano, Op. 147, first movement, solo part, bars 1–43. Copyright for Finland © Fennica Gehrman Oy, Helsinki. Published by permission.

Moderato ♩ = 104

1 *pizz.*
p

5

10 *arco*

16

22 *cresc.* *f*

28 *dim.*

34 *p* *pizz.*

40 *2*

Abstract

Instrumental practice, with regards to the psychological processes surrounding it, is of particular relevance in education, since the type of practice performed by the musician is considered a key factor for skill development. The present study, by means of an ex post facto prospective design, aimed to delve into the learning processes that a group of viola students went through in order to approach a piece of atonal music from the 20th century—an aesthetic context with which they were not yet familiarised. After analysing the data employing qualitative coding, we obtained a distribution of the production systems and psychological processes of each student on different moments of a 1-hour learning session. Then, the results of several students were compared in order to determine which circumstances may inform and lead to different musical interpretations of this repertoire. The analysis and comparison of these results brought to light how factors such as the involvement of self-regulation processes or motivation for learning have a bigger impact on the quality of interpretation than other commonly observed factors such as age or academic level. Finally, the study underlines the importance of self-regulation processes in learning, which improves the student's autonomy in the study of music from different aesthetics. This fact brings light on the social implications of this line of study for the future of musical education, since improving the knowledge and experience of music from the 20th and 21st centuries in an educational context is vital for its understanding and for the quality of its performance by future musicians. ■

Keywords: contemporary music; instrumental music learning; music conservatory; music education; Shostakovich; viola.

“You just had to learn to live with it”: Gendered and sexual misconduct in classical music culture in Finland

Introduction

According to a 2018 survey by the Finnish Musicians’ Union (Seye 2018), 51% of women and 20% of men reported exposure to sexual harassment (SH) in various music cultures and institutions in Finland. Of those who had experienced SH within the classical music sector, 69% had experienced it in orchestras, and 28% in educational institutions (Seye 2018). A more recent survey (Inklusiiv 2022) shows that 76% of respondents had personally experienced inappropriate behavior in the Finnish music industry. Further, 65% of the respondents aged 20 to 25 had experienced SH. As many as 40% of respondents aged 20 to 25 that had experienced inappropriate behavior had experienced it in teaching situations (Inklusiiv 2022).

Inspired by the global #MeToo movement (Burke 2021) while also reflecting the statistics cited above, Finnish print media have published numerous articles about SH and emotional abuse (EA) in the classical music sector (e.g., Saarikoski 2020a, 2020b; Karemo 2020). SH and sexual violence (SV) in classical music culture have also been frequently reported in foreign media (e.g., Cooper 2017; Harding 2017; Gault 2020; Brug 2018; Wang & Drivsholm 2020; Prentice 2022), suggesting that the structures and practices of this music culture share conditions across countries that explain the prevalence of these phenomena.

Despite the known statistics, academic research discussing the publicly acknowledged phenomena of SH, SV, or EA in the field of classical music and related music industries has increased only recently (e.g., Browning 2016; Macarthur et al. 2017; Strong & Raine 2019; Scharff 2020; 2021; Gibson 2023). Drawing on interviews with 14 Finnish, white professional classical women musicians, I focus primarily on instances of gendered and sexual misconduct and the associated EA in educational institutions and learning environments. I explore how specific understandings of gender and sexuality, related traditional power hierarchies, narratives, and widespread practices within classical music allow for G&SM and associated EA in classical music culture, particularly in classical music education. Through this Finland-based study, I contribute to wider ongoing research on these phenomena.

By “gendered and sexual misconduct” (G&SM), I refer to a range of behaviors, including, *gendered misconduct*. To this I include what gender studies scholar Carstensen (2016, 276–277) discusses as the “light grey” zone of SH, such as dirty jokes, generalized sexist statements, and behavior that can damage gender equality, usually by reinforcing male dominance. Secondly, my definition of G&SM also includes *sexual misconduct*. Leaning on the definition by Page et al. (2019, 1311), in my research, sexual misconduct encompasses power-based behavior such as SH, sexual advances, sexualized communication, and grooming (the process of preparing the target of sexual misconduct). I also discuss EA that contributed to grooming, such as harmful verbal behavior or emotional neglect (Stirling & Kerr 2008, 173, 178; Bull & Page 2021; Ramstedt in press). I exclude the term *sexual violence* from my definition of G&SM, as none of my interviewees reported rape, pressured or coercive sex, or violence – which Kelly (1988, 77) includes in her definition of SV. Further, following Page et al. (2019, 1311), I use *misconduct* to “signal that this is a matter of professional behavior

in the workplace, and to ensure that the focus remains on the responsibility of the staff member, and their employer, for maintaining professional conduct in their dealings with students.” According to Page et al. (2019, 1312), using the term misconduct avoids defining SH exclusively as “*unwanted* behavior.” SH is not necessarily identified as inappropriate at the time of the incident. The term G&SM takes into consideration processes and conditions that might contribute to normalizing SH (Carstensen 2016, 268; Page et al. 2019, 1312).

Gendered and sexual misconduct in classical music culture

Much research has documented gender, racial, and class-based inequalities in modern-day classical music culture (e.g., Yoshihara 2007; Scharff 2018; Griffiths 2019; Bull & Scharff 2021; Kolbe 2021; Bull et al. 2023). Several studies have drawn connections between gendered, racial, and class hierarchies and musicians’ precariousness (e.g., Macarthur et al. 2017; Cannizzo & Strong 2020; Black Lives in Music 2021). The precariousness of classical musicians’ work and the reliance on informal recruitment has in turn been linked with making it “difficult to speak out against sexual harassment” (Scharff 2020, 24). SH, SV, and/or EA in classical music culture have previously been researched in the contexts of classical music history (Koivisto-Kaasik in press; Saloranta in press), contemporary music and screen music composers (Strong & Cannizzo 2017; Hennekam et al. 2019; Strong & Cannizzo 2019; Cannizzo & Strong 2020), classical musicians in the UK and Germany (Scharff 2018; 2020), and brass players in North America (Schmalenberger & Maddox 2019). Even though SH and EA in music education have already received some academic attention (e.g., Bull 2019; 2022; Özevin 2022; Wickström 2023; Gibson 2023; Ramstedt in press), research on these issues remains scarce. In this paper, I focus specifically on G&SM in classical music education.

Because there is still a lack of research on G&SM, and specifically grooming, perpetrated by music instrument teachers, this paper builds upon research on G&SM and EA in coach-athlete relationships (e.g., Burke 2001; Fasting & Brackenridge 2009) and recent studies on staff-student relationships in academia (e.g., Bull & Page 2021). These studies are important reference points for this research, as they provide valuable insights on G&SM committed by teachers/coaches in contexts and power hierarchies that are comparable to those of classical music education. The relationships and hierarchies between coaches and athletes, and between university staff members and students, are similar to those between teachers and students in classical music culture. Athletic coaches may have overlapping roles as dietitians, life coaches, psychologists, and sports experts (Stirling & Kerr 2009, 228, 237) that are similar to those roles held by classical music teachers in their students’ lives as personal coaches, role models, gatekeepers to career opportunities, and general experts of classical music. In classical music culture, power discrepancies between student and teacher are also emphasized through common learning settings. As music education researcher Juntunen (2014, 8) notes, higher music education often relies on the traditional master-pupil learning setting, in which expertise is considered to be transmitted by example, guidance, and support (e.g., Gaunt 2009, 180).

Teachers’ overlapping roles, as well as gendered hierarchies, thus contribute to “invisible structures of power,” which, according to Bull and Page (2021, 1058), can make students in higher education vulnerable to sexual misconduct (e.g., grooming) in particular. Bull and Page (2021, 1061) explore how heteronormativity is linked with sexual misconduct by leaning on the writings of Gavey (2005/2019, 8), who argues that “dominant discourses of heterosexuality operate to reinforce gendered relations of power through which women’s (and men’s) choices and control in heterosex are potentially compromised.” However, as Hirsch and Khan (2020, xxvi) point out, “thinking of men as predators and women as prey misses so much” and provides only limited opportunities to find solutions to G&SM and

SV, as this approach concentrates on individuals instead of larger social systems, norms, and constructions. Indeed, Bull and Page (2021, 1068) argue that heteronormativity can camouflage gendered power dynamics. Further, “gendered socialisation reveals how heterosexualised norms, practices and identities structure everyday interactions as well as being institutionalised into formal structures of power” (Bull & Page 2021, 1068). In this paper, I build upon these research perspectives by focusing on G&SM and the associated EA in the specific sociocultural conditions of Finnish classical music culture.

To understand the underlying traditions and tendencies that facilitate G&SM in classical music, I analyze the social circumstances of G&SM described by the interviewees by applying, as my key analytical tool, the notion of “social imaginaries” (Gatens 1996/2003; 2004; Churcher & Gatens, 2019). Feminist philosopher Gatens (1996/2003, viii) uses this to encompass images, symbols, representations, and narratives through which “we make sense of social bodies, and which determine their status and what is deemed their appropriate treatment.” Feminist philosophers Churcher and Gatens (2019, 152) concern themselves with the “deeper ethical import of heterosexual encounters,” and examine how they are governed by dominant norms of masculine entitlement and feminine submission created and sustained by social imaginaries. I use this notion to examine beliefs about gender and sexuality that appear in the interviewees’ experiences of G&SM, as well as the attendant power hierarchies, established images, narratives, and representations in classical music culture. I discuss how the given social imaginaries establish damaging standards that normalize and facilitate G&SM. Drawing on Hirsch and Khan’s (2020, 248–249) study of sex, power, and assaults on university campuses, particularly their understanding of power, I analyze how power is distributed in situations of G&SM in classical music education.

Research material and its limitations

This article analyzes thirteen thematically sectioned, in-depth interviews and one written interview.¹ All the interviewees were white, Finnish, women musicians between 25 and 45 years of age who played the piano, violin, viola, or cello. At the time of the interviews, the interviewees were either students in or graduates from higher classical music education institutions in Finland. All were working in classical music as teachers and/or musicians. Interviews that lasted between approximately 60 and 90 minutes were conducted once with each participant between November 2019 and May 2020.² Conducting in-depth interviews allows the researcher to gather “deep” knowledge and information in qualitative research. Moreover, it allowed me to study the contextual boundaries of experiences of inequality in Finnish classical music culture, as well as to reflect on the issues at hand (Johnson & Rowlands 2012, 100–102). A thematic analysis of the resulting material was carried out in dialogue with the chosen feminist theoretical framework (Gatens 1996/2003; Churcher & Gatens 2019; Hirsch & Khan 2020).

The interviews were conducted in either Finnish or Swedish – the official languages in Finland – and were audio recorded and then transcribed, with permission from the interviewees. I personally invited two of these participants to take part in the research. The remaining participants signed up through an invitation on the webpage of the research association Suoni³ in February 2020, and later shared in social media. To ensure anonymity and avoid building connections between the quotations used in this paper and other quotations in other publications based on this interview material, none of the interviewees are referred to by their names nor pseudonyms. Moreover, by translating the quotations to English and not including the original versions in the endnotes, potentially recognizable colloquialisms in Finnish or Swedish have been effaced. The participants had the opportunity to grant consent for this article and to review or withdraw their remarks.

Pianists, violinists, and cellists form a sufficiently coherent group of research participants in the context of classical music. They remain the instrumentalists who most commonly perform with orchestras as soloists. Furthermore, these instruments have a vast canonized solo repertoire and, along with the viola, form a common chamber music ensemble that originated in 19th-century Romantic repertoire. The chosen groups of instrumentalists also entail limits for this study, and thus the results cannot directly reflect other instrumental subcultures of classical music. For example, female brass players, conductors, and percussionists are even more underrepresented in classical music, which results in different experiences of G&SM (e.g., Bartleet 2008; Schmalenberger & Maddox 2019; Bull et al. 2023).

Another limitation of this study is that the interviewees are all white, and were not asked about their sexual orientation, socio-economic background, or status, nor did they spontaneously discuss class or socio-economic standing. While I analyze white normativity and whiteness in classical music culture in Finland elsewhere (Ramstedt 2023a, 98), and discuss sexual orientation briefly because “concern about displaying other than heterosexuality was also prevalent in the interviews,” this study has intersectional limitations regarding race, sexuality, and class (Crenshaw 1989). However, class and socio-economic status in Finland play a markedly different role than in, say, the UK. While early music education and music education in Finnish music schools are subsidized by the state, higher music education is free of charge for all EU/EEA students. Nevertheless, many researchers have demonstrated a link between classical music culture and the path to becoming a classical musician and the status and cultural values of the middle and upper classes (e.g., Bull & Scharff 2017; Kolbe 2021; Jääskeläinen 2021). Even though the connection between class and classical music is also evident in Finland, it was not a key aspect in this research material regarding G&SM. Thus, this study offers a necessarily limited critical account of manifestations of G&SM in the Finnish classical music scene.

During the interviews, the participants were asked about their childhood teachers and role models, and how they ended up as professional musicians. They were also asked whether they had encountered any misconduct, in what situation it had happened, the position of the perpetrator in relation to them, whether they had reported the incident, and the possible impacts on their well-being and musicianship. The interviewees who described G&SM reflected on their experiences, occurring from teenage to young adulthood. Most cases of G&SM in this research material occurred between young women and older men, echoing not only the statistics of SH in the Finnish music field (Seye 2018; Inklusiiv 2022), but also previous research findings (Strong & Cannizzo 2017; Strong & Raine 2019).

The present research was driven by my own lengthy background as a woman classical pianist and piano teacher in this field. However, my “insider position” is blurred by the multiple ways in which I position myself as social self-other in terms of gender, ethnicity, professional status, language, and race in relation to my research participants (Savvides et al. 2014, 413). This positioning in the “space between” (Corbin Dwyer & Buckle 2018), different spaces, and social statuses has impacted my current research. While it has given me an opportunity to understand some cultural underpinnings and challenges that women face in classical music, my status as a white researcher gives me only limited access to experiences and understandings of inequality because of the privileges related specifically to whiteness. My social status most likely affected the fact that all the musicians who agreed to participate in this research were similarly white women. As a member of the Finnish research society Suoni (n.d.), which practices activist music research, I also position myself in the context of societal and action-orientated music scholarship. In my research, activism means that I aim to demonstrate the *status quo* of gendered inequality in Finnish classical music culture, as well as producing new knowledge about forms of inequality that can subsequently be used to outline preventive measures.

Normalizing gendered and sexual misconduct in classical music culture

The grey zone of gendered and sexual misconduct

The participants in this research experienced G&SM from teachers, staff members at their educational institutions, and/or coworkers. Some had already experienced G&SM by the time they were teenagers. One interviewee explained that she had been harassed as a high-school student by her music teacher's older colleague. When she told her own teacher about this, he responded, "you do understand that men like you, don't you?" This teacher's reply can be interpreted in two ways. First, the teacher was suggesting that as a late teenager, the student should have known to expect attention from men. Second, the teacher assumed harassment to be a "natural" part of the heteronormative attention granted young women by men. These problematic presuppositions reflect the norms that frequently appeared elsewhere in the interview material.

One interviewee informed me that her teacher had a habit of hugging her before and after her one-to-one instrumental lessons. She experienced this as uncomfortable because the teacher was known for hugging only female students. The interviewee suspected that the reason for this behavior was that the teacher was a lonely, middle-aged man with many young, attractive female students. The interviewee struggled with the habit and described it as "[s]o innocent... but on the other hand... a bit difficult," indicating that underneath the practice of hugging, there was some tension that she found uncomfortable. Similarly, another interviewee explained that in some situations, her teacher had touched her in a way, that "went beyond [an appropriate teacher–student relationship]."

These examples can be seen as "grey zone" behaviors, as defined by Carstensen (2016, 271; see also Bull & Page 2021), because they are ambiguous ways of acting that may be unwelcome but are still not considered "real" SH. According to Carstensen (2016, 277), SH is formally identified only when "the objective and subjective definitions coincide," resulting in behaviors that may be identified as SH by the subject but not necessarily objectively confirmed as such. The existence of the grey zone reveals that some codes of conduct partly allow for certain kinds of G&SM. Like Bull and Page's research (2021, 1068), what emerges from the interviewees' experiences in my study is how education institutions reproduce and rely on heteronormativity "of interaction as a part of teaching and learning culture." The gendered misconduct depicted above suggests that there are social imaginaries in which women are considered as generally available for touching and subtle harassment. Such underlying social imaginaries are illustrated in greater detail below.

Appearance ideals and intersecting inequalities

Several interviewees observed that teenagers and young women were addressed in terms of their femininity and supposed sexual availability. One interviewee reported that she was told by a member of the jury in an instrumental competition, "[y]our playing is so sexy." Another reported that when she was a teenager, her teacher declared to her, "I cannot teach you anymore because you are so beautiful!" The idea that their bodies were sexualized made these musicians extremely uncomfortable. Similarly, reflecting how teenagers and young women could be sexualized and objectified by their teachers, one interviewee witnessed two under-40-year-old male teachers discussing their underaged female students' looks in an inappropriate, sexist manner. Churcher and Gatens (2019, 155) argue that "[c]entral to norms governing male heterosexuality and gendered codes of conduct are masculine and feminine body-images that play into heterosexual imaginaries." The encounters depicted above reflect social imaginaries I have discussed elsewhere in relation to performance ideals in classical music culture. Based on this same interview material, I have argued that "the appearance ideals recognized by my interviewees can be summed up as a

social imaginary that idealized restrictive Western beauty standards, thinness, able-bodiedness, and heterosexuality.” (Ramstedt 2023a, 98).

Similarly, the interviewees’ experiences of sexist remarks by male teachers contributed to behavior that reinforced male dominance by sexualizing and objectifying feminine bodies (Carstensen 2016, 276; Ramstedt 2023a, 96–99). In their experiences of G&SM, the interviewees were presumed to be heterosexual by the perpetrators. This highlights the prevalence of heteronormativity in classical music culture, but also the more general structuring role of heteronormativity as power hierarchies related to G&SM (Bull & Page 2021, 1068). While heteronormative power hierarchies and social imaginaries are at play here, (Bull & Page 2021, 1060; Ramstedt 2023a), it is important to stress that many identity markers such as race, class, sexual orientation, gender, and citizenship intersect (Crenshaw 1989) in various ways regarding how G&SM and EA are experienced and perceived (Calafell 2014; Rospenda et al. 1998; Hirsch & Khan 2020, 244). Further, the social imaginaries surrounding white Finnish women classical musicians differ from those attached to Black, minority ethnic, and indigenous musicians, and musicians of color. As Scharff (2018, 59) points out, the sexualization of female players also “intersects with racialised stereotypes,” as depicted by many researchers (e.g., Yoshihara 2007, 119) even though racial inequalities can often be disavowed in classical music culture (Scharff 2018, 85; Ramstedt 2023a). Similarly, for LGBTQ+ individuals, SH and SV typically intertwine with experiences of being discriminated against based on gender and/or sexuality (Hirsch & Khan 2020, 134).

Sexual advances

Some interviewees were also the targets of direct sexual advances in the form of invitations to have sex, sent to them as text messages by teachers and authority figures. One interviewee, who had received a direct sexual invitation from a musician in a position of authority, told me that she had to struggle not to apologize to the perpetrator for declining his invitation. Initially, she blamed herself for perhaps misleading him. However, at the time of the interview, she was upset with herself that blaming herself had been her first reaction; she had realized that the direct SH was not her fault. This interviewee’s observation illustrates how women may blame themselves for G&SM. Narratives in which subjects of G&SM are, even indirectly, assumed as responsible are damaging in that they overlook the responsibility of the perpetrators (Page et al. 2019; Bull & Page 2021). Scharff (2020, 18) argues that the image of a single person standing against SH due to the hierarchies and uneven gendered powers of classical music industry is unrealistic. Moreover, women’s alleged empowerment in the #MeToo era can have disempowering effects for individuals who are unable to call out or fight against the prevalence of SH: “[t]he figure of the strong, empowered woman who calls out perpetrators may thus disempower working-class, queer, trans, Black and minority-ethnic women in particular ways” (Scharff 2020, 24).

Many of the interviewees were acutely aware of how women could easily encounter G&SM and actively tried to avoid it. One interviewee explained: “As a woman [orchestra player] I have had to realize from a very young age that if I discuss musical things or ask for advice, I need to make very sure that... I am not ‘offering myself’ [sexually] ...I have to set my own boundaries very clearly.” The idea that giving attention to some men, even by asking for musical advice, could be interpreted as sexual advances reflects the extreme ways in which women can be reduced to sexually available subjects. Further, it reflects the structuring logic of heterosexual conviction, which supports “male entitlement and female acquiescence” while rendering women’s submission in particular as normative (Churcher & Gatens 2019, 153–154; see also Butler 1990/2014, xii).

While women are assumed through heteronormative femininity to be sexually available, men, on the other hand, are occasionally depicted based on a narrative that centers the

“male sexual drive” and “men’s need for sex as natural and forceful” (Gavey 2005/2019, 98–99). Social imaginaries reflected in narratives of men’s heteronormative sex drive (discussed in Ramstedt 2023a, 101) seem to normalize and explain misconduct, as illustrated by one interviewee who suggested that the mere fact of a woman being younger already makes her susceptible to misconduct from an older man. The interviewee explained that “when you have young women as students ... it’s probably easy to start taking advantage of that.” Another interviewee who was subjected to G&SM explained that “[SH] is something people shush about; even women [say] that ‘we can’t do anything about it,’ it just is how things are ... that you just had to learn to live with it.” Churcher and Gatens (2019, 154) write that social imaginaries confer different meanings and values “on particular bodies and practices, and establish collective norms of behaviour.” I argue that G&SM is normalized in classical music culture through social imaginaries, established for example through performance ideals (Ramstedt 2023a, 98; 101), which structure and produce gendered power discrepancies and narratives of sexuality. However, a closer look at theories regarding the distribution of power helps us acquire a better understanding of how power hierarchies besides those related to gender also structure G&SM.

Power and authority

Hirsch and Khan (2020, 247–251) maintain that power could be differentiated into three main forms: something people possess, something people practice, and something people enjoy because of structural advantages (such as being a teacher, professor, or musical conductor). Many of my interviewees mentioned their perpetrators’ professional positions as reasons for not reporting misconduct. One interviewee explained: “I wasn’t as rude to [him] as I would have been to a normal person.” While authority figures in classical music enjoy power due to musical skills (e.g., Anttila 2019; Ramstedt 2023b), gendered hierarchies (e.g., Bull 2019; Ramstedt 2023a), and structural advantages (Hirsch & Khan 2020; Ramstedt 2023b), persons in positions of power and prestige were also perceived by the interviewees as possessing power over students’ career trajectories, and other resources, such as career opportunities. They also often possess social power (Hirsch & Khan 2020, 249), such as social influence – for example, the appreciation that teachers or musicians enjoy from their colleagues within the Finnish classical music scene (Ramstedt, 2023b). While social imaginaries and associated beliefs and understandings of gender and sexuality normalize G&SM, the hierarchical distribution of power makes reporting G&SM even more difficult.

Authority and power hierarchies also affect how G&SM can be experienced. I have presented accounts of misconduct that my interviewees experienced as uncomfortable, inappropriate, unwelcome, and/or unacceptable, although in some cases it had been unclear to them if SH had indeed taken place. One interviewee also stated that “there are extremely amazing relationships that have started from student and teacher roles [between persons who have first had a teacher–student relationship]” and elaborated that it is not easy to know where to draw boundaries. This sentiment is further illustrated by instances in which sexual attention from male authority figures were seen as positive or desirable. Some interviewees reported that young women might take it as a compliment to be approached by male authority figures, and that being harassed caused envy from other young women. Hirsch and Khan (2020, 189) argue that reputation and social power may also protect harassers from accountability as “high status provides men with some protection against allegations of sexual assault, because it is harder for others to imagine that sex with such men could be unwanted.” The envy and admiration at being approached (harassed) by male authorities reveal a key paradox – while G&SM may be perceived as inappropriate, it also aligns with and illustrates many of the social imaginaries discussed above. G&SM demonstrates the value and treatment that social imaginaries prevalent in classical music culture

depict as appropriate for young, white women (Gatens 1996/2003, viii). It epitomizes what the social imaginaries have suggested all along: young women are sexually available while men are governed by their sexual drive. As one interviewee explained, “I have lived in a world where it is not understood how inappropriate it is that an old man and a very young [instrumentalist] girl have an affair. And I am talking about a barely-18-year-old.”

Classical music teachers’ grooming behavior

The term “grooming” was originally coined by sociologist Finkelhorn (1994) to describe child sexual abusers’ strategies of preparing children for abuse. The notion has been frequently used in research on the sexual abuse of young athletes (e.g., Brackenridge & Fasting 2005), and in academia, between adults (e.g., Bull & Page 2021). In their report on sexual misconduct in higher education in the United Kingdom, Bull and Rye (2018, 10) define “grooming” as behaviors that blur the boundaries between professional and personal relationships, with the aim of preparing the subject for harassment, assault, or abuse. Moreover, the intentionality of grooming should not be seen as its main defining feature, instead “the experience of the person targeted should be foregrounded” because even behavior that is less explicit or allegedly unintentional can have serious and long-term consequences for its targets (Bull & Page 2021, 1069; Bull & Rye 2018). This is also apparent in my research material. Hirsch and Khan (2020, 249) maintain that one form of power is what people practice or do. Through grooming behavior, people may gain power in the form of trust and emotional dependence. In the following sections I outline how subtle grooming appeared in the interview material.

Blurring of boundaries

One common way in which teachers gain power, as highlighted in my interview material, is through actions that blur personal boundaries in various ways (in line with Bull & Page 2021). One interviewee explained that all the teenage girls used to admire their teacher, who “absolutely realized it. ... It feels like he only encouraged it.” This suggests that the teacher knowingly engaged in grooming behavior by spending his free time with the girls. Similarly, another interviewee explained that “the teacher never maintained boundaries with his students.” By sharing private things about his marriage, he also blurred personal boundaries to heighten trust between him and his students. Another interviewee explained that when she was 17 years old, her teacher started to comment on her clothing and appearance. These comments suggest that the teacher’s behavior emerged from a social imaginary, as described earlier, in which young women are objectified and sexualized. The teacher also started to ask her out to dinner and kept sending her non-sexualized text messages about topics outside of the taught subject.

Because of the significant age differences between teachers and students in all of the boundary-blurring examples in my interview material, the older male teachers had both psychological maturity (Stirling & Kerr 2009, 235) and, most probably, significantly more sexual experience (Hirsch & Khan 2020, 249) than the younger student, which contributed to grooming behavior. One interviewee, who experienced grooming that did not lead to SH, stated that she was saved by the “safety net” connections she had with other musicians and music-related social networks. This emphasizes how isolation and limited access to social networks can heighten the risk of grooming (Bull & Rye 2018; Brackenridge & Fasting 2005, 38). Some interviewees reported that they were more vulnerable to grooming because they had recently moved out of their childhood homes.

Power disparities in the classical music classroom

Hirsch and Khan (2020, xix) note, “space has a social power that elicits and produces be-

havior.” Power disparities were also related to the typical spatial settings of classical music instrumental lessons, which happen in one-on-one situations, usually behind closed, even soundproof doors. The closed space that is supposed to offer a safe learning environment with a (supposedly) trusted adult may actually make the unequal power distribution even more pronounced. In my research material, the historically long-standing hierarchical setting related to the master and pupil traditions of classical music lessons was repeatedly mentioned in my interview material, contradicting Juntunen’s (2014) research on teachers’ understandings and views of their pedagogical approaches in the Sibelius Academy across different music genres. Juntunen (2014, 21) shows that the hierarchy between teachers and students was considered equal by the teachers, even in master-pupil learning settings. However, because the long-standing hierarchical master-pupil setting was often mentioned in the study at hand, I argue that it can be associated with a wider social imaginary in classical music that assumes a strong tradition of power disparity between “master and pupil” and emphasizes teachers’ power (as has been widely discussed in Pozo et al. 2022).

Music education researcher Owens (2014, 60) argues that the power hierarchy, especially the role of the (submissive) “pupil,” can also be maintained by “section leaders, instrument coaches, other teachers, and upper classman.” In other words, the power of space (Hirsch & Khan 2020, xix), especially the social imaginary of power hierarchies related to classical music instrumental lessons, can be maintained outside the classroom by other teachers, by other students, in ensemble playing, and so on. Male teachers in particular also enjoy power due to structural advantage related to gender heteronormative power discrepancies (Hirsch & Khan 2020, 247–251). As Bull and Page (2021, 1068) argue, “the (male) lecturer is in a dominant position, the expert who is in control, and the (female) student is required as part of her role to respect his expertise.” Furthermore, because the interviewees described music as being an enormously important part of their lives during their youth and early adult years, their teachers enjoyed immense power not only in relation to the traditional authority position of classical music teachers, but also as role models. The extreme power disparity is illustrated by two interviewees who compared their devotion to music and their teachers to religious devotion.

Emotionally abusive behavior

According to my interviewees, the hierarchies and unequal distributions of power described thus far also facilitated emotionally abusive behaviors (Ramstedt in press). One interviewee explained how her teacher had engaged in emotionally abusive behavior: “Throughout the years, his strategy was that I was so admired and treasured that I couldn’t let him down in any way ... it was [an] unspoken [assumption] that if I stopped practicing, his admiration might stop, which would have meant for me to [be cast aside].” In the context of classical music, this account highlights how teachers can impose control through the practice of playing an instrument. According to another interviewee, it was only when she described her teacher’s behavior during the interview that she began to realize the extent of her teacher’s control over her “in playing [the instrument] and everything else.” In these cases, the power that the teacher exercised through playing was related to choosing the repertoire for the student as well as controlling, in a detailed manner, the student’s musical execution – for example, by requiring the student to play in a specific, restrictive way. As Stirling and Kerr (2013, 96) argue, emotionally abusive coaching techniques “may enhance an athlete’s degree of compliance and non-self-determined motivation in sport, but may decrease the intrinsic motivation of the athlete.” In the context of my interview material, EA and controlling behavior led to harmful emotional dependence on the teacher, and increased obedience in fear of punishment in the form of EA, which further, in some cases, facilitated the teachers’ intention to engage in SH (in line with Ramstedt in press).

Concluding discussion

In this paper, I have discussed G&SM in the field of classical music with regard to the power asymmetry between music students and teachers as well as the social imaginaries that generate and perpetuate such asymmetry. In the first part of the analysis concerning normalization of G&SM, I examined experiences of the grey zone of G&SM, sexualization, as well as sexual advances and the corresponding behaviors by leaning on Gatens' (1996/2003; 2004 Churcher & Gatens 2019) notion of social imaginary. The experiences of G&SM at the forefront of my research material clearly indicate that the perpetrators assumed that young women would be generally available for touching, harassment, inappropriate comments, and direct sexual advances. These findings reveal a larger social imaginary concerning gender and sexuality in which heteronormative gender hierarchies structure behavior, in that young women are seen as targets for the advances of older men – who might even be seen as predators driven by their sexuality. Gendered hierarchies are further emphasized through other, related power hierarchies. Based on Hirsch and Khan's (2020) understanding of power, I have analyzed how authority and power also impacted how G&SM could be experienced. In some cases, sexual advances from male authority figures were seen as desirable or positive, and also affected accountability. This paradox reveals the value and treatment that prevalent heteronormative social imaginaries suggest: young women are sexually available, and older men are governed by their sexual drives.

In the second analytical section, I examined classical music teachers' grooming behaviors, such as boundary-blurring and emotionally abusive behavior. I demonstrated how teachers are traditionally associated with emphasized authority in the typical spatial settings of classical music lessons. Because of the significant age differences between male teachers and their female pupils, teachers had more psychological maturity as well as often more sexual experience. Through grooming behavior of blurring boundaries and manipulative behavior, teachers could gain power in the form of students' trust in and/or emotional dependence on them. In some cases, the overlapping power discrepancies paved the way for fully-fledged abusive relationships. As discussed at the beginning of this paper, explaining G&SM only through heteronormative gender narratives in the form of "men as predators" and "women as prey" overlooks structures, systems, and constructions related to G&SM (Hirsch & Khan 2020, xxvi). However, as Bull and Page note (2021, 1061), heteronormativity and its camouflaged gendered power dynamics are compounded by other inequalities. I argue that social imaginaries of heteronormative power dynamics are used to normalize harmful behavior in the field of classical music. This is most clearly illustrated in the instances of the grey zone of gendered misconduct, sexualization, and objectification. Most notably, G&SM was assumed to be normal in instances where old male teachers taught young women. That G&SM is expected or accepted calls into question how this is then supported by heteronormativity and how it structures codes of conduct. The multiple other power hierarchies related to structural advantage and social power are also supported by social imaginaries related to classical music culture that associate musical skill with social power and respect, and classical music teachers with accentuated authority. This leaves young women students in particular in a precarious situation.

Such precariousness and power discrepancies also heighten vulnerability to grooming behavior through which teachers could gain power in form of emotional dependence and trust. Not all of the incidents in my research material led to abusive relationships or sexual acts, but all grooming experiences had severe consequences, ranging from anxiety, panic attacks, depression, and sleep deprivation to difficulty in trusting fellow humans and beyond. While no incidents of SV, such as rape, violence, or sexual assault, were mentioned, it should be noted that such experiences are also extremely difficult to report, and might be

shared only after several long interviews (Hirsch & Khan 2021, xxix). Nevertheless, grooming significantly affected the interviewees who had experienced it. One interviewee had been in an abusive relationship with her teacher and explained, “I reacted very strongly, both mentally and physically. Before the instrument lessons, I sometimes vomited from fear and anxiety.” Finally noticing and calling out grooming behavior was difficult for the participants of my research due to the myriad ways in which power was unequally distributed between them and their music teachers.

While this research discussed G&SM only from the limited research material in the context of certain instrumentalists in classical music culture in Finland, and only from the experiences of white women, I suggest that the findings of this paper reflect and further advance ongoing discussions in the international media and research about the reasons behind G&SM in the field of classical music in various countries. I argue that some traits, such as social imaginaries and power hierarchies related to professional authority, gender, and sexuality, might be common to the practice of classical music across diverse sociocultural and geographical contexts. In conclusion, my findings imply that in order to prevent G&SM in classical music culture, the generally accepted customs, practices and social hierarchies of this culture should be further scrutinized in terms of how they may allow for G&SM. Classical music students, teachers, parents, and education institutions should become aware of these processes of G&SM and the various factors that make individuals vulnerable to them. ■

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Notes

[1] One of the interviews was conducted in written form according to the participant's own wish. The interviewed subject consisted of sensitive topics that were easier for the participant to communicate in written form.

[2]

Interviewee 1. Interview in person by author in Helsinki. 29.11.2019.

Interviewee 2. Interview in person by author in Helsinki. 13.12.2019.

Interviewee 3. Interview in person by author in Helsinki. 6.3.2020.

Interviewee 4. Interview in person by author in Helsinki. 7.3.2020.

Interviewee 5. Interview in person by author in Helsinki. 8.3.2020.

Interviewee 6. Interview in videocall by author. 1.4.2020.

Interviewee 7. Interview in videocall by author. 2.4.2020.

Interviewee 8. Interview in videocall by author. 3.4.2020.

Interviewee 9. Interview in videocall by author. 7.4.2020.

Interviewee 10. Interview in videocall by author. 9.4.2020.

Interviewee 11. Interview in videocall by author. 14.4.2020.

Interviewee 12. Interview in videocall by author. 15.4.2020.

Interviewee 13. Interview in videocall by author. 15.4.2020.

Interviewee 14. Interview in writing. 21.5.2020.

[3] <https://www.suoni.fi/toiminta-soi/2020/2/20/osallistu-tutkimukseen-sukupuolittuneesta-vallankyyst-klassisen-musiikin-kulttuurissa>. Retrieved on January 2, 2023.

Abstract

Based on interviews with fourteen Finnish, white, women professional musicians between the ages of 25 and 45, this paper offers an in-depth discussion on how social conditions and structures in Finnish classical music culture create predispositions for gendered and sexual misconduct (G&SM) and associated emotional abuse (EA). By G&SM, I refer to a wide range of behaviors ranging from dirty jokes and generalized sexist statements to sexual harassment and grooming. I focus on instances of G&SM that the interviewees experienced in educational institutions and learning environments, and ask how understandings of gender and sexuality, traditional hierarchies, and common practices in classical music culture allow for G&SM. To understand how underlying traditions of inequality and related social practices contribute to normalizing misconduct, I apply feminist philosopher Gatens' (1996/2003) concept of *social imaginaries*. Using Hirsch and Khan's (2020) understanding of *power*, I analyze how power is distributed in G&SM situations, and how specific sociocultural conditions, traditions, and practices contribute to power hierarchies. I argue that certain prevailing social imaginary concerning gender and sexuality – in which heteronormative gender hierarchies structure behavior, and along with power discrepancies – normalize G&SM and facilitate grooming behavior. ■

Keywords: Social imaginary, sexual harassment, gendered misconduct, sexual misconduct, emotional abuse, classical music, grooming, music education, power hierarchies, heteronormativity, gender dynamics, teachers, students, musicians.

➤ An inquiry into the psychological wellbeing of piano teachers engaged in one-to-one tuition in higher music education: How trauma transfers in teaching

Background

One-to-one vocal and instrumental tuition follows the traditional, or nineteenth-century, ‘apprenticeship’ model, whereby the teacher imparts their knowledge to the student, giving him/her a high level of individual attention (e.g., Burwell, Carey & Bennett 2019; Creech et al. 2008; Gaunt & Papageorgi 2010; Haddon 2009; Jørgensen 2000; Nicholls 2002). This one-to-one approach—provided by institutes of higher music-education—which predominates in Western classical education, is considered a central and valued part of the curriculum (e.g., Gaunt 2017; Pozo et al. 2022).

Nevertheless, while one-to-one tuition is considered to play a crucial part in fostering a successful learning environment for aspiring musicians who wish to be professional, much of the research concerning this approach has focused on the implications for the student rather than for the teacher (Spilt, Koomen & Thijs 2011). There are several reasons for this. First, is the difficulty in accessing vocal and instrumental teachers for such research (Burwell, Carey & Bennett 2019); second, the nature of teaching relationships across institutes of higher music-education is diverse (Gaunt 2011; Presland 2005); third, the degree of support provided by the institutions to the researchers is inconsistent.

Additionally, while there is an established body of literature which recognizes that teaching is a stressful and demanding career (Richardson, Watt & Devos 2013; Shaw 2016), emerging research into the health and wellbeing of teachers engaged in this practice, points to a uniquely stressful educational environment (Perkins et al. 2017; Shaw 2016). Factors such as professional isolation (Sindberg 2011), and juggling teaching while pursuing a career as a professional musician, all combine to create a complex challenges for teachers working in these institutions (Gaunt 2008; Shaw 2016; Spilt et al. 2011).

The lack of institutional support, or structures for professional development—in the context of these intense one-to-one relationships—has been multiply cited. Furthermore, there is neither pedagogical training, or a requirement for formal qualifications (Casas-Mas & López-Íñiguez 2022), a system for assessing the validity of the one-to-one practice, or structured and regulated practice, all of which would enable teachers to self-reflect (Carey et al. 2018; Gaunt 2017; Gaunt, López-Íñiguez & Creech 2021). Also, teachers who work in these institutions are further disadvantaged by being part-time, self-employed, and on zero-hours contracts (Presland 2005). These arrangements are extremely insecure and, as a report by the Incorporated Society of Musicians (2018) has shown, these factors may contribute also to the poor health of the teachers (Sindberg 2011).

Additionally, teachers must contend with a wide range of complex psychological issues such as: emotional awareness, self-regulation, a knowledge of psychological variables, as well as acknowledging students from diverse backgrounds; and, with all this in mind, adapt their methods and techniques to suit each student. These are essential requirements in all areas of teaching, but even more so within the context of such intense interpersonal relationships.

The importance of providing professional support in managing these issues, such as pedagogical training, facilitated reflection and emphasis on psychological processes, has been highlighted in recent research. For example, based on an extensive pilot study of pedagogical practices, Carey et al. (2018) have demonstrated the benefits of adopting formal processes to enable teachers to self-reflect, and to facilitate also problem-solving, support transformative practice, and alleviate teacher isolation, all of which make a strong case for teachers to engage in ongoing, facilitated, critical reflection.

By considering the teacher-student relationship within a mentoring or coaching framework (Gaunt 2017), an important comparison can be made with therapeutic relationships, in which the therapist's role is to guide the client towards self-reflection, self-discovery and personal growth (Horvath & Luborsky 1993; Jones 2005). Equally, the teacher's role might also be compared to that of a midwife, or fellow traveller, thus highlighting the role of collaboration and guidance in this regard (in music, see Gaunt, López-Íñiguez & Creech 2021).

More importantly, while, within the therapeutic context, there are formalized structures in place to prevent countertransference of the therapist's feelings and desires onto the client, there are no such formal structures for vocal and instrumental teachers, which would protect those teaching relationships against the transference of traumatic personal experience and, at the same time, enable them to reflect upon the dynamics of their own interpersonal relationships (Persson 1996).

Aims of the study

The aim of this study was to investigate the psychological factors which contribute to the health and wellbeing of the piano teacher within the one-to-one relationship. The research drew upon the perceptions of nine senior piano teachers, from international institutes of higher music-education, which were presented in an open discussion as part of the London International Piano Symposium (LIPS) hosted by the Royal Academy of Music in 2018. The discussion was based around the question: 'Which psychological factors contribute to a healthy teacher-student relationship in one-to-one piano tuition?' It was video recorded and later transcribed verbatim by the researcher.

It was hoped that the results would provide a clearer understanding—from the teachers' perspective—of the factors that affect their psychological wellbeing, and in turn, inform future interventions and develop formal structures to support the one-to-one relationship. These would include pedagogical training, facilitated reflection and further emphasis on psychological processes encompassing emotional awareness, self-regulation, and knowledge of psychological variables. The results reveal an important connection between the teacher's traumatic past when, as students, they studied with difficult teachers, their personal experiences and their current psychological wellbeing (Baker 2006).

This study is also the first to address: a) the teachers' perspective of the one-to-one relationship in vocal and instrumental pedagogy against the current backdrop of shifting power hierarchies; b) provide a new insight into the factors which can contribute to the dynamics of the relationship; c) show how personal experiences are formed, which not only influence teaching styles, but serves also to cement the power hierarchies.

Methods

Participants

Professional profile of teachers

While twenty teachers attended the focus group, the views of nine teachers only are presented, given that they contributed significantly more to the discussion. The teachers were recruited from the symposium (LIPS), the European Piano Teachers Association and the Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music, UK. The group was aged between 25 and 75 (70% female and 30% male) and selected on the basis that they represented diverse musical institutions, cultures, professional profiles, and piano-teaching experience. Although the group worked with piano students at an early stage of learning, the majority taught at an advanced level, in institutes of higher music-education. It was made clear that those who declined the invitation to participate would not be professionally disadvantaged regarding their positions. Teachers who took part voluntarily were not compensated for their time and gave signed consent to acknowledge their participation in the research.

Professional profile of the panel

The panel comprised two psychologists (both former piano teachers): Prof. John Sloboda, Fellow of the British Psychological Society and Dr Sam Johnson, Clinical Psychologist at the Tavistock and Portman and NHS Foundation Trust, and primary researcher, Cristine MacKie, Director of LIPS—also a former performance tutor at Royal Holloway, University of London. The objective of the panel was to prompt the teachers with questions concerning their psychological wellbeing during one-to-one piano tuition. Also, given the emotive content of the film, Prof. John Sloboda and Dr Sam Johnson provided support for the group in a sensitive manner.

Materials and Procedure

Using a film as a research tool in a mediatised society is becoming increasingly recognised (Given, 2017). The use of media often forms part of the discursive and social practice of developing musicians today, and the film *Madame Sousatska* was selected as the medium for the discussion with the focus group, since it dramatizes the unsatisfactory life of the Russian pianist Maria Levinskaya, who immigrated to London in the 1930s and taught the piano privately on a one-to-one tuition basis. It presents an extreme example of the master-apprentice model, vividly highlighting the intensity of the one-to-one teacher-student relationship. Furthermore, given previous research, which demonstrates teachers' hesitation to reflect on their own practice (Carey et al. 2018), it was thought that the film would serve as stronger tool for opening a dialogue on these issues rather than prompt questions alone.

Since the focus group took place within a three-day global symposium, time was limited allowing three hours only in which to view the film and the discussion which followed it. Following the viewing, the flow of the discussion was unstructured, except for some initial prompt questions posed by the psychologists, which were intended to keep the focus on teacher wellbeing, develop the themes in greater detail, and provide equal opportunity for the teachers to express their views. The discussion, which was recorded onto a videotape, was later transcribed verbatim by the researcher.

Analytical approach

The dataset was read through several times to identify the themes, which were deemed relevant with the aims of the research. These were then reviewed, defined, and collapsed where necessary and then coded and referenced (Braun & Clarke 2006). A selection of the extracts

featured in the final analysis were then examined at a latent level by looking at the underlying ideas put forward and reflecting on the possible assumptions made by the teachers. Also, given that teachers had attended the symposium as a one-off event, it was not possible to offer the group a further discussion, which might have clarified the themes in greater depth.

Ethical approval

A research proposal was submitted for ethical approval alongside a statement of intent for the London International Piano Symposium Forum to the Royal Academy of Music. Ethical approval was granted prior to conducting the research.

Results and Discussion

The aim of this study has been to expose instrumental teachers' perspective on the nature of the one-to-one teacher-student relationship within institutes of higher music-education in connection with their own psychological wellbeing, and to answer the question '*Which psychological factors contribute to a healthy teacher-student relationship in one-to-one tuition?*' Although the intention was to focus on the teacher's wellbeing, much of the discussion revolved around their recollections of their own experiences as students, and the factors which they considered pivotal in contributing to the psychological wellbeing of the student. Teasing out these issues was challenging, since there was a reluctance amongst many of the teachers to reveal anything personal about themselves let alone contribute in-depth to the discussion.

Furthermore, specific factors which appeared in the conversation—spontaneously, concerning psychological damage and trauma—dominated much of the dialogue. As the focus group was semi-structured and as prompt questions were specifically put by the psychologists to maintain focus on teacher wellbeing, this finding raises important questions about instrumental teachers' ability to separate their own experiences as students from their teaching practices. We asked about psychological wellbeing of teachers when they teach, and instead they referred to how they survived difficult experiences as students with harsh teachers. This indicates that current wellbeing is not only dependent upon past experiences but suggests a tendency for teachers to teach as they were taught (Twemlow et al. 2006; in music, see López-Íñiguez & Pozo, 2014). Thus, we argue that therapeutic relationships, whereby transference and countertransference occur, could be dangerous if not supported by structured supervision (Gelso 2013). Many of the themes, which emerged more than once in the discussion, were not entirely independent one from another. Thus, five key themes were selected, which contribute to the psychological wellbeing of the one-to-one teacher/student relationship.

Themes identified in the thematic analysis

These were: Power Dynamics, Resilience, Relationship Boundaries, Isolation and Support, and Responsive Teaching. The results for each of the themes are presented below. Power Dynamics and Resilience have been interlinked and discussed together given the overlap of relevant discussion points within the focus group. The quotations, given below, have been labelled anonymously—each teacher being represented in parentheses by [X1] for example.

Power dynamics and resilience

Although definitions of the master-apprentice model of the teacher-student relationship differ in the literature, it is generally considered to be the predominant approach applied to one-to-one tuition; that is, knowledge is passed from one more skilled individual to one less so (Bjontegaard 2015; in music, see Pozo et al. 2022). For example, teachers are traditionally seen as a role model for the student; for example, someone to look up to while exerting

their authority (Burwell 2020). This approach creates a hierarchical dynamic in which the student is ‘stripped of control’ (Harrison & Grant 2015), and any interaction is predominantly controlled by the teacher (Gaunt 2011; Burwell, Carey & Bennett 2019).

Within the focus-group, the teachers held mixed views of the controls present within the one-to-one teaching relationship. For example, some expressed the view that a tough and controlled teaching approach would promote excellence, whereas others saw this approach—used within an intense interpersonal relationship—as an abuse of power and one potentially damaging to the student’s development.

It is interesting that despite the master-apprentice model being referred to as the ‘old model’, there was agreement among the group that this approach to piano teaching is still prevalent in their institutions, and contrasts with the ‘collaboration incorporating elements of mentoring’ advocated in the literature (Gaunt, 2017; Pozo et al. 2022; Presland 2005).

After viewing the film—which presents Madame Sousatzka as an extreme example of the master-apprentice model¹—power dynamics were referenced by the group as the teacher taking a ‘tough’ approach to pedagogy. Teaching styles such as ‘positive aggressivity’ and ‘fighting against the student’s limitations’ were held up as successful pedagogical methods by two of the teachers, one saying: ‘I think if there’s a talented student [...] some positive aggressivity [...] helps to find the limitations of each student. I think it’s the only way to learn more’ [P8]. In total, four of the teachers within the group advocated a tough, critical teaching approach, saying it would help to build strength in students and support them in their professional careers, despite evidence in the literature to the contrary (Carey et al. 2018; Gaunt 2017; López-Íñiguez & Burnard, 2022).

...I think that there’s an element of the ‘survival of the fittest’. I mean, if you want to be a concert pianist, it’s a really tough world out there. So, some of the things that you need are strength and getting over memory slips [P7].

Another teacher added: ‘You have to be tough... strong to hear all criticism and not flinch...’ [P3]. These comments reflect the traditional, hard-line view that authority and constant criticism in teaching is both crucial and productive. This approach has been criticised in the literature as not only not conducive, but damaging to learning and, with the added danger of paralysing students while damaging their self-efficacy (Gaunt 2017; O’Hora 2013).

Since the imposition of traditional power hierarchies is beginning to be seen as a negative force, and contrary to the successful development of musical talent and creativity, there is now a trend towards a more ‘constructivist’ or ‘transformative’ approach, whereby pedagogical trajectories are shaped collaboratively by both teacher and student, or lightly guided by the teacher in the manner of a midwife, that is to say supporting the development of student autonomy (Carey et al. 2018; Gaunt, López-Íñiguez & Creech, 2021; Pozo et al. 2022).

Resilience is variously understood as the capacity for adaptive strategies in the context of adversity or challenging circumstances (Davydov et al. 2010; Fletcher & Sarkar 2013; Luthar, Cicchetti & Becker 2000). As shown elsewhere in the literature (Kegelaers, Schuijjer & Oudejans 2020), the need to acquire resilience, in order to succeed as a musician, was a strongly held viewpoint among the group, and formed a large part of the discussion. It was also a view which provoked the most disagreement as to the best way to support the development of this skill. There was, however, a consensus concerning the importance of students building resilience which, for example, would enable them to carry on, after making a mistake during a public performance. Several teachers recalled their personal experiences as students in having to ‘rebuild’ their technique, to ‘get over’ such an experience, and to ‘undo’ the damage caused by the criticism of their teachers:

I've worked for a very great teacher [...] who was a horror, so everything is perpetuated. On her death-bed, she told me I couldn't play the piano. Fortunately, I'm now very strong, and I rebuilt my technique and all the rest of it. But that she couldn't resist saying that when she was dying [P1].

This is a powerful example of the level of control that a teacher may exert in these relationships, and how damaging the choice of words may be for students, since they could result in a trauma response. One teacher recalled: 'I had experience with... um... an abusive kind of teacher; I was like 14 or 15 [...] it took a very long time to recover from... um... all this trauma [...] for years I thought I just cannot play piano' [P9]. Members of the group responded to these contributions sympathetically, but still appeared to be undecided as to whether or not it was the criticism which had contributed to their developing resilience. This indecision was reflected in the comments that:

...is what you need to experience yourself. But, then on the other side, there will also probably [be people who] don't need this [...] It could traumatize you, just depending, [...] If we're talking about teaching professionals who will be professional musicians then you need... er... all these things could be helpful [P6].

Such remarks imply that most teachers held the view that, this kind of critical teaching could be potentially harmful, as well as damage confidence and the ability to form and maintain relationships in other areas of their lives. It was of concern however, that other teachers advocated this criticism-led style of teaching, even though they acknowledged that it could result in a traumatic outcome. By contrast, one teacher expressed the view that: 'You can teach at a high level, produce high-level students without traumatizing [...] I think it's an old tradition. I don't buy into that it has to continue, I really don't' [P5].

It was interesting that teachers did not talk about the impact this tough, controlling method actually had on them as teachers. Instead, they spoke about the potential to traumatize students. In total, trauma was referenced seven times within the discussion, and given that abuse and maltreatment has also come to light elsewhere in the literature (Museumeci 2005; Fernández-Morante 2018; Pecan, Collins & MacNamara 2018), this raises an important question as to how much these—sometimes traumatic experiences—affect teachers' practice in later years and, whether or not these feelings or baggage are transferred on to the student in the one-to-one relationship. These comments also reflect the belief that these experiences *must* have been beneficial, thus encouraging a tendency to teach as they were taught—something that needs to be mitigated against.

By comparison, the Tripartite model—concerning therapeutic relationships—is composed of a real relationship, a working alliance, and a countertransference configuration, suggesting that countertransference may occur when the teacher redirects their feelings or desires onto their student (Gelso 2013). Each of these above-mentioned conditions is influenced by existing beliefs and experiences, as well as by varying levels of interpersonal hierarchy and goals. According to Gelso (2013), the Tripartite model was constructed to highlight the fact that the relationship between therapist and patient is more complex than a simple working alliance. As he says, *how* the therapist feels towards the patient, and vice versa, has a profound effect on the techniques to be adopted. For example, if 'transference' and 'countertransference' is poorly understood or poorly managed by the therapist, the results could spill into the session, and become manifested behaviourally. Fortunately, in clinical settings the negative impact of such mismanagement is minimized, since there is often support in place to equip the therapist with the tools to address the issues of conflict, power imbalance, and boundary violations (Lazarus 1991) which inevitably arise between therapist and patient.

By comparison, there is little scope for teachers to reflect upon the dynamics of close interpersonal relationships with their students (Carey et al. 2018) and may be quite unaware of these underlying feelings and motivations. For example, some of the teachers said that they had not been aware necessarily, of certain feelings in their teaching practice, and therefore had been unable to control their mixed motives: ‘...gosh, don’t we all have mixed motives [...]. But how much space do we have [...] to acknowledge what those might be?’ [P4]. Interestingly, one teacher did note: ‘So much seemed to be about Madame Sousatzka exerting control [and] trying to repair her own damage through control’ [P4], demonstrating that teachers urgently need to crystallise their past experiences with their current approach to teaching.

Further discussion on the issue of mixed motivations was prompted by one of the psychologists, who suggested that becoming aware of this problem might help to prevent an unhealthy power-dynamic in the one-to-one relationship. However, no one in the group responded directly to this, except for one teacher who commented: ‘I do believe this, is actually, probably the first opportunity we’ve had to have a conversation this way’ [P1], implying that the opportunity for self-reflection is not the norm, and suggesting also that its absence is very likely to impact on the health of the one-to-one teacher-student relationship (Hanken, 2016; Long et al. 2014).

It should be noted too, that the question of institutional control was presented as a significant barrier to change, as one teacher exclaimed: ‘For years, I was trying to get these ideas [across]’ [P1], suggesting that one-to-one tuition is already operating within a context of control, and that currently the opportunity to bring about change is limited (Bull 2019).

Relationship boundaries

While in mainstream education the teacher-student relationship is understood as context-bound and, more importantly, distinct from friendship (Frymier & Houser 2000), the one-to-one relationship in instrumental tuition is comparatively intimate; it has been described as a ‘unique, special and intense relationship’ (Presland 2005). While this relationship is, considered to be valuable in high-quality music tuition (Creech & Hallam 2011), the inevitable interpersonal dynamic can have positive and negative implications for both parties (Hargreaves 2000).

The intensity of the one-to-one relationship was referenced several times during the group discussion. There was agreement among the group that a ‘strong bond’ between teacher and student was an important part of successful teaching. However, they predominantly perceived the intensity of the one-to-one relationship to be a risk factor; furthermore, if boundaries were not respected, abuse of the student could result, putting them at risk of being dominated by personal issues of the teacher.

For example, teachers shared their experiences saying—that when, as students—their teacher violated the boundaries within the one-to-one relationship, this had impacted on their later development as musicians. Then, three of the teachers acknowledged that the intensity of the one-to-one teacher-student relationship had been ‘suffocating’ or too intense for them as students: ‘...the first teacher I had just wanted in on my life; it was suffocating’ [P7], while yet another implied that the intensity of the relationship needed to be ‘diffused’: ‘Maybe assistants are the answer, because that diffuses the intensity of the relationship’ [P1].

Although it was unclear from the discussion whether or not this kind of behaviour was acknowledged within their own teaching practice, it was interesting that no solutions concerning the risk factors—such as violating the boundaries of the one-to-one relationship—were offered; an omission which suggested that this potential violation is something that the teachers struggled with.

In fact, teachers were prompted by one of the psychologists to consider the impact of the intensity of the relationship on them as teachers: ‘I mean, teaching piano’s [...] I would imagine, very often a sort of close, intimate, tight relationship, that of course is bringing up strong feelings. What does one do with that feeling? Are you talked to about it?’ [P4]. This question was, however, misinterpreted by the group. Immediately following this, another teacher asked: ‘Would it not have to do...err... with the age of that student?’ [P9]; and another replied: ‘To answer your question, in my department students who are complaining about their piano teacher that I’ve assigned them, so I speak to the student, and I speak to the teacher. It’s usually a miscommunication’ [P7].

It is interesting that, despite a sense among the group that boundaries should be constructed, and respected by the teacher, the initial suggestion for managing ‘strong feelings’ within the relationship, was for the student to change teacher; that same teacher indicated also that other teachers could go to her for support: ‘That’s all just stuff that happens in all relationships, but it’s just how, you know, where would one go—as a teacher—to talk about that? Or to even express it? That’s my question’ [P4]. Another teacher said: ‘Well, they can come talk to me’ [P7]. A consensus emerged among the group which expressed the view that these kinds of conversations: ‘need to be happening’, and that ‘...clearly [these] conversations are not happening [...]’ [P3]; and also, that teachers should have an outlet to process the difficult emotions which they experienced as a result of such intense relationships. Then, an important question was raised:

Where is the space for tutors to talk about [this] ... Those emotions that are aroused will be expressed in the relationship in some way [...] without space to talk about emotions aroused by the relationship dynamics...could make it difficult to maintain necessary boundaries within the relationship in some way? [P4].

This was followed by: ‘Do teachers have any possibility of going to someone about the student they’re having a problem with?’ [P3]—to which the answer was: ‘Yes, I mean probably’ [P1], with no elaboration.

Nevertheless, there was general agreement within the group that there was a need for the teacher-student relationship to remain professional and impersonal by keeping it task-focused and ‘bringing it back to the music’: ‘I tell [students] right away: it’s not about you, it’s not about me, it’s about this piece of music’ [P7]. This view contrasts with that advocated by Gaunt, López-Íñiguez and Creech (2021), which is that a good fit between teacher and student, and a shared understanding of goals and responsibilities is an essential element of transformative teaching. However, it was unclear from the discussion *how* teachers might ‘bring things back to the music’, and achieve a balance between intimacy and detachment, although a system of supervision and a collaborative teaching approach was suggested by some, as a means of diffusing the intensity of the one-to-one relationship, while at the same time supporting the maintenance of boundaries (Bjontegaard 2015).

Isolation and support

An important theme which emerged in *Madame Sousatzka* was that of Sousatzka’s own isolation. This theme was identified by the group and formed a major focus of their discussion. One teacher noted that Sousatzka was ‘isolated from any sort of sources of support with the issues that she was grappling with—which she was grappling with completely alone’ [P3]; while another noted that the film: ‘depicted a person who was multiply isolated’ [P4].

This theme encouraged teachers to reflect on their own experiences of being isolated within the teaching environment, or the ‘contemporary performance scene’ [P3]. One teacher, recalled her experiences of being isolated, and of hostility, between the teachers: saying that she went to a musical institution ‘when I was thirteen and it was very isola-

tionist with the teachers, and they would fight' [P7]. However, she did not indicate whether she felt this kind of isolation or hostility in her practice as a teacher (Burwell et al., 2019). It should be noted also that teachers may have felt uncomfortable when speaking about the absence of support within their institutes of higher music education, given that each of them was representing their own individual institution in the focus group. One teacher, however, did state that other teachers were able to come and talk to her if they needed support:

Yeah. I have a teacher that can't stand the student. This year, she talked to me and she said, "I don't want to teach this student, I really don't". The student's very happy with some other teachers so it worked out. So, I think, as long... I mean, I'm not a psychologist or anything, but just somebody to vent to for both the teacher and the student [P7].

Again, however, it appeared that the solution for the difficult emotions brought up by the teacher-student relationship was for the student to change teacher, implying that teachers are often left alone to deal with the challenges that arise in their one-to-one relationships and, that in many cases there is no formal provision for emotional support, or reducing isolation. This prompted one of the psychologists to make an invaluable comparison with the clinical profession, saying: 'As a clinician, you would have supervision...you would be able to take your difficult cases to a more experienced colleague and say: "This patient really troubles me"' [P3].

Importantly, within the clinical sphere, research has shown that supervised mentorship in therapeutic relationships is beneficial. For example, it is the quality of the therapeutic relationship which is the most reliable predictor of a positive clinical outcome. This reflects recent findings in music pedagogy that a more gentle and attentive approach produces better outcomes than that of a harsh and/or critical one (Ardito & Rabellino 2011; Gaunt 2017; Kadur, Lüdemann & Andreas 2020; Owen & Hilsenroth 2014). For example, Gaunt (2017; see also, López-Íñiguez & Pozo 2016) demonstrated that: 'reciprocity through mutual feedback', and a 'protective, nurturing context', each contribute to a successful teacher-student relationship—and, more importantly, such an approach does not arouse fear. Others too, have suggested conceptualizing learning instead, being an 'emergent property of the interpersonal dynamic' (Creech et al. 2008; Gaunt et al. 2012). But, of course, one-to-one relationships in music tuition differ from therapeutic relationships in one important respect since, crucially, they hinge on evaluative outcomes in a way that therapeutic relationships—even though assessed through some form of measurement of the results—do not.

Some teachers agreed, however, that there was a need to challenge the current thinking within musical institutions that the more intensive the teaching, the better the outcome; and it was suggested too, that teacher collaboration, and/or team-teaching, might provide another solution which would help offset the negative effects of teacher isolation. For example, one participant explained that they were:

'Fully aware of this [...] unavoidable nineteenth-century tradition where we all come from, but at my school, we are working in a totally different way...almost to the point where our students do not have one particular teacher' [P2].

This was quickly held up as a potential challenge for music pedagogy, with another teacher commenting: 'Not every student can have more than one teacher because it can confuse them' [P6]. It was also significant that only one teacher said that her musical institution supported a team-teaching approach that left her free to work with other piano teachers: 'I am friends with other teachers in the university... it's just other people' [P7].

Isolation in a working environment is well known as a risk factor for multiple aspects of wellbeing (Cacioppo & Hawkley 2009), and research in other areas—most notably within the armed forces—has shown the mediating effects of collaborative cohesion on mental-health problems, including trauma (Anderson et al. 2019). The positive outcomes associated with more collaborative working include improved opportunities for support, efficacy, and effectiveness; the establishment of boundaries; the promotion of confidence; opportunities for feedback; enhanced teacher-learning; and continuous improvement (e.g., Hanken 2016; Van Der Doef & Maes 1999).

The emerging literature, concerning higher music-education, highlights the importance of a more collaborative and ‘co-operative reflective’ approach (Carey et al. 2018; Pozo et al. 2022). For example, developing a ‘community of practice’, whereby teachers can share ideas and expertise and reflect on their practice in a structured and facilitated setting, has been shown to alleviate teacher isolation (Carey et al. 2018). Collaborative working can also be an effective method for the development of musical talent in that more supportive social contexts contribute both to better outcomes for students and to the promotion of teacher wellbeing and personal development (Gaunt et al. 2012). From the group discussion, it seemed that, in practice, this still remains a very novel, and somewhat mistrusted, approach.

Responsive teaching

This theme did not occupy a large proportion of the overall discussion, and the teachers were not necessarily in dialogue with one another here. Although they commented that a uniform attitude towards students should be adopted, they also acknowledged that teaching styles would inevitably be quite different, and that teaching was more akin to an obscure artistic process which did not follow a prescribed methodology. Referenced more than once, was the idea that students were quite capable of choosing a teacher who met their needs. Teaching, in this regard, was discussed in terms of a ‘free market’, whereby students simply chose the teacher whose style of teaching was appropriate to them. This perspective was apparent from the comments that: ‘...[students] find the right fit for them, [and] I wonder if there’s also a bit of gravitating to the teachers who give you the thing you want’ [P2]; and, ‘...if students don’t like them, they can move on’ [P1]—implying that the ‘wrong’ method of teaching could have negative consequences for the student, and in such circumstances the student should be free to work with another teacher. However, it was not clear from the discussion whether the teachers themselves would be willing to be more flexible in their teaching methods. Further questions arose from this, as for instance, why are issues of a ‘bad fit’ not addressed? And, why do teachers not encourage or request feedback from their students?

Nor was there any evidence of their teaching being subjected to critical evaluation by peers, or that it followed evidence-based practice. This reflected findings elsewhere in the literature that one-to-one music tuition is something of a ‘black box’ or ‘secret garden’ (Burwell, Carey & Bennett, 2019; Carey et al. 2018). One teacher commented that the pedagogical approach was indeed a mysterious process, remarking that: ‘There’s this idea [...] that it’s magic. [...] And, if we unravel the magic, like Keats the poet said: “Unravel the rainbow and describe it, and you ruin the poetry”’ [P1]. Nevertheless, some of the group countered this view, saying that: ‘...it’s what we all want to know about. How do we do it?’ [P3]. It was perhaps surprising that they did not talk of inquiring further into the contributions and experiences of other teachers, working within their own institution, who could help them to find some of the answers to this question.

As we have seen, an opportunity to share knowledge among teachers and develop a community of practice could not only alleviate isolation but also improve practices and

build confidence in teaching methodology through deeper understanding of standards of professional practice (Carey et al. 2018; Gaunt & Westerland 2013).

Despite the emphasis in emerging research concerning the benefits of more student-centred teaching approaches, it was significant that, although a distinction was made between teaching students at the professional, versus non-professional level, none of the teachers discussed adapting their teaching style to the specific issues, goals, or psychological needs of the student. For the future, an interesting line of inquiry would be to look at what impact this trend of student-centred or ‘transformative’ pedagogy has on teachers, and indeed whether it would add to their already heavy weight of responsibilities (Carey et al. 2018; Pozo et al. 2022).

Conclusion

Given the shift in focus of the discussion towards the student experience, the results did not provide as much insight into teacher wellbeing as was hoped. Despite having been provided with a strong influence for topic direction, teachers spent a great deal of time talking about their experiences when students, emphasising that, now, as teachers, it is difficult to disentangle those experiences from their own teaching. We asked also about the psychological wellbeing of the teachers when they teach, and yet, they continued to be concerned with how they survived their difficult teachers in the past. The present research provides an example of how revisiting traumatic memories may not only be a catalytic experience, but provide also an opportunity for change, thus, enabling them to move forward.

More importantly, our findings serve to highlight that the trend we see in the literature towards more student-centred and collaborative teaching is yet to become widespread practice on the ground; and, that although the literature shows that there is an increasing emphasis on the development of personal agency and creativity, these are not drivers at the forefront of teachers’ minds, or representative in anyway in their current approach. This situation also mirrors recent findings in the literature review, that higher music-education institutions and their teaching staff are yet to adapt their practices to align with the multi-disciplinary vision of instrumental learning, with its heavy emphasis on fostering critical thinking, emotions, and psycho-social processes (Pozo et al. 2022).

Some important issues which emerged from the discussion were: an absence of clear support-structures; lack of emotional support and ‘space’ to discuss challenges within the one-to-one relationship; limited opportunity for critical reflection on practices; limited opportunity for peer reflection or teacher collaboration; and, finally, a lack of structured supervision which typically goes hand-in-hand with other similar interpersonal relationships, such as those in the therapeutic sector. On these grounds, we suggest that this research provides important insights into the teachers’ perspectives of the one-to-one relationship both in vocal and instrumental pedagogy, and the—somewhat unexpected—issues that contribute to the dynamics of the one-to-one teaching relationship; in particular how the traumatic experiences, which they endured as students can serve to shape their later teaching style. Thus, we particularly recommend that future research addresses three issues: first, the impact on the teacher’s wellbeing during one-to-one teaching; second, whether team-teaching—as part of the curriculum—might be able to mitigate against some of the problematic factors of one-to-one relationships; and third, the effects of different approaches to teacher training, that include within their scope of focus, therapeutic work—ideally examined through longitudinal studies.

Limitations

The present study has a number of limitations. The participant pool, though diverse, included a small sample of teachers only—nine of whom made a significant contribution to the discussion. This means that conclusions may not be generalized easily across teaching practices.

Given that the symposium was a one-off event, only one focus group discussion took place, thereby precluding any opportunity to ask follow-up questions which might not only have increased clarity of meaning but also explored some comments in greater depth.

Considering the qualitative research methods, which were subject to the researcher's background, experience, and interpretation, it was natural that the approach to data theme identification and analysis, data selection, flow of discussion and interpretation of points raised therein, may have been biased, as, for example, being more alert to certain research themes which they may have worked with previously.

The film was chosen as the medium for discussion since it dramatized the intensity of the one-to-one relationship above other possible issues. A decidedly sad story, it was designed to stir anguish and melancholy within the viewer, which may have influenced the teachers to recall their abusive experiences when students, which they then brought up in the discussion.

Despite these limitations, we feel that, from the vocal and instrumental teachers' perspective, this study provides valuable insights into present-day practices, insights that will shed light on areas requiring further research. ■

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Note

[1] The film is available at: <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0095564/>

Abstract

One-to-one tuition given by piano teachers to undergraduate and postgraduate students in institutes of higher music-education is a central and valued part of the curriculum. However, these relationships are often intense and demand a host of complex psychological processes involving both parties, such as emotional awareness, self-regulation, and a knowledge of psychological variables. Thus, the aim of this study was to inquire—from the teachers’ perspective—the factors which affect their psychological wellbeing during one-to-one tuition. The research draws upon the perceptions and experiences of nine out of the twenty senior piano teachers—from different musical institutions in ten countries, across four continents—who attended the focus group. A semi-structured focus-group discussion was facilitated following the viewing of John Schlesinger’s film *Madame Sousatzka* (1988). This is an extreme example of the master-apprentice model, portraying the intensity of the teacher-student relationship during one-to-one tuition. A thematic analysis was conducted from transcripts based around the question: ‘Which psychological factors contribute to a healthy teacher-student relationship in one-to-one piano tuition?’ from which analysis four key themes emerged: i) Power dynamics and resilience; ii) Relationship boundaries; iii) Isolation and support; and iv) Responsive teaching. Each of these themes were discussed in relation to determining the support needed for the psychological health and wellbeing of teachers in institutes of higher music-education, with the primary focus being on the teacher’s wellbeing. The findings revealed an important link between the past experience and current wellbeing of teachers. This suggested that within the one-to-one teacher-student relationship, teachers were unable to disentangle their own traumatic experiences from their psychological wellbeing, and that they tended to teach as they were taught. ■

Keywords: higher music education; teacher-student relationship; one-to-one tuition; instrumental tuition; piano teaching; isolation in teaching; trauma in teaching.

Identity and leadership between worlds: A case study of training female instrumental music teachers in Israel's Haredi community

Theoretical and Sociological Background

A.N. Whitehead famously declared that “the essence of education is that it be religious,” which he clarified as meaning “an education which inculcates duty and reverence” (Whitehead 1929, 14). In its traditional conservatory form, music education positioned itself in this vein, with the master-apprentice relationship very much designed to engender a sense of reverence and duty in students. In recent times, this construct has increasingly been called into question, with the emergence of competing values and ideas about the essence of music education—see, *inter alia*, López-Íñiguez and Bennett (2020) on classical musicians’ critique of the traditional approach, and Georgii-Hemming and Westvall (2010) on Swedish music teachers’ inclination toward inclusion and open participation, based on their democratic values.

These themes—education, religion, and duty and reverence—are at the heart of this article, though approached from a different angle: The student teachers’ sense of duty and reverence, while very strong, is not a single thread tied to their obligations as musicians, but rather a tangled web of commitments vying for primacy.

Research has identified two main components in the professional identity of music teachers—musician and teacher (Austin, Isbell & Russell 2012; Ballantyne 2005; Ballantyne, Kerchner & Aróstegui 2012; Pellegrino 2009; Scheib 2006). These twin identities are often in conflict (Hargreaves, Purves, Welch & Marshall 2007; Mark 1998), and furthermore, the relationship between them appears to be strongly influenced by the individual’s own perceived abilities as musician/performer (Ballantyne & Zhukov 2017; Isbell 2008; Precesky 1997; Roberts 1991). However, studies taking a post-structural approach have also revealed more complex and nuanced identity composition beyond this dyadic construct (e.g., Natale-Abramo 2014).

In this latter vein, this article examines the hybrid identities that develop among a group of female student music teachers from a highly traditionalist and separationist background, in response to their multiple commitments: as musicians; as teachers; and as Haredi women, dedicated to their traditional roles as wives, homemakers, and active members of their religious community.

Women in the Haredi Community in Israel

Haredi society is a minority group in Israel, forming 13.3% of Israel’s population (Malach, Cahaner & Bechar 2022). It is characterized by strict observance of Jewish religious law (halakha) and by a traditionalist and conservative culture and way of life, which it protects by maintaining self-segregation from the hegemonic norms of majority society. The tactics used to minimize interaction with the general public include geographical segregation (Dahan 1998; Shilhav 1991); a separate education system, in which gender separation is also strictly enforced (Friedman 1999); and a separate legal system, in which rabbinical courts are the sole judicial authority (Ilan 2000).

Traditional Haredi society seeks to preserve the central role of men and the peripheral role of women (El Or 1992; Friedman 1999). Torah study (the study of texts in the religious Jewish canon, and particularly the Talmud) is a supreme value of Haredi society, and is entrusted largely to men, who are commanded to devote themselves to it; women's contribution to this effort is to provide for the family, allowing their husbands to study full-time. Thus, Haredi women face an inherent tension between their traditional role as modest, quiet figures in the background, raising children and running the household, and their role as breadwinners in a modern economy. This challenge itself has become imbued with a sense of holy mission.

One of the most prominent characteristics of the Haredi household is the large number of children. Haredi fertility rates stand at around 6.5, compared with 3.1 in the Jewish population as a whole (Malach, Cahaner & Bechar 2022), which places a considerable burden on Haredi mothers and daughters (Atzmon 2006; Gantz 2003).

Music Education in the Haredi Community in Israel

Music occupies a respected position in the Haredi community due to its treatment in Jewish texts, including the Bible and philosophical works, as well in major ultra-Orthodox movements such as Hasidism and the Musar movement. The verse “This is my Lord and I shall sing His praises” (Exodus 15) describes the essential approach of Judaism to art and aesthetics: beauty and art, in their various different forms, are used in service of religious worship and the religious experience, rather than being an end in themselves. Of the various art forms, music is held in particular esteem.

However, there are various religious restrictions on music, chief among them being bans on men hearing women singing; on non-Jewish religious music (while church liturgical music in an artistic setting is technically permissible, it is considered culturally a taboo); and on songs containing romantic and/or sexual content or connotations.

Another issue relates to the supreme importance attached to Torah study for men. The Haredi education system for boys focuses almost exclusively on religious subjects, and from the age of around eleven boys are engaged in full-time Torah study from morning to evening. Though music is understood to have religious value, its formal study is considered inappropriate for males, whose time is to be dedicated almost exclusively to Torah study. Consequently, the development of music education in Haredi society has been restricted mainly to girls.

In the broader context of Israeli state education, it is worth noting that “while music reflects and influences culture and society and plays a significant role in Israeli life, it is not included as a compulsory subject at any level of the educational system” (Brand & Portowitz 2015, 345), much to the detriment of the status of music education and music teachers. Particularly in secondary education, but not exclusively, it is common for schools to offer limited or no music studies, and in earlier decades, music was not offered in the Haredi education system at all. Interestingly, recent studies have also found lower provision of elementary school music education and less parental support for it in Arab society in Israel, possibly due to Muslim religious disapproval (Poles-Cahn & Rusu 2018).

The growth of music education in the Haredi community in Israel can be traced back to the 1980s, when music began to be taught in schools and kindergartens and in non-formal educational settings—resulting in the creation of new audiences interested in classical music, of both listeners and performers. This was the backdrop for the launch of a new training program for female Haredi music teachers in 2004, as a collaboration between the Ron Shulamit Conservatory (a Jerusalem institution established at the beginning of the twentieth century) and Levinsky College of Education in Tel Aviv.

Study Origin and Methodology

The case study presented in this article takes the form of an ethnographical study (with some auto-ethnographical aspects) of a teacher training program with a unique combination of characteristics in terms of (a) the participating population; (b) the chosen specialization in instrumental teaching; and (c) leadership training and identity elements. The study comprises analysis and interpretation of a series of interviews and focus groups conducted with graduates of the program, and of various course materials collected over a three-year period.

My own life story forms the background to this study (hence the auto-ethnographical aspects): I was raised in an Orthodox educational tradition, positioned between Haredi society and general Israeli society, which combined an overriding commitment to Torah study and religious observance with Western education and culture. In my own milieu, I was entirely alone in my love of classical music and had no-one with whom to share my musical experiences, which were such a meaningful part of my life.

Despite my strong musical inclination, I devoted myself to religious study in mainstream Haredi schools, married young, and raised my ten children in the Haredi community. I returned to my musical studies after five of my children were born, attending the Jerusalem Academy and at Levinsky College of Education. I then established the Ron Shulamit program, under the auspices of Levinsky College, in 2004 (described in greater detail below).

In 2007, I became a fellow at the Mandel School for Educational Leadership, which introduced me to the huge potential of leadership and intercultural dialogue, as well as to educational theories and the importance of educational identity (Nisan 2012). Subsequently I became a faculty member at Mandel and developed leadership programs and higher education programs for Haredim; and in 2014, I began a doctorate at Hebrew University, conducting research into the experiences and dilemmas of students from Haredi society as they encounter the academic world, and the strategies they develop to cope with these challenges.

In 2016, in light of my doctoral studies, I came to appreciate the significance of the experiences of the women in the Ron Shulamit program, as an important example of the complex Haredi relationship with higher education, Western culture, and secular society. I began collecting materials from the course to support further study, including papers and essays written by the students, focusing on the students' identity development and strategies for coping with this new world outside the boundaries of Haredi society.

In 2018, I conducted (together with Dr. Amira Ehrlich and Rachel Katzir) in-depth interviews with 15 graduates of the program, as well as a focus-group workshop in which participants engaged in co-construction of group narratives (Schulz, Schroeder & Brody 1997). Using a grounded theory approach (Spector-Mersel 2008), the individual interviews produced categories of stories, including stories of self-fulfillment, stories of friendship and camaraderie, and stories of dissonance, difficulty, and crisis. Further, between 2019 and 2022 I collected course materials including students' course papers and students' reflective writing, which included reflections on peer discussion processes, and collated them using the categories identified above.

The study was approved by the Levinsky College research ethics committee, and all participants signed consent forms, including for the use of quotations from their course materials. It should be noted that interviews and focus groups were conducted with graduates to remove the possible complications of teacher-student relations. Throughout, the participants' pseudonymity was zealously protected, and no names or identifying features appear in this article.

Narrative analysis of the collected material was based on Chase's (2005) "six analytic lenses" of narrative inquiry, three of which became of particular interest: (1) narrative as meaning-making; (2) narrative as voice; and (3) narrative as an expression and a cultivation of self. In this context, it was clear to me that my own story, and my position as both a Haredi woman and as the founder of the program, was playing a significant role.

As a researcher, the decision to study the program I established and then left was a complex, challenging and confusing one. My earlier involvement in the program under study and my Haredi identity offered advantages in terms of understanding internal language, norms, and codes, but also held disadvantages due to the difficulty of separating myself as researcher of the program from myself as the program's founder.

Qualitative research literature has much to say about the positioning of the researcher and their involvement in the field being studied. All researchers are influenced by their culture and education, and their biases can have negative and positive impacts on their research. Researchers must be aware of this effect and be able to exploit positive opportunities and pay attention to negative influences. Lavie and Swedenburg (1995) note the significance of conducting anthropological research "at home" rather than "in the field," in that it allows expression of the voice of a particular culture from the inside, thus protecting it and contributing to its status and understanding, which would not be possible from an external position.

This study was conducted in my "home," which as noted carries certain advantages, including familiarity, trust, close knowledge of language and nuance, and ability to empathize and identify with subjects' complexities, challenges, and dilemmas. On the other hand, studying my "home" presents considerable challenges, and demands a constant shift between the internal and the external gaze, as well as awareness, reflectivity, and self-regulation (El Or 1998).

Another aspect of my involvement in the field stems from the fact that the study focuses not only on the subjects but also my own work. This aspect of research has also been studied extensively over the last two decades. Self-study and action research, which are similar approaches to that which I have used in this study, are recognized as entirely valid forms of academic research, as long as appropriate methodologies are used (Zimran 2009).

The Ron Shulamit Program

The Ron Shulamit program enables talented young Haredi women, who have demonstrated potential to become professional musicians, to realize their talent and gain an academic musical education—and as music teachers, to act as cultural agents in a community in which music education is still in its infancy. The students range in age from 20 to 38, some of them married and some single, and some of them already engaged in teaching. The instruments taught include both string and wind instruments (Perl 2007), and the focus is almost exclusively on Western classical music.

The larger context of the program is particularly challenging. These are female students from a closed community, who have had highly restricted access to musical culture and to culture in general, and most of whom began learning an instrument seriously only in their late teens. Moreover, they grew up in small homes in large families with low incomes, and themselves marry and become responsible for a household at a young age (most students get married and have children during their studies)—far from optimal conditions for developing a career as a musician. Given this background, the students' achievements in musicianship are highly impressive.

The program's curriculum development and implementation were facilitated by a deep understanding of and respect for the community's culture and values, and consultations were held with rabbinical leaders as part of the development process. Alongside the desire

to conduct professional training to a high standard, efforts were made to avoid the inclusion of inappropriate or immodest content, and to find viable alternatives to the study of non-Jewish devotional music. Furthermore, the program is held in a Haredi educational setting, and the secular faculty members respect the dress code in terms of modest clothing (Perl 2007).

Specialization in Instrumental Teaching

It is a commonly held view that instrumental teachers are unsuccessful musicians who have turned to teaching as a profession instead of performing (Feingold 2005). It is certainly true that many have not received proper pedagogical training, and their approach to teaching is intuitive and based on their own experience—they teach their students as they themselves were taught, using established methods (Feingold 2005). The teaching and learning processes they follow mainly focus on direct goals: transmitting heritage, molding students in the image of those who came before them, and enabling them to play fluently a canonical repertoire on a particular instrument. Thus, these processes have largely focused on performance skills—“knowing how to” play (Feingold 2005) and preparing for concerts.

In contrast to prevailing norms, the Ron Shulamit program chose to define training instrumental teachers as its main goal. This approach is better suited to the Haredi community, in which women’s self-actualization occurs mainly in the private sphere. As noted, the Haredi ideal for women is to remain as modest figures in the background, and beyond the ban on singing in the presence of men, women were until recently largely discouraged from any form of performing arts. While public performance is not widely considered suitable for Haredi women, education is valued as an honorable and worthwhile occupation, and teaching is an in-demand profession. The fact that music is an important feature of Jewish tradition only serves to increase the value attached to music teaching. Thus, for female Haredi musicians, who mainly begin raising children when they are young and need to financially support their families, music education is almost the only viable option for working in music.

It is important to note that because of the pioneering nature of the Ron Shulamit program, its training approach embodies a sense of mission. The program seeks to develop the students as educational leaders and change agents who are committed both to Haredi values and to music education, fully aware of religious restrictions and of diverse educational and ethical issues, and have the sensitivity required to work within the Haredi community. Thus, the program is designed to help students formulate their musical-educational-religious vision and ethos, so they can promote music education, and music in general, in Haredi society.

The “Methodology for Instrumental Teaching” Course

In this section I describe the “Methodology for Instrumental Teaching: Planning and Evaluation” course, which is a central component that runs throughout the third and fourth years of the degree program. This deliberative and active course, which is mandatory for all students regardless of their chosen instrument, comprises two weekly hours in the form of a workshop, as well as conducting observations, interviewing experienced teachers, and teaching a student class. Students submit projects at the end of both years, organize a final concert, and also keep and submit a course diary.

Theoretical Basis

The course is based on the work of two leading theoreticians in the field of curriculum planning: Joseph Schwab and Seymour Fox.

Schwab presents four “commonplaces” as the basis for educational practice and curriculum planning (Fox 1985; Schwab 1973): the subject matter; the learner, the teacher, and the milieu in which education takes place. According to Schwab, active and systematic attention to each of these commonplaces will lead to informed and sophisticated curricular development, and particularly of individual curricula. Students in the program are taught to apply these lenses when examining educational practice and teaching, and to be aware of differences stemming from the commonplaces (such as their pupils’ family background and home setting), as well as of the responsibility they bear for developing musical education and instrumental teaching in their community.

The second main theoretical framework underpinning the course is Seymour Fox’s five levels (Fox 1997, 28–29). These are:

1. *Philosophy*: The founding premises underpinning educational practice, and its goals, such as: What defines the worthy individual and worthy society? In the context of music education, core questions include: What is music? What is its role in our lives? Is everyone born with musical ability?
2. *Philosophy of Education*: What defines the worthy educated individual? What does a society of educated people look like? And in the musical context: What is the role of music in the formation of the educated individual and a worthy educated society? What musical abilities should a graduate of a worthy education system possess?
3. *Theory of Practice*: These are directed principles of practice that stem from a philosophy. These may be holistic or practical approaches embodying core principles of music education, such as those of Kodály, Orff, or Dalcroze. Theories of Practice also include defined goals and targets.
4. *Implementation*: Practical means and methods for implementing and realizing theories and principles. This level thus includes curriculum and pedagogy, teaching methods, detailed design of the program of study, and more.
5. *Evaluation*: This refers to evaluation both of implementation mechanisms and of principles and worldviews. Proper evaluation examines the choice of goals, and not only the methods used and their results. In the performing arts, performance is mainly evaluated via concerts or individual assessment, yet this approach fails to examine the possible goals of music education.

According to Fox, this theory of five levels provides a lens through which to examine educational practice vertically, rather than the horizontal perspective taken by Schwab (Marom 2009). It is not a recipe for action, but rather a set of coordinates with which to navigate the complex and ever-shifting field of education and educational practice.

Using this lens, the students in the Methodology for Instrumental Teaching course are asked to discuss and formulate their own conception of music education, and to clarify their personal vision as music teachers: Why do I do what I do? How do my work and study tally with my overall worldview? What are the implications of my vision for my own teaching, and what guiding principles inform my work?

This task—of philosophical exploration and formulating a coherent educational approach—is not an easy one even for seasoned educators, and is certainly not a common feature of music teacher education. In Haredi society, this task would appear to be even more difficult, as the community’s worldview often seems to be in conflict with the develop-

ment path for young artists: Haredi society is oriented toward keeping out foreign cultural influences, rather than exploring them; it values collectivism over individual self-actualization; recoils from attaching deep spiritual meaning to any field outside the “world of Torah”; and values Torah study above all other pursuits. Moreover, it looks askew at women investing considerable time and energy in self-development, rather than devoting themselves to their main tasks of raising and providing for their family.

However, the inherent presence of these conflicts and dilemmas mean that this task is experienced by the students as essential, helping them prevent cognitive dissonance, develop a coherent and viable creative personality, and further the legitimacy of musical practice in the Haredi community. This process is carried out via several course components:

1. *Studying Educational Worldviews and their Application.* In order to practice and understand the link between an educational worldview and instrumental teaching, the students are presented with examples of philosophical approaches and how these are translated into teaching practice. The students study texts by teachers and composers, and attempt to extrapolate the writers’ educational worldviews.
2. *Observations of Experienced Teachers and Critical Analysis.* As part of their training, students are also required to conduct observations of experienced instrumental teachers. They then discuss their impressions from these observations with the group, looking at all aspects: concepts and philosophies, principles, goals, and teaching methods. The students also interview the teachers about their work, the traditions in which they were educated, and their educational and personal worldviews. Both the students and the participating teachers described these interviews as meaningful experiences that enabled both sides to formulate the principles and significance of their musical work.
3. *Formulating a Personal Educational Vision.* After having encountered and discussed the approaches of different teachers—teachers they met in texts, teachers they viewed in master classes, and their own teachers—the students are tasked with writing their own worldviews using the five-levels model. They are asked to elaborate on the place of music in their personal and religious philosophy, present their aims, and describe the principles that guide them in their work with their young pupils.
4. *From Philosophy and Principles to Goals, Implementation, and Evaluation.* In accordance with Fox’s five levels, the course addresses the goals and outcomes of instrumental teaching. The students’ final project in the program includes the following elements:
 - a. A program of study for a pupil, including a description of the pupil, her abilities, characteristics and needs, and her immediate environment and conditions for study.
 - b. A broad description of goals for a year’s teaching, including performance, repertoire, and musical skills.

Findings

In this section, I present the main findings elicited from the analysis of the interviews and focus groups conducted with program graduates, as well as materials collected over a three-year period (see Study Origin and Methodology section above). Throughout, I provide representative quotations from the students, taken from interviews, from their course diaries, and from their final projects; in all cases, the names provided are pseudonyms, to maintain the participants’ confidentiality.

Studying Educational Worldviews and their Application

One of the main exercises in this section of the course is based on the scholarship of Prof. Lia Laor (1980), who studied the educational and pedagogical works of Robert Schumann and how they reflect his worldview, particularly in the context of contemporary literature on teaching piano, such as the writings of Czerny, Köhler, C. P. E. Bach, and Clementi, as well Friedrich Wieck. Contrasting Schumann's educational worldview with that of his master, Friedrich Wieck, invites a deep examination of questions of educational philosophy. Wieck's approach views the child as a human machine that needs to be programmed from an early age, so it can respond appropriately after reaching maturity. By contrast, Schumann addresses the learner directly, relating to them as an autonomous being, and encourages gaining musical experience before building technical proficiency.

These contrasting approaches invoked important questions among the students regarding educational theory and practice, such as: Is a child indeed an autonomous individual who plays an active role in their own training? What is the teacher's task? How should the teacher's worldview regarding the nature of children and the nature of music be translated into guiding principles and teaching methods? What are the goals and means of musical education?

Furthermore, the students were fascinated by Schumann's aphorisms (in *Musikalische Haus und Lebensregeln*) relating to the musician's moral personality.

Schumann was a man of principles. He wrote his aphorisms in the present tense, directly to the reader, so as to touch their heart. His aphorisms can be seen as a form of Shulkhan Arukh [the major compendium of Jewish religious law]—an instruction manual for musicians stating what is permitted, what is forbidden, and how to conduct oneself in daily life. The principle that guided Schumann in his musical career was not money, but satisfaction—as he wrote, “Art is not a path to wealth. Strive to be a true artist; the rest will take care of itself.” He compared art to morality (“the laws of morality are the laws of art”), and spoke about modesty and humility: “Beyond the mountains there also dwell people. Be modest: you have not invented or discovered anything that others did not discover or invent before; and even if so, consider that a gift from heaven.” (Esther)

Formulating a Personal Educational Vision

This task enabled the students to process the clash between their religious-communal world and the world of classical musical culture which they encountered during their studies. Their responses also stemmed from the tension between their traditional roles as Haredi women and their growing self-awareness and personal development. Thus, they were able to express the dilemmas resulting from the challenge of teaching instruments to Haredi girls, and from their own self-doubt about the meaning and legitimacy of their musical work:

My difficulty is the lack of sleep. I get home in the evening, play as much as I can, and then—because I won't compromise on taking care of the home—I start doing that at midnight. (Gila)

Sometimes I have doubts, I ask myself what I'm doing. (Rachel)

When I come to teach advanced pupils, I sometimes ask myself, what am I teaching them for? They'll become professional, and then they'll experience the frustration of not really being able to do anything with it apart from play for themselves, or at the most in concerts... They ask me: How will it help me in life if I insist on some tiny nuance? And I answer them; but inside I have a voice that also says, based on my experience: On some level, it won't help her make a living, raise her kids, or anything else she'll want to do in life; just the experience of professionalism and aesthetics in music. (Ruti)

Dilemmas relating to the tension between career and family are common to many people, and especially women. But they are particularly acute for these students, who were raised and live in a society in which being a mother and “supporting a house of Torah” is the accepted role for a woman. It is important to note that the students themselves embrace this identity, and are not willing to surrender it. Rather, they want to live in both worlds, and create a degree of harmony between them. Some have even garnered rabbinical support for their musical occupation:

I used to think it couldn't work... I thought about playing music in total terms, either everything or it's not worth it. And that when I marry and have children, I'll have to stop. Today I don't see a contradiction. I know what my priorities are: family comes first. And if it [music] works out, then great. It can give a lot to my family and me. And if it doesn't work out, I'll wait for other periods of life when I can give my all to it again, and in the meantime, I'll maintain what I have, and not feel I'm missing out. (Gila)

The fact that education is the main goal, not performing, makes it OK. I asked my father, who is a well-known rabbi and halakhist, and he was the one who encouraged me! (Tova)

Rabbi Eliyahu encouraged me, and said that it's a calling to sing and play, to make people happy, to spread joy and love among Jewish people... After my father died, I went to a rabbi and asked him, and he said that people need joy. Women especially need joy! If you can bring them joy, that's a holy deed [mitzvah]! It's not just “permitted,” you should go and make people happy... And since then, before every time I have performed, I went to get a blessing from the rabbi. (Na'ama)

The discussions in the course about the moral value of music education and instrumental teaching also allowed the students to delve into their Orthodox religious and ethical tradition, and find religious and spiritual meaning for their musical work.

As a human being, I know that I will never fully understand the Almighty, so I rely heavily on other things, such as music, to bring me closer to Him, and to help me experience true spirituality. I have had experiences of sitting at the piano or singing, and feeling as though I was alone with my Creator... In those moments, I felt as though the purpose for my gift was being fulfilled, as I was using what I believe that the Almighty gave me in order to get closer to Him... (Sara)

Somehow, music allows me to access places deep within myself, and to reach up higher to the Almighty than I ever could without it. I also have a certain ritual that I recently shared with a few nervous friends before a performance. Before I step onto a stage to perform, I whisper to myself the verse from Psalms, “Lord, open my lips, That my mouth may declare Your praise.” I pray that what I am about to perform will be an experience that will bring me closer to my Creator, and that the women who I am performing for will have a similar experience. (Rachel)

On a personal note, I can say that music is a very large part of my life, spiritually and otherwise. However, I am not willing to give up on any aspects of Jewish practice or tradition for music. I am first and foremost a Jew, and I am a musician and music teacher to the extent that it fits into and enhances my spiritual lifestyle. (Rivka)

From Philosophy and Principles to Goals, Implementation, and Evaluation

The students' discussions on this topic explored a wide range of possible goals, including explanatory and process-based knowledge (notation, harmony, musical styles and forms), psycho-motoric knowledge (performance skills and techniques, note quality, note produc-

tion, articulation), music listening and reading skills, self-development (reflective listening, self-discipline, practice habits, time management), and listening to others (interpretation, improvisation, playing together, communication, and critical awareness).

In their projects, the students expressed their sense of mission and responsibility not only for providing good teaching, but also for being aware of their pupils' environments (Schwab's "milieu") and for helping shape a learning environment that facilitates concentration and social interaction.

Parents have an integral role in children's musical understanding: the music they play to their children, the place they give to music, tells children how important music is... Teachers have a significant and complex role in lessons. They must be gentle and accepting, but also firm and decisive, so that their students form a bond with them and will want to invest in their playing and in lessons. Teachers must give their students motivation and encouragement, and must constantly point out where they have improved, as well as giving them the best tools to progress further. (Hanna)

Discussion

Teacher Education as an Act of Social Justice for a Population with Multiple Marginality

The Ron Shulamit program offers a case study in the cultural adaptation required to make the academic and professional spheres accessible to populations with specific needs and characteristics. The program for students can be described as being at the intersection of various marginalities: They are women in a traditionalist, patriarchal, and anti-individualist society; they belong to a minority group in Israel; they are the first generation in their families to enter higher education; and they are music teachers in an education system that undervalues their subject. They must therefore not only develop themselves as musicians and educators, but also develop the very field of music education in which they wish to work. In this sense, the program is more than a framework for learning—it is a foundation for the construction of a Haredi female music community and leadership cadre. The students form the spearhead of this undertaking, serving as leaders and change agents.

Educational Identity Development in Leadership Training

The educator's sense of purpose and mission is an important element in their personal identity, and thus their ideas about what is worthy guide their thinking about their educational approach and practice. Nisan (2012) calls this "educational identity," which encompasses beliefs and values about educational processes and goals, based on core inner beliefs and certainties regarding what is good and worthy for individuals and society. It also includes leaders' beliefs about their own inclinations, abilities, talents, and ambitions. According to Nisan, educational identity development is thus an essential part of training educational leaders.

The students in the Ron Shulamit program undoubtedly see themselves as educational leaders who are shaping musical culture and music education in their community. However, they also bring to the program their own religious and ethical worldviews and priorities, instilled in them before they embarked on their journey toward becoming musicians and music teachers and toward their own self-actualization. For them, these latter commitments are relatively new, and they are stacked against the commitments ingrained in them by their education, tradition, and community, and which they have no interest in abandoning. Rather, they want to hold onto both identities and sets of values—indicating that the construction of instrumental music teacher identity can even more complex than shown by, for example, Hargreaves et al. (2007), Mark (1998), or Natale-Abramo (2014).

A Meeting or Clash of Traditions?

Musical training for Haredi female students necessarily involves conflicts or clashes between two deeply-rooted and strict traditions. The first is the ultra-Orthodox tradition in which they were raised, with its sanctified values and uncompromising worldview regarding women, family, modesty, and outside culture. Haredi tradition prizes Torah study above all, and other arts and sciences are secondary and purely utilitarian. The second tradition is that of classical musical instrumental training, which likewise demands a high degree of devotion and immersion, while also seeking to broaden the students' cultural horizons. The inherent tension—both physical and ideological—between the conflicting demands of these two traditions is a prominent feature of the students' experiences.

Yet alongside it, they also discovered, sometimes to their surprise, certain shared values of the two traditions: respect for authority, for canonical texts, and for the elevated status of teachers; an ethos of delayed gratification and of continued work at self-improvement; and humility in the face of the tradition itself and of senior figures who are wiser and more experienced. The students discovered these facets by observing other teachers and by studying texts.

Studies on the integration of Haredi students into higher education indicate that students use four types of “internal strategies” to cope with the dilemmas thrown up by the encounter between two conflicting ideational worlds: (1) compartmentalization—setting clear boundaries between their lives at home and in the community” and their professional lives; (2) conversion—an attempt to find roots in Jewish tradition for Western values, and to give Jewish religious meaning to new values they encounter (3) alienation—a cynical response expressing lack of faith in both traditions, and mainly a rejection of their native tradition; and (4) polyphony—managing the different voices, understanding that the human condition consists of multiple conflicting values, and that conflicts cannot always be solved, but can be managed (Perl 2019).

The group process undergone by the students on the Ron Shulamit program enabled them to deploy the “conversion” strategy, and attach to their new world spiritual meaning stemming from their Haredi values. Some of them were also able to apply the “polyphony” strategy—as displayed by Gila in managing the tension between motherhood time and practice time, an understanding that it is not a case of “all or nothing,” but rather sometimes one way and sometimes another.

Telling the Story Anew: Liminal Space and Leadership in the Borderlands

Constructing a worldview is a narrative process. In effect, the students were given the opportunity to retell their stories and imbue them with religious and spiritual meaning, thus transforming their dilemmas into a source of strength, and the story of their studies into a narrative of discovery, mission, and spiritual labor. Furthermore, holding these discussions in a peer-group setting offered the students a safe space and a sense of belonging, alongside others who understand their experiences and share the same dilemmas, ambition, and growth. The group thus provided a fruitful liminal space, enabling the students—instead of relinquishing one of their two worlds—to move between them as cultural mediators. Music education has become an arena of fruitful creativity, and a liminal space in which they are able to open passageways between the music community and the Haredi community. In this sense, they are “border people.”

Dilemmas that stem from loyalties to conflicting values systems and worldviews are characteristic of migrants and groups belonging to two or more cultures. The commonly accepted view is that there is a clear boundary between different cultures, both physical and metaphorical, and those who cross it therefore adopt a contrary, confrontational position. But against this dichotomic approach, which imposes a narrative of struggle between op-

pressor and oppressed, is an alternative view according to which cultures, races, and classes are instead separated by “borderlands” (Anzaldúa 1987)—spaces containing hybridity and mixtures, whose inhabitants can be “both” or “neither.”

This intermediary space makes it possible to combine cultures and create something new, and thus to reshape categories and identities. While inhabiting such borderlands often means having to cope with contradictions, hate, anger, and exploitation, it also invites growth, development, and cross-pollination of cultures, languages, and identities (Anzaldúa 1987), while at the same time demanding a commitment to flexibility and to avoiding closed and dichotomic frameworks. Here, to use Anzaldúa’s (1987) description, there is no rest, but there is a home.

This concept of borderland is entirely fitting for the Ron Shulamit program, and the students can be understood as border people in that they are (still) an avant-garde minority group, working hard to gain a degree of independence and freedom and construct a space of their own, without relinquishing their loyalty and belonging to their community. For them, their community of female musical leaders has become a borderland in which they can develop language, ideas, and action that allow them to inhabit two worlds. ■

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Abstract

This article describes a unique case study involving women from Israel's Haredi (ultra-Orthodox Jewish) community, who participated in a groundbreaking academic program to train female Haredi music teachers. The program, founded in Jerusalem in 2004, focuses on instrumental teaching in the Western classical music tradition, and was the first academic training program in music education for women from Israel's closed and highly traditional Haredi community. The article presents the educational and pedagogical approach developed in this special program (the Ron Shulamit program), and examines insights gleaned from observation and analysis of the social and educational processes undergone by the students. I begin with a short review of the theoretical background for this article, and present some of the key characteristics of the Haredi community in Israel and the place of music and music education within that community. I then describe the origin of this study and its methodology. Subsequently, I survey the track for instrumental teaching in the Ron Shulamit program, explain the pedagogy developed for it, and describe its impact on the participants, concluding with a discussion of the main themes emerging from the study. ■

Keywords: education and religion; ethnography; Haredi women; hegemonic society; hybrid identity; multiple marginality; music education provision; narrative inquiry; self-actualization; social justice; teacher training; women studies.

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“Dialogue lost? Teaching musical interpretation of Western classical music in higher education” – A retrospect and forward-looking reflection

Introduction

The lion’s share of this dissertation report summarises my PhD thesis entitled *Dialogue lost? Teaching musical interpretation of Western classical music in higher education* (Holmgren 2022a) consisting of five publications: four peer-reviewed articles (Holmgren 2018, 2020b, 2020c, 2022b) and one conference paper (Holmgren 2020a). Afterwards, a forward-looking reflection for research and practice follows, where I draw upon examples from my finished and ongoing research in various constellations and my teaching. To make this text more concise, I have restricted references to those referring to quotes, specific assertions, or central theoretical perspectives. The interested reader is thus invited to consult the PhD thesis for a fuller account.

Background

There is an inherent tension in higher music education, given its roots in the conservatory tradition. Although it is a formally structured education, it is still commonly described as and in research findings reported to as adhering to a master–apprentice tuition model. However, after the implementation of the *Bologna declaration* from 1999, such conservatoires were supposed to turn into research-based institutions, adapting their curricula and practices to, among other things, develop student autonomy, and their capacity to autonomously identify their needs for further knowledge and competencies, emphasising a lifelong perspective on learning.

Musical interpretation is commonly assumed to be at the core of the educational content of higher music education of Western classical music. Given that instrumental teachers in higher music education have a dual function as they also, or in some cases mainly, work as performers, the current ideology regarding musical interpretation, nowadays not seldom described as restrictive, affects them both as policing teachers and policed performers (Leech-Wilkinson 2021, 166–172). During the last decades, musical interpretation has become a central topic in artistic and practice-based research from the performing artist’s perspective. Still, hitherto, the teaching and learning of musical interpretation is not a well-researched area, at least partly due to the unclear terminology and different theoretical foundations.

How musical interpretation is conceptualised and defined matters for how education of such aspects is designed, carried out, and examined. If musical interpretation is narrowly defined, as in some examples of previous research (see, e.g., Hultberg 2000, 13; Burwell 2006, 335), then it is *ipso facto* construed as a reproductive act where teachers’ personal understandings of composers’ actual or supposed intentions—i.e., what they “must, or could, or should have intended” (Elliot & Silverman 2015, 246; see also the description of what Kivy 2007 refers to as the new contract)—are seen as a central educational content.

Instead, if musical interpretation is defined as a creative and open-ended practice (see, e.g., Small 1998, 8; see also the description of what Kivy 2007 refers to as the old contract), such education must be adapted accordingly.

Literature review

My review of previous research and other relevant literature highlighted that teaching and learning of musical interpretation seem to (1) take its departure in teachers' understandings of musical interpretation and the studied repertoire; (2) be based on command-style teaching where students assume a subordinate position and adapt to the teacher's style of teaching; (3) centre on the short term goal of improving students' performances of the studied repertoire; (4) have little focus on checking students' understanding of the teaching content; (5) contain little discussions of musical interpretation, learning about learning, art forms, and the broader curriculum; and (6) rely on methods that seem to limit students' possibility to develop autonomy and a personal authentic artistic voice. Furthermore, although there has been an increasing discussion and a push for more progressive forms of organising instrumental education (i.e., those centring on peer, group, and collaborative learning), it is still unknown if and how this has affected the practices in higher music education of Western classical music in Sweden.

In sum, I hold that much previous research on teaching and learning of musical interpretation has presented a too shallow analysis of students' understandings. I suggest that this is a consequence of the research designs tending to rely on researchers' observations and retrospective interviews with teachers and students, at the expense of longitudinal studies striving to take the students' perspective of their lasting learning into account. Moreover, the possibility of further developing dialogical forms of instrumental education remains under-researched. Thus, in total, motivating the study carried out and reported in my PhD thesis.

Aim and research questions

The aim of this thesis was to contribute to a better understanding of musical interpretation in teaching and learning Western classical music from both a teacher's and student's perspective within the context of piano main instrument teaching in higher music education in Sweden. The following three research questions were formulated to fulfil this aim:

1. How do teachers and students understand musical interpretation as educational content?
2. How do teachers and students understand teaching and learning of musical interpretation?
3. How could verbal and musical dialogues be used for improving teaching and learning of musical interpretation?

Theoretical framework

The thesis' theoretical framework mainly builds on selections from the philosophical hermeneutics of Gadamer (2013/1960) and Ricoeur (2008/1986), including a narrative (e.g., Ricoeur 1991/1981; Bruner 1987, 2017) and an arts-based (e.g., Barone & Eisner 2012; Gadamer 2013/1960) perspective on experience, emphasising the ontological need for interpretation and that every interpretation is incomplete, historically, geographically, and socially situated, and followed by new interpretations.

As hermeneutic understanding, seen as the fusion of horizons, takes place in dialogues, a dialogical learning theory was used. Central concepts were the Herbartian (1901/1835) principle of *Bildsamkeit* (“educability”), emphasising that learning is possible and that learners, by necessity, actively participate in their development; the Fichtean (2000/1797) *Aufforderung* (“calling” or “summons” to “self-activity”) used for describing educators’ actions; the *pedagogical contract* (Uljens 2001), describing the pedagogical sphere of action which entails educators’ *Aufforderung* to learners’ own activity and that learners strive to respond to the *Aufforderung* as a pedagogical ditto; and the *educator’s metaphorical suicide* (Uljens 1996, 1998), which refers to when the educators—and the education—aims to support the learners’ development of self-awareness and autonomy so that a state where the teacher no longer being needed is achieved. Furthermore, Hegel’s master-slave dialectic (2018/1807, 108–116) was used as an analytical framework to understand instrumental education, viewing the teacher as the master and the student as the slave part-taking in the dialectic.

Musical interpretation is, in the thesis, not seen as value-free but based on various—often unarticulated and taken for granted—philosophical underpinnings. The term “musical interpretation” is used to denote both the process of interpreting the notated score (verb), i.e., understanding and translating the notation into (potential) sound, and the performer’s underlying understanding and intention (noun) that can be communicated verbally or performatively (in performance). Consequently, at least to a certain extent, musical performance is seen as informed by a pre-determined musical interpretation. Thus, a musical performance implicates that musical interpretation (as a verb) has taken place both before and during the performance. Hence, a musical performance could be thought of as an instance or token of a musical interpretation (a type containing a set of possible performances within the realm of how the interpreter wants to play the piece, which can conceptually be specified on different levels of hierarchy and precision). However, these decisions can be formed based on many experiences and understandings, including but not limited to those from reading the score, playing, listening, and philosophising. Furthermore, these understandings are not static as performances, combining pre-determined aspects and decisions made during the performance, inform the interpretation and vice versa in a complex interplay.

As the demarcation of musical interpretation is seen as philosophical and not empirical, it is impossible to give a definite and normative description. Consequently, I hold that what musical interpretation is or could be, must be discussed and negotiated in pedagogical situations. However, although multiple positions may be equally valid from an epistemological perspective, I posit that not all are equally productive from a pedagogical or artistic perspective.

Research process and methodology

The thesis consisted of three-part studies, referred to as movements, each addressing different aspects of the studied phenomenon. In the first, I interacted with six teachers and four students from four institutions for higher music education in Sweden in the verbal domain through qualitative semi-structured interviews; in the second, I observed master class lessons held at one Swedish institution for higher music education and afterwards engaged in semi-structured interviews with and without stimulus with the master class teacher, two students and their regular instrumental teacher (who had been a student of the master class teacher); and in the third, I created a socially constructed pedagogical space for dialogical teaching and learning of musical interpretation in a series of response-guided workshops on musical interpretation within a participatory action research study together with four students from the bachelor program in musical performance at one Swedish institution for

higher music education. Thus, the three movements differ regarding studied aspects of the phenomenon, the creation and analysis of empirical material, and how active the participants were invited to be in the research process.

The full empirical material consisted of transcriptions of semi-structured interviews with and without stimulus with teachers, students, and one master class teacher; video and audio recordings of master class lessons and workshops; annotated scores; audio-recorded student performances and written instructions, written responses, and reflective one-minute papers. The material was hermeneutically analysed and presented using poetical condensations, haiku-formed poems, (auto)ethnodrama, and collaboratively negotiated student narratives.

Results and discussion

The overarching results regarding how teachers and students understand musical interpretation as educational content, as well as such teaching and learning, outline that musical interpretation is neither verbalised nor negotiated. Furthermore, the students are held responsible for developing or already having the skills and capacities required for autonomy and a personal authentic artistic voice, described as the desired learning outcome. That the students find their education backwards-looking and not preparing for a professional career in music could at least partly be due to the instrumental lessons being mainly devoted to demonstration and imitation without argumentative support. Moreover, as the teachers' capacity to verbalise and engage in dialogical practices seems to be situationally bound and requiring questions, the possibilities to, on an organisational level, empower students to initiate and enter such dialogues should be further studied. In sum, the results, in line with previous research, outline that teaching of musical interpretation of Western classical music at the studied Swedish institutions for higher music education still seems to adhere to a traditional master-apprentice model, limiting students' possibilities for developing autonomous learning and a personal authentic voice. Furthermore, there appears to be a discrepancy between how such instrumental teachers conceptualise the aims of their teaching and how they describe and carry it out. Moreover, a lack of clarity regarding the central terms used, i.e., musical interpretation, performance, and personal authentic voice, was identified.

The results regarding how verbal and musical dialogues could be used for improving teaching and learning of musical interpretation centre on areas where such dialogues seemed to be lacking, necessary prerequisites for making a truly dialogical instrumental educational possible, and how verbal and musical dialogues could be used for improving teaching and learning of musical interpretation in higher music education. First, such dialogues seemed conspicuous by their absence in the students' current instrumental education. Second, a necessary prerequisite is that teachers are open for dialogue, critique, and willing (or obliged by curricula or organisation) as well as capable of actual change of their practices. Furthermore, the students in the participatory action research project emphasised that the workshop leader affected the tone of the sessions, and they found my openness, non-judgmental attitude, and humbleness critical for establishing a fertile learning environment. Third, the created dialogical pedagogical situations in the form of response-guided workshops, opening for musical and verbal collaboration, helped establish a shared understanding of musical interpretation and highlighted the difference between students' intentions and performances. These situations offered collaborative explorations of what musical interpretation is, might be, and could be. Furthermore, the students stated that such workshops should be included in the curriculum, which indicates that they believe such a way of organising instrumental education could be beneficial and outlines a path forward that they were interested in taking.

Concluding forward-looking reflections for research and practice

Given the apparent lack of verbalisation and negotiation regarding musical interpretation, I suggest that musical interpretation—including its philosophical, ethical, and terminological aspects—is lifted as a general subject at a programme level, to ensure that it is dealt with adequately, not merely relying on individual teachers. Furthermore, I suggest that continuing to develop response-guided workshops on musical interpretation may contribute to increasing student autonomy and responsibility for their learning, equal participation, and multivoicedness in pedagogical situations. However, it should be emphasised that establishing a truly dialogical pedagogical situation goes beyond merely including question-asking, as who and in which ways get to ask questions is connected to the power of framing topics, setting limits for acceptable answers, and, by doing so, setting the discourse. Moreover, such workshops could also contribute to allowing students to develop a more philosophically based professional judgment concerning their artistic practice and broaden their view of what such a judgment could and perhaps should entail. The question of how higher music education can support students' development of a professional judgement is something that I am currently investigating together with a fellow researcher.

By staging the ethnodramatic collage from the findings in the second movement (Holmgren 2020c, 45–46) as a *Hörspiel* in an audio paper, we (Holmgren, Östersjö & Friberg 2021) sought to sonically explore and present how such power structures, traditionally inherent in the master–apprentice model, could manifest themselves. Since 2021, I have used the audio paper in various classes with students at different educational levels to aid their understanding of this educational context. I have also invited students to perform the ethnodramatic script, portraying the master class teacher, student, and their regular teacher. This allows students to directly experience how these characters do not engage in dialogue but talk in parallel, frequently without apparent mutual understanding. Such an exercise could also be conducted with staff as part of in-service training opening for discussions on curricular development.

In an ongoing study on piano students' experiences of conservatoires as educational cultures, a fellow researcher and I have identified that they were primarily disciplined towards and through such studies by traditions, expectations, teachers' responses, and self-conceptions. However, when the instrumental teachers invited their students as partners to collaborate, think, and discuss together, they seemed to develop self-efficacy and agency, for example, regarding their personal musical interpretation. Such findings indicate the need for more research on how higher music education can be developed to better support student-centred learning and autonomy.

Regarding the conceptualisation of what a personal authentic voice can entail, my ongoing studies with a professional musician indicate that the question is complex. We tentatively suggest that the concept of authenticity should be expanded to, outside of the questions of *which person(s)* (musician; composer, teacher, or other authority) and *what objects* (scores, treatises, traditions, et cetera) the musician should be authentic towards, include the philosophical aspect of *who* the musician wants to be and become as a person. The conceptualisation should also allow for persons having multiple not necessarily compatible authentic (artistic) personas. Consequently, the question of how higher music education can be developed to include such aspects in its curriculum and how they can be enacted should be addressed in further research.

Finally, as I note in the PhD thesis, challenging and changing the established master–apprentice model takes courage, trust, time, and effort. Nonetheless, I suggest that it is imperative that instrumental educators critically scrutinise their own and their peers' teaching. Thus, I welcome you to participate in the collaborative exploration of how higher music

education's futures can be co-constructed with fellow researchers, teachers, students, and other colleagues. Hopefully, higher music education can succeed in (re)making Western classical music (as well as other genres) relevant, inspiring, and open for current and future students, teachers, and the wider society. ■

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Lectio praecursoria

Music students' experiences of workload, stress, and coping in higher education

Lectio Praecursoria 15.4.2023, Musiikkitalo, Helsinki

Honoured custos, honoured opponent, honoured audience:

We all know that higher education is associated with a demanding workload and high levels of stress. However, we do not know what to do about that issue. One music student who participated in my doctoral research thought that it is difficult to change the situation because “in general, in society as well as in my department, people tend to idealise those multi-tasking individuals” (Jääskeläinen, López-Íñiguez & Phillips 2020, 516). Some of you are studying in higher education at the moment and understand this issue from your current experiences. Some of you are parents of higher education students, and you have seen how their stress accumulates every now and then to extremely high levels. All of you have heard concerns about students' workload and stress from the news. In these times, figuring out how to support higher education students' well-being is a burning question in our society. Although it has been a concern for decades, it became a serious issue after the COVID-19 pandemic started. This is not any different for students who specialise in music. In my doctoral research project, I have listened to many music students talking about the challenges that workload and stress have placed on their lives.

Let us take a closer look at what it means to study music. As you know, music students usually start studying music during their childhood. Thus, they have already spent much more time with their chosen field than students who choose their subject when they enter university. It is not only technical skills that music students learn when they practise their instrument or sing. They also create a deep emotional engagement with music itself. This is because studying the arts often connects deeply with students' expression, emotions, and experiences. In this way, music intertwines with the students' own personalities. As one of my research participants observed, music students “have gotten used to constantly working since childhood, and to expecting a lot of themselves” (Jääskeläinen, López-Íñiguez & Phillips 2020, 516).

The typical higher music education learning environment partly derives from the traditional master-apprentice model. A good example of this is the one-to-one tuition model. Music students spend a great part of their studies in these individual learning situations, where the relationship between teacher and student often becomes very special. In higher education, music students have the same sources of stress as other students. However, they also have high performance expectations. If you recall your own memories from school, when you had to sing alone in front of the class, it is easier for you to imagine how performing music students feel when they are *constantly* in front of other people when they perform and rehearse. The people who see and hear their performances include not only their peer-students and teachers, but also the wider public. Moreover, competitions are also a traditional part of studying music professionally. Added to that, if you think about music students' calendars, their commitments to ensembles and other groups pose additional time and constraints. In addition to all this, there are often extra concerns and workload for music students related to the musculoskeletal issues and injuries that sometimes arise from long hours playing their instrument or singing.

In my doctoral dissertation I take a deep look into music students' specific experiences of workload and stress, and how they cope with these experiences in higher education (Jääskeläinen 2023). When I received the wonderful opportunity to start my doctoral studies, I was working in student services in music faculties. In my administrative work I saw how many students had difficulties in coping with their studies, and many questions arose: Why do higher education studies seem to negatively affect students' well-being? How could we change the situation so that students could better concentrate on learning and, most importantly, actually enjoy their years in higher education? Thus, my doctoral journey began with a happy synergy of my professional and academic worlds.

When I started searching for literature related to my research topic, I was glad to see that the topics of music students' health and well-being had been widely researched. This research had also been utilised to support music students' study practices in many institutions, like here in the Sibelius Academy. However, it was surprising that studies focusing on music students' experienced workload in *higher music education* settings were lacking. There was lots of research evidence available on student workload in *general fields* in higher education. It was rather concerning to read that unmanageable workloads may lead to students' decreased engagement and motivation, and even burnout. Thus, I became determined to produce knowledge of music students' experiences, so that I could contribute to developing both my own and others work in higher education.

Specifically, the first aim in my research was to investigate how the music students *themselves* experience their overall workload. The second aim was to contribute to pedagogical practices and educational policies by providing recommendations for higher music education institutions to better support music students coping with their workload and stress. In my dissertation, I—together with my research team—approached these aims through four articles. In the first article, we conducted a systematic literature review on the topic of the workload of higher education students in music and other disciplines (Jääskeläinen, López-Íñiguez & Phillips 2023). The other three articles utilised a multistrategy approach that integrated quantitative and qualitative research (Jääskeläinen, López-Íñiguez & Phillips 2020; Jääskeläinen & López-Íñiguez 2022; Jääskeläinen, López-Íñiguez & Lehtikoinen 2022). A total of 155 music students in five higher music education institutions in Finland and the United Kingdom responded to the Workload, Stress, and Coping questionnaire. In addition, 29 of the questionnaire respondents participated in interviews.

What did the first article teach us about the previous international research on music students' experienced workload? It is interesting that the subject of workload is often associated with the strictly negative connotations of overload. However, it should be defined more widely, because previous research has shown that workload can also be a positive aspect of studies for music students. This fact was confirmed in the later stage of my research process, and is perfectly described by one of my research participants in these words:

I feel success when I have enjoyed doing or completing something. For example, exam concerts and other concerts in which I can play on my own or together with someone, and when, in that moment, I feel deep love and joy for playing, for other performers and for the audience. (Jääskeläinen, López-Íñiguez & Phillips 2020, 517)

The findings of 29 studies from that systematic literature review were synthesised into a total of 23 recommendations for good practices to: (a) increase music students' ability to cope with their workload, (b) provide tools for teachers to support music students' ability to manage and cope with workload, and (c) develop learner-centred environments in higher music education. Indeed, many of those 23 recommendations are already familiar to most administrators and teachers. For example, one recommendation suggests utilising

knowledge of music students' experienced workload when developing curricula. One could expect that previous research has revealed some tricks that might solve student workload issues—but that kind of trick does not exist. The real trick is to ask higher music education institutions: if you already know and use all of those recommended ways of supporting music students, why do music students still experience heavy workloads, stress, and even burnout? I, along with the research participants, argue that music students' experiences have not been listened to carefully enough in most institutions.

After the systematic literature review, I was curious to see what the collected data showed about research participants' experiences. Of the total of 155 research participants, 108 music students were from Finland and 47 were from the United Kingdom. There are differences in higher education systems between the two countries that affect students' lives. For example, in contrast to the United Kingdom, higher education institutions in Finland have low tuition fees. The results indicated that a university culture with high tuition fees is likely to increase music students' experienced stress, but might not directly impact their experienced study workload. Music students have their own ways of coping with workload and stress when they need support for music-specific physical and psychological problems. The research participants wanted their teachers to be aware of these pressures and show empathy for those students who have commitments other than studying. For example, part-time work and family responsibilities can make time management challenging and cause additional stress for students. Indeed, almost 70% of the questionnaire respondents were working alongside studying, and almost 60% had work in the field of music. A very interesting result was that work related to music did not have any influence on music students' experienced stress. In fact, such work may even be seen as beneficial and invaluable for the music students' future careers, as this research participant noted:

For me, it is the financial need in particular that forces me to work alongside studying. But the workload is also partly caused by me enjoying being able to work in my own field. I think that the same reasoning applies to many other students. Although they know that work during weekends and holidays causes extra commitments in the calendar, working is very beneficial for my current studies and for my future career. (Jääskeläinen, López-Íñiguez & Phillips 2020, 516)

Next, I was interested in exploring to what extent experienced study workload, stress, and proactive coping were associated with gender, level of degree, genre group, and study programme among the research participants. Some groups of music students experience particularly significant workload and stress. For example, female students experienced more study workload and stress than male students. However, male students used proactive measures to overcome challenges and positive imagery to achieve their goals more often than female students, and this helped male students better cope with their study workload. An alarming conclusion of the study was that non-binary gender students used emotional support seeking statistically significantly less than female and male students, although the non-binary gender was associated with a noticeable effect on stress. These differences between genders may resonate with invisible structural inequalities in the higher music education system.

Of further note is the topic of specific study programmes, whose related professions, particularly in music education and church music, often require multi-instrumentalism. Students in these fields thus often have more study- and instrument-specific demands than students in classical music study programmes, resulting in a higher workload and increased learning challenges.

In addition, both the junior and doctoral levels of study are particularly associated with stress. This may be related to the fact that junior students study music while in high school,

while on the other end of the spectrum doctoral students often have other work and family commitments.

I also wanted to figure out how this dissertation's results and findings could be used to develop pedagogical practices and educational policies. Based on music students' experiences, 43 constructive tools for teachers were created to support music students in managing and coping with their workload in higher education. For example, one of these tools is related to teachers' interaction with students when teachers give feedback:

It is important for teachers to understand that harsh and overly critical feedback affects students' mental health. Good feedback encourages and motivates students to practise even harder, and constructive critical feedback pushes students to increase practising time. When students are overloaded, they are not able to handle feedback of any sort. (Jääskeläinen & López-Íñiguez 2022, 8)

In my dissertation, I provide four general recommendations for good practices. The first recommendation (1) suggests that higher music education should support music students' proactive coping skills that minimise their distress and maladaptive coping during their studies. As I mentioned earlier, there are differences between genders in using proactive coping styles, and these differences should be acknowledged to develop better support systems for music students.

The second recommendation (2) suggests that higher music education institutions should find solutions to the unequal workload and stress experiences between low-income and well-off students, different genders, and different study programmes. Higher music education institutions could acknowledge students' diverse backgrounds, change a competitive atmosphere to a more co-operative university culture, and utilise more diverse sources of knowledge in developing study programmes. Diverse sources do not mean adding more content to courses and demands on students. Instead, it means that administrators and teachers should start to consider what to leave out from the current overloaded structures. It means rethinking study programmes in a way that utilises students' wishes to be able to combine studying and working in order to benefit their learning and careers. It means support for students from the beginning of their studies so that they can find individual and meaningful study paths.

The third recommendation (3) suggests that higher music education should ensure teachers' continuing professional development, particularly in learner-centred pedagogical approaches. Understanding music students' experienced workload may also enable teachers to improve their students' learning experiences more generally. Constructivist learning theories suggest that it is possible to support students being active learners when the teaching is connected to their prior knowledge and students have enough time to process new information. At this point, when I mention teachers, people often ask: What about the teachers' workload? That is a good question, and it affects the resources they have to support students' learning and well-being. However, that important question should be aimed at higher music education institutions so that it does not overshadow the issue with students' workload.

Indeed, the final recommendation (4) suggests that higher music education should invest resources in providing for more research investigating students' experiences. For example, curriculum-related decisions directly impact students' workload, but administrators and teachers all too often make these decisions without robust evidence. There is so much valuable data gathered in the institutions from the students through innumerable questionnaires, and yet very little of that data is analysed and then utilised to develop pedagogical practices and educational policies. In light of this, I want to raise a question targeted at the higher music education institutions: Why there is no full-time researcher, or even several re-

searchers, who concentrate on collecting, analysing, and providing usable reports from your students' feedback? I do not mean only percentages and statistics, but especially students' experiences from their everyday lives.

To end my *lectio praecursoria*, I want to remind the higher music education institutions that my dissertation includes many valuable examples of music students' experiences that can be utilised as decision-making tools. This is one way in which institutions could develop better study environments that help make the experiences of workload and stress manageable for all music students. Music students should get enough support of the right kinds to have successful, healthy, and enjoyable study experiences that prepare them for their professional careers. To illustrate a vision for that kind of study environment, I will end here with the words of a research participant who described the optimal workload while studying music:

There are kind of optimal circumstances for me, so that I can feel comfortable, and I know that I now have enough time. And I don't need to stress about it. (Jääskeläinen, López-Íñiguez & Phillips 2020, 517) ■

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Statement for approval of doctoral dissertation of Tuula Jääskeläinen

This is a carefully researched dissertation that contributes to our understanding of music students' experiences of overload, stress and coping whilst also making practical recommendations for the development of curriculum, teaching and support services in higher education.

This dissertation reports on two stages of a larger four-stage research project, the Music Student Workload Project which took place across Finland and the United Kingdom. Following stages 1 and 2—the pilot and exploratory stages—which are reported elsewhere, the dissertation provides an extended summary of the third stage and part of the fourth stage of the project: the explanatory and synthesis stages.

The overarching research question and related sub-questions are addressed in a systematic manner through the various chapters of the dissertation and relate to 4 published articles. There is evidence of a thorough engagement with a wide range of literature from general higher education, along with material from other areas such as psychology, and music education health and well-being. Students' experiences of overload, stress and coping are tested against a number of variables using quantitative tools of analysis appropriate to small sample sizes. Along with qualitative data, the findings are used to inform a set of 43 constructive tools for teachers to support music students in their studies.

Starting from the premise that students today are experiencing increased levels of stress and poor mental health, Tuula makes the case that there are characteristics and features specific to music education that can exacerbate pressures on students, as well as offset them. These features include performance anxiety, musculoskeletal strain problems and the fact that music students have a great deal of personal investment in music and their identities as musicians. The systematic review showed that whilst the topic of workload for students in higher education had been studied in general, there was not much existing research specific to music students. Therefore, the specific focus on music students in this research makes a welcome contribution to both the music education and general higher education literatures.

A key benefit of the systematic review was in revealing the complexity of trying to define and conceptualise workload. Workload cannot be adequately studied just by logging credits and course hours; its experience is subjective depending on the meaning and satisfaction ascribed to the task by each individual. Furthermore, students have varying degrees of workload outside of their study-related activities; a need to work for a living, establishing professional contacts, and other life commitments such as caring responsibilities and, for junior students, going to school. One of the most important contributions of this dissertation is the care it takes in building a nuanced understanding of potential factors that can affect students' experiences of workload, stress and coping in music education.

In addition to the expanded concepts of workload, the research draws from Greenglass et al's Pro-active Coping Inventory for Adolescents (2008). The choice to do this draws on the argument that most stress-related research uncovers reactive strategies that people use after they are already stressed. The research establishes a relationship between students' lack of reported stress and their use of various proactive coping strategies. In learning more about students' use of these strategies this dissertation makes an important contribution to curriculum development that is based on what students have found to be useful. It also goes some way in heading off critiques on the rise of well-being as a central concern in

education today. The main point of contention is that by focusing excessively on ‘students as stressed’, students and teachers are encouraged to position students as automatically fragile and vulnerable. This, it is suggested, is to the detriment of their well-being (Ecclestone & Hayes 2019) and of course goes against the intentions of this work. Pro-active coping strategies replace perhaps stereotypical images of students as worn down and passive, with students as having agency to meet the demands of their work.

Perhaps the most surprising findings of this research were around classical music performance students’ workload. The pressure to engage in individual practice for many hours a day is one of the factors that marks out music students from other students in higher education. Expectations of Tuula’s findings might have predicted a link between the demands of daily instrumental practice and experiences of overload. However, this was not found compared to students of other genres. The observation that the positive meaning and satisfaction that music students find in their studies can offset or replace feelings of overload and stress seems to be a significant one.

It should also give pause for thought and further investigation that music education students and church musicians seemed to experience the greatest workload. The sample sizes for these musicians were comparatively small. Perhaps future research could start with more detailed descriptions of what different courses entail, including objective course handbook measures of hours and credits to measure that baseline curriculum hours are not excessive (Rivadeneira 2022). Tuula did point towards the multi-skilled demands of some of these musicians and it would be of great interest to see whether task-switching (for instance, between different roles or instruments, or combining academic study with practical music making) is perceived as more stressful than courses that comprise mostly performance on a single instrument.

Finally, the findings around extracurricular paid work are important. It was found that if extracurricular work could be linked to future career goals, then students experienced this as a benefit, despite it inevitably contributing to a greater workload. This has interesting implications for the development of courses that use work-based learning. Could music education partnerships with ensembles or professional contexts create opportunities for students to earn money, develop professional contacts *and* earn course credits? It is known that contextual learning is important in vocational training for the acquisition of tacit skills and competencies that are picked up by osmosis from the environment and the people in it. If working professionally whilst still a student also contributes to greater well-being through career building, should we be taking this more seriously?

At the Public Examination, Tuula engaged with the discussion in a confident and fluent manner showing knowledge of the implications of her chosen research design and tools of analysis. When discussing the implications of the research her commitment to using the findings to improve student outcomes was clear.

On the basis of this Public Examination and the submitted doctoral dissertation, I propose that this work meets the requirements and is approved for the degree of Doctor of Music. ■

Dr Biranda Ford, 5.5.23.

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Reviews | Arviot

Book review

Learning and teaching in the music studio. A student-centred approach, edited by J. I. Pozo, M. P. Pérez Echeverría, G. López-Íñiguez & J. A. Torrado (Springer, 2022)

Almost two decades of interdisciplinary work by the Musical Knowledge Acquisition Research Group (GIACM) of the Faculty of Psychology of the Autonomous University of Madrid (Spain) has been compiled in the book *Learning and teaching in the music studio. A student-centred approach* (Pozo et al. 2022). This ground-breaking volume invites music teachers, advanced level music students, and researchers to embrace the paradigm shift towards student-centred learning by approaching the topic from a socio-cognitive constructivist viewpoint.

The book arises from the current existential crisis in instrumental music teaching, as the gap between the education provided and the competences needed is becoming increasingly wider and deeper. The way musicians are educated has remained unchanged for decades, if not centuries, while the graduates find themselves unprepared for the challenges of the real world, which expects a majority of them to become dedicated to teaching their instrument instead of being a professional soloist. Although the current system has many shortcomings, the idea of the authors is not to complain, but to offer alternatives to the current situation, and towards that purpose they have included a thorough overview of various research-based approaches to learning and teaching, which makes up the entire second part of the book. In this way the reader is given a comprehensive overview of the current situation, as well as numerous ideas for creating a more student-centred and constructivist-based classroom environment.

Among instrument teachers there is a widespread hesitation regarding any proposed changes to their work practices, which is often based on the assumption that those who propose new strategies rarely teach themselves. *Learning and teaching in the music studio* has the potential to alleviate those doubts, as the 12 contributing authors are specialists in the fields of both psychology and music, and several also work as teachers in Spanish conservatories and schools of music. Advocating for effective and meaningful teaching, their goal is to promote learning strategies that students could also use in the absence of their teachers. Without any ambition to publish a handbook for music teachers or convince them to give up their current practices, the authors aim to improve the existing situation by questioning the accustomed conservatory model and contrasting it with an alternative pedagogical approach.

The first part of the book, *A new mindset for learning and teaching music*, offers a thorough introduction to the current state of music education in Spain and several other Western countries. Even though the authors have little positive to say in this respect, their supportive while somewhat sarcastic tone leaves readers optimistic regarding the numerous opportunities for improvement in the various fields of music education considered in this part. The discussion is opened by Guadalupe López-Íñiguez, Juan Ignacio Pozo, and María Puy Pérez Echeverría arguing the necessity for reforming music education to better prepare future musicians for the challenges of their work life. Juan Ignacio Pozo's "The psychology of learning music" sheds light on the teaching conditions that help students to manage their own learning processes, questioning the common function of teachers as the correctors of errors. While explaining the conflict between two different styles—traditional *versus* student-centred—where the first concentrates on learning the musical score (or "code") and

transferring it to the instrument, and the other focuses on how the relationship between the student's actions and the instrument has a conceptual, personal, or aesthetic meaning and affects the sound produced, the author gently directs readers towards contemplating the true value and meaning of learning an instrument. In the same line, María Puy Pérez Echeverría continues with analysing teachers' conceptions and beliefs on learning and teaching music as factors that may hinder change in music classrooms, aptly pointing out that the debate is between the perception of needing a change and the fear of bringing it about. Juan Ignacio Pozo, María Puy Pérez Echeverría, Guadalupe López-Íñiguez, and Amalia Casas-Mas end the first part of the book with a chapter presenting an empirically validated system for the analysis of instrumental learning and teaching practices (SAPEA, for its initials in Spanish), which seeks to be an exhaustive tool for the observation of most activities taking place in instrumental music classes. The proposed multidimensional analysis includes not only verbal interaction between teachers and students, but also the instrumental actions—therefore differentiating between various types of activities and leading to the breakdown of what happens in the classroom into different units of analysis to make observations as objective as possible.

After getting readers thoroughly acquainted with the theoretical and methodological principles upon which the book is based, the second part on *Learning and teaching in the music classroom* is like a buffet of chapters catering to almost every taste and need, allowing a more specific look into different contexts of music education. For those interested in the development of children between 4 and 7 years of age, Anna Sorlí, Juan Ignacio Pozo and José Antonio Torrado explore the topic of children's intuitive musicality, which is often overlooked both in general education and in music schools. Contrasting the common way of teaching music, where the student is expected to perfectly execute the musical score before “adding” emotional qualities to the piece, several chapters stress the need to address the expressive dimensions of music from an early age. María Puy Pérez Echeverría and Cristina Marín debate the pragmatic and epistemic function of musical scores, pointing out the ridiculousness of excluding expression and meaning from words by paralleling scores with written texts. In a similar vein, Guadalupe López-Íñiguez and Juan Ignacio Pozo compare the effects of constructive *versus* direct teaching methods regarding initial learning of musical instruments at elementary levels of conservatories and music schools. According to their research, students of constructive teachers are highly motivated and have the ability to consider musical scores in a complex and holistic manner at an early age, suggesting the need to focus teaching more on the students and their learning processes rather than contents and outcomes. Continuing with the topic of expressivity in regard to learning instrumental techniques, José Antonio Torrado, Juan Ignacio Pozo, and María Puy Pérez Echeverría contrast the traditional approach with the expressivist, stating that although it is necessary to learn musical and instrumental codes and the actions leading to the desired sounds, it is also important to keep in mind that these are a means to an end, not the ultimate goal of music learning and interpretation. In line with this work, but approached from a distinct angle, Elisa Méndez and Juan Ignacio Pozo remarkably expand upon the idea of using composing as a means of teaching school-age children the communication and expression of emotions through music, which prompts the salient question – why is it so rarely used in today's music schools?

Regarding the more mundane aspects of music learning, José Antonio Torrado, María Puy Pérez Echeverría, and Juan Ignacio Pozo address the topical theme of this decade by delving into the use of Information and Communications Technologies in chapter “Learning music through ICT”. Although advances in technology have affected every teacher and student in music education, especially during recent years, we have little knowledge of how to put that into use. In this chapter, the authors have suggested ways to use ICT in the

music classroom so that it would contribute new qualities instead of merely underpinning the traditional methods with new measures. Turning to the timeless issue of evaluation, Aránzazu González and Alfredo Bautista question the purposes of assessment, as teachers are invited to rethink and improve their feedback on students' learning process. Although the arguments for reconsidering the assessment criteria are strong, a far more intriguing but only casually mentioned topic is the idea of teaching deontology and responsibility. Undoubtedly an extensive theme, it could have been elaborated a little more to leave the reader some hints regarding the ethics of teaching to ponder on.

While most of this book has dealt with issues concerning individual lessons, the chapter "From individual to cooperative learning" shifts focus to analyse the characteristics of ensemble lessons. Here, Lucas Baño and Juan Ignacio Pozo discuss the problems of cooperation in rehearsal practice of chamber music groups and point out the teacher's role in fostering authentic cooperation of group work use, which entails genuine co-construction of the emotional significance of a musical piece. In "The choir conductor: Interpreter or maestro?" Maravillas Corbalán Abellán discusses the choir conductor's professional role – whether they identify as an interpreter or a "maestro" —and proposes that in a rehearsal which serves as a learning environment (for example, amateur choirs) the conductor is both musician and teacher at the same time, whereas with professional singers the conductor acts almost exclusively as a musician, giving direct and precise instructions to the singers on technical and interpretative aspects. One could question whether the choice really is between one or the other approach, as guiding professional singers towards the mutually desired outcome resembles any other teaching process and, in that case, the author seems to suggest that professional work as a conductor automatically means having a direct teaching style. Could constructive conductors really be non-existent on a professional level?

Concluding on a somewhat rebellious note in "Learning outside the music classroom: From informal to formal learning as musical learning cultures", Amalia Casas-Mas outlines the features of classical, flamenco, and jazz music cultures. Non-formal and informal environments have several observed benefits over the (formal) classical culture, most notably students' very high intrinsic motivation, as their enjoyment from making music inspires learning and excelling, which should offer plenty of food for thought for everyone in the field of classical music.

The journey of getting acquainted with the principles of student-centred learning ends with part three: *Teacher training, innovation and research*. First, Amalia Casas-Mas and Guadalupe López-Íñiguez address the deficiencies in Western music education mentioned in the previous chapters of this book, while also calling attention to issues such as the gender gap in the education sector and the rate of student drop-out. They suggest well-reasoned and specific improvements regarding both pre-service and in-service teacher training, and this chapter is thus strongly recommended reading material for every music educator and curriculum developer. The final chapter, by the book's editors Guadalupe López-Íñiguez, María Puy Pérez Echeverría, Juan Ignacio Pozo, and José Antonio Torrado, offers a compendious summary of all the topics addressed above. For a busy reader, this could serve as a commented version of the table of contents, so approaching the book in an unorthodox manner by starting from the very end might be worth considering.

Although some editorial hiccups slightly disturb the otherwise clear and understandable message of the authors, the occasional disjointed tables or textual blemishes do not affect the generally positive impression. As a bonus, from time to time the reader might quite unexpectedly find some encouraging comments from the authors, which reveal their good-humoured and benevolent attitude. In conclusion, the book has successfully overcome the mythical challenge of being both research-based as well as easily readable, and it is surely an invaluable addition to the bookshelves of every music teacher and student. ■

Reference

Pozo, J. I., Pérez-Echeverría, M. P., López-Íñiguez, G. & Torrado, J. A. (eds.). 2022. Learning and teaching in the music studio. A student-centred approach. Springer. Landscapes: the Arts, Aesthetics, and Education, vol 31. Springer.

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Contributors | Kirjoittajat

Amalia Casas-Mas

Associate Professor,
Faculty of Education, Complutense University of Madrid (Spain)
amacasas@ucm.es

Elizabeth Francis Edwards

Doctoral Researcher,
Royal Holloway, University of London (United Kingdom)
elizabethfrancisedwards@gmail.com

Biranda Ford

Researcher,
Guildhall School of Music and Drama in London (United Kingdom)
Biranda.Ford@gsmd.ac.uk

Carl Holmgren

University Lecturer,
Department of Creative Studies, Umeå University (Sweden)
carl.holmgren@umu.se

Tuula Jääskeläinen

Analyst,
Sofigate (Finland)
tuula.jaaskelainen@sofigate.com

Ida Knutsson

Teacher,
Malmö Academy of Music (Sweden)
ida.knutsson@mhm.lu.se

Guadalupe López-Íñiguez

University Researcher, Docent,
Sibelius Academy, University of the Arts Helsinki (Finland)
guadalupe.lopez.iniguez@uniarts.fi

Cristine MacKie

Director,
London International Piano Symposium (United Kingdom)
mackie_cristine@hotmail.com

Naomi Perl

Director,
Mandel Leadership Institute in Jerusalem (Israel)
perlnaomi@gmail.com

Helen Pote

Professor,
Royal Holloway, University of London (United Kingdom)
H.Pote@rhul.ac.uk

Anna Ramstedt

Doctoral Researcher,
Faculty of Arts, University of Helsinki (Finland)
anna.ramstedt@helsinki.fi

Pedro A. Rodríguez Cortés

Researcher,
Faculty of Education, Jaume I University in Castellón (Spain)
pedroant93@gmail.com

Kaisa J. Vähi

Doctoral Researcher,
Sibelius Academy, University of the Arts Helsinki (Finland)
kaisa.vahi@uniarts.fi

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Liisamaija Hautsalo

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Tanja Johansson

Taideyliopiston Sibelius-Akatemia | Sibelius Academy of the University of the Arts Helsinki

Maria Cecilia Jorquera Jaramillo

Departamento de Educación Artística, Facultad de Educación, Universidad de Sevilla, Spain

Marja-Leena Juntunen

Taideyliopiston Sibelius-Akatemia | Sibelius Academy of the University of the Arts Helsinki

Pirkko Juntunen

Helsingin yliopisto | University of Helsinki

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Turun yliopisto | University of Turku

Nuppu Koivisto

Helsingin yliopisto | University of Helsinki

Erja Kosonen

Jyväskylän yliopisto | University of Jyväskylä

Anna Kuoppamäki

Taideyliopiston Sibelius-Akatemia | Sibelius Academy of the University of the Arts Helsinki

Kari Kurkela

Taideyliopiston Sibelius-Akatemia | Sibelius Academy of the University of the Arts Helsinki

Vesa Kurkela

Taideyliopiston Sibelius-Akatemia | Sibelius Academy of the University of the Arts Helsinki

Tuire Kuusi

Taideyliopiston Sibelius-Akatemia | Sibelius Academy of the University of the Arts Helsinki

Tuulikki Laes

Taideyliopiston Sibelius-Akatemia | Sibelius Academy of the University of the Arts Helsinki

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Taideyliopiston Sibelius-Akatemia | Sibelius Academy of the University of the Arts Helsinki

Jukka Louhivuori

Jyväskylän yliopisto | University of Jyväskylä

Otso Lähdeoja

Taideyliopiston Sibelius-Akatemia | Sibelius Academy of the University of the Arts Helsinki

Charulatha Mani

Queensland Conservatorium Research Centre, Griffith University, Australia

Jan-Erik Mansikka

Helsingin yliopisto | University of Helsinki

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University of Toronto, Canada

Markus Mantere

Taideyliopiston Sibelius-Akatemia | Sibelius Academy of the University of the Arts Helsinki

Marie McCarthy

University of Michigan, U.S.A.

Susanna Mesikä

Metropolia AMK & Taideyliopiston Sibelius-Akatemia | Sibelius Academy of the University of the Arts Helsinki

Laura Miettinen

Taideyliopiston Sibelius-Akatemia | Sibelius Academy of the University of the Arts Helsinki

Yannis Miralis

European University Cyprus

Graça Mota

CIPEM, Porto Polytechnic Institute, Portugal

Sari Muhonen

Taideyliopiston Sibelius-Akatemia | Sibelius Academy of the University of the Arts Helsinki

Minna Muukkonen

Taideyliopiston Sibelius-Akatemia | Sibelius Academy of the University of the Arts Helsinki

Pentti Määttä

Helsingin yliopisto | University of Helsinki

Hanna Nikkanen

Taideyliopiston Sibelius-Akatemia | Sibelius Academy of the University of the Arts Helsinki

Ava Numminen

Taideyliopiston Sibelius-Akatemia | Sibelius Academy of the University of the Arts Helsinki

Albi Odendaal

School of Music, North-West University Potchefstroom, South Africa

Juha Ojala

Taideyliopisto | University of the Arts Helsinki

Mikko Ojanen

Helsingin yliopisto | University of Helsinki

Alejandro Olarte

Taideyliopiston Sibelius-Akatemia | Sibelius Academy of the University of the Arts Helsinki

Pirkko Paananen

Oulun yliopisto | University of Oulu

Reijo Pajamo

Taideyliopiston Sibelius-Akatemia | Sibelius Academy of the University of the Arts Helsinki

Heidi Partti

Taideyliopiston Sibelius-Akatemia | Sibelius Academy of the University of the Arts Helsinki

Aija Puurtinen

Taideyliopiston Sibelius-Akatemia | Sibelius Academy of the University of the Arts Helsinki

Leena Pääkkönen

Oulun yliopisto | University of Oulu

André de Quadros

Boston University, U.S.A.

Thomas A. Regelski

Helsingin yliopisto | University of Helsinki

Inga Rikandi

Taideyliopiston Sibelius-Akatemia | Sibelius Academy of the University of the Arts Helsinki

Michael Rogers

University of Oregon, U.S.A.

Guillermo Rosabal-Coto

Escuela de Artes Musicales, Universidad de Costa Rica

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Helsingin yliopisto | University of Helsinki

Inkeri Ruokonen

Helsingin yliopisto | University of Helsinki

Marja-Liisa Saarilampi

Korkeakoulujen arviointineuvosto | Higher Education Evaluation Council

Eva Sæther

Lund University, Malmö Academy of Music, Sweden

Miikka Salavuo

Taideyliopiston Sibelius-Akatemia | Sibelius Academy of the University of the Arts Helsinki

Patrick Schmidt

The University of Western Ontario, Canada

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University of Tallinn, Estonia

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Michigan State University, U.S.A.

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John C. Cali School of Music Montclair State University, U.S.A.

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Oulun yliopisto | University of Oulu

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Malmö University, Sweden

Ketil Thorgersen

Stockholm University and University College of Music Education in Stockholm, SMI, Sweden

Juha Torvinen

Turun yliopisto | University of Turku

Danielle Treacy

Taideyliopiston Sibelius-Akatemia | Sibelius Academy of the University of the Arts Helsinki

Serja Turunen

Itä-Suomen yliopisto | University of Eastern Finland

Olli Vartiainen

Taideyliopiston Sibelius-Akatemia | Sibelius Academy of the University of the Arts Helsinki

Lauri Väkevä

Helsingin yliopisto | University of Helsinki

Susanna Välimäki

Turun yliopisto | University of Turku

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University of Southern California, U.S.A.

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Taideyliopiston Sibelius-Akatemia | Sibelius Academy of the University of the Arts Helsinki

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Rhythmic Music Conservatory, Copenhagen, Denmark

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Sibelius-Akatemia, Musiikkikasvatuksen, jazzin ja kansanmusiikin osasto
PL 30, 00097 TAIDEYLIOPISTO

Address

Sibelius Academy, Faculty of Music Education, Jazz and Folk Music
P. O. Box 30, FI-00097 UNIARTS

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fjme@uniarts.fi

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