NOTE TO USERS

Social, Cultural, and Psychological Influences on

Three Promising Piano Students' Decisions to Continue

Taking Piano Lessons

by

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This thesis is dedicated to my grandson Ryan Abbott Moskowitz

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ABSTRACT

In this inquiry, I used a qualitative-portraiture approach to examine the social, cultural, and psychological influences on piano students' decisions to continue taking piano lessons. I collected data between 1997 and 2002. Data types included field notes, interpretive memos, audiotaped and videotaped piano lessons, audiotaped one-on-one interviews and retrospective interviews, email messages, and written documents. The main sources of data used for analysis were transcribed videotapes of piano lessons in the music studio and interviews with the teacher and three of her promising students. I drew on Vygotsky, Halliday, and Wenger's theoretical frameworks to conceptualize my understanding of the social, cultural, and psychological issues that influence promising music students' commitment to learning music. I used Vygotsky's social-psychological-developmental theory of learning and Halliday's social theory of language to portray the significance of piano students' experiences in a music studio, their relationships with their teacher, and the teachers' use of language in the decision. Vygotsky's perspective on volitional-affective tendencies provided a framework for understanding how students' abilities to cope with their emotions influenced them to continue their music studies. I drew on Halliday's concept of *Register* to analyze the transcribed videotaped lesson data sets. I used Wenger's notion of *Community of Practice* to portray the social, cultural, and historical characteristics that play a role in motivating students to learn music. I found that being socialized into the music community, developing musical competencies, becoming a self-regulated learner, and being able to cope with the emotional experiences of playing and performing shape students' decisions to continue piano lessons. The results of my findings support that teachers influence their students' decision to continue their music studies by

socializing them into the practices of the musical community, by developing their musical competencies, by encouraging them to regulate their own learning, and by teaching them strategies to cope with the emotional experiences of playing and performing piano. The results of the findings also suggest that a teacher's holistic approach to teaching and use of language during the lesson play a major role in mediating his or her students' decisions to continue.

RÉSUMÉ

Pour cette étude, j'ai utilisé une approche qualitative et la portraiture pour examiner les influences sociales, culturelles et psychologiques sur les décisions des élèves de continuer à suivre des leçons de piano. J'ai recueilli des données entre 1997 et 2002. Les données rassemblées sont tirées de différentes sources: notes de cours, mémos d'interprétation, leçons enregistrées sur bande son et vidéo, entrevues personnelles enregistrées sur bande son et entrevues rétrospectives, courriels et textes écrits. Les principales sources de données sont une analyse des transcriptions de bandes vidéos de leçons de piano en studio de musique et des entrevues avec la professeur de piano et trois de ses meilleurs élèves. Je me suis inspirée des cadres théoriques formulés par Vygotsky, Halliday et Wenger pour conceptualiser ma compréhension des éléments sociaux, culturels et psychologiques qui influencent l'engagement des élèves prometteurs à apprendre la musique. J'ai utilisé la théorie de Vygotsky sur les aspects sociaux, psychologiques et développementaux de l'apprentissage et la théorie sociale du langage de Halliday pour décrire l'importance des expériences des élèves dans un studio de musique, de leurs relations avec leur professeur, et du langage utilisé par leur professeur au niveau de leurs décisions. La perception des causes délibérées et affectives formulée par Vygotsky a servi de cadre pour mieux comprendre comment la capacité des élèves à maîtriser leurs émotions les a influencés dans leurs études de musique. Je me suis inspirée du concept du *Registre* de Halliday pour analyser les données tirées des transcriptions de leçons enregistrées sur bande vidéo. J'ai utilisé le concept de la *Communauté de pratique* de Wenger pour décrire les caractéristiques sociales, culturelles et historiques qui jouent un rôle de motivation dans l'apprentissage de la musique. J'ai observé que la

socialisation dans une communauté musicale, le développement d'une habilité musicale, l'autonomisation de l'apprentissage et la capacité d'intégration des expériences musicales ont une influence sur les décisions que prennent les élèves de continuer ou non à suivre des leçons. Les résultats de mon étude viennent corroborer l'idée que les professeurs influencent les décisions de leurs élèves de continuer à suivre des cours de musique par leur socialisation dans la communauté musicale, en développant leur habilité musicale, en les encourageant à réguler leur apprentissage et en leur apprenant les stratégies d'intégration de leurs expériences au piano. Les résultats de l'étude indiquent également qu'une approche holistique suivie par un professeur dans son enseignement et son utilisation du langage pendant les leçons jouent un rôle majeur au niveau des décisions des élèves de poursuivre leur apprentissage de la musique.

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PRELUDE

Many children studying music take private piano lessons (Duke, Flowers, & Wolfe, 1997). Yet, it is well known that many music students abandon their music lessons within the first 18 months (Rostvall & West, 2001; Sloboda & Howe, 1991). This includes students who show early talent and sensory ability (Sloboda & Howe, 1991). Why do some promising piano students continue when so many others drop out? What factors mediate their decisions? Philosophers such as Plato and Aristotle employ words such as *desire, want, purpose, volition,* and *will* to explain why humans sustain a specific behavior. Harding (1961) claims that for those in the field of art "the miracle does not work on itself. It must be worked to find fruition. In short no artist of immortal stature is his own creation" (p. 12). Although he refers to the musician Clara Schumann, his point is that pianists do not learn in a vacuum. Piano students acquire skills through their interactions with others (parents, teachers, colleagues, and professional musicians) in various musical environments (Davidson, 1999; Sloboda, 1993). Through these experiences, piano students learn about the "musical sounds of a culture . . . in terms of, for instance, the instruments, the typical forms found, the scales and tuning systems used, and social contexts in which music occurs, and so on" (Sloboda, 1993, p. 240). Music students' experiences with others also play a critical role in shaping their "beliefs and behaviors with regard to music and its performance skill acquisition" (Davidson, 1999, p. 36). Thus, underlying pianists' decisions to further their music studies are social, cultural, and psychological experiences with others.

Finding My Musical Way

Why did I continue my musical studies? Conditions during my childhood

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sparked my interest in learning music and set in motion my life-long participation in the field. Furthermore, these experiences touched on some of the themes I address in this research, which include socialization into a music community, development of musical competency, regulative roles, emotional experiences, and a piano teacher's use of language during the lesson.

Music has always been a part of my life. I recall sitting in the living room listening to Chopin's lyrical melodies as my aunts, Hattie and Sonja, played on our upright mahogany piano. I remember watching in awe as their fingers skimmed over the top of the keys and their feet oscillated on the brass pedals. I spent many evenings listening to my father talk about my paternal grandfather repairing musical instruments for the musicians who lived in the small village of Sloben in Russia where he lived as a small child. My mother was always eager to share her stories of singing in her high school choir and being privileged to take formal piano lessons after she married. I was five years old when my mother decided to bring me to the Saturday morning concerts at Montreal High School, where I would join other children in the front row of the auditorium. I remember trying to keep my body from wiggling to the rhythm as the musicians began playing.

My encounters with my piano teachers, in particular Ms. Goldbar [pseudonym] and Jacob Wolfe [pseudonym], played a significant role in guiding and directing my learning. I began formal piano lessons at the age of seven. Week after week, I would eagerly arrive at Ms. Goldbar's piano studio, ready to play the repertoire that I had diligently practiced. Eventually I became disenchanted. I wanted to quit only three years later. What happened during the lessons? What did my teacher tell me? Although Ms. Goldbar taught me musical symbols and musical skills, I also remember that she yelled her instructions and criticized my playing. I can still hear her ordering me to curve

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my fingers, to repeat a scale until she deemed it perfect, or to play a given section louder. When I performed at the level of her standards, I earned a sticker. When I had earned 4 stickers in a row, I received the coveted BIG GOLD STAR. This occurred only once. I cannot recall Ms. Goldbar ever asking me for my interpretation of the music or letting me take the initiative in terms of how to play through a particular passage. She never encouraged me to express my wishes or permitted me to be creative. She took the sheer pleasure out of learning about the music and music history. She stifled my initiative to create my own interpretive ideas. Earning a sticker was not enough to maintain my interest especially in light of one particular incident. When I was ten years old and was about to set foot on stage to perform at the year-end concert in front of an audience of parents, family members, and friends, Ms. Goldbar yelled at me to calm down before entering the stage. She yelled at me again when I came off stage. Because I felt so dejected, I could neither remember my notes nor play up to my ability. I subsequently experienced performance anxiety for many years. After this disastrous evening, I persuaded my parents to look for another teacher.

Learning with my next teacher, Jacob Wolfe, was a miraculous experience. The lessons were quite a contrast from those with my previous teacher. Soon after I began lessons with Jacob Wolfe, my enthusiasm to learn music returned. What did Jacob Wolfe do differently to inspire me to invest time and energy in learning, practicing, and playing piano, and to inspire me eventually to work professionally as a music specialist? What occurred during my lessons with Jacob Wolfe? What did he tell me?

I believe that I continued because learning music with Jacob Wolfe was a voyage of discovery that brought me personal joy. His expert musical knowledge, his instructions, and his constructive criticism nurtured my love

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of music. He showed me how to play through passages that I was having difficulty with. He selected music that was both challenging and appropriate for my level of ability. In other words, Jacob Wolfe understood that my zone of proximal development was the distance between my level of carrying out musical tasks independently and my potential level of musical development in carrying out musical tasks with his support (Vygotsky, 1978). At the same time, he encouraged me to regulate my actions by allowing me to choose what I wanted to play. I always felt that I could handle what he suggested because he always demonstrated the difficult passages. As well as focusing on learning to play repertoire, we spent a great deal of time listening to and analyzing the music. We collaborated on questions of interpretation, sometimes by listening to records that he had stored in a special room in his studio. He never openly criticized my playing. He cared about me as a whole person, not only as his piano student. Jacob Wolfe also took me on group outings to concerts and to other events, such as the circus. He encouraged me to play for the sheer pleasure of getting to know the music and the composer. Jacob Wolfe taught me to love music and to enjoy playing piano. Significantly, I left each lesson feeling fulfilled and wanting more.

What occurred during my childhood that made me passionate enough to choose a career in music? I was socialized into various communities of musical practices, communities where musicians "find musical performance a meaningful way to experience the world," share resources, recognize participation as competence, and create their personal histories in the communities (Russell, 2002, p. 33). My experiences at home, listening to my aunts as they played through their repertoire on the piano and hearing stories of my family's involvement in musical activities, immersed me in the kinds of musical practices that musicians generally engage in. Attending concerts at the Montreal High

School with other children and parents and watching musicians play through their repertoire on their various instruments provided me with a sense of the value of engaging in musical activities with others and set in motion my ongoing desire to participate.

Although I wanted to quit when I studied with Ms. Goldbar, her year-end recitals introduced me to the excitement and general camaraderie that musicians and music students experience in performance. Ms. Goldbar developed my musical knowledge by providing me with the technical tools musicians use to read notation, play, and interpret the repertoire. She instructed me on how to play rhythms and how to physically place my fingers on the keyboard. However, she controlled my every move, thus inhibiting the development of my confidence in my musical expertise. I had low self-efficacy and I did not know how to regulate my learning. Although I cannot remember exactly what she said, Ms. Goldbar's criticism of my imperfect rendition of the music and her lack of attention to my emotional needs gave me little room to explore my ideas, to develop a sense of myself, and to work on my own. I still squirm when I reflect on how she made me feel. I now realize that Ms. Goldbar's manner and use of language could have had life-long negative emotional consequences had I not switched to Jacob Wolfe. My experiences with Ms. Goldbar and Jacob Wolfe inspired me to raise the issues I present in my study of the aspects of learning that influence a piano student's decision to continue taking piano lessons.

CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

Situating the Study and Rationale

This dissertation builds on questions I raised during my masters of education project, in which I investigated how motivation and its components contribute to gifted piano students' success in reaching their musical goals (Kronish, 1999). In that study, I interviewed Esfir Dyachkov, a piano teacher, and six of her students whom she identified as gifted and talented. I asked the students to describe the factors that they believed facilitated their musical success, including why they were motivated to play piano and what their teacher did during piano lessons.

The study familiarized me with Esfir's lesson routines. The conclusions derived from the study suggested that gifted piano students associated success with self-motivation. They had high self-efficacy; that is, they believed in their ability to accomplish tasks and actions. In addition, they attributed their motivation to their feelings, moods, and reactions while learning and playing. They also connected their motivation to studying with a teacher who selected music that was appropriate for their ability, worked collaboratively with them, reinforced appropriate behaviors, and focused on the music. Furthermore, Esfir used metaphorical explanations instead of shouting, being derogatory, or focusing on errors. However, the study only analyzed what she said or did during lessons from the students' individual and collective accounts of their perceptions and their experiences during lessons with Esfir and from information collected from my observations.

My analysis of the field notes, interviews, and the review of the literature led me to believe that these students' motivation to succeed included several

factors that were worthy of further study. The first, overarching question was: Why do promising piano students continue to pursue their musical goals? The second question was: What transpires during piano lessons that impact a student's intent to continue? As I became more familiar with the data, my research questions became more focused on studying the extent to which social, cultural, and psychological aspects of learning influence a promising piano student's decisions to continue studying the instrument. I was particularly interested in learning how Esfir's use of language developed and sustained her students' interest and commitment.

There is a lack of consistency in and indeed an absence of qualitative research explaining why promising piano students further their music education. To date, most of the research on retention focuses on the age when students start or stop music lessons (Davidson, 1999). Other research examines practice routines (Slaboda, Davidson, Howe, & Moore, 1996) or student personalities (Kemp, 1996). Literature on music students focuses on cognitive abilities (Revesz, 1925), performing conditions on music performance anxiety (Brotons, 1994), self-efficacy beliefs (Craske & Craig, 1984), or the role of the parents (Bloom, 1985; Davidson & Scripp, 1994; Freeman, 1979; Maccoby, 1980; Noy, 1968). For example, the psychologist Revesz (1925) conducted an extensive study of Hungarian prodigy Erwin Nyiregyhazi's musical ability. He speculated that Nyiregyhazi would "become a great artist" because he exhibited musical ability at an early age (p. 4). Revesz based his prediction on Nyiregyhazi's Binet-Simon test results and his above-average technical, auditory, and intellectual ability to play Beethoven sonatas and Bach fugues by the time he was 9. Although Nyiregyhazi did debut as a soloist in Berlin when he was 15, he eventually gave up his career as a musician (Folkart, 1987; Rockwell, 1987). Why did Nyiregyhazi stop? Unfortunately, Revesz did not investigate

whether Nyiregyhazi's experiences during his piano lessons offered him a fertile environment for developing his music abilities; he did not investigate what transpired during Nyiregyhazi's lessons and what part his teacher played in his decision to shorten his career as a concert pianist.

There is very little research in the field of music investigating the connection between what occurs during lessons, promising piano students' ability to deal with emotional issues and their determination to further musical studies. Responding to the music, coping with performance anxiety, and experiencing the elation of playing are some of the emotional issues students deal with. Researchers are concerned with performance anxiety and the fact that many students who suffer from performance anxiety become so discouraged that they terminate their musical studies. Brotons (1994) suggested that many students suffering from performance anxiety get so discouraged that they decide to end their musical studies; however, he did not investigate how the elation of performing, despite being anxious before hand might influence some students to continue their musical studies. Inquiries on performance anxiety often focus on the physiological symptoms, such as increased heart rate, dry mouth, diarrhea, memory lapses, irritability, and feelings of panic. Craske and Craig's (1984) research on musical performance anxiety explored the relationship between college music majors' self-efficacy beliefs and performance anxiety. The anxious and relatively anxious group of students had lower self-efficacy scores than the non-anxious group. Other researchers have attempted to determine whether the participants rated their emotions as being either high or low, or whether they used similar or different words to rate their emotions (Shaver, Schwartz, Kirson, & O'Conner, 1987). Some have asked their participants to list the distinctive categories and subcategories of emotions (Kleinginna & Kleinginna, 1981). Such inquiries do not provide students with strategies that might reduce

their performance anxiety. They provide little insight into teachers' role in alleviating anxiety or in otherwise helping students to cope with the problem. Few researchers investigate the connections between music students' emotions, their aesthetic experience of the response to the music, and their continued investment and commitment to study music.

Parents are usually the first people to provide children with early environmental or acoustical stimuli (Freeman, 1979; Noy, 1968). For example, a baby becomes sensitized to the mother's voice, responding to the many variations in the sounds – intensity, pitch, rhythm, and timbre, even before acquiring the capacity to use language as a semantic system (Noy, 1968). Parents also provide their children with musical experiences, singing to them, listening to musical recordings with them, and playing musical games with them (Davidson & Scripp, 1994; Freeman, 1979; Maccoby, 1980). Although an in-depth inquiry of the parents' roles would no doubt reveal that they influence their child's decision to continue learning music, parental influence decreases when children become older. Once good practice habits are instilled, parents have a limited effect on their children's decision to continue the lessons or drop out.

Students also derive inspiration from their teachers, and over time, the role of the teacher becomes more significant in mediating students' learning and decision-making (Bloom, 1985; Pruett, 1990; Sosniak, 1990). Yet, little is known about the connection between student-teacher interactions, students' emotional response to the music, and their decision to continue their music studies. The research focus has been on how the learning environment at school and students' emotional response to the music influences their choice of music (Gregory, Worrall, & Sarge, 1996), or how the music teachers' style of teaching and selection of topics and repertoire motivates students to study music (Sloboda et al. 1996).

Whether promising piano students continue or stop their lessons is more complex than knowing about their level or degree of support. A large part of teaching music occurs during private lessons (Rostvall & West, 2001). The existing research shows that pupils' experiences during their music lessons affect their thoughts, feelings, quality of learning, and enthusiasm to continue their music studies (Mackworth-Young, 1990). Yet, researchers are more interested in the outcome of music instruction (National Center for Education Statistics, 1991), and not in what actually transpires in the contexts where teaching and learning take place (Rostwell & West, 2001). Researchers in the field of music education have devoted more attention to studying classroom contexts than private lesson set-ups.

Piano students also derive their inspiration from their teachers. For example, Dubal's profile of the great musician and concert pianist Vladimir Horowitz, captured during evening visits between 1979 and 1982, illustrates the profound impact Horowitz's teachers had on him. Each had a different impact on his professional career that spanned six decades. Horowitz's first teacher, Vladimir Puchalsky, was very strict and demanding. Although he respected Puchalsky's musical knowledge, Horowitz realized that Puchalsky's emphasis on technique and his habit of screaming during lessons was not what he needed; it made him tense. Dubal claims that Horowitz's experiences with Puchalsky might have contributed to his neurosis, for which he was famous all his life, and may explain why he retired from performing for many years. Horowitz's next teacher, Sergei Tarnofsky, loomed large in his continued involvement in music and in his decision to pursue a professional career as a pianist. Horowitz found that Tarnofsky captivated him and provided him with skillful psychological insight into self-knowledge. More importantly, he encouraged him to develop on his own, letting him practice what he wanted. In other words, Tarnofsky developed

Horowitz's ability to self-regulate his learning and to cope with emotional issues when playing and listening to music. According to Dubal (1994), without Tarnofsky "Horowitz's pianistic gift may have perished since neither his temper nor temperament could tolerate the usual straightjacket type of training [of Puchalsky]" (p. 8).

Language use during piano lessons is neither incidental nor peripheral. A piano teacher's use of language plays an important role in piano students' ongoing interest and dedication to continue their musical studies (Kronish, 1999). Russell (1995) provides insightful evidence that verbal language mediates the teaching and learning of skills and musical concepts, such as the conventional notational and rhythmic systems. Other scholars, such as Denzin (1984) and Vygotsky (1978), argue that the language used in a particular social and cultural context has implicit emotional and psychological effects on people. Researchers seldom interview students and let them express their opinions of what occurs during piano lessons. Except for a study by Ryan (2000), who examined performance anxiety and performance preparation, there are few studies in which piano students voice their opinion as to how their teacher's use of language provides them with the tools they need to self-regulate their actions, to develop a sense of their musical competency, and to acquire strategies so that they can cope with emotional issues. I situate my inquiry within the relevant empirical and theoretical literatures in more detail in chapters two and three.

Research Questions and Original Contribution to Scholarship

Given that the existing research indicates that only some students who show promising ability continue taking piano lessons, my focal research question is: What conditions set the tone for the promising piano student's decision to continue taking piano lessons?

To answer this question, I asked two additional questions that have arisen from my own experience and from readings cited thus far: What do promising piano students and their teachers perceive leads to the decision to continue studying music? What does a teacher say and do during piano lessons to shape their students' intent to continue? To respond to these questions, I considered the following themes that have arisen from my own experiences and from readings cited thus far: socialization into the music community, development of musical competency, regulative roles, emotional experiences, and the teacher's use of language during lessons.

In this dissertation, I provide information for piano teachers, music educators, and researchers about how piano students' musical experiences in various musical contexts with others, such as their teachers, family, friends, and colleagues, promote an ongoing interest and dedication to their music education. I aim to contribute to the qualitative research literature on promising piano students, their motivation to continue music lessons, and the development of higher mental functioning. I look at more than the effect of teacher modeling or student self-efficacy. Most research to date analyzes the conditions that motivate students to learn music as separate phenomena (Asmus, 1985, 1986a, 1986b, 1993). The uniqueness of this inquiry is that I qualitatively capture the complexity, dynamics, and subtlety of the issues that contribute to the decision to continue lessons by revealing the teachers' role in sustaining their students' interest. I present a holistic view of what transpires during actual lessons, including what the students and teacher do and say. I provide opportunities for the teacher and her students to reveal their perspectives on teaching and learning music. I look at students' emotional reactions to expressive and formal aspects of the music, as well as how the students' initial learning experiences influence their decision. Another contribution to the literature on students'

decisions to continue piano lessons is the combination of three theoretical lenses: Vygotsky's sociocultural-historical focus on learning, Halliday's socio-semiotic perspective on the use of language, and Wenger's notion of community of practice. My research also adds to the literature on the role of the teacher. Instead of focusing on teachers who have many students who drop out, I portray how students who take lessons with a "good" piano teacher respond to their experiences with their teacher. Verbal language plays an important role in learning music (Russell, 1995). Russell analyzed the functional use of language in a music context. She looked at how student conductors used language during orchestral rehearsals to construct and explain musical meanings. My research adds to the literature on language use in different disciplines and contexts. I describe the procedures I used to analyze the function of a piano teacher's use of language during piano lessons.

I use the descriptive and interpretive principles of portraiture (Lawrence-Lightfoot & Davis, 1997) to report the data. Throughout the text, I use the actual names of the piano teacher, Esfir Dyachkov, the schools she attended, her professors, and her colleagues. My choice to use her name is based on the desire to honor her wish to be identified and to provide the reader a glimpse of the cultural context of music and music education during the Soviet regime. I use pseudonyms for all other individuals and institutions, particularly since some of the people I write about hold an important position, and because by disguising their identity, the participants felt freer in divulging intimate information.

Summary

In this chapter, I situated the focus of my inquiry – why promising piano students continue their music studies. I provided my rationale. I presented my

research questions and my original contribution to scholarship. In the next chapter, I present the conceptual terminology I use in this dissertation and I discuss relevant literatures.

CHAPTER TWO

Terminology and Relevant Literature

In this chapter, I present the conceptual terms I use in this thesis and present the principal empirical and biographical literature in the field of education and music that pertains to musical ability, motivation, emotion, and the effects of music teachers on their students. I address musical ability by examining the characteristics of promising students' ability, the development of musical ability, and how ability mediates students' commitment to their studies. Selected literature on motivation and emotion pertains to the role of self-efficacy and self-regulation. The literature on emotion addresses four aspects: the physiological aspects of emotions, emotional experiences, the emotional dimensions of the aesthetic experience of the music, and the social-relational aspects of emotions.

Conceptual Terminology

The conceptual terms that I use are listed below in this section:

Emotion

The word emotion derives from the Latin word *emovere*, which means "to move away from" (Stein, 1969, p. 467). Currently, the words emotion, feeling, and affect are used interchangeably (Campbell, 1996; Goleman, 1995). Emotion is an affective state in which feelings such as joy, love, anger, fear, happiness, sadness, and the like are experienced either consciously or unconsciously (Cornelius, 1996). Feelings are characterized by the arousal of bodily sensations (Campbell, 1996; Goleman, 1995). Emotions are accompanied by bodily responses such as muscle tension, hollow feelings in the chest, or increased heart rate, which affect "the way in which we interpret the world" (Ochsner &

Barrett, 2001, p. 38). Another important notion is that emotions are socially

and culturally constructed from our experiences, and from our interpretations,

understandings, and conceptions of these experiences.

Interpsychological State

A person's interpsychological state occurs from sharing social and

cultural knowledge with a more knowledgeable person, such as a peer, teacher,

or parent. Vygotsky (1978) stated that "every function in the child's cultural

development appears . . . first, between people (interpsychologcal)" (p. 57).

In this inquiry, I use the term interpsychological state to refer to the sharing

of cultural and historical aspects of learning music in the private piano lesson

between a knowledgeable adult, such as a parent or piano teacher, and the

student. The physical arrangement of the music studio, the actions, words, and

sounds, the operation of actions, and the social, cultural, and historical norms of

music lessons are all considered part of social and cultural context.

Intrapsychological State

The term intrapsychological implies that there is a transformation and

internalization of "the connections and relationships among various processes"

acquired through social interactions with significant others within a particular

context to a higher level of functioning (Vygotsky, 1978, pp. 50-51). This includes

voluntary attention, and self-regulated mastery. The term "intra-psychological"

indicates that children can reformulate, reorganize, and represent ideas,

operations, knowledge, and relationships internally, which were determined from

their social experiences (Vygotsky, 1978).

Language Use

Language acts as a social semiotic tool for learning and has a "shared meaning potential" (Halliday, 1978, p. i). For this dissertation, language use includes verbal and non-verbal forms of communication that are recognized by the teacher and student. Language use acts as a resource in generating students' musical knowledge, as well as their values and beliefs about their future involvement in musical activities.

Motivation

The word motivation derives from the Latin verb *mover*, which means *to move*. For the purposes of this research, motivation refers to goal-directed activities and actions engendering and sustaining the pursuit of musical goals (Schunk, 1990; Vygotsky, 2000).

Musical Contexts

Musical contexts, such as piano studios or concert halls, are sites of learning in which people (teachers, students, colleagues) participate in musical activities with others. Music lessons are contexts where musical traditions are created and recreated (Rostvall & West, 2001; Russell, 2002). Music lessons are "social encounters in which the action of participants creates and re-creates social orders at different institutional levels, by means of communication routines using speech, music, and gestures" (Gregory, Worrall, & Sarge, 1996, pp. 4-5). In this study, piano lessons are sites of learning where people are socialized into the music culture.

Musical Experiences

A musical experience is context specific. It involves the production,

appearance, and/or application of musical notation, acoustics, rhythm, harmony, and melody. A musical experience involves listening and reacting to the sounds, rhythm, and tonality. A musical experience can be a powerful source of inspiration and enjoyment.

Promising Students

There is no one single satisfactory definition of ability (Getzels & Dillon, 1967; Leong, 2003). Promising piano students are those who put a lot of effort and work into maximizing their abilities, no matter whether they were born with artistic talent, *"good ears, hands or not"* (Esfir, Interview Transcripts, 1998).

Self-efficacy

Self-efficacy is a belief in the self. The term self-efficacy refers to "people's judgment of their capabilities to organize and execute courses of actions" (Bandura, 1986, p. 391). Self-efficacy provides people with information about whether a particular action or set of actions can be sustained. Self-efficacy differs from self-esteem in that it is a cognitive belief in the self while self-esteem is an affective reaction to an evaluation of one's self-worth (Gredler, 1997). Belief in the self is also a key factor for self-regulation. Self-regulation is the act of people organizing, regulating, and enacting what they believe they can do.

Self-regulation in Music

Self-regulation refers to music students' abilities to take charge of their learning. Piano students learn to direct musical activities (playing, performing, reading) that were previously under the control of others, such as teachers. In other words, musical actions and behaviors become under the student's control.

<u>Semiotic Mediation</u>

Semiotic mediation refers to the use of signs and symbols of a particular culture to transform lower forms of mental behavior to higher forms of behavior through social interaction with significant and more knowledgeable others (adult, teacher, parent) in the particular context in which activities occur. Semiotic mediation enables an individual's ability to think at a higher level (Vygotsky, 1978).

<u>Zone of Proximal Development</u>

Zone of Proximal Development (also referred to in the text as "ZPD") is the distance between what an individual is capable of achieving on his/or her own and what he/she has the potential to achieve under the guidance of more capable peers and adults. In this study, zone of proximal development refers to the distance between a piano student's ability to learn musical operations and concepts on his/or her own, and his/her potential ability to work through problematic areas under a piano teacher's guidance, such as playing complicated rhythmic passages.

Relevant Literature

<u>Identifying Promising Music Students</u>

Much of the research literature in the music domain focuses on the characteristics of *promising* music students. Sloboda (1991) refers to those with musical ability as being able to make sense of music. Haroutounian (1995) recognizes that those with promising artistic talent have above-average ability to think, discriminate, and be creative. Tannenbaum (1992) refers to students with musical potential as possessing "extraordinary brain power [and] a collection of abilities that seem to vary endlessly in unique and subtle combinations" (p. 245). Researchers have found that promising piano students have above-average

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sensitivity to sound (Feldman, 1982; Noy, 1968; Sergeant, 1969; Shuter-Dyson, 1985) and "the capacity to attend specifically to abstract auditory stimuli" (Wing, 1968, p. 160). They describe those with promising musical ability as exhibiting a keen kinesthetic perception (Shuter-Dyson, 1985) and being able to recognize and reproduce short musical phrases at an early age (Sergeant, 1969). For example, the concert pianist Arthur Rubinstein could tell when his sister played an incorrect note when he was a young child. Likewise, Igor Stravinsky, one of the outstanding composers of the twentieth century, "imitated the unison singing of women from the neighboring villages as they wended their way home" (Gardner, 1993, p. 190).

Researchers continue to debate the circumstances that develop musical ability (Howe, Davidson, & Sloboda, 1998). One position focuses on a person's individual attributes, such as natural selection (Galton, 1869), or genetic factors (Terman, 1925; Rowe, 1994). For example, Revesz (1925) credits the Hungarian pianist Erwin Nyiregyhazi's confidence, enthusiasm, and high degree of willpower to study music to his being born with superior musical and intellectual ability. However, this reductionist perspective ignores that culture plays a role in supporting musical talent (Russell, 1997) and that being in a musical environment and studying with a supportive teacher, one who provides clear instructions and teaches in an unthreatening manner, nurture students' desires to continue their musical activities (Davidson, 1999).

Other researchers (Davidson, 1999; Gagné, 1993; Gardner, 1994; Sloboda & Howe, 1991) focus on exploring the social and psychological conditions that influence students to further their studies. Their position is that possessing intellectual ability alone does not explicitly demonstrate why students decide to further their activities. Sloboda and Howe (1991) found that a significant number of music students who enrolled at a reputable British music

school attributed their intent to study music to environmental circumstances (parental involvement and the quality of the teaching). Only 10% of these students exhibited musical ability when they were young. As Gardner (1994) found in his research on the nature and course of human development, genetic, neurobiological factors, along with particular contextual conditions, offer individuals the prospect of developing and flourishing. Gardner (1993) found that it was only when Stravinsky began to study with the composer Nikolay Rimsky-Korsakov in 1902 that music became "his life's calling" (p. 192). Rimsky-Korsakov not only taught Stravinsky about the formalities of composing, but he became a "father figure" (p. 367). In other words, Rimsky-Korsakov provided Stravinsky with the skills he needed to develop musical abilities and a "positive model in childhood of a creative life" (p. 368).

Motivational Aspects in the Decision-making Process

The motivational literature addresses motivation, and the components of motivation, self-efficacy, and self-regulation in the decision-making process. For example, Howe (1990) claims that "to a large extent, the motives, interests, and inclinations that fuel a person's daily activities" influence his or her decision to continue these activities (p. 181).

Wundt (1879), James (1890, 1892), and Ach (1910) were among the first researchers to use the empirical process to study motivation. They maintained that there is a relationship between *will* (motivation) and the active pursuit of goals. Freud (1961-1963) examined the concept of self in motivation. He argued that psychic energy underlies human motivation. Psychic energy, which is often unconscious, is aimed at responding to such inner forces as hunger, sex, and fear. In other words, psychic energy is an urge, drive, or need to reduce the excitation and tension and reach a state of homeostasis. Vygotsky (2000)

began his research on self-regulation and the ZPD at about the same time that Freud developed his psychoanalytic theory. Although Vygotsky did not talk about motivation in a literal sense, it is interesting to note that he proposed that motivation acts as a source for opening ways for goal-directed behaviors to be pursued and a channel for mental functioning to develop.

From Vygotskian and Freudian perspectives, motivation is based on social, cultural, and biological factors. Freud's focus is on drives, instincts, and conflicts. The key to his theories is that drives, instincts, and conflicts are mainly approached at the level of the unconscious. Vygotsky's emphasis is on the development of higher forms of human consciousness.

Bandura, a more recent social-cognitive theorist addressing the role of motivation in the decision-making process, has focused on the behavioral aspects of motivation. He addresses motivation in terms of its contribution to learning. He claims that implicit in the motivation to engage in, repeat, or sustain a behavior or an activity over a long period is the notion or belief that "certain actions will bring valued benefits, that others will have no appreciable effects, and that still others will avert future trouble" (Bandura, 1977, p. 8). In other words, personal beliefs and attitudes, including our judgment of our performance competency and our sociocultural environment conditions, such as verbal reinforcement from parents, teachers, or peers, affect a person's future behavior.

Although Bandura lives in a different era than Vygotsky and based his theory on the assumption that there is an end-state to be achieved, both theorists recognize that social and contextual factors influence the tendency for humans to repeat certain actions. While Bandura claims that modeling and verbal persuasions foster motivation, Vygotsky argues that various sociocultural experiences acquired within a particular setting, such as learning with more knowledgeable adults and using the tool of language, mediates learning.

Decision-making and Self-efficacy: Bandura (1986) explains that "people's beliefs about their abilities have a profound effect on" (p. 90) their future behavior and that those with high self-efficacy bounce back from failure; they focus more on how to handle their behavior than on worrying about what can go wrong. He referred to self-efficacy as a person's belief in their own competency in organizing and carrying out actions.

The current literature on self-efficacy associates students' decisions to continue pursuing goals with their confidence in being able to attain their goals, especially when they believe that positive outcomes will result (Rosenthal & Zimmerman, 1978; Shell, Murphy, & Bruning, 1989; Schunk, 1989a, 1989b, 2001; Schack, 1989; Zimmerman, 2001). Schack (1989) acknowledges that gifted children's initial self-efficacy perceptions influence the likelihood that they will continue their creative endeavors. Pintrich and Schrauben (1992) found that those who are more motivated are "more likely to monitor or regulate their learning, persist in the face of difficulty or boring tasks, and manage their time and study environment more effectively than students low in efficacy" (p. 19). Shell, Murphy, and Bruning (1989) used the Degrees of Reading Power Test to investigate how undergraduate students' self-efficacy beliefs about their reading and writing increased the likelihood that they would continue pursuing their tasks and goals. They found a positive relationship between undergraduate students' expectations that they would continue writing and their self-efficacy beliefs. However, determining a student's degree of self-efficacy in reading and writing does not show what contributed to their self-efficacy belief, particularly since the measurements were actually pre-determined by the researchers and not by the students' own perspectives.

Studies by Asmus (1985, 1986a, 1986b, 1993) connecting self-efficacy with the decision to continue studying music associated a student's self-efficacy

belief with an outcome expectation. Asmus' (1985) inquiry focused on grade six music students from three different schools. He found that their decision to continue studying music depended on their perceptions of success. However, he did not delve into how the sociocultural learning context or how the teacher's use of language affected the decision to continue reaching towards long-term musical goals. Hylton (1981) administered a Likert-type scale to 673 secondary high school choral students to learn what choral singing experiences meant to them. He defined meaning "as a psychological construct with cognitive and affective aspects, manifested overtly through behavior, reflecting an individual's evaluation and valuing of an experience" (p. 288). He found that the choral students' sense of achievement, improvement from their prior experiences, and feeling good inside influenced their decision to continue singing. Using a Likert-type scale to analyze the data is limiting. Although the statements on the Likert-type scale were adopted from an assortment of statements elicited by the participants in the pilot and pre-pilot studies, the selection of statements for the main study were only based on psychological, communicative, integrative, and musical-artistic factors. Using a Likert-type scale only tests and verifies the degree to which the participants agreed or disagreed that there is a relationship between feeling more accomplished and being internally satisfied. Analyzing the meanings students give to their musical learning experiences under controlled conditions excludes investigating the meanings students give to their musical experiences and eliminates portraying why they feel more accomplished or what contributes to their beliefs about their musical abilities.

Brändström (1996) investigated the significance of piano students' self-formulated goals and self-evaluation in their music education. The students in his study were from Piteà School of Music in Sweden. Brändström found that students from a cross-section of piano ability are capable of independently

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planning what to do. However, he also based his findings on quantitative measures. Although Brändström found that teachers play a role in developing the students' "inner motivation" and positive attitudes towards studying piano, he did not examine what the teachers did, how the students felt about their teachers' interventions, or whether these interventions influenced their decision to continue studying music.

All these researchers (Asmus, 1985, 1986a, 1986b, 1993; Brändström, 1996; Hylton, 1981; Rosenthal & Zimmerman, 1978; Shell, Murphy, & Bruning, 1989; Schunk, 1989a, 1989b, 2001; Schack, 1989; Zimmerman, 2001) placed a great deal of importance on quantifying self-efficacy according to outcome expectation rather than eliciting and classifying the various qualities of the music learning experience that sets self-efficacy beliefs in motion. To date, I have not found any qualitative studies carried out in the private piano lesson setting that connect the experiences during piano lessons to the shaping of piano students' self-efficacy beliefs and their decision to continue their musical studies.

Decision-making and Self-regulation: In the next chapter, I discuss Vygotsky's views on self-regulation and explain how an individual learns to organize and execute a course of action or actions on his or her own. To understand the role of self-regulation in the course of a student's decision to continue studying music, I examine in this chapter the research by Neo-Vygotskian theorist, Wertsch (1984), and math teacher-researcher Zack (1988). Both used a qualitative paradigm to investigate how teachers mediate their students' ability to self-regulate actions. Wertsch observed castle-building activities. He noted that at the beginning students focused on their teacher's directives. As the learning activities proceeded, the teacher shifted from giving explicit instructions to offering just a few suggestions on how to construct

castles from wooden blocks, and the students began to create their own plan. Zack (1988) found that the teacher's manner of providing information, offering explanations, and giving directives mediated her mathematic students' understanding of mathematical concepts and their ability to select problem solving strategies on their own.

Emotion and the Decision-making Process:

Emotion is another key concept in this study. In this section, I review the relevant literature that describes how the decision-making process is shaped by the appraisal of personal-emotional experiences, the emotional response to formal and expressive dimensions of the music, and the emotional reaction to social-relational experiences. Although I classify the literature according to these three different groupings, I acknowledge that taken together, these perspectives contribute to piano students' intentions to study music.

Appraisal of Personal-emotional Experiences and the Decision-making Process: There is evidence to suggest that a pianist's emotional experiences influence his or her motivation to learn music (Persson, Pratt, & Robson, 2001). Studies associated with the physiological aspects of emotions tell us that a musician's body responds physically when listening to or playing music. Responses include eyes dilating, respiratory rate increasing or decreasing, rising blood pressure, and contracting muscles (Storr, 1992). The arousal of internal visceral organs, such as muscles tightening up, triggers us to judge whether to flee the scene or not. Yet, just knowing that the body reacts in a certain manner does not necessarily explain what influences piano students' decisions to continue or stop music lessons. The review of the literature that follows indicates that studying only the physiological aspects of emotions limits us from

considering other possible factors that may shape a promising piano student's intensions to continue their music studies. Mackworth-Young (1990) claimed that a piano student's "thoughts and feelings greatly affect his enthusiasm to continue learning" (p. 73).

To understand the connection between the emotional experience and the decision-making process, I turn to the work of Richard Lazarus. Lazarus (1991, 2003) has approached the study of emotions from a psychological-physiological perspective. He maintains that our appraisal of our personal emotional experiences influences our future actions. Lazarus (1991) describes emotion as "a highly complicated hypothetical construct, an organized configuration consisting of many variables and processes" (p. 44). He proposes that the appraisal of the situational context, personal capacities, and past emotional experiences provoke thoughts and feelings that subsequently lead to the decision to act or not to act. Also central to the decision to act or not is the individual's perception of "whether or how [he] can manage [personal and environmental] demands" in the future (p. 150), or whether he should stop what he is doing and flee because he is frightened. As Lazarus (1991) summarized,

> Every fiber of our being is likely to be engaged - our attention
> and thoughts, our needs and desires, and even our bodies. The
> reaction tells us that an important value or goal has been engaged
> and is being harmed, placed at risk, or advanced . . . what a
> person has at stake in the encounter with the environment or in
> life in general, how that person interprets self and world, and how
> harms, threats, and challenges are coped with. (p. 6-7)

According to Lazarus, individuals evaluate "the implications of what

is happening in [their lives for their] well being" (p. vii), that is whether it threatening, challenging, or beneficial for their well being, and the extent to which an emotional "encounter touches on [their] personal goals" (p. 149). This reminds me of my own experience with Ms. Goldbar. She frequently yelled at me, criticized my playing, and ordered me to play it her way. I decided to stop because she made me believe that I could not play well enough to perform in front of an audience. I would panic when I performed at her year-end concerts. It is my personal view that if she had taught me the skills needed to cope with the stress of performing and developed a positive attitude about my playing skills, I would have continued lessons with her.

Emotional Response to Formal and Expressive Dimensions of the Music and the Decision-making Process: In Chapter Three, I discuss Vygotsky's (1978, 2000) interpretation of the affective volitional aspects of learning. In this chapter, I explain how an aesthetic experience affects the artist.

What is an aesthetic experience? The word aesthetics derives from the Greek word *aesthesis*, which means to experience a feeling or sensation. According to Vygotsky (1971), "each element of art strikes a corresponding emotional key" (p. 206). The artists' experiences with materials, objects, forms, and sounds have a more powerful effect on them than with the artistic structures and technical procedures. In other words, the power of the aesthetic experience is not only what musicians know about music structures, it is what the meaning of the experiences is for them. Another characteristic that is central to Vygotsky's notion of the aesthetic experience is that the art does not incite artists to action. Rather, the interaction between the work of art, the recipients' (artist, player) previous social and cultural experiences, and the intended or assigned effects of the artwork generates an artist's aesthetic responses and the intensity in which

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artistic passions are pursued.

Musicians and researchers (Dubal, 1984; Gregory, Worrall & Sarge, 1996; Juslin & Sloboda, 2001) reveal that the aesthetic experience of the music significantly affects an individual's emotions. Alfred Brendel, a noted concert pianist, explains that his desire to perform "came from the music itself" (Dubal, 1984, p. 88). Brendel (Dubal, 1984) uses such expressions as *so astonishing, mysterious, marvelous thing, nirvana, mystical,* as well as feeling the *love* and the *ying* and *yang* in the music to express his emotional responses to the expressive aspects of the music (p. 111). One might infer that for Brendel, the emotional experience of hearing the different sounds while playing or reading the music score inspired him to play piano. Juslin and Sloboda (2001) maintain that the "music both 'represents' the emotion (that is perceived by the listener) and 'induces' the emotion (that is felt by the listener)" (p. 455). Scruton (1997) found that musicians respond emotionally to different sounds, tonal properties (color, pitch), patterns, or order of sounds (intervals). As well, he showed that their mental representations of what they hear in the music and their aesthetic preferences represent their particular cultural practices.

Gregory et al. (1996) investigated how the mood of a musical composition affects young music students' emotional responses to music. They asked 40 children between the ages of three and four, 28 children between seven and eight, and 28 adults to respond to different versions of the same tapes of music. They found that their participants over the age of four reacted to the expressive aspects of the music. Burnsed (1998) found similar results when he administered music preference tests to music students from grade 1 to grade 5 in urban schools. However, these researchers did not elicit the teachers' or the students' points of view in terms of how experiencing the expressive aspects of the music influences the decision to continue studying music. Furthermore,

they do not describe how a teacher's focus on the expressive aspects of the music shapes the determination to study music. Haack (1990) was interested in studying the educator's role in showing students how to tap into their feelings. He found that their use of words such as calm, turbulent, surprise, and clear, and their use of sensory and recognizable descriptors focuses students on the expressive aspects of the music, and sharpens their perceptions and awareness of expressive qualities of the work. Excluding an examination of the teachers' and the students' views of how their formal learning experiences and listening to the expressive aspects of the music affects them emotionally limits understanding of how the emotional experiences of the formal and expressive dimensions of the music influences the decision to play or quit.

In research by Lucas (1984), a significant number of college piano majors in the United States claimed that their piano teachers neglected to include references to the expressive aspects of the music in their instructions. They also reported that they "never really thought about what it means to engage with a work of art or an aesthetic object, even though they have had contact with such objects for a number of years through listening, study, and the performance of keyboard literature" (p. 2). However, music educators in Soviet Russia were required to develop their students' awareness of the expressive aspects of the music regardless of the music program from the preschool level (McCaskill. 1989).

Thus, the review of the literature shows that the affective dimension of the emotional experience of the music is an integral part of a music student's learning experience, and plays a role in determining why a music student decides to invest time and energy in studying music. However, to date, researchers have not looked at how studying with a teacher who focuses on the expressive aspects as well as the formal aspects in the music influences piano

students' decisions to continue their music studies.

Emotional Reaction to Social-relational Experiences and the Decision-making Process: How do students' experiences with their teachers affect them emotionally? Do their feelings about their relationships with their teachers influence their decision to continue? Denzin's social-interactional view of the emotional experience provides a clearer picture of how piano students' interpersonal emotional experiences mediate the decision to continue taking piano lessons. Denzin (1984) connects our emotional reactions to our social experiences (interpersonal relationships) to our decision to continue our actions, particularly in respect to another person's verbal and non-verbal use of language. He describes emotions as an "agitation of passions or sensibilities, physiological changes [and] any strong feeling arising subjectively rather than through conscious mental effort" (p. 16). In Denzin's view, our decision of whether to act or not reflects both our conscious and unconscious awareness of our bodily sensations and our reflections on experiences with others who trigger our emotions (p. 54). He also maintains that emotional consciousness is a circular and joint process, beginning and ending "with transactions and actions of the self in the social situation interacting with self and others" (p. 58). Each person's feelings, real or imagined, reflect two individuals who share a common field of experience and who envision the commonality between the other person's feelings and one's own feelings (p. 145). In Denzin's words,

> [Person B's thought or gesture] becomes part of A's [student] emotional feeling, which is then incorporated into A's [student] next gesture and statement to B [teacher]. A's [student's] self-feeling becomes part of an emotional social act, which enters B's

[teacher's] inner phenomenological stream and becomes part of

B's [teacher's] social act both toward B and toward A [toward the

teacher and toward the student himself or herself]. (p. 56)

Researchers (Bresler, 1996; Duke, Flowers, & Wolfe, 1997; Mackworth-

Young, 1990) show that a teacher's style of teaching affects his or her students'

feelings. For example, in summarizing her review of the literature on arts

instruction, Bresler (1996) concludes that emotional experiences "direct and

color our perceptions" of our inner selves and what is going on around us

(p. 19). Duke et al. (1997) found a positive correlation between private piano

students' emotional responses and the manner in which their teachers organized

the lessons and gave instructions. However, Duke et al. did not account for what

triggered the students' positive emotional remarks, such as *I love it* (p. 66). Nor

did they consider whether the teacher's instructions influenced their decision

to continue their lessons. Mackworth-Young (1990) investigated how three

different teaching styles, teacher-directed, pupil-directed, and pupil-centered

learning experiences affect piano students' emotional intensity and their

motivation to study music. She observed four secondary school-age students

(from 11 and 14 years) during their piano lessons over a ten-week period.

She videotaped the second and last pupil-centered lesson. She audiotaped

the second pupil-directed and last pupil-centered lesson. She audiotaped

interviews with the participants. She had the parents, students, and teachers

respond to questionnaires. She found that the students' emotions reflected their

experiences with their teacher, and their experiences during pupil-centered

lessons increased their motivation, interest, and positive attitude towards

studying music. Particularly interesting here is the reaction to the teacher's

decision to stand back and "give over control to the pupil" (p. 83). Thus, the

teacher's pedagogical stance increased his or her students' motivation, and enabled them to feel free to make their own decisions. However, Mackworth-Young did not elaborate on how the teachers' pedagogical foci affected students' emotional intensity and motivation to continue studying music.

As I argued in the last chapter, language plays an important role in students' subsequent actions. Researchers show (Edwards, 1997; Egerton, 1995; Gergen, 1994; Harré, 1986; Harré & Gillet, 1994; Harré & Stearns, 1995) that we use language to interpret and explain our emotions to others. Halliday (1978) maintains that we embed our emotional connotations in our linguistic expressions. Harré and Stearns (1995) claim that we use words to "track, correct, comment upon, and manage our emotional feelings and displays" (p. 4). For Denzin (1984), voices of others "silent and loud, active and passive, reluctant and open, distorting and opaque, transparent and visible" affect us emotionally (p. 253).

To further understand the connection between the students' emotional experiences and their decision to study music, I turn to three studies outside the music domain that focus on the immediacy between teachers and students. The term *immediacy* describes the extent to which communication patterns, verbal and non-verbal, enhance student-teacher closeness. Rodriguez, Plax, and Kearney (1996) studied immediacy between undergraduate students enrolled in speech communication classes at a large university in the United States. They found that the teachers' use of language was instrumental in forming affectively based relationships between students and teachers, and to some extent were influential in fostering the students' motivation, preferences, and commitment to learn. In Barringer and McCroskey's (2000) study of immediacy, both verbal and non-verbal forms of language, including eye contact, facial expressions, voice tone, posture, and movements, were positively correlated with the students'

general affect. Underlying implications of Frymier and Houser's (2000) research is that affective oriented communication affects students' perceptions of themselves and teachers' immediacy establishes "closeness" with their students in the classroom (p. 209).

As this review of the literature on the emotional experience of interpersonal relationship shows, there still remains a paucity of empirical literature eliciting students' points of view or descriptions of how their piano teachers' focus on the emotional aspects of playing piano influenced their future plans and actions. Nor were there studies carried out with promising piano students in a musical setting, particularly in a private piano teacher's studio.

The Role of the Piano Teacher

My review of empirical and biographical literature reveals that teachers play a vital role in generating and sustaining their students' interest in and commitment to studying music (Bloom, 1985; Brophy, 1983; Sloboda, 1993; Sloboda & Davidson, 1996; Sosniak, 1990). Concert pianists attributed their continued involvement in music to their teacher's presence, role modeling, assistance, and direction on how to understand the music and help integrating them into the music community (Bloom, 1985). Pianist Claudio Arrau told Mach during his interview that a teacher acts as "a guide who helps you unfold and develop" (Mach, 1988, p. 2). He not only attributed his own commitment to music to genetic factors, he credited his teacher Martin Krause as the greatest influence in his pursuit of and subsequent career as a concert pianist. Margaret Wilder's (2000) music teacher, Miss McGruder, had a lasting impact on her life, instilling in her a sense of hope, confidence, and desire to achieve.

Sloboda and Davidson (1996) have concluded that students attribute their motivation to studying with a teacher who possesses "high professional

qualities" (p. 184). Brand (1990) claims that good teaching contributes to music students' motivation to be involved in musical activities. Researchers maintain that good teachers encourage their students to become self-motivated (Lautzenheiser, 1990). They adjust their pedagogical approach to suit their pupils' needs and situations (Brand, 1990; Lautzenheiser, 1990; Pruett, 1990; Stamer, 1999) and are supportive, challenging, and insightful (Brand, 1990). Good teachers show their students how to self-analyze their weaknesses and strengths. They express their "thoughts and emotions without cynicism and sarcasm" (Lautzenheiser, 1990, p. 36). They are creative, energetic, enthusiastic, encouraging, and take great pleasure in their students' ability to play (Brand, 1990).

Stamer (1999) also describes good teachers as those who provide a nurturing environment, pay attention to their students' personal and musical development, and support self-discovery. Stamer used a questionnaire to survey high school choral students' impressions of their teacher's effectiveness in motivating them to engage in learning music. He found that good teachers provide feedback about the student's progress, strengths, and areas that need improvement; assign a meaningful and interesting "repertoire that challenges the musical ability of students but is attainable with effort" (p. 28); and present achievable challenges, motivating their students' engagement in music learning.

Many of us have experienced a teacher whose words crushed us. On the other hand, we can remember the teacher who sparked our interest in learning. Music teachers' use of language plays a role in their students' attitudes towards learning music (Rostvall & West, 2001; Schön, 1987). The following studies (Dweck, 1986; Mota, 1999; Speer, 1994) on music teachers' use of language illustrate this point. Mota (1999) reports that students' motivation to learn music at school increased when their teachers related their instructions to everyday

experiences. She interviewed students prior to and following their participation in a three-year music program. The participants came from three different schools in Portugal, including a special music school. Dweck (1986) found that music teachers' feedback that endorsed "risk taking and tasks that include challenges, and even failure, within a learning-orientation setting" fostered a student's desire to continue engaging in learning music (p. 118). Speer (1994) and other researchers found that private piano teachers vary their comments on their students' ability according to their students' age; they use more directive statements when working with average students than when working with better piano students. However, these researchers conducted their inquiries in isolation from context, reporting the frequency of teacher directives and feedback statements. I believe that these researchers only scratched the surface and could have found more comprehensive findings had they observed what actually transpired in natural lesson contexts, including what the teachers actually said and how the students talked about experiences during their lessons.

Siebenaler (1997) conducted an empirical study on the effectiveness of a teacher's verbal and non-verbal interactions during piano lessons on their students' musical development. Thirteen teachers participated in the inquiry. Each teacher taught two students, one adult (age 24 plus), and one child (age 7 to 13). Each student had had at least one year of piano instruction. Siebenaler video recorded the sequence and duration of students' and teachers' behaviors as they occurred. He measured teachers' effectiveness by coding their verbal and performance behaviors and the students' progress, performance quality, and age. Although he found a higher percentage of teachers modeling than students' active involvement during piano lessons, he did not examine whether this form of behavior was effective in motivating students to continue their piano lessons.

Russell (1995) conducted one of the few qualitative studies within the discipline of music and music education on the role that verbal language plays in teaching music. Her study focused on a group of university students taking a university musical conducting course. She found that student orchestral conductors use verbal language to express, to explain, and to identify musical concepts, to propose musical behaviors, to appraise the student musicians' performance, and to express their musical preferences. Although Russell studied how student music teachers used language in a university classroom setting, to date I could not find research focusing on how teachers use language during one-on-one piano lessons, nor what impact their language use has on their students' decisions to continue studying piano.

Summary

The decision to continue studying music is a complex and multifaceted process. The reason that promising piano students persevere cannot be attributed to a single factor, such as innate ability, environmental factors, motivation, being able to self-regulate practicing, or having high self-efficacy. Although this review of the literature seems to indicate that music itself – together with social, cultural, and historical experiences – triggers emotions, I could not find any empirical studies that investigate how promising piano students' personal and interpersonal emotional experiences, as well as the formal and expressive aspects of the music, combine to influence their decision to continue piano lessons. There is a paucity of literature providing detailed insight into the role of the teacher and a teacher's use of language in a promising music student's decision to continue music lessons. Most of the researchers associate music students' interest with the teacher's use of language and interactions with students in isolation from the students'

and teachers' behaviors and the broader social and musical contexts. Their conclusions are generally based on quantified findings. They do not examine the function of the teacher's language in terms of students' intent to continue investing time and energy into learning the piano.

CHAPTER THREE

Theoretical Framework

In this chapter, I introduce the three major theories that frame this study – Vygotsky's (1978, 2000) sociocultural-historical theory of development, Halliday's (1978, 1985) socio-functional theory of language use, and Wenger's (1998) social theory of learning. Each theory has its particular internal logic and epistemology. Together, they offer an interpretive framework for understanding why promising piano students decide to invest time and energy towards pursuing their musical goals, and for understanding the role of the teacher and the teacher's language use in the lesson.

Vygotsky's Theory of Learning

<u>Background to Vygotsky's Research</u>

Lev Semenovich Vygotsky is known for his work as a developmental theorist, psychologist, and educator. He was born in 1896 in a small town in Byelorussia within the former Soviet Union bordering on the Republic of Ukraine. He died in 1934. His background resonates with that of Esfir Dyachkov, the teacher I introduce in this dissertation.

Vygotsky studied arts and humanities at Moscow University, focusing on literature. After graduating, he returned to Byelorussia, where he taught and lectured on a variety of subjects, including language, literature, psychology, aesthetics, art history, and theater; his students ranged from school-aged children to adults. He also opened a psychology clinic where he diagnosed learning problems. Vygotsky presented a paper, "Methods of Reflexological and Psychological Investigations", at the second Russian Psychoneurological Congress in Leningrad in the fall of 1924, his initial formal presentation in the

field of psychology. Following the presentation, Vygotsky was invited to join the Psychological Institute in Moscow (Wertsch, 1985).

Vygotsky spent the last years of his life developing his thoughts on human development with Alexander Luria and Alexei Leontiev at the Psychological Institute in Moscow. Their research program was later undermined by Lenin's communist ideology, which controlled research in post-revolutionary Russia and banned all psychological testing in the U.S.S.R. in 1936. Vygotsky started to receive the acknowledgement he deserved for his research on human development in the early 1960's, some twenty-five years after his death.

During Vygotsky's lifetime, most acclaimed researchers grounded their research in the natural scientific approach. This approach was better accepted than Vygotsky's. Wilhelm Wundt, known as the founder of experimental psychology, opened the first psychological research laboratory in 1879 at the University of Leipzig. He studied how external stimulation affects the development of human consciousness. Behaviorist and physiologist Ivan Pavlov examined behavior from a stimulus-response perspective. He argued that learning is a function of environmental events and conditions. Using a systematic, objective, and biological-scientific approach, he demonstrated by laboratory experiments on dog reflexes a connection between conditioning and learning complex behaviors. Vygotsky (1978) rejected this reductionist, Pavlovian, behavioristic-neurophysical stimulus-response stance that social reality exists independently of individuals. He maintained that a Pavlovian framework only provides "the context within which the experimenter-theorist could obtain a description of the processes presumed to have been elicited by the subject" (p. 59). It is questionable as to whether the experimenter-theorist can even do that. His argument was that human development "is not an auxiliary aspect of a theoretical study, but rather forms its very base" (pp. 64-65).

Vygotsky's Developmental Perspective

Vygotsky's sociocultural-developmental theory provides a framework for understanding the complex process of the development of higher mental functioning in a particular sociocultural context. He argues that "human behavior differs qualitatively and is part of the general historical development" (p. 61). Higher forms of human mental functioning are contingent on psycho-physiological development. He also claims that humans transform and internalize their "natural abilities and skills into higher mental functions" (Vygotsky, 2000, p. xxv). In other words, humans' learning trajectory and intentions, as well as their interpersonal and cultural experiences, determine their level of functioning.

Vygotsky classifies unmediated actions, involuntary attention, and simple memory as examples of lower-level functions. For example, a young child who hits random notes on the piano may be said to be functioning at a lower level. Higher forms of mental functions are actions or thoughts that are attended to voluntarily and self-regulated by the individual. A music student who figures out how to play the second phrase of a piece on his own after working on the first phrase with his piano teacher might be said to be functioning at a higher level.

Vygotsky claims that a child's initial forms of behavior eventually transform through maturation and meaningful social encounters into higher mental functioning from an interpsychological level to being internalized at an intrapsychological level. Consciousness, the zone of proximal development (ZPD), and self-regulation are three key concepts in Vygotsky's theory of the development of higher mental functions. These concepts are proposed in my inquiry as having an influence on students' abilities to accomplish musical goals and develop potential musical competencies.

Consciousness: Consciousness, which is a form of high-level mental functioning, is a key concept in my inquiry. Vygotsky (1978) describes consciousness as an awareness of thoughts, sensations, and actions. A person's consciousness represents the internalization of sensory materials (sounds, images) and words, as well as the manner in which he/she organizes and accomplishes goal-directed activities. Vygotsky maintains that consciousness is "part of a dynamic system of behavior" (p. 33), a state of awareness that enables children to control their movements and construct their own identity, even at very early phases of development. Over time, children learn to represent the materials and operations symbolically through gestures, signs, and symbols (Vygotsky, 1978, 2000).

The following example, which comes from my field notes, demonstrates how a piano student's ability to understand how to play the music enables her to become conscious of her musical abilities:

> As the student sight-reads the music for the first time, her fingers stumble over the notes. Then Esfir advises her to pay more attention to listening to what she plays than thinking about playing with the precise fingering and rhythm. Esfir also tells her, "Listen to the melody, and use your mind, your inner ear, your imagination, your knowledge, and your musicality, everything." When the student returns the following week, there is a difference in the tone quality when she plays through the music. After the lesson, the student relates that she feels more confident and that while practicing at home, she thought about Esfir's comments. (Field notes, 1998)

It seems that the previous week the student played literally what she saw on the score. However, her eventual internalization of her teacher's directions and explanations to think about and listen to the music made her aware of her abilities to represent the music implied by the notation on the score within her inner ear. Thus, attending to the unfolding sounds was a source of consciousness for the student. Furthermore, the teacher's words of encouragement reinforced the student's awareness of her abilities to play her new piece and to take ownership of her actions.

Zone of Proximal Development: Another important concept relevant to this study is the "Zone of Proximal Development" (ZPD or zo-ped). Vygotsky refers to the ZPD as the distance between a person's potential and actual development. In Vygotsky's (1978) words, the ZPD is "the distance between the child's actual developmental level as determined by independent problem solving [without guided instruction] and the level of potential development as determined through problem solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers" (p. 86). Thus, learning takes place in contexts of social interactions. Children begin to operate within their ZPD in instructional activities that may be too difficult for them to perform independently by collaborating with or receiving guidance from more capable others (teacher, parent, peer), a person who has already mastered the particular concepts and actions.

Originally, Vygotsky (1978, 2000) referred to the concept of ZPD to dispute the use of individual assessment of a learner's intellectual abilities as a measurement of her learning potential. He stressed that assessing a child's accomplishments on the basis of tasks completed without any assistance only evaluates the level of attained abilities. He believed that it was important to

predict a child's future learning potential.

From a Vygotskian perspective, learning potential is not an assessment of the tasks that learners can complete unaided. Learning potential refers to the tasks that can be completed with the assistance of more capable others. Vygotsky proposed that children need to learn within their ZPD and that the appropriate level of instruction lies between a child's actual mental age level when functioning independently and the level of problem solving with assistance. For example, if children had similar ability when they began lessons, put in a comparable amount of effort, and were motivated to study piano, one would assume that after a year of music lessons they would potentially be able to carry out musical tasks that had a similar degree of difficulty and challenges. However, I recall when two 10 year-old piano students began lessons with me at the same time, one student was actually able to play music that was several years above his chronological age level. However, when I chose pieces for the second student, the level of musical difficulty was comparable to the pieces I chose for most of my beginner ten-year-old students after a year of lessons. In other words, each child works within their own ZPD.

Vygotsky (1978, 2000) was interested in the relationship between instruction and development. He maintained that instruction precedes development, awakening and arousing mental functioning that lies within a child's ZPD. Effective instruction leads learners towards their level of potential development and enables them to solve problems with less assistance. They can internalize problem-solving activities, tackle problems independently, and self-regulate their actions and decisions. In other words, instruction both precedes and leads to development. Vygotsky (2000) stated,

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What the child can do in cooperation today he can do alone tomorrow. Therefore the only good kind of instruction is that which marches ahead of development and leads it; it must be aimed not so much at the ripe as at the ripening functions. (p.188)

From a Vygotskian perspective, a piano student's ZPD is generally the difference between how a student first sight-reads a passage and how she plays the same passage following her teacher's instructions. By directing the instructions on how to sight-read at the level of the piano student's ZPD, the teacher may increase the student's knowledge base in terms of how to read the music and eventually to read through a new piece on her own.

Vygotsky maintains that instructions should not be too much in advance of their development. He stresses that although children can solve a range of problems by interacting and cooperating with more capable others, when instructions are beyond their mental abilities, children's abilities are not expanded. From a Vygotskian perspective, a teacher's support and guidance, which occurs primarily through social dialogue, enables children to augment their performance ability (Wertsch, 1984). A teacher's role in mediating or augmenting students' potential to learn within their ZPD involves providing support through social interaction as they build awareness, understanding and competence; being flexible and paying attention to student feedback; and varying the amount of support according to the learning activities and contexts.

Self-Regulation: Self-regulation is another key concept in this inquiry. Vygotsky (1981) claims that self-regulation is the genesis of higher mental functions. Self-regulation denotes a shift from functioning on an interpsychological level (external level) to an intrapsychological level (internal

level). He explains that internalization leads children to acquire an increased capacity for reorganizing the properties that will fit into their plans, goals or specific tasks, self-regulating more complex and higher-level mental functions, and being able to decide on and represent their own plans and ideas without the help of others. Diaz, Neal, and Amaya-Williams (1990) claim that when children are self-regulated, they can master their own actions. However, the progression from other-regulated to self-regulated performance is not always a step-by-step human progression (Cole, 1990).

Vygotsky (1978, 1981, 2000) argues that every self-regulated behavior emerges from a complex process of psychophysiological development. He also maintains that all learning is mediated in some form or other. In the earlier phases, children are other-regulated and function on an interpsychological level. Over time, through specific social interactions with more capable others, children become aware of which purposeful operations and stimuli will bring success and what they can do on their own. Vygotsky (1981) refers to an operation as the manner in which a person carries out an action or plan, such as a game played with cards, and stimuli as the signs and symbols that are used to direct the behavior, such as the numbers on the cards.

The following anecdote will illustrate how the neurologist Frank Wilson's (1987) self-regulation in playing piano developed through his teacher's mediation. When he sight-read Mozart for the first time, he kept his foot on the sustaining pedal throughout the piece because his "inexperienced ear kept telling [him] to use it" (p. 65). This created an unpleasant dissonance, which often occurs when the pedal is used incorrectly. Playing Mozart requires the utmost discretion in the use of the pedal. It was only after his teacher explained that the pedal is a mediational tool that conveys harmonic structure, extends the duration of the sound, and adds character to the piece that he began to

understand and follow the procedures and practices of pedaling. Furthermore, several months after this lesson, Wilson realized that he could detect when to use the pedal without his teacher's assistance. While listening to a recording of Mozart, he recognized that the artist had used "too much" pedal. His ability to distinguish when to use the pedal and what occurs when it is used incorrectly indicates that he had internalized his teacher's initial instructions and was able to self-regulate his thoughts about and actions with respect to pedaling.

Vygotsky's Concept of Context

Vygotsky (1978, 1981, 2000) believes that one's genetic predisposition and previous experiences are not the only factors that shape one's choice of actions. He claims that the choice of which actions to pursue also depends on one's lived experiences in a particular sociocultural-historical context or contexts. Vygotsky identifies three sociocultural contexts, the individual context, the interpersonal context, and the cultural-historical context. Each context provides a space and places for individuals to transform signs and symbols (cultural context) of former generations (historical context) through interactions with significant others (social context).

From a Vygotskian perspective, an educational context includes the physical setting, the participants (teachers and students), the sharing of experiences, and the participation in past and present cultural actions. The context of a typical music lesson is a piano studio that involves a teacher and a student engaged in playing music. The music studio typically includes mediational tools, such as a piano, a piano bench, stacks of music sheets and books, music recordings, and chairs. The teacher usually stands or sits next to the student. During piano lessons, teachers use talking, singing, and playing to explain and illustrate musical concepts. They typically explain concepts that

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have been passed down from generation to generation, such as the westernized notational symbols for musical sounds.

Neo-Vygotskian theorist Wertsch (1985), following Vygotsky's lead, claims that the context guides "the selection of and determines the functional significance of tool-mediated, goal-directed actions" (p. 212). Wertsch adds that when people pursue actions, they determine which goal-directed actions and subactions can be maximized in a particular setting. He refers to goal-directed actions as the operational tasks and strategic plans taken to carry out a task. Wertsch uses the example of a pole-vaulter running down the runway on a sport's field, planting the pole in the ground, and lifting off to describe the goal-directed actions needed to get over the bar. For pianists, goal-directed actions needed to play trills include moving the arms towards the piano keyboard, positioning the tips of the fingers in contact with the piano, and rapidly alternating the fingers back and forth between two neighboring notes on the piano.

According to Wertsch (1985), an individual's pursuit of goals depends on "the definition of the activity setting" (p. 213). The primary goal in a school activity setting is to learn. Therefore, goal-directed actions are directed towards learning. An educational setting in which risk-taking is encouraged can be a positive feature (Wertsch, Minick, & Arns, 1984). The following anecdote is an illustration of how a colleague I call Nancy used the lesson to encourage her student, my son Michael, then only seven years old, to take more risks. As I watched her teach, I noticed that whenever she introduced a new concept, she created a strategic plan on how and what to practice. The focus during this particular lesson was on mastering the physical skill of pedaling, which involved coordinating the mind and body so that there would be a seamless release of the foot from the pedal and a re-depression immediately after. When she

finished explaining and demonstrating how to press and release the damper pedal, Michael placed the front part of his foot on the right pedal and pressed down. After he played a few notes, the strings began to vibrate and stopped when he released his foot from the pedal. As Michael continued to replay this section, Nancy pointed out several ways of deploying the pedal, which are useful when learning piano. To stress the importance of risk-taking, she also emphasized the value of not being bogged down with a few incorrect notes. In a short while, Michael was able to play the passage with the pedal.

Wertsch (1985) explains that experienced adults lead children towards maximizing their efficiency and minimizing mistakes when executing potentially difficult tasks. However, adults often assume the responsibility for the execution of potentially difficult tasks when they focus children on avoiding errors and flawlessly executing actions. Thus, adults may lead children to misunderstand what they did and diminish their task-mastery. When mistakes are encouraged, they serve as an instructive function and foster increased mastery of tasks. By encouraging Michael to take risks when learning new concepts during his lesson rather than focusing on playing the correct notes, his teacher increased the likelihood that he would gain a more meaningful understanding of how to play through his repertoire over time.

Vygotsky's Notion of Semiotic Mediation

Many tools mediate learning. Language is a primary mediating tool. Vygotsky began his social-constructivist approach to the study of language in 1924. He centered his theory on several global but interconnected socioculturally and historically situated foci. He argued that language mediates human behavior and a person's general historical developmental trajectory. He maintained that language brings "out the specifically human qualities of the

mind" (Vygotsky, 1962, p. 104). Individuals use language to exchange cultural meanings and information as well as to arouse their consciousness. Language is used to communicate knowledge and shape a learner's thinking. As previously mentioned in my discussion on the concept of context, cultural signs and symbol systems of former generations are transformed through language transactions with significant others. Piano teachers use language to teach their students how to skillfully play piano, how to develop a meaningful understanding of musical concepts, and how to function in the sociocultural communities of musical practices.

Vygotsky wrote extensively on the role of language use in education. He conceptualized learning as a socially mediated activity. He claimed that language is a cultural tool whose use transforms and regulates behavior, shapes thoughts, and mediates learning through socially mediated activities. He recognized that the words and actions of others enable an individual to learn about previously formed concepts. Although he maintained that an individual internalizes another person's words, he does not see internalization as a sequential process.

Vygotsky claimed that contexts shape language and language shapes contexts. In the music studio, music teachers use verbal and non-verbal language to communicate particular cultural knowledge (notation, tempo, timbre), historical information (musician's background), and technical (manipulation of the arms, finger, and torso) and psychological tools (relaxation). However, in a different context, such as a hockey rink, hockey coaches focus on different subject matter than piano teachers refer to in a piano studio. For example, a hockey coach typically informs his goalies about how to stop the opposing players from scoring a goal. If a hockey coach works with his young goalie the morning before his first game, the coach's actual language choices

might be talk and gesture and the subject matter would focus on how to stop the hockey puck, where to stand when stopping the opposing player from scoring a goal, and where to place the gloved hand.

What teachers say and do in an educational setting influences students' learning. Teachers' language is crucial because their words and actions shape how students think and act with respect to subject matter and about themselves. The language they use acts as a mediational tool to expand their students' learning potential and concept formation. Through language, verbal and non-verbal, teachers enable students to transform basic concepts into abstract thoughts, to internalize tasks that earlier they had done with the teacher, to work on their own, and to reach their developmental potential. In Vygotskian terms, the best instruction occurs when teachers lead their students from more primitive to higher mental functioning. For the neurologist Frank Wilson (1987), his piano teacher, Lillian Cox helped him to reach his goals. She widened his musical experiences and enjoyment in playing piano by selecting which instructions to give, and then by explaining how to use the available tools (music instruments) and signs (music notation) and by setting tasks that were within his ZPD. Her advice on how to play through the different passages on the piano, as well as her explanations on the procedures and practices of pedaling, were instrumental in mediating his ability to self-regulate his thoughts and actions with respect to pedaling.

Language and Human Consciousness: In this section, I discuss the connection between a teacher's use of language and a student's consciousness. Vygotsky (1978) argues that consciousness evolves through communicating with others, forming social connections, and sharing cultural experiences with a significant interlocutor. He points out that, "even at very early stages of

development," language plays an implicit role in fostering a child's conscious awareness (p. 33). It is from these social experiences that children develop the ability to understand abstract concepts and to form symbolic representations of which purposeful actions to pursue. From a Vygotskian perspective, earlier socio-semiotic experiences enable children when seeing a pile of clothes to use them symbolically to represent "a baby", or when finding a stick to place it through their legs to signify that they are riding a horse.

Vygotsky (2000) explains that students' consciousness is derived from the ways in which knowledgeable others (parents, teachers, other adults, peers) convey concepts, operations, norms, values, and beliefs in particular contexts. He recognizes that instructions of knowledgeable adults induce "the generalizing kind of perception and thus plays a decisive role in making the child conscious of their mental processes" (p. 171). The words of knowledgeable others are "a microcosm of human consciousness" (p. 256). More knowledgeable others help children to redirect and transform their actions through their use of language. Over time, children learn to choose a specific object and to single out what they need to do by analyzing the integral aspects of the situation. It is when children become conscious about what to do that the adults' instructions become part of a student's consciousness. Neo-Vygotskian theorist Wertsch affirms that language, especially when the appropriate forms of semiotic mediation are used, plays a role in our awareness of our abilities.

The next example is from my own experience teaching Gloria, an adult student who had returned to her musical studies after a four-decade lapse. It illustrates how conveying past and present sociocultural norms, beliefs, and values about playing piano through talk, gestures, and sounds encouraged her to return week after week.

During the lesson, I praised Gloria's ability to play through her repertoire. I also explained that *allegro* was a musical term used to indicate that the tempo of the piece was lively and diminuendo meant that she was to gradually decrease the volume. To ensure that she understood how I expected her to play the passage that was filled with complicated rhythms, I played the passage on the piano and rotated my body. In a short while, Gloria was able to tap into this general pool of knowledge and to play through the next passage, as well as the section that followed where the rhythms were presented in reverse order. Then, she added that at this stage in her life, she was excited about learning to play the piano and focused less on worrying about hitting the wrong notes, which she had done in the past. She attributed her changed attitude to my explanations on what to do and my constant emphasis on her ability to play piano. (G. Cherney, personal communication, 2000)

It seems that my use of instructions, explanations, and appraisal of my student's playing ability along with gestures and demonstrating on the piano mediated her ability to play through this passage and had a positive influence in altering her perception of her ability to play piano.

Language and Learning Potential: As Bruner (1986) points out, Vygotsky's theory of development is also a theory of education and learning. Teachers' words and actions add to a student's "historical growth of consciousness as a whole" (Vygotsky, 1962, p. 153). Teachers awaken their students' abilities to work on their own by leading their students towards their learning potential. Vygotsky (1978, 2000) stresses that there is a difference

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between a learner's actual development when the learner performs on her own independent of anyone's help as compared to how this same learner performs with the assistance of a more capable other (teacher, parent, adult, peer). He remarked that teachers use language as a conceptual tool to draw their students towards their proximal zone of development. Over time, the child (student) internalizes the teacher's words (Vygotsky, 2000). Moreover, teachers enable their students to use cultural signs and symbols by using words and actions that are appropriate for the learner's level of functioning. From a Vygotskian perspective, music teachers help their students to achieve their potential by a variety of means, one of which includes language. Music teachers give directives, provide explanations, assess performances, and share information.

The following example illustrates how the words and actions of a piano teacher can help young beginner students achieve their potential musical ability. The example comes from my field notes:

> At the beginning of the ear-training segment, Esfir introduces very simple tasks, which include naming the note – "*Sol*", playing the sound on the piano keyboard, and showing where to place the note on the music notation paper. Then, the student and Esfir take turns singing the note. Finally, Esfir instructs her student to write the note "*Sol*" on the notation paper. They repeat this procedure with the note "*Do*". By the end of the lesson not only can the student sing the different notes, she can identify whether Esfir played "*Sol*" or "*Do*" and write the notes on the music notation paper. (Field notes, 1997)

It seems that by gradually increasing the level of difficulty and by using

directives, explanations, and actions that were appropriate for her student's ZPD, Esfir taught the student how to recognize and write down musical sounds. In other words, she enabled the student to use cultural signs and symbols, to self-regulate her actions, and to internalize musical meanings. Vygotsky's interdisciplinary theoretical assumptions about learning and using language provide a conceptual framework for understanding the development of higher forms of mental functioning in a particular sociocultural-historical context. In addition, language is a tool that mediates the emergence of self-consciousness and voluntary control.

Language and Self-regulation: Another focus of Vygotsky's theory of the use of language as a tool for mediating learning is self-regulated learning. According to Vygotsky (1978), language "structures the whole psychological process and enables the child to master her movements" (p. 35). Language conveys and provides "the means and methods" for individuals to organize, to form, and to structure their own behaviors and actions (p. 74). Thus, from a Vygotskian perspective, more capable others (adults, teachers, peers) use language to inform, transform, and regulate a student's behavior. Eventually these meaningful social encounters between a teacher and student lead students to function on an "intra-psychological" plane.

Private music teachers typically convey information about musical elements, structures, and general laws by naming, by pointing out details and features of the score, and by selecting tasks. Then good music teachers, such as Dorothy Delay, step back so that their students can self-regulate their actions. The great violinist Itzhak Perlman referred to their teacher, Dorothy Delay, as the best teacher in the world. Isaac Stern commented that she not only provided "an enormously solid physical base to her students," she also encouraged them

to take responsibility (Epstein, 1988, p.75). Another former student of Dorothy Delay, Cho-Liang Lin, recalls that "it's not even so much what she teaches you – it's what she tells to you to teach yourself" (Epstein, 1988, p. 81). It seems that studying violin with Miss Delay at the Julliard School of Music was instrumental in Lin and Perlman becoming major international artists. Her use of language, as well as her timing as to when to step back and let them further their musical careers on their own, seemed to enable them to self-regulate their actions.

Therefore, a Vygotskian perspective offers an explanatory framework for examining teachers' use of language in several ways: in facilitating students' learning, thinking, reasoning, problem solving; in transforming students' abilities in forming higher level concepts (self-regulation, internalization and symbolization), and in leading students towards their learning potential. However, Vygotsky does not construct a specific scheme to analyze language use.

Affective and Volitional Dimensions of Learning

In any holistic discussion of engagement with works of art (literature, music), the affective and volitional dimensions cannot be overlooked, especially when examining students' desires to further their study of the arts and even to pursue the arts as a career. Although Vygotsky does not specifically investigate why musicians pursue their musical endeavors, the broader and general significance of his exploration on affect and volition is relevant for my study. He argues that in order to understand our thoughts, a study should analyze the source of a person's affective and volitional tendencies. As Vygotsky (2000) claims,

Thought is not begotten by thought; it is engendered by motivation, i.e. by our desires and needs, our interests and emotions. Behind every thought, there is an affective-volitional tendency, which holds the answer to the last "why" in the analysis of thinking. A true and full understanding of another's thought is possible only when we understand its affective-volitional basis. (p. 252)

Vygotsky's underlying argument is that consciousness is not an impulsive reaction to our desires and needs. Vygotsky proposes that affect and volition are connected to our motives and interests. Consciousness evolves through our reactions to our sensations and motives, which include our desires, needs, interests, and emotions. In other words, consciousness includes both volition and affect. Vygotsky claims that over time and through social experience, humans acquire the abilities to direct and identify their needs and motives. They learn to master their own behavior, formulate their needs, and decide on their course of action instead of responding impulsively. In other words, Vygotsky proposes that thought grows out of affective-volitional and social actions.

Vygotsky (1978) describes volition as "a product of the historical and cultural development of behavior" (p. 37). Another distinguishing feature of human volition is the ability to choose, direct, or alter which purposeful actions to pursue. He refers to affect as an emotion, or expression of one's feelings that "provides the integrating and motivational forces of consciousness" (Wertsch, 1985, p. 189). He believes that affect is determined by stimuli in the environment, which over time mediate higher mental development (Vygotsky, 1978). From a Vygotskian perspective, affect enables humans to regulate their behaviors. Vygotsky (2000) refers to consciousness as a self-directed flow of "thoughts thinking themselves" (p. 10) which are set apart from our particular

context, our personal needs and interests, inclinations and impulses. In other words, affect is another component of consciousness.

Vygotsky's interest in affective-volitional impact on higher mental functioning emerged from his doctoral research on the psychology of art (Vygotsky, 1971). He began this research project in 1910 and only completed it in 1922 (Lima, 1995). He focused his exploration of the psychology of art on the role of affect in art, the nature of aesthetic experience, and the semiotic nature of psychological processes.

Vygotsky (1971) emphasizes that affect acts as a transitional channel in motivating artists "to strive . . . towards all that lies beyond" (p. 253). He claims that initial sensory stimuli, such as sounds, become the fundamental force opening the way for understanding the impact of artistic enjoyment. He explains that eventually artists learn how to recognize, counteract, and respond to their initial impulses, through their experiences with others. Vygotsky claims that artists' social experiences mediate their ability to guide "the aesthetically aroused forces into socially useful channels" (p. 254).

According to Vygotsky, the work of art itself is "a system of stimuli, consciously and intentionally organized in such a way as to excite an aesthetic reaction" (pp. 23-24). He describes a work of art as "a combination of aesthetic symbols aimed at arousing emotion in people" (p. 5). In other words, an aesthetic response arises from the artist's consciousness of the form and content of a work of art, as well as from sensations, emotions, and passions associated with the work of art. From a Vygotskian perspective, an initial reaction to musical stimuli may be an impulsive reaction like being excited or irritated by the sound after hitting a note on the piano. This initial reaction is the fundamental force behind a musician's response to the aesthetic aspects of a work of art. Through explanations about the details (musical elements,

structures, and general laws of playing intervals) and the character of the music (graceful, tender, passionate), musicians learn to recognize and to channel their initial impulses and their emotional reactions to the music. Vygotsky also recognizes that the artwork triggers an affective-volitional response. Considering the influence of the emotional response to the aesthetic aspects of a work of art was a pioneer perspective for researchers in the early twentieth century.

A Vygotskian perspective on affect, aesthetics, and volition is significant in this analysis of promising piano students. I question why students continue to pursue their musical studies with respect to how their affective and volitional needs and actions drive them to continue. I specifically address the issues of emotion and aesthetics and their role in developing music students' continued desires, needs, and interests in pursuing their musical studies. Examining how affect and volition shape our thoughts and actions provides us with information about our motives, interests, and desires. As well, exploring the genesis of our thoughts reveals the motives that channel our thoughts and the influence that our thoughts have on affective responses and volition. Thus, a study of our consciousness should not separate affect from volition.

Although Vygotsky talked about affect and volition, and their impact on human consciousness, he did not go into detail on this topic. Furthermore, he devoted only a small part of his research to describing the affective-volitional process, as he was unable to complete his ideas before he died.

Summary of Vygotsky's Theory of Learning

Vygotsky claimed that learning involves the transformation and internalization of lower forms of functioning into higher forms of functioning. Higher forms of mental functioning include conscious awareness, working in the zone of proximal development, and self-regulation. Knowledgeable others

mediate the transformation of human abilities and skills into higher forms of mental functioning. Vygotsky maintained that over time, children move from being other-regulated to being self-regulated. Vygotsky also argued that learning evolves from lived-experiences with others in a sociocultural-historical context. He was particularly interested in the role of language in learning. He emphasized that language acts as a psychological tool in mediating the transformation of lower mental functioning into higher mental functioning. Vygotsky also believed that there is a connection between our motives, interests, affect, and volition. In the next sections, I explain how Halliday socio-functional theory of language use extends and complements Vygotsky's theory of language and thinking.

Halliday's Social-functional Theory of Language

Michael A. K. Halliday, a systemic-functional linguist, focused his research on social-semiotics. His particular research interests are in the theoretical and applied aspects of linguistics. He has written about grammar, semantics, discourse analysis, socio-linguistic aspects, language education, and child language development. Halliday's social-semiotic theory of language provides a useful explanatory framework for understanding how music teachers use language to exchange meanings with and communicate to their students in piano lessons. This social semiotic function of language use is central to my research, since I am interested in investigating why piano students persist in their efforts to study music and the role their teacher's language plays in shaping their decisions.

Background to Halliday's Research

Halliday was born in Yorkshire, England in 1925, the year following Vygotsky's presentation of the paper, "Methods of Reflexological and

Psychological Investigations", at the Russian Psychoneurological Congress in Leningrad. Halliday's famous paper on the functional use of grammar was presented in 1961. He based his theory on his observations of his son Nigel's language development.

J. R. Firth, the founder of modern British linguistics, and anthropologist Malinowski significantly influenced Halliday's thinking and social perspective on linguistics. Malinowski emphasized the need to define meaning as a function of the context. He coined the term 'context of situation' (Malinowski, 1923). Firth (1957) elaborated on Malinowski's concept of context, stressing that meaning is an open and dynamic process, that meaning is a function of the context, and that the typology of the situation provides information about how we act and behave. He also claimed that there is a relationship between language use and society.

Halliday, a student of Firth, followed Firth's social-functional approach to linguistics and language use and epistemological stance that meaning is not a stable product. However, contrary to Firth's general anatomic and physiological perspective on linguistics, Halliday presented a more systematized and comprehensive view of systemic linguistics and language. Whereas Firthian linguists seek to provide information about the general anatomy (structure, logic, form, syntax) and the physiological situation (paradigms, functions, rhetoric) of language, Halliday developed a more systematized and detailed process to determine the communicative potential of language and functional use of language. Halliday also opposed the traditional linguists' perspective on the pure and applied aspects of linguistics. He claimed that linguists such the American formalists, Chomsky and Hymes, treat linguistics as a science and view language according to structure, form, and syntax; decontextualized from meaning. Researchers (Maguire, 1994; Maguire & Graves, 2001)

expanded Halliday's views on language. They maintain that language reflects meaningful interpersonal exchanges with others in the nested contexts in which activities occur.

Using Language to Shape Learning

Halliday (1978) studied the scope of language use as well as grammatical structures. He claimed that language not only consists of sentences and words but "constitutes a culture; one that is distinctive in that it also serves as an encoding system" (p. 2); as well it reflects the text or discourse of a meaningful interpersonal exchange in a particular context. Language functions both as a social semiotic and socio-linguistic process. For Halliday, language as social semiotic means "interpreting language within a sociocultural context, in which the culture itself is interpreted in semiotic terms -- as an information system" (p. 2). Language as a socio-linguistic process involves "interpreting both discourse and the linguistic system that lies behind" (pp. 4-5), such as the patterns of social structures and systems, status and roles, values and knowledge, and language of those in the community.

Halliday (1978) conceptualized language as a contextualized exchange of meanings between two people. He recognized that individuals encode language, its words and its structure, through their experiences of and with people. Their conversations symbolize the two-way relationship between a speaker's intentions and the dialogic partner's interpretations. Speakers may use language to symbolize actions, interactions, and role relationships in particular contexts. Both the speaker and the dialogic partner reflect on and interpret each other's utterances and the different meanings of one another's words, sentences, and actions. When a speaker uses vocal sounds or gestures to transmit information, the dialogic partner may interpret their functional meaning. Therefore, Halliday

sees the process of communication as recursive, generative, and potentially meaningful.

Halliday (1978) also maintained that language provides both "the end as well as the means" in the activity of learning and teaching (p. 68). Language is the foundation for constructing human experience. It is essential for establishing, maintaining, and developing "the status of the individual and shap[ing] them as persons" (Halliday, 1985, p. 14). Language is a resource for questioning, appraising, or drawing out information about others from the surrounding contexts. By sharing and exchanging the meanings of their experiences with others in particular 'contexts of situations', humans obtain goods and services (Halliday, 1985).

Halliday (1985) explains that there is "a systemic relationship between the social environment on the one hand and the functional organization of language on the other hand" (p. 11). People learn about their environment, its particular sociocultural context, "its modes of thought and action, its beliefs, and its values" (Halliday, 1978, p. 9). It is through experiencing language in a particular environment that "language comes to life" (p. 28). Halliday uses the term 'context of situation', a term he borrowed from the linguist Firth, to represent the environment in which language is experienced.

Halliday also emphasizes that there is a connection between what the teacher intends to communicate and how the student interprets the meaning of the speaker's (teacher's) utterances. Teachers use language to guide and shape their students' learning. Furthermore, through their exchanges with their teacher's words and actions, students are eventually able to reflect on and internalize their teacher's words, sentences, or actions, creating their own "mental picture of reality" (Halliday, 1985, p. 101).

Interpreting Language Meanings

Another fundamental feature of Halliday's (1978) functional theory of language is the social semantics of text. Semantics is the study of meaning and the text is "the basic unit of semantic structure" (p. 60). The semantic aspect of human language serves as a way for others to encode potential language meanings. Halliday maintains that language meanings evolve in a particular context, and represent particular experiences (cultural), interpersonal relationships, and judgments, as well as the text. Language meanings are determined by how the speaker intends the hearer to interpret the text, and how the hearer interprets the speaker's meanings, and differ according to the make-up of the group "in their interpretation of what the situation demands" (p.27). The function of language depends on the particular social and cultural context or contexts in which a speaker utters words, proposes actions, and stimulates thoughts.

Functions of Language

Halliday (1985) claims that people typically use a particular semiotic "semiotic encounter" to activate and channel meanings to others about the cultural environment. He claims that a speaker uses language to express what the human organism "can do" with other humans by using different modes of communication, such as *instrumental* language, *regulatory* language, *or interpersonal* language (p. 8). Halliday explains that a speaker uses *instrumental* language to notify the respondent that he or she needs to do something. Speakers use *regulatory* language to establish that they intend to control the recipient's behavior, such as when a piano teacher states, *Play the note as short as possible, more pedal,* or *stop.* When a teacher addresses the tone quality by stating to the student that *"it's a very special and bright sound"* (Field notes,

1998), the student understands that she needs to make a change in how the keys are touched. *Interpersonal* language indicates that there is an exchange of meaning about involvement, interactions, attitude, and position. For example, I observed Esfir tell a student, "*I told you how to change your fingers, and you are not changing*" (Field notes, 1998), indicating her position of authority and signaling her role as the teacher and the student's responsibility in carrying out different actions.

The speaker's utterance reflects the relationship between the dialogic partners and the particular context in which it was uttered. How a dialogic partner interprets and responds to an utterance depends on how the dialogic partner interprets the speaker's meanings. Halliday identifies two functional classifications – proposals and propositions. He claims that whether the dialogic partner interprets and responds to a speaker's utterance as proposal or proposition depends on how the dialogic partner interprets the speaker's intended meanings.

Speakers use proposals to elicit actions and to exchange goods and services (Halliday, 1985). Russell (1995) classifies proposals as "any utterances that could be interpreted by players as an urging, instruction, command, exhortation, vow, declaration, invitation or caution to carry out or implement a musical action" (p. 135). In Russell's study of how four student conductors made musical meaning from their scores in rehearsals with peers, the dominant function of language use by student conductors was regulatory. They used proposals to control their peer orchestral players' behaviors while playing through the repertoire. Three examples, of student conductors using proposals in Russell's study are: "*Try to make it shorter this time*"; "*We're going to have to take it faster*"; and "*Build!*"(p. 135). The student orchestra players were expected to respond to these utterances with appropriate actions.

Halliday (1978, 1985) defines propositions as explicit or implicit verbal statements or questions that a speaker uses to suggest, explain, or inform dialogic partners about the terms or ideas of how to carry out or achieve an action or behavior immediately or later. Propositions include statements and questions that can be debated. Speakers use propositions to offer or exchange information, and to stimulate a thought response (ideas or concepts) from the dialogic partner, such as whether she affirms or denies the suggestion. The following are examples of the kinds of propositions a piano teacher may utter during a lesson:

> *This slur means that the violinist plays just one bow.*
>
> *This phrase is written in the orchestra only for the violins.*
>
> *When I was younger, I did not have a piano at all. I could just practice every afternoon at my aunt's house on her upright piano that was never in tune.* (Kronish, transcribed videotaped lesson, 1998)

The intention of a proposition is that the dialogic partner may affirm or deny the speaker's suggestions. The principles that guide the practice of teaching and learning piano indicate that piano students' expected responses to their teachers' propositions would be to follow the suggestions by responding verbally or thinking about the comments and explanations. From a Hallidayian perspective, music teachers and their piano students use proposals during piano lessons to regulate the students' musical behaviors, and propositions to stimulate, shape, and elicit their thinking about the music and how to play.

<u>Language Texts</u>

Language texts are not just words and sentences. Language texts are the "linguistic form of social interaction" (Halliday, 1978, p. 122). Language texts share a set of characteristics. They consist of a sequence of utterances (verbal and non-verbal) that are particular to the context of language use, the co-constructing dialogic partners, and grammatical elements. Language texts are the product of their cultures and situations; they embody the language people use as they speak, write, read, and listen in their everyday life.

All language texts, written or spoken, consist of organized patterns of meanings. Textual meaning consists of references to the speaker's social relationships, the context of language usage, and the internal organization of meaning. Both dialogic partners have the potential to share meanings. Both the speaker and the dialogic partner decode the language text by selecting meanings from the text. The more one knows about a topic and the relationship between people in a specific context, the better one is at interpreting what people say and do. Moreover, being familiar with another person's semantic patterns and situational contexts enables people to talk and interact with each other and to become skilled in interpreting the meanings of their utterances.

Halliday (1978, 1985) drew up a set of concepts to code the topics, interpersonal relationships and contextual aspects of what people do, mean or say in a particular social context or contexts. He proposed the notion of *Register*. He defines *Register* as "a set of meanings that are appropriate to a particular function of language, together with the words and structures which express these meanings" (Halliday, 1975, p. 65). *Register* is a feature of a particular sociocultural context. It encompasses the entire social context of the situation "within which meanings are selected and the forms which are used for their expression" (Halliday, 1978, p. 32). In Halliday's words, "register is a form of

prediction; given that we know the situation, the social context of language use, we can predict a great deal about the language that will occur, with reasonable probability of being right" (p. 32). The meanings that lie behind a speaker's language use depend on whether both speaker and recipient are familiar with the register of the particular context. In a music lesson, students become familiar with the meanings and intentions of the teacher's utterances.

Typically, register is associated with the field, the tenor, and the mode of discourse (Maguire, 1989). Field of discourse is associated with the component of a text in which language is an essential component in communicating what is happening. The field conveys information about the "total purposive activity of the participants" from the perspective of both dialogic partners (Russell, 1995, p. 101). This includes the setting in which meanings are exchanged, and the embedded nature of ongoing social activities that take place there. For example, when a piano student replays a section of the music by gradually slowing down the tempo at the end of the phrase after the teacher utters "*Ritardando*" (gradually getting slower), the student recognizes what to do because he is familiar with this field of discourse.

Tenor of discourse is associated with the interpersonal aspects of the text. *Tenor* provides information about the role relationship of the participants, and their status in a specific context, such as who is the teacher or student. Tenor is established by how the speaker selects words such as *you* (represents the student), *I* (represents the teacher), or *we* (represents a student-teacher relationship), and so on. Mode of discourse represents the words in the text, that is, the different channels of communication (words, sounds, gestures). Mode determines the symbolic or rhetorical channels of communication in the text, such as the key functions assigned to the language and the symbolic and metaphorical themes of the text (Halliday, 1985).

The register of a piano lesson thus includes the physical context (piano, studio, metronome, sheet music). The register also includes the field of the activity (information about a composer's background, instructions about how to learn a song, the participants' relationship and interactions with a teacher, student, parent, visiting teacher, or any other person who might attend the lesson), and the different modes of communication (words, sounds, gestures). My knowledge and understanding of the register of the piano lesson enables me to interpret meanings and identify functions as I analyze the exchanges between the teacher and students.

Summary of Halliday's Socio-functional Theory of Language

Halliday argues that language is a social-semiotic process in which individuals construct meanings by interpreting their particular social and linguistic environments. He stresses that language acts as a systematized resource of social behavior. Language expresses what is being done, who is involved, and the type of semiotic means that are used in a particular social and cultural context. Function of language includes explaining ideas to others, establishing interpersonal relationships, and relating information about a context. Halliday also maintains that language provides a bridge between learning and conceptual development. His concept of language offers a useful framework for analyzing how a music teacher channels musical meanings to her students and develops students' musical abilities.

A Vygotskian - Hallidayian Framework

In this section, I discuss how Vygotsky's theory of language as a socioculturally-situated theory of education complements Halliday's socio-

functional theory of language use. Maguire (1989) was the first to bring together Vygotsky and Halliday as a theoretical lens. She referred to Vygotsky and Halliday's theories in her study of French immersion children's perceptions and productions of English and French written narratives. I explain how combining the theories of Vygotsky and Halliday form the theoretical basis for exploring the role of piano teachers, and their use of language during lessons, in their piano students' decisions to continue learning music, and how her use of language expands her students' learning potential.

The following are the most salient and complementary features of Vygotsky and Halliday's theory: language is a social semiotic process; language use has an impact on learning; individuals use language as a mediating tool to construct cultural knowledge; people engage in actions by internalizing the specific modes of language used to mediate these actions. For both Halliday and Vygotsky, language is a semiotic process; more capable others (teachers, guides, peers) use language to channel children's learning and development. For Vygotsky, more capable others use language to provide social and cultural knowledge. He claims that over time, children (students) are able to represent information symbolically, such as by classifying events and objects in terms of generalized categories or by formulating the relationships among categories. For Halliday, language is a tool that adults (teachers, parents) use to elicit actions and thinking, to make tasks meaningful and functionally relevant, to channel information to others, and to get things done. Halliday also argues that adults encode important features about the cultural context through language, such as the employment of reading music notation during piano lessons. He explains that language is an external tool that links individuals with other people and with different objects.

Both Vygotsky and Halliday address the connection between language,

thought, and the development of higher mental functions. Whereas Vygotsky focuses on the psychological aspects of language that mediate a person's learning, the core of Halliday's theory is the socio-linguistic functions of language use. From Hallidayian and Vygotskian perspectives, a teacher's language use contributes to the students' potential to acquire higher mental concepts. In particular, Vygotsky recognizes that a more capable other's use of language intersects with a child's ability to internalize and self-regulate his or her actions. Halliday (1978) explains that by communicating with an adult (teacher), a child (student) internalizes the adult's language "into his own functional framework" (p. 54).

Both theorists argue that the social and cultural aspects of the particular context influence how students interpret a more knowledgeable peer or adult's language use. Their claim is that the context sets the stage for providing information to others, making interpretations, and establishing relationships with other people. Fundamental to Halliday's theory is that language is a resource for making meaning. He explains that the way a person experiences language determines how an individual learns and interprets others, such as the nature of the context, the channel of communication and specific relationships with the speaker. Halliday also claims that form follows function and that language learning is a progressive mastery of meaning potential (Maguire, 1989). I use Halliday's concept of language use to show how a music teacher channels musical meanings and expands her students' musical abilities. In the next section, I explain Wenger's notion of community of practice and how I use his social constructivist theory as a research tool to interpret the role of musical communities in piano students' decisions to continue piano lessons.

Wenger's Notion of Community of Practice

<u>Background to Wenger's Research</u>

Etienne Wenger's (1998) research on learning communities and their practices adds an important dimension to my research goal to understand the role musical communities play in a piano student's decision to continue studying music. Wenger, who first studied artificial intelligence, went on to develop a model of situated learning, which he created in collaboration with anthropologist Jean Lave. Lave and Wenger (1991) maintain that learning involves engagement within a community of social practice. They articulate their theory of social practice thus:

> Briefly, a theory of social practice emphasizes the relational interdependency of agent and world, activity, meaning, cognition, learning and knowing. It emphasizes the inherently socially negotiated character of meaning and the interested, concerned character of the thought and actions of persons-in-activity . . . In a theory of practice, cognition and communication in, and with, the social world are situated in the historical development of ongoing activity. (pp. 50-51)

Whereas Vygotsky recognizes the importance of the relationships between the sociocultural contexts and social interactions in human learning and development, and Halliday maintains that there is a connection between the sociocultural context and language use in channeling meaning and mediating learning, Wenger (1998) locates the sociocultural context within the community.

Wenger's Notion of Community of Practice

Wenger (1998) describes a *community* as a sociocultural context in which humans engage in actions and interactions. He maintains that actions and the contexts in which they occur are conceptually inseparable. He claims that people develop a sense of self through sharing meaningful social interactions with others and by participating in specific and broader sociocultural-historical mediated activities. Wenger maintains that learning is primarily a social phenomenon; we learn in the "context of our lived experiences of participation in the world" (p. 3). He also proposes that knowledge is a matter of knowing what we do, who we are, and how we interpret what we do in terms of our competence in particular communities of practice.

Wenger explains that the fundamental premise of a practice is that it is organized around the actions and interactions that evolve from the three-way interplay among mutual engagement, joint enterprises, and shared repertoires of knowledge and skills. In an educational community of practice, members actively participate with others in the pursuit of learning. In addition, members engage with others in meaningful ways. Therefore, meaning, practice, community, and identity are the key components of learning (Maguire & Graves, 2001). Meaning refers to how the members experience the world and life around them. Practice represents how members share historical and social resources. Community characterizes the pursuit of enterprise that its members consider worthy. Identity refers to the ways the members actively create their personal histories in social communities.

Wenger emphasizes that mutual engagement is important because a practice does not exist in a theoretical sense; mutual engagement exists because "people are engaged in actions whose meanings they negotiate with one another" by sharing their experiences, values, and competencies (p. 73).

The members interact with one another not just to do their work, but to clarify what to do, to define how it is done, to change how it is done, and establish their identities within the practice. For example, in a music community, people (teachers, colleagues, friends, family, audience) meet together to engage in musical pursuits (performing, singing, listening) to learn about the different aspects of the musical practices (technical and informal musical knowledge, skills, and activities) and to view themselves as members within a music community, such as jazz.

Wenger claims that members of a community of practice also participate in joint enterprises. Joint enterprise indicates that the members meet on an ongoing basis. They come together from different and diverse backgrounds to work on common goals. It is through the "social experience of living in the world in terms of membership in social communities and active involvement in social enterprises" (p. 55), sharing cultural and historical artifacts, symbols, and common resources that members negotiate meaning, master skills, and develop a sense of identity Maguire, 2003). Shared repertoires include methods, tools, techniques, language, stories, and behavior patterns. Identifying oneself within a community of practice allows one to "come up with certain interpretations, to engage in certain actions, to make certain choices, to value certain experiences – all by virtue of participating in certain enterprises" (p. 153).

Over time, the members in a community of practice begin to share their repertoire, which includes their resources, cultural and historical artifacts, routines, and symbols. They use a common repertoire of words that are particular to the community or adapted within the community to negotiate meaning and master skills. Corenblum and Marshall (1998) found that students are more likely to continue their musical activities when people in their community support instrumental or arts programs as a meaningful and valuable

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activity. They studied grade 9 students enrolled in band programs in seven schools in the Saint James-Assiniboia School Division in Winnipeg, Canada. From a Wengerian perspective, one might interpret that students remained in the band program because belonging to the band and arts communities gave them a context to learn about traditional musical structures, to share knowledge, and to develop their competency in an enterprise that is valued by the members.

Applying Vygotsky, Halliday, and Wenger's Theories

Table 1 provides a brief summary of the theoretical frameworks I employ in this study, the features of each theory, and how I used them as a research tool to analyze and interpret the data. Vygotsky's, Halliday's, and Wenger's theories provide a useful theoretical, interpretive framework for my study of the interactions and relationships between Esfir and her three promising students, especially the roles that Esfir plays on their commitment to continue music, and the role of language oin the decision.

Table 1 – Theoretical Frameworks for Responding to Research Questions

Theory	Lev Vygotsky Social Theory of Learning	Michael Halliday Social Theory of Language	Etienne Wenger Social Theory of Community of Practice
Perspective	Socio-psychological developmental	Socio-linguistic-semiotic-contextual	Sociocultural-contextual
Answers the following research questions	**How** do sociocultural and historical experiences influence learning? **How** do lived experiences in a sociocultural context impact one's pursuits? **How** does language mediate the development of conscious awareness, ZPD, and self-regulation? **What** is the role of the teacher's use of words, sounds, and gestures in mediating and shaping students' intentions? **How** does the affective-volitional tendency mediate students' motivation?	**How** do social-functional characteristics of language mediate the decision to learn piano? **How** does the teacher use language to encode social and cultural knowledge to communicate beliefs, intentions, and thoughts, and to provide information?	**What** particular contextual, social, cultural, and historical characteristics influence learning? **What** is the role of mutual engagement with others (social participation and interaction in a sociocultural-historical context), joint enterprise (common goals, resources, artifacts, and symbols), and shared repertoire play in the students' decisions to continue?

Vygotksy based his theoretical assumptions on the idea that higher-level human functions are a product of one's experiences in a sociocultural-historical context. This is particularly important for my study, since I examine and interpret the significance of piano students' experiences in a music studio. I also focus on how Esfir used the specific sociocultural piano lesson context to interact with and form relationships with her students.

Vygotsky's perspective on human consciousness and self-regulated actions are also important, since I examine what Esfir and her students revealed to me about how their experiences during lessons influenced their decision to continue their piano lessons. Vygotsky's theory of human consciousness provides a framework for understanding how Esfir shaped her students' learning, their awareness of their abilities, and their ability to take charge of their learning, or, as Vygotsky would say, their ability to self-regulate their actions.

Vygotsky argues that language is essential for the development of higher mental functioning. Adults' language transactions help students become more competent and skilled, and become independent thinkers. Socially mediated discourse may contribute to a person's volition to partake in meaningful activities (Vygotsky, 1978, 2000). A Vygotskian perspective on semiotic mediation is useful when interpreting how Esfir's use of words, sounds, and gestures during piano lessons acted as mediational tools for learning, mediated her students' thinking, their abilities to organize and present suitable tasks, to develop student-teacher relationships, and to mediate the students' ZPD.

Vygotsky also recognizes that humans develop awareness of their volitional-affective tendencies and abilities to identify and direct their functions or goals. This self-regulation is particularly important for my study because I seek to understand how the students' abilities to cope with elation or stress when playing piano drove them to continue or abandon their music studies.

Halliday assumes that meanings do not emerge by Immaculate Conception (Maguire, 1989). He claims that meanings are embedded in verbal instructions, commands, pleas, requests, explanations, and evaluations in particular contexts or situations. Verbal clues are found in a text. For example, transcripts of videotaped piano lessons may reveal piano students' experiences with their teacher, including the teacher's particular instructions and explanations.

For Halliday, the more the speaker is familiar with the context in which he engages in dialogue with his dialogic partner, the topics that are discussed, their relationships, and the context in which language is used, the better the dialogic partner is able to interpret his intentions and meaning potential. My analysis of the register of the piano lesson contributes to understanding how Esfir influenced her students' choices to continue learning piano. I draw on Halliday's concept of register to explain how she channels her intentions, meanings, values, and attitudes as she provides an outline of what actions to take, uses the lesson context to impart knowledge, and establishes a relationship with her students.

Wenger's (1998) social theory of learning emphasizes that we learn in a community with others by engaging in meaningful activities and by sharing common repertoires. This perspective is highly appropriate to answering the following research questions: What do promising piano students perceive leads to their determination to continue studying music with their teacher; and, how are their decisions related to belonging to a musical community? Using Wenger's principles also allows me to explore how the teacher integrates students into a community of musical practice.

CHAPTER FOUR

Methodology

To make a summary of how I teach is extremely difficult. This job other people do so that they can see things from inside. Everything has to be finished to make a summary. My work, my field is never ever finished. It's endless. It's always just in a role. I am learning from my pupils. They're learning from me. Actually, I love to learn to teach because I am also learning myself. This is a whole process . . . It's a process that is interesting for me . . . The process of working with pupils reminds us that it's an event. (Esfir, Transcribed Interview, 2002)

In this chapter, I present the epistemological principles and the research activities upon which this inquiry proceeds. I explain why I situated my inquiry within the framework of a qualitative, interpretive paradigm and why I selected the principles of portraiture as the most appropriate approach for responding to the research questions. I describe my role as a researcher. I introduce the participants and explain how I gained entry to the research site. I then describe the different data sets – field notes, videotaped lessons, interviews, written documents, and email correspondences. I conclude by describing the different phases of data collection.

Epistemological Principles and Research Activities

Esfir's words that introduce this chapter capture the epistemological assumptions and principles that drive my investigation and interpretation of the significance of the music lessons in promising piano students' decisions

to continue studying music. Esfir's views on learning are that teachers and students are continually in the process of learning; learning is socially constructed. Teachers play a role in their students' interest in learning music; learning takes place during particular musical events; and learning piano involves an on-going and holistic analysis and interpretation of the aesthetic, interpersonal, and personal forms of knowing.

The following are the distinguishing epistemological assumptions and principles underlying this inquiry:

There is no single explanation for our actions or behaviors. An inquiry into promising piano students, their decisions to continue piano lessons, and the role of the teacher is broad, complex, and dynamic. Everything becomes a clue, including the physical setting, the interactions between students and teachers, their language and actions, the manner in which musical information is exchanged, and students' perceptions of their learning experiences. To obtain a more holistic picture of piano students' realities required examining a piano teacher and her students' dynamic and open-ended forms of life and thought from different perspectives and portraying their realities in rich and vivid details. This involved capturing the teacher and the students' utterances and actions during piano lessons and seeking their similar and different points of view.

Behaviors and actions are socially constructed. What piano students do and how they do it are inextricably related to their interactions and relationships with others, such as teachers, colleagues, peers, or parents.

Beliefs and actions are cultivated through our experiences in particular naturalistic contexts (Denzin & Lincoln, 1998; Guba & Lincoln, 1998). Getting at the core of how students make sense of their experiences involved understanding the social, cultural, and psychological circumstances in which their decisions were shaped. Therefore, I conducted the investigation with

students whom their teacher identified as promising: Emily, J.J., Susan, and their teacher Esfir Dyachkov. I collected data as it unfolded during piano lessons. I conversed with students and teachers, seeking to elicit their backgrounds, their feelings, their perspectives, and their lived experiences in the music studio.

There is no objective reality. In a study of this sort, it is impossible to be truly objective and neutral, to exclude the interactions between participants and the researcher and to ignore the researcher's personal feelings, values, and beliefs. The students', the teacher's, and my subjective explanations and descriptions provided awareness of social actions and insight into how students construct meaning about why they continue piano lessons. Bringing out the different voices of the teacher and the students gave authenticity to the research topics. Using an interpretive-analytic process has a logical basis and responds to the questions asked when studying why promising piano students continue piano lessons and the role of their teacher in their decision.

Principles of Portraiture as Methodology and Method

Portraiture is a method of inquiry that shares many of the features traditions and values of qualitative research (Lawrence-Lightfoot & Davis, 1997). Portraitures are life drawings of particular human experiences, the meanings people attach to their experiences and the context in which human experiences are "being framed and shaped by the setting" (p. 41). Portraiture provides a holistic and in-depth view of reality. As in most qualitative research, portraitists seek to record and interpret the perspectives and experiences of the participants using a particularistic, heuristic, descriptive, and inductive process.

Portraitists focus in on participants' "voices and their visions – their authority, knowledge, and wisdom" (p. xv). Portraitists study the subtle details of human actions and interactions. They focus on what people do, how they

behave, what they say, and the meanings they attach to their behaviors and experiences. What distinguishes portraiture from other qualitative methodologies, such as ethnography and case studies, is the manner in which the portraitist combines aesthetics and empiricism in an effort to capture the complexity, dynamics, and subtlety of human experiences. To do so, they view the context as he participants shape it. They interpret thoughts, feelings, and behaviors, and they connect theory to participants' realities. In other words, they look at "strengths, resilience, and creativity in the people," their relationships, cultural rituals, and emotional meanings as well as weaknesses, imperfections, and vulnerabilities (p. 158).

Originally, I considered visiting a second teacher's studio and using a multiple case study to describe and compare what transpires during lessons. I discovered that interpretive portraiture is a form of inquiry that is more appropriate for my study of the social, cultural, and psychological experiences that influence piano students' decision to continue their music studies for the following reasons.

As a portraitist, I explore observable phenomena as they are experienced and perceived by piano students and their teacher and listen to the students' and Esfir's points of view. For example, I zoom in on Emily, J.J., and Susan's music lessons in Esfir's piano studio as they play sections of a piece, perform the entire work, and discourse with Esfir about different strategies of working on the piece. I also ask Esfir, and her students Emily, J.J., and Susan, to talk about and describe their music learning experiences.

By focusing on one site, conversing with the students and their teacher, and observing how Esfir taught, I was able to obtain an in-depth, holistic view of how piano students' social, cultural, and psychological experiences learning music influence their decisions. Including participants' points of views,

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highlighting data about the teacher's pedagogical approach, and foregrounding what transpired in the lesson enabled me to portray why Emily, J.J., and Suan continue piano lessons. The text of the portraits, which are based on the transcribed videotaped lessons and interviews, offer a way for readers to vicariously experience the uniqueness of Emily, J.J., and Susan's learning experiences, particularly their interactions with Esfir, and how these events influenced their intent to continue taking piano lessons. I portray piano students' interactions with Esfir because she is a piano teacher described by colleagues, students, parents, and other musicians in the music community as an expert teacher. Not only do I portray what works, I illuminate Esfir's weaknesses and her students' responses to them. I describe, in their language and in detail, how they construct the meanings of their experiences. I focus on uncovering why three piano students continue to invest time and energy learning piano instead of quitting. My experiences as a piano teacher and piano student have allowed me to make sense of what I heard and saw during these observations of and conversations with them.

My Role as Researcher

A researcher's "local frames of awareness" influence his or her perspective and interpretations (Geertz, 1983, p. 6). My analysis and interpretation of the data were influenced by my own experiences, expectations, knowledge, and intentions. My childhood experiences as a piano student, my 35 years of teaching music both in the public school system and in the private studio, my attendance at master classes, and my work with individuals in psychotherapy have been invaluable assets in helping me make sense of the data. Recall in the Prelude that my knowledge of musical culture was shaped through my relationships with my family and my piano teachers. My experiences

learning with Ms. Goldbar and Jacob Wolfe influenced me to ask questions and to look at what transpired during piano lessons, including the interactions between Esfir and her students, as well as her use of language. My knowledge of the piano lesson register was also useful when analyzing and interpreting how Esfir's use of language acquainted Emily, J.J., and Susan with learning strategies and lesson routines. I became more aware of how Esfir used the lesson context as a learning tool. My work with patients in psychotherapy developed my ability to listen to and to make sense of my participants' lived experiences, and to tune into how they felt about their experiences, especially Esfir's advice on how to cope with the stresses and the elation of playing piano.

My stance on collecting data was to work closely with Esfir, Emily, J.J., and Susan. I visited the music studio, observed and videotaped the lessons, and interviewed the participants. I attempted to create an atmosphere of trust, respect, and comfort so that the participants would feel safe in disclosing their thoughts. I consciously strove to respect the students' feelings, concerns, and unique points of view. I established an informal relationship with the students and Esfir so that they would feel safe in revealing their views and experiences and in divulging intimate information when the interviews commenced. This excerpt from my field notes describes how I strove to establish myself as a non-threatening, supportive presence:

> I believe one of the reasons why J.J., Emily, and Susan accepted
> my presence is because I set up an atmosphere of comfort and
> respect. As well, I visited Esfir's music studio many times. In
> addition, I remained open and responsive to their needs, arranging
> the data collection schedule to their timetables. On my first visit,
> I clearly and honestly explained my expectations. My decision

to participate as an observer for the first year seemed to provide the time and space for Esfir and her students to get used to my presence. When I introduced audiotaping and videotaping the following year, I chose to blend into the background in the music studio so that I could observe the students, listen to what the teacher and student said, and observe what they did. At the same time, I respected their boundaries, particularly when controversial subject matter was discussed, such as the lesson when Esfir decided to discuss whether Emily would enter the Canadian Music Competition. (Reflective memo, 2002)

I posed questions and discussed issues that arose with students, piano teachers, and other pedagogues. For example, to ascertain why music students stop lessons, I asked a former undergraduate music student to explain how her particular experiences learning music influenced her decision to drop out of the music program at university. She revealed that her experiences with her piano teachers at university played a decisive role in her decision to quit. For example, her piano teacher's "*hearty tap*" each time the ruler fell off her hands still haunt her today and continue to inhibit her from playing piano (R. Mirvis, email correspondence, June 8, 2003).

Selecting the Participants

I first approached Esfir Dyachkov in the fall of 1997 about the possibility of conducting a pilot study on piano students' motivation for my Master's research project, and again in 2000 when I decided to continue this project as my doctoral research project. She agreed and signed the informed consent form on the condition that I use her real name. I have honored her request.

I also asked Esfir to select students who showed promising musical ability and regularly attended their lessons. Esfir contacted five of the students – Emily, J.J., Paullina, Romy, and Susan – who had participated in the pilot study. I explained the purpose of my doctoral research, and said that I would transcribe and analyze the videotaped lessons and initial interview data, and that I would like to interview them again to study motivation in music students and the strategies the teacher uses to motivate them. I informed them about their rights, emphasizing that I would conceal their identity and their affiliation with other music learning institutions and teachers by using a pseudonym of their choice. All participants agreed to continue in my study and signed a letter of consent. I also obtained parental consent for Emily, Paullina, and Romy because they were under the age of 18 at the time of data collection. I obtained an Ethics Certificate from McGill University Faculty of Education, which is included in Appendix A.

Introducing Esfir Dyachkov

I first met Esfir Dyachkov in 1986, shortly after she immigrated to Canada from Russia. I was fascinated by her energy, focus, and involvement in music and music education. We began to meet informally for long walks during which we had lengthy discussions on such issues as the differences in motivating music students in Canada and Russia, teaching piano to gifted preschoolers, and the impact of nature or nurture on a performance career. I discovered that Esfir's doctoral thesis examined music performance, pedagogy, and teaching music to students who are physically or cognitively-challenged. She has over 30 years of experience teaching piano at the conservatory and college levels and several of her students have gone on to pursue musical careers. Conversations with Esfir about her life as a musician in Russia linked me to the music cultures of Russia.

Esfir's colleagues consider her an expert in piano pedagogy and performance, topics she wrote about when she lived in Russia. Examples of her publications are *Piano Technique in Function of the Different Steps in the Formation of a Pianist* and *Methodology of Piano Teaching*. Esfir explained that her book *Esfir Dyachkov: Methodology in Piano Pedagogy* had been approved and ready for publication in 1978. When she applied to emigrate, the officials destroyed her preparatory work for her book and her manuscript along with all the articles that she had written (Personal conversation, 2002).

Esfir became a professor at the Moscow Conservatory and Academy in 1968, where she taught piano performance and piano pedagogy to music education and performance students. While in the Soviet Union, she performed as a soloist, traveled to East Bloc countries, worked at the Bolshoi Theater, and played with a number of orchestras, including the Moscow Goskonsert. Esfir established music programs in Ecuador and Europe. She was sent by the Russian government to help develop their music culture program in Ecuador. She taught in Italy for a year while waiting to immigrate to Montreal. Although she was offered a teaching position at the Vienna Conservatory, she based her decision to settle in Montreal on her son's music education so that he could continue his music studies with his former cello teacher from Russia, Yuli Turofsky, the conductor, cellist, and director of "I Musici de Montréal" chamber orchestra. Esfir believed that "with Yuli, he would develop [his abilities because] it's the Russian school he knows very well" (Esfir, Interview, 1998).

Esfir continues to teach piano in Montreal, and to accompany soloists such as Yuli Turofsky. As soon as she arrived from Russia in 1988, she began to teach at Lanaudiére's summer music program. She continues to teach there. In 1997, she established her own music camp outside of Montreal. Some of her

recordings include the Sonata for Viola and Piano by Shostakovich and concerts by the Trio Lanaudiére (piano, viola, and clarinet) during the Lanaudiére Festival.

<u>Introducing the Students</u>

At the time of the initial stage of the data collection, Emily, J.J., Paullina, Romy, and Susan ranged in age from 11 to 24. They were at different stages in their music education. Although I collected data from Paullina and Romy, who were 14 and 11 years old when I first interviewed them, I did not transcribe and analyze their data because the videotapes were either incomplete, inaudible, or of poor picture quality. In addition, Paullina returned to Russia to attend college before I completed the study. The following are brief descriptions of Emily, J.J., and Susan's musical backgrounds.

J.J.: J.J. was 24 years old when I first interviewed him. He was always cheerful, friendly, gregarious, and eager. He consistently arrived early for his lesson and usually observed the lesson that followed his. He often helped me pack up and carry the camera equipment.

J.J. is Vietnamese. He began formal piano lessons in Quebec City when he was nine. He continued his lessons after moving to Montreal with his family. He first studied piano with a teacher who also worked as an engineer during the day. Then, he switched to Micheline Rousseau (pseudonym), who taught him at École St. Sebastian (pseudonym). J.J. began lessons with Esfir while he was completing his degree in science. He was accepted into an "advanced [health] science program" in CEGEP (collège d'enseignent général et professionnel), a mandatory junior college for Quebec students who plan to go on to university. He received a Canadian University scholarship to study biochemistry at a major university in Montreal. Yet he chose not to pursue a medical career as

he originally intended and as his parents had planned for him. He began an undergraduate music program in a university in Montreal shortly after graduating with a Bachelor of Science. He took lessons from teachers at the university, as well as from Esfir while he was an undergraduate music student. He hoped one day to become a concert pianist.

Emily: Emily was eleven years old when I began my research. She was cheerful, outgoing, and inquisitive. When I introduced the video equipment during her lesson, she was eager to peer through the lens of the camera. Emily had many interests besides music. She talked about skiing, soccer, and camp. She was not shy to share that she intended to pass up the opportunity to attend Esfir's music camp.

Emily grew up in a social environment where she heard a lot of music. Her mother taught and played piano. She frequently went with her sister to her piano lessons and accompanied her father to his guitar lessons. Emily began formal piano lessons when she was five years old. Her first teachers were her mother and her cousin Joey. She began lessons with Esfir when she was eight.

Emily attended a private parochial day school in Montreal. Although her school did not have a "real" music program, the students were taught Hebrew and Yiddish songs. She is presently a student at a public high school, where she plays the oboe. Although Emily puts a lot of time and effort during the year into learning the piano, she also participates in many other activities throughout the year, such as being a member of the school band, skiing, and socializing with her friends.

Susan: Susan was 24 years old when I first met her in 1997. She seemed eager to learn, put a lot of energy into her playing, and took her work seriously.

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She was always ready to talk about her experiences as a music student. She invited me to all her recitals and proudly shared her accomplishments.

Susan began formal piano lessons when she was six years old. She also sang in school and church choirs, and participated in high-school musicals. She competed at local, provincial, and national music competitions. In addition, she attended music camps in Europe and the United States. Susan received a Bachelor of Music in piano performance and music education from a university on Montreal. She began lessons with Esfir just prior to her graduation.

Susan left Montreal in 1999 to pursue her goal as a concert pianist. Her original plan was to study with a teacher in Russia who was to prepare her for the International Chopin Competition. However, her plans changed and she went to France, where she studied with a well-known piano teacher, performed as a soloist and an accompanist, and participated in master classes. Susan returned to Montreal in 2001. Today, she teaches in her private music studio and at a conservatory of music in Montreal. She performs as a soloist, and continues to take piano lessons. However, she no longer studies with Esfir. In the next section, I describe the music studio, the context in which J.J., Emily, and Susan engaged in learning music with Esfir.

Entering the Research Site

Each time I entered Esfir's music studio, a place where her students arrive each week for their private lessons, I was transported into a setting that exuded an atmosphere of music wherever I looked. This narrative of my reflections of my visit to her studio when I met with her to sign the informed consent form provides the ambiance of her locale and the site for my inquiry. Figure 1 displays the arrangement of Esfir's studio.
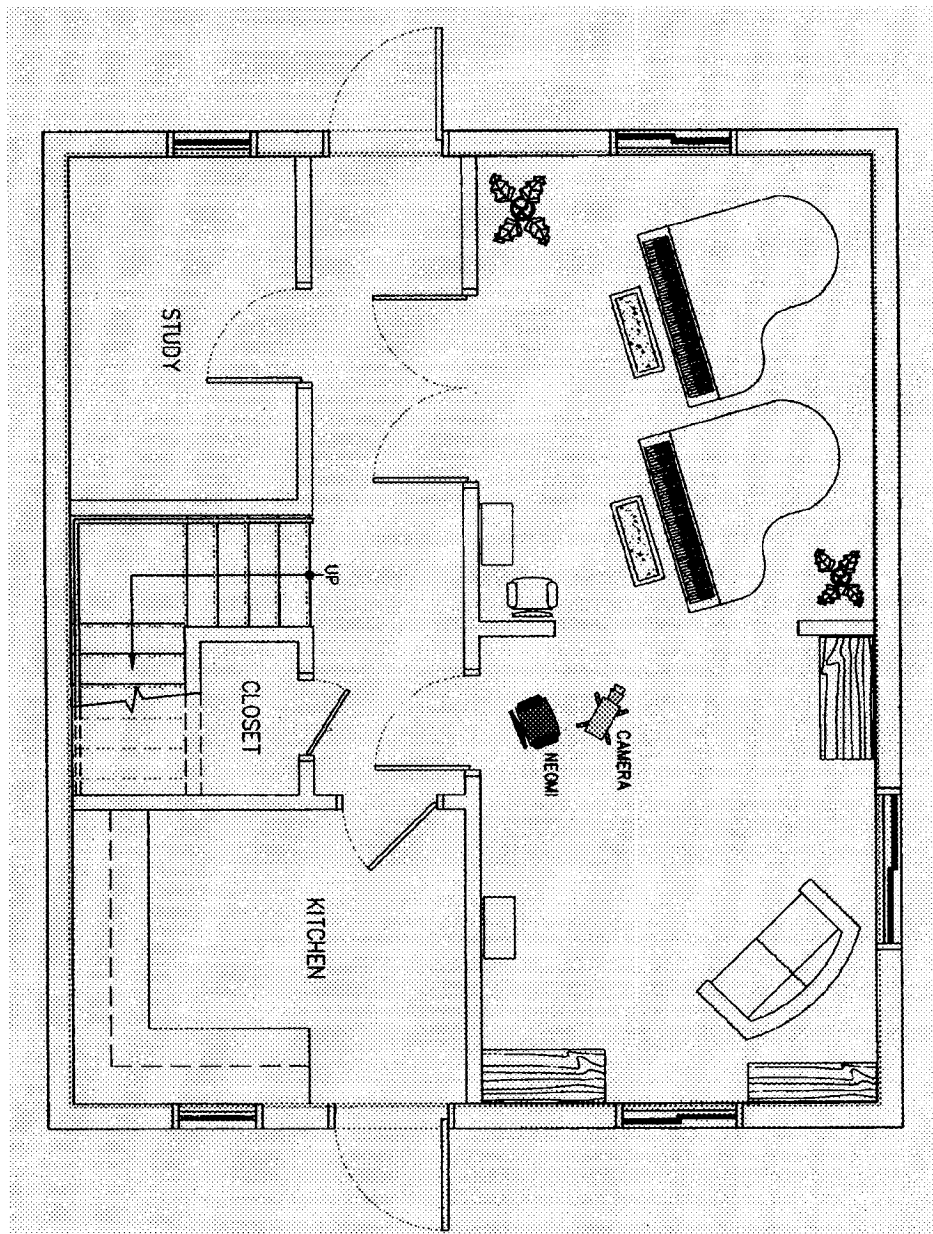
Figure 1 - Layout of Esfir's Music Studio

Locating Esfir's Music Studio

Esfir's house is located in a quiet residential neighborhood in

the western section of Montreal on a tree-lined street. As I enter

Esfir's house with my intent to explain my research project to her, she leads me to a large room at the front of the house that she uses as the music studio. The sunrays, which peek through the branches of the tree just outside the window of her studio, cast streams of light that bounce off the two black pianos, which sit side-by-side kitty corner to the window. One piano is next to the window and the second piano is beside it. My first impression is that two Yamaha baby grand pianos take up most of the floor space. I notice that there is not a lot of furniture in the room. There is a cabinet, a love seat, and several potted plants. Sheets of music are placed in neat files that fill the shelves of the cabinet. Several paintings cover the walls of the music studio and the adjoining room where her students wait for their lessons to begin. My eyes wander over to the photos of her family, friends, and colleagues that surround her pianos. I look at photos of the renowned Russian cellist Mstislav Rostropovich and composer Dmitri Shostakovich, whom Esfir knew personally. The small study at the front of the house across from the studio serves many purposes, a space to listen to her recordings, a music library, and an office. As I follow Esfir to the upper floor of her house, I peer into a room that doubles as a bedroom and a recording space. Before I leave, we enter the small kitchen at the back of the house where she signs the informed consent form; it is where we often discuss our views on music education over a cup of tea. The rooms in Esfir's house not only serve a musical function; they are her living quarters. It is where she sleeps, eats, and entertains her friends and colleagues. (Field notes, 1997)

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Data Collection Methods

I gathered data over a period of five years, from the fall of 1997 until August 2002. Table 2 presents a detailed inventory of the data collection. The first column indicates the types of data I collected (videotaped lessons, audiotapes interviews, field notes, email correspondences, and artifacts). In the second column, I describe my rationale for collecting the data. The third column shows the different phases of data collection, and the last column presents the duration of the data collection. The table illustrates that I collected data in four phases. It also shows that some of the data were collected for my Masters of Education project. These data sources provided me with an excellent background to follow up with my new research questions and to back up data collected from the retrospective interviews.

I also attended recitals and competitions, including student recitals at Esfir's studio. Whenever possible, I engaged in informal conversations with the students and Esfir, such as when they arrived at Esfir's house. For example, Susan used this opportunity on several occasions to inform me when she was to play for a small group of people and the location of the concert. I modified the data collection methods throughout, adapting them to the needs of the participants. For example, when I was unable to complete the retrospective interview with Esfir because of her busy teaching schedule, I gave her the last question ahead of time. Portraitists who "make the time together [with their participants] comfortable, respectful, and benign" build trust and ensure that they would be more comfortable in presenting a personal, sensory, and descriptive rendition of their experiences and their beliefs (Lightfoot-Lawrence, & Davis, 1997, p. 141). Renegotiating the method and timing of Esfir's interview gave her time to ponder the response and alleviated the stress of completing the interview before her pupil arrived. Providing the questions ahead of time gave Esfir the

opportunity to think about her experiences with her teachers, and how they influenced her teaching practices and pedagogical philosophy.

Table 2 – Inventory of the Data Collection

Data Types	Rationale	Phase	Time-Span
Written Memos (Field Notes and Reflective Memos)	To obtain an overview of what transpired during lessons, to decide whether to continue further with the study.	1 and 2	January 1997— December 5, 1998 Collected for MEd project.
Audio — Taped Piano Lessons	To make the participants comfortable with my presence, to decide whether the participants are suitable, and to gather information when the video camera did not work.	2	October 24, 1998 — December 3, 1998 Collected for MEd project.
Video — Taped Piano Lessons	To capture in depth details about what actually transpired during lessons, including the different strategies Esfir used to provide information to students; to obtain data not attainable on audiotapes.	2	October 31, 1998— December 5, 1998 Collected for MEd project.
Audio — Taped Interviews	To capture the participants impressions about why students continue piano lessons.	3	December 2, 1998 — December 25, 1998 Collected for MEd project.
Audio — Taped Retrospective Interviews	To discuss and clarify unresolved issues and questions.	4	August 2002 — September 4, 2002 Collected for PhD thesis
Written Documents	To obtain written documentation of participants' activities outside the music lesson, such as student recitals and competitions.	1, 2, 3, 4	January 1997 — April 2004 Collected for PhD thesis
Emails	To obtain written documentation of the participations' impressions, invitations to concerts, and feedback on analysis of data.	2, 3, 4	December 2, 1998 – April 2004 Collected for PhD thesis

<u>Data Types</u>

An important focus of a qualitative research is credibility. Credibility evolves from considering an array of interrelated factors and experiences. This requires collecting detailed information from several data sources, including a first-hand record of actions and behaviors, the researcher's own observations, and the participants' points of view of their experiences (Guba, 1981; Guba & Lincoln, 1998). To investigate the social, cultural, and psychological experiences that influence piano students to continue their musical studies, I collected data by videotaping piano lessons in the music studio, audiotaping interviews with the participants, writing field notes and reflective memos, and collecting email messages and written documents. My memos included field notes and reflective memos following lessons, musical events, and meetings with participants.

Videotapes provided a direct visual and audio record of what transpired during piano lessons with Esfir and the ways in which she communicated with her students. The videotapes captured Esfir's verbatim use of words, the sequence of her words and actions, how she managed the teaching space, and how she attended to J.J., Emily, and Susan's needs. They portrayed how Esfir used of speech, gestures, and humor and how her students typically reacted to her use of language. For example, a videotape of J.J.'s lesson portrayed Esfir's comments on his playing, such as *"Your elbow participated [when you were] uniting this movement that unites your hands,"* and *"Of course it is not like this"* (J.J., Transcribed Videotaped Lesson, 1998). It also showed that at the same time as she talked she moved her hands as if she were playing the notes incorrectly and that J.J. responded to her verbal and non-verbal feedback on his playing by laughing.

The audiotaped interviews with the participants yielded in-depth biographical data of my participants' experiences learning music and revealed

their values, beliefs, and emotions. The audiotaped interviews with Esfir

helped gather information about her music learning experiences in Russia and

her values and beliefs about teaching piano. The interviews with Emily, J.J.,

and Susan were useful in eliciting information regarding how their musical

experiences, particularly their experiences with Esfir, influenced them to

continue studying music. For example, Emily told me that Esfir's choice of

"pieces that really require a lot of feeling" was one of the reasons why she

continued taking piano lessons (Emily, Interview, 2002).

Reflective memos and field notes provided a first-hand record of my

observation of the participants, the events that took place during lessons,

and background information, such as the layout of the studio. Reflective

memos included my analysis of the activities that took place during lessons,

and the participants' response to my questions. Reflective memos also

included references to assumptions about and interpretations of concepts and

relationships between concepts as illustrated in the next excerpt.

> I notice that Esfir is directing Emily and that Emily seems to
> constantly respond to her instructions by playing the piano or by
> writing comments in her homework book. Although the lesson
> was primarily teacher-directed, Emily asked many questions and
> offered her opinion on how to phrase the passage that she was
> having difficulty playing. (Reflective memo, 1998)

Field notes were mainly observational. They helped me see and reflect

on details of the activities and the dialogue that I heard during lessons and to

retrieve what I could not remember, such as the names of the pieces that were

played and what the students did before their lessons began. Field notes also

acted as a cross-check of events that were captured on the videotapes. The next example is a field note I wrote during Susan's lesson. I jotted down the name of the piece she was working on, the people present during the lesson, and the general topics Esfir covered:

"A good Soldier"

Susan is early for her lesson. She plays a Chopin Étude. When she stops, Esfir and a visiting professor enter the room. They speak in Russian for a length of time. I wonder how Susan feels as they talk. I find it disconcerting not understanding what they are saying. When her colleague leaves, Esfir reviews what her colleague said. She begins by praising Susan's facility in playing through her repertoire and her musicality. She tells Susan that she is a "good soldier." Then she highlights the areas that need more work and how she should work. At the top of the list is working on strategies for practicing more efficiently and how to play with more emotion. Esfir does most of the talking and playing. Sometimes she sings. Susan usually responded obediently to Esfir's instructions. Esfir tries to get Susan to practice more effectively by instructing her to think before she plays and to write out a plan of action. (Field notes, 1998)

Written documents provided information about the types of activities the students were participating in outside the lesson. Documents included programs from students' concerts and competitions, information about music programs, the Quebec Music Teacher's Association (QMTA) newsletter, and information about Esfir's music camp. For example, the brochure describing the program

Email correspondences between the students and me were another source of insight. For example, J.J.'s email concerning his interpretation of my analysis of his data let me see the data in a new way. Figure 2 displays some of his comments on my interpretations.

Hello Neomi,

Here are my comments on your Chapter 4 (case studies), page 1 starts on first page of chapter on the copy I got:

✓ p.8, interview transcript: "...where my foggy music idea..." – that is the order of words I actually meant.

✓ p.9, int. transcript: "...equation OR some biochemical pathway..." (I am sure of that)

✓ p. 10, 1ˢᵗ line: ...learning about orchestral music: but NOT restricted to it, but rather included among other types of music as well, especially jazz...

p. 12: the famous passage we talked about on the phone.

"...describe his aesthetic response.": the "he" does not necessarily mean me. The paragraph is essentially an "impressionistic" description of my aesthetic response to the music.

p.13: "...his reference to he and not I" I didn't think of the contrast of listening/performing when I wrote it. And certainly did not intend that effect. I did write something about a Rachmaninov prelude I played last year – it has the same style... but I didn't it was good enough to be "given out".

"Perhaps we can read... as a metaphor..." I didn't think of that. Somebody (one of Esfir's friends, Pierre) told me that music is like a cancer. I was about to go for vacations to the Maritimes in January. I've always had a fascination for the ocean – its beauty and danger. Its timelessness. Only music can describe something like that. So hence that spontaneous literary improvisation.

p.14: "...ability to master octaves" The physical pleasure involved is/should be generalized over the technical aspect of piano playing in general. It's not restricted to being able to play octaves!

p.18: "Because he was able to meet their high expectations, ...may have set the stage for his desire to focus on his music studies." Actually I can say that I did it even though everybody else told me it'd be a dead-end financially/job-wise. Being the idealistic lad I was, I didn't listen to anybody but myself. It was certainly not to "meet their expectations", or because I met their expectations. Their expectations was for me to become a medical doctor, that's it, that's all. Of course today my views are a lot "nuanced" by present and past experiences, but today is today, and five years ago is back then!

p.18, int. transcript: "Now it's SHIFTING a lot, shaking because of things".

Figure 2 — Email Correspondence – J.J.'s Comments on my Interpretations

The combination of videotapes, interviewing, field notes, memos, and email messages yielded data concerning piano students' decisions to continue their music studies and ensured that the goal of a holistic study could be met. Multiple data collection tools portrayed different views of the research issues and provided a means for crosschecking interpretations. Multiple data sources contributed to an understanding of each participant's individual perceptions. Using multiple data sources allowed me to acquire and interpret information about how Esfir used language. The videotapes revealed that Esfir primarily used instructions during Susan's lesson. My field notes provided opportunities to describe participants' actions, reactions, and behaviors, as for example Susan's eagerness and readiness to follow Esfir's instructions. Interview allowed me to confirm my observations and assumptions. For example, Susan explained how Esfir's instructions pushed her forward. However, the second interview exposed that Esfir's heavy use of instructions rather than explanations, and her tendency to push Susan to her limits, proved to be too stressful for her. Collecting data over a five-year period, situating my inquiry geographically in a music lesson context, and including what Esfir focused on and how she communicated with Susan I hope gives readers a sense of her piano lesson experiences with Esfir.

Phases and Time-span of Data Collection

Phase 1: The purpose of my visits to Esfir's music studio from January 1997 to October 1998 was to decide whether I would conduct a pilot study on how motivation contributes to musicians' success for my master's project. I introduced myself to each student, and explained why I was there. I observed many lessons, including those of J.J., Emily, and Susan. I usually sat in the room adjacent to the piano studio with a note pad placed on my lap, quietly writing what I saw and heard during the piano lessons. I commented on the

general atmosphere of the lesson, student-teacher interactions –verbal and non-verbal – and the students' responses to Esfir's explanations and demonstrations on the piano. I flagged topics for further investigation, such as why Esfir paid little attention to working on the notes or fingering, whether this was her usual practice, or why she went out of the music room and left her students to work on their own. The next example from my field notes is an example of what I wrote and noted in my initial observations of J.J.'s lesson:

> *J.J. is in his twenties. He arrives before his lesson begins. As soon as his lesson begins, he tells Esfir that he wants to work on scales, chords, and arpeggios. Esfir works closely with J.J. Esfir rarely utters negative statements. Overall, her assessment of J.J.'s playing ranges from "not bad" to "good idea" to "very good." She compliments his playing and his improvement. She discusses repertoire for the Canadian Music Competition. She also focuses on explaining the technicalities of moving his fingers and the importance of listening to the sounds as he plays his scales. She suggests that he close his eyes so that he can listen more closely to the sounds. She also shows him how to place his fingers on the keys. Esfir plays through the music and cautions J.J. to remember what she did. She also discusses how J.J. can deal with emotional stress, set goals, and the technique of phrasing and articulation. J.J. writes down what she says.* (Field notes, 1997)

During this initial stage of data collection, the field notes were broadly focused on portraying information about who the participants were, such as their age, the general environment of the lesson, and the activities of the lesson.

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During the next phase of data collection, I continued to write field notes of my observation. I also videotaped and audiotaped the lessons, wrote reflective memos after each lesson, and collected written documents, such as the concert program.

Phase 2: When I returned to Esfir's studio in the fall of 1998, my research focused on exploring how social, cultural, and psychological experiences contribute to promising piano students' decision to study piano. I visited Esfir's studio several times a week over a period of 9 weeks. I tailored the schedule of my visits to the availability and needs of Esfir and her students. I often attended several lessons on the same day, observing what the students did before and after their lessons.

I videotaped or audiotaped 23 piano lessons from October to December 1998. The videotapes varied between 45 to 90 minutes in length and captured Esfir and her students' actions, gestures, speech, silences, humor, and little nuances. I usually arrived early and prepared my recording equipment in the adjoining room. I positioned the camera equipment on a tripod in the same spot each time, where I could film the lesson from a distance without interfering with how Esfir used the instructional space. I videotaped Esfir and her students' side and front view. Figure 3 shows how I positioned the camera and myself within Esfir's music studio. The camera equipment is highlighted in yellow and where I sat in red. Photo 1 shows a digital photo of the music studio.
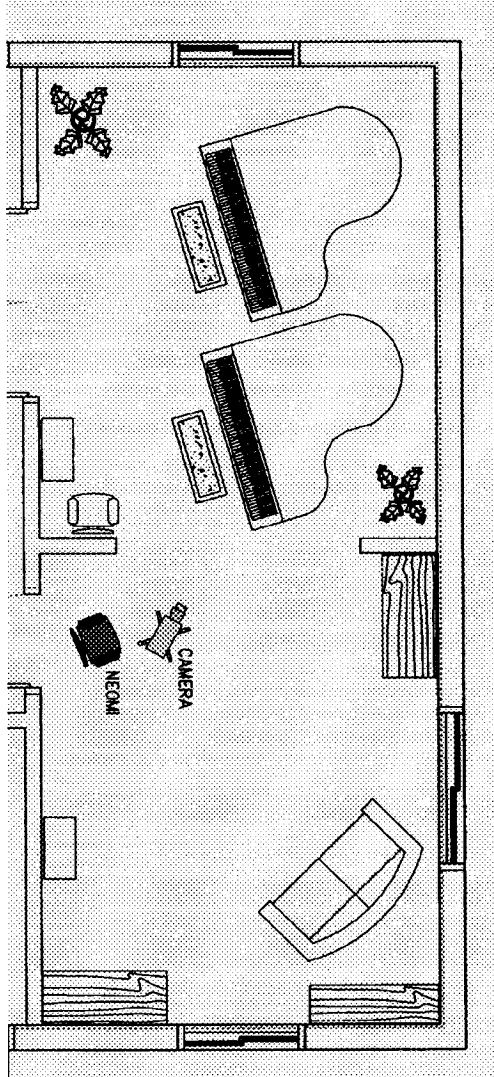
Figure 3 – Positioning the Camera and myself within Esfir's Music Studio

Photo 1 – Capturing a View of Esfir at the Piano in her Music Studio

NOV. 13 1998
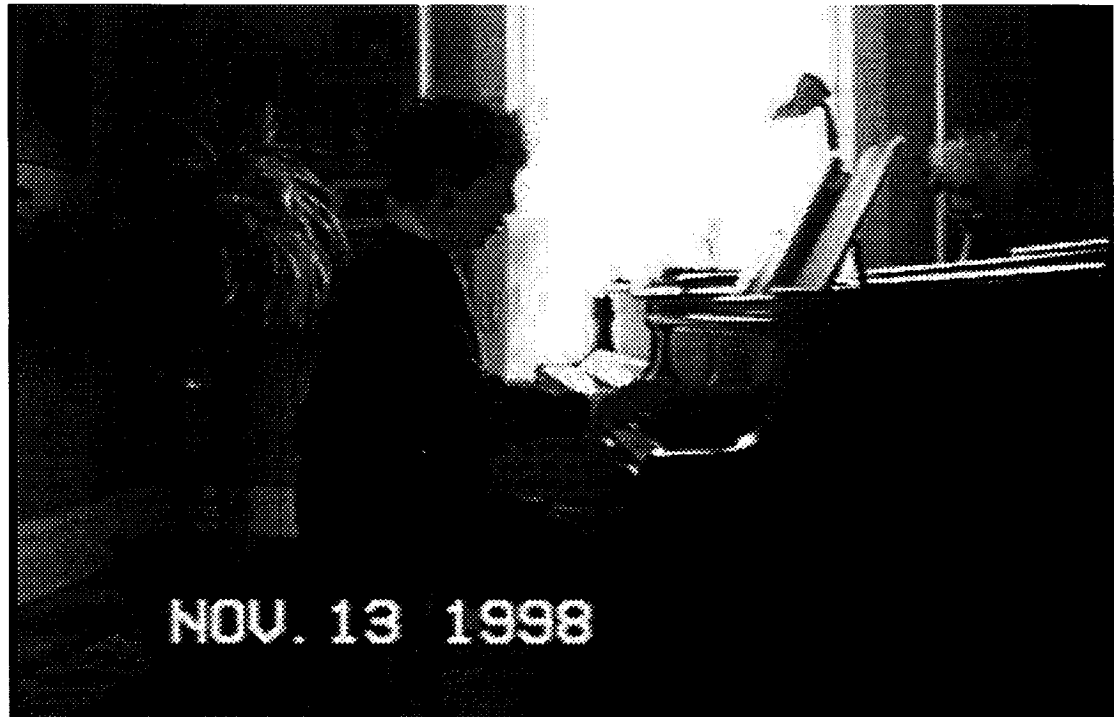
Before I started the video recorder, I reassured the students that I was not there to judge their playing. I also let them look through the camera's viewfinder if they wished to do so. After one of his lessons, J.J. told me that he stopped thinking about my presence once the lesson began. I left it up to Esfir to let me know when I could videotape and what I could include. Videotaping was not a problem, except on two occasions. For example, I turned off the camera and recorded what transpired in my notebook when Esfir had a lengthy discussion with Emily about why she was not practicing. Esfir also requested that I stop filming after Susan played through her repertoire for Esfir's colleague, because their conversation was in Russian and because she wanted her colleague to feel comfortable in assessing Susan's progress. As soon as the visitor left, I resumed

videotaping.

As I sat next to the camera, I continued to write my personal observations and my insights in my notebook. Writing field notes was especially useful for ensuring a visible trace of what was not visible on the videotapes and noting what the students and Esfir did or said before I turned on the camera. For example, when Esfir left the room, Emily informed me that she practiced without her mother's guidance during the week. Her manner seemed to imply that she was proud of her accomplishment. I recorded this anecdote in my notebook as it seemed to be evidence of her ability to self-regulate her learning. I also wrote comments on how Esfir conveyed information, ideas, theories, and her philosophy to her students, as well as where she physically positioned herself and how students responded to her instructions and explanations. My field notes included more details whenever I had technical difficulties with the camera. I include the next excerpt of my observations of Susan's lesson when the camera was not working:

> The camera is not working properly. As usual, Susan is early for her lesson. Susan plays a Chopin's étude. Esfir comments on her improvement. She also points out what needs improvement. She tells Susan to think about producing a romantic sound. Esfir instructs Susan think about the contrast between a calm and dramatic sound. She uses the metaphors of a "nice sea" and a "storm". Esfir comments on Susan's improvement after she replays this section. Then Esfir discusses the tone color. (Field notes, 1998)

Phase 3: I began the next phase of data collection just prior to the 1998

Christmas recital. I conducted the first of two sets of interviews. I met individually with each student and with Esfir at mutually convenient times and locations. I used open-ended, semi-structured, face-to-face, and one-on-one interviews with Esfir, Emily, J.J., and Susan. I encouraged each person to talk freely about his or her music learning experiences and listened attentively so that I could respond or pose the next question. I questioned each person about their backgrounds, their expectations, and goals. I asked the students about their interpretations of what transpires during piano lessons. I asked why they continue studying piano. I did not interview parents because I was primarily interested in examining what transpired during piano lessons and how experiences with their piano teacher influenced piano students' decisions to continue their music studies.

The interview questions varied depending on the information and issues that emerged. Some of the interview questions, such as what was their earliest involvement in a musical activity, and when they began formal music lessons, were adapted from those posed by Sloboda and Howe (1991) to young performance students who attended Chethams School. Chethams School is a special music school in England for students who show exceptional talent. Several questions deriving from my own experiences teaching music and observations of other music teachers centered on how a piano teacher's use of language influences a student's desire to learn music. Other questions came out of lengthy discussions I had with Esfir as we walked through the streets of Montreal or sat at her kitchen table, such as the effect that aesthetic qualities of the music has on a student's desire to play piano or how playing piano develops a student's self-esteem, even for those who have cerebral palsy. These conversations prompted me to ask students how Esfir developed their musical ability and the impact of her teaching strategies on their decision to continue.

I began by asking the students specific questions about their level of education, when they began music lessons, and when they started lessons with Esfir. For example, J.J. and Susan told me that when they first met her they were 21 and had completed undergraduate degrees, J.J. in biochemistry and Susan in music. Emily was in elementary school. J.J. was nine when he began formal piano lessons, Emily was five, and Susan six. I invited J.J., Emily, and Susan to talk about why they chose to continue their piano lessons. I asked them to explain what or who influenced them to play piano, how they appraised their own playing ability, what happened during the lesson with Esfir, how they felt about their lessons with Esfir, why they continued to study piano with Esfir, and how they felt when they played piano. I asked Esfir to tell me about her music education and her philosophical approach on teaching promising students. A list of the first set of interview questions to the students is found in Appendix B and to Esfir in Appendix C.

Shortly after I completed the first interview, students started to email me messages. Emails provided additional data, which were either spontaneous or consisted of a request from me to clarify information. Email topics included information about upcoming concerts, personal mission statements, thoughts about playing piano, and comments on my analysis of the data. I filed all email messages in hard copy under each student's name, as illustrated in this excerpt.

> The gig last Thursday went amazing. We literally tore down the
> house. The place was packed (~60 people). By the last song of
> the second set, the audience was cheering so loud I could hardly
> hear myself playing anymore! It was a great night. We are booked
> again to play at the same place on Dec. 4 . . . from what I feel,
> it might just get to be a regular monthly performance! We play

again tomorrow in a high school (performance followed by a Q & A

period). On the 16th I play at Esfir's (accompanying a student), the

17th with my band, and then the 25th at Susan's place for a few

miniatures. Things are looking good . . . and busy!!! (J.J., email

correspondence, November 2, 2003)

Phase 4: After reading through my field notes and reviewing the

videotapes, I met with each of the three students and Esfir once again in the

fall of 2002. I also wrote up reflective memos following each visit. We viewed

and reviewed the transcriptions of videotapes. I also conducted retrospective

interviews to clarify unresolved issues. I also wrote up reflective memos

following each visit. The interviews were particularly important because they

provided an opportunity to clarify anything I did not understand and filled in

missing information. For example, I learned why Esfir left the room and how the

students felt about this strategy. A list of the questions posed to the students can

be found in Appendix D and to Esfir in Appendix E.

Summary

In this chapter, I explained the rational for using a qualitative, interpretive

portraiture approach and my role as a researcher. I introduced the participants

and described my initial visit to Esfir's music studio. I described the types of data

I collected, how I collected them, the rationales for collecting the data, and the

four phases of data collection. In the next chapter, I describe how I analyzed the

videotaped lessons and interview data.

CHAPTER FIVE

Data Analysis

In this chapter, I explain the criteria I used for selecting the data for analysis, the transcription procedures, and the analytic procedures. Then I explain how I interpreted the themes and placed them into categories. The main data sources were the videotaped lesson transcripts and the initial interview transcripts. Before analyzing data on the videotape, I selected videotapes and transcribed the verbal and non-verbal utterances. I transcribed and analyzed all the interview data.

My analysis of the data was an emergent, recursive process. I reviewed my initial impressions and listed tentative categories. I identified, organized, and reorganized the recurring notions and themes that flowed throughout each data set into similar and different chunks of meaning. Once I identified the themes, I placed each theme on an index card and labeled each card according to the name of the participant, date, data set, and particular category. I also included units of analysis from the data and the line number for each unit of analysis for easy retrieval. Figure 4 is an example of an analytic theme index card. On this card, I listed in consecutive order that I interviewed Emily and that the date of the interview was December, 11, 1998. Next, I documented the theme (how piano students develop musical competency) and the category of her comments (strategies for gaining musical competency). On the next line, I recorded examples from the text that referred to strategies that are useful for gaining musical competency which are presented in italics and placed next to the line number.

```
┌─────────────────────────────────────────────────────┐
│ Interview with Emily                                │
│ Date – December 11, 1998                            │
│ Theme - Developing Musical Competency               │
│ Category – Strategies for gaining musical competency │
│                                                     │
│              Summary of Emily's Comments            │
│ 48 – Have to practice                               │
│ 54 – Take two bars                                  │
│ 58 – I practice one hour a day                      │
│ 60 – I play through the piece                       │
│ 62 – Practice the sounds                            │
│ 64 – Practice a lot                                 │
│ 70 – You need to be serious                         │
│ 72 – I have to practice a little bit more           │
│ 72 – Work half hour on easy pieces                  │
│ 74 – Practice if there is a piano                   │
│ 86 – If I work hard, I'll get it right              │
│ 96 – Lesson twice a week                            │
│ 96 – Practice one hour a day                        │
│ 96 – Lessons more frequently                        │
│ 96 – Learn pieces similarly to teacher              │
│ 96 – Learn left hand and then right hand            │
│ 96 – Practice in sections                           │
└─────────────────────────────────────────────────────┘
```

Figure 4 – An Example of an Analytic Theme Index Card

Accountability, which is an important aspect of qualitative research, arises from the ability to obtain multiple layers of information. In addition to applying cross-data analysis, I obtained consensus by including pertinent references from the participants and peers who reviewed my analysis of the data. My familiarity with the register of the lesson and my experiences working in therapeutic settings were crucial when analyzing what Esfir said and did during piano lessons, the topics she focused on, and how Emily, J.J., and Susan responded to their experiences with Esfir. I also invited the participants to review their videotapes and comment on my selection and transcription of videotape data. I asked them to provide feedback on my interpretations of the videotaped lessons

and the audiotaped interviews. For example, J.J. clarified that his references to learning music pertained not only to learning orchestral repertoire; they referred to "*other types of music as well, especially jazz*" (J.J., Email, 2003). This process broadened my understanding of J.J.'s interests.

Nancy, a knowledgeable and experienced piano teacher, checked for inconsistencies in the analysis, providing me with additional feedback about my interpretations, and ruling out any misinterpretations. I also shared my interpretations with a colleague who had done research in the sciences, but who was also a former student of Esfir. She supported my choice of categories and themes.

Analyzing the Videotape Transcripts

My intention in analyzing the videotape transcripts was to examine what Esfir said and did during the lessons that may have inspired her students Emily, J.J., and Susan to continue their musical studies. Before coding the transcripts, I reviewed my field notes, reflective memos, and email messages to ensure that I did not miss any important information. I selected and transcribed the videotape data. I coded and classified the data. For example, rereading that Esfir spoke to Paullina in Russian reminded me of the importance of teaching in a language that was familiar to both the student and the teacher and that I needed to investigate how Esfir used language to familiarize students with the traditional practices musicians use to read, write, listen to, and play music. I describe the process of selecting, transcribing, coding, and classifying the videotape data, and documenting the findings in detail in the next sections.

Videotape Selection

I collected nine videotapes in total. The selection of the videotapes

was not random. I began by viewing nine videotapes of Emily, J.J., Paullina, Romy, and Susan's lessons. Simultaneously, I jotted down my insights and reflections in my notebook, as for example how I thought Esfir's manner of teaching reflected Vygotsky's perspective on self-regulation. For example, while viewing J.J.'s videotapes, I noted that although Esfir directed J.J. to follow her instructions, she also set the tone for him to think and work on his own learning, emphasizing that *"it's important that you insist on that"* (J.J., VTL, 1998). Next, I created a chart where I noted the tape number, date, and length of the taping, the names of the participants, and a summary of my reflections on the fundamental characteristics of the lesson. For example, I commented on the manner in which Esfir conveyed and directed information to her students, such as making up stories. Table 3 displays the Inventory of the Videotapes. I highlighted in yellow and placed a star (*) next to the videos I chose to transcribe. The students' words are in italics.

Table 3 - Videotape Inventory Chart

Tape Number and Date	Students	Length	Fundamental Characteristics
Number 1 - October 31, 1998	Romy	30 minutes	**Strategies for working on your own:** Uses metaphors as a means to channel strategies. Videotape too dark.
	Romy and Emily	15 minutes	**Community of practice:** Establishes a community of practice (social). Videotape too dark.
	Emily	90 minutes	**Strategies for learning a new piece:** References to music culture; metaphors; empowering the student; task orientation; affect. Videotape too dark.
Number 2 - November 5, 1998	J.J.	65 minutes	**Tapping into the Student:** Developing his ZPD; creating student –teacher relationships. Tape dark
	Paullina	45 minutes	
Number 3 - November 6, 1998	Susan	11 minutes	Video taping defective
	J.J.	64 minutes	**Thinking psychologically:** Also creates a plan of action; Video tape too dark
	Paullina	15 minutes	**Community of practice:** Theory lesson with another student. Videotape too dark.
Number 4 - November 7, 1998	Romy	30 minutes	*Instructions for keep:* Also establishes a relationship; Incomplete – part of the lesson is not on the tape.
	Emily*	60 minutes	*Getting over the hump:* Uses metaphors as a tool for leading Emily to ZPD.
Number 5 - November 13, 1998	Esfir	8 minutes	**Practicing**
	Susan*	45 minutes	*Using your emotion:* Focus on emotion; Fewer propositions than proposals
	Romy	30 minutes	*Making up stories:* Using metaphors; I arrived after the lesson started
	Emily	14 minutes	**Working on your own:** Esfir altered her strategy when Zena arrived – Flexible teaching
	Emily and Paullina	2 minutes	**Develops a community of practice**
Number 6 - November 13, 1998	Emily and Paullina	50 minutes	**Develops a community of practice**
	Paullina	10 minutes	**Working on your own:** Incomplete tape
	J.J.	55 minutes	*Organizing yourself*
Number 7 - November 27, 1998	Susan	56 minutes	**Defective tape**
	J.J. *	73 minutes	*Instructions for keep:* Use of proposals, propositions, appraisals; creates strategies for the rest of your life
Number 8 - December 4, 1998	J.J.	50 minutes	*Getting personal*
	Susan	27 minutes	**Appraisals:** A long portion of the lesson was not videotaped because Susan played through her repertoire as Esfir and I watched and listened.
Number 9 - December 5, 1998	Paullina	30 minutes	**Working on your own:** Appraises Paullina's effort and ability. Provides strategies for working on her own and within her ZPD (Vygotsky). She referred to feelings and used imagery. Several exchanges were made in Russian.

After carefully re-examining the videotapes and my reflective memos, I selected three videotapes for fine-grained analysis when they met six criteria:

The picture was clear

The participants' voices were audible

The taping commenced at the beginning of the lesson

There were no long breaks in the taping

There were no technical interruptions

The participants spoke in English or French, and not in Russian

In addition to these six criteria, I highlighted lesson events for further analysis. The following details that caught my attention for in-depth analysis included the manner in which Esfir created a music community atmosphere, structured the tasks, provided students with different strategies on how to organize their own practicing, got her students to work on their own. In addition, I noted how she developed a personal relationship with her students, worked with the aesthetic aspects of the music, dealt with her students at an emotional level, gave instructions for life-long learning, and made up stories.

Three videotapes met all the criteria: Emily's November 7th, J.J.'s November 27th, and Susan's November 13th lessons. I transcribed J.J.'s videotaped lesson (November 27, 1998) because it was a good example of how Esfir typically dialogued with her students. I chose to transcribe Emily's lesson (November 7, 1998) because Esfir presented her with a plan of how to manage her own practicing even when the music was difficult. During Susan's lesson (November 13, 1998), Esfir referred to the topic of emotions.

Videotape Transcription

I adopted a set of transcription conventions and guidelines to bring order to the connections and relationships between the data and the research

questions. Choosing conventions and guidelines ensured that there was "consistency of style, format, and vocabulary across transcripts" (Russell, 1995, p. 123). As Ochs (1979) claimed, symbols are "the way in which behavior can be symbolized within a transcript" (p. 61). The following set of symbols, typefaces, and numbering produced transcribed texts that read like scripts. Table 4 shows the symbols and typefaces I used. The categories, terminology, and layout of the transcribed videotaped lesson texts were adapted from those by Ochs (1979, pp. 63 – 66), and by Russell (1995, p. 125) who created them from Bracewell and Breuleux (1993). The examples are from Emily's transcript of November 7, 1998.

The symbols and typefaces set apart language that was used, overlapping discourse between and among the participants, my descriptions and observations, my explanation of terms and meanings, and foreign terminology. The speaker's use of language also included exchanges which were spoken or sung in a louder than normal volume, longer than normal speaking pause, as well as interrupted or unfinished words and phrases.

Table 4 – Video Transcription Symbols and Typefaces

Mark	Significance	Examples
.	Period: Indicates utterances having normal falling intonation, such as in a declarative sentence.	This is not what is written here.
,	Comma: Indicates a normal speaking pause.	I am trying to show, to help you know what to do during practice.
?	1 question mark: Denotes a question.	What is written here?
!	Exclamation mark: Indicates a rising intonation, such as in a declarative sentence.	Do it!
(. . . .)	4 dots in a bracket: Indicates a pause.	Okay, try it (. . . .) once.
___.	Underscore followed by a period or comma: Indicates that the speaker has revised or failed to complete an utterance.	And the further you go, uh . . . . it becomes to be already ___.
(???)	3 question marks in parentheses: Signifies that the transcriber could not hear the speaker's words.	Something strong here, strong feeling (???).
(Descriptive)	Text in round brackets: Signifies that the text describes events.	(Esfir moves her arms in a sweeping motion)
//	2 forward slashes placed between overlapping or simultaneous channels of communication: Indicates simultaneous or overlapping exchange of communication.	Es - *PLAY*// *TALK*
[ ]	Square bracket placed at the beginning and end of more than one overlapping or simultaneous channel of communication: Indicates more than one simultaneous or overlapping vocal and non-vocal exchange of communication between 2 people.	[* Es [*TALK* Em*] *PLAY*]
Language	Bracketing asterisks: Indicates channel of communication.	*TALK, *SING*, *PLAY*, *GESTURE*, *LAUGH*, *WRITE*
Foreign Term	Text in italics: Denotes standard but foreign term.	Yeah *forte*.
"Singing"	Text in bold and in quotations: Denotes a close approximation to a non-verbal utterance such as singing.	**"La . . Ti . . Di . . La . . La"**
*	Asterisks: Denotes the person making the utterance.	Em Es *

I also created a table, which I called the Transcribed Videotape Lessons (VTL), to present a visual picture of what transpired during a given lesson. I organized the layout of the manuscripts under nine headings. Table 5 below

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shows how I laid out the column headings line, student, Esfir, verbal script, non-verbal script, mode, function, theme, and comments on the Table of Transcribed Videotape Lessons.

Table 5 – Layout of the Transcribed Videotape Lessons

Line	Student	Esfir	Verbal Script	Non-verbal Script	Mode	Function	Theme	Comments

The line numbering of the sentences or phrases on the manuscript evolved concurrently with the transcription and analysis of the data. I assigned a new line number for each new utterance or action, a change of speaker, parallel or overlapping utterances and actions, a change in the function of the utterance, the use of terminology like "Okay" and "Good", silences, and incomplete sentences and statements. Table 6 provides examples of the placement of the numbering on the transcripts and my rationale for selecting these examples. The examples are from Emily's lesson (November 7, 1998). In this table, I listed the line number according to the name of the student (Emily), Esfir, verbal script, non-verbal script, mode, function, theme, and comments, with exemplars from the transcripts. I used different color to exemplify how I used the different conventions. For example, red highlighted that the script changed from verbal to non-verbal, yellow showed that various modes of communication were used at the same time, blue indicated that the speaker switched from uttering a proposals to uttering a proposition, and so on.

Table 6 – Numbering on the Transcribed Videotaped Lesson Transcripts

Line Number	Em	Es	Verbal script	Non-verbal Script	Mode	Function	Comments
9		*	Yeah, *forte*! And _____.		*TALK*	A	Change from verbal to non-verbal.
10		*		(Es plays through the passage)	*PLAY*		
23	[*			(Em plays through the passage)	[*PLAY*//		Simultaneous *PLAY*, *SING*, and *TALK*.
		*]	"Tra . . Ah . . Ah . . Do . . Si . .Do"		//*SING*]		
24		*	Okay.		*TALK*		
60		*	I changed that. I changed that because [it is] the end of the legato.	(Moves arms in the shape of a slur)	*TALK*// *GESTURE*	Pr	Change of function from a Proposition to a Proposal.
61		*	Listen carefully.		*TALK*	P	
64	*		I, I understand what you are talking about. But, I don't get the actual thing you are talking about.		*TALK*		Change of speaker.
65		*	You are, you are trying to do so, to follow my actual thoughts.		*TALK*	A	
102		*	Good		*TALK*		Terminology.
103		*	So, that's why I didn't change anything.		*TALK*	Pr	
283		*	This is _____.		*TALK*		Incomplete sentence.
284		*	The next phrase starts with *"fa"*, but differently.		*TALK*	Pr	

I simultaneously placed the verbal and non-verbal script for each sequential turn into separate columns on the manuscript page to smoothly access prior, subsequent, overlapping and parallel utterances and actions as they occurred, to distinguish one event from the other, and to display the temporal and sequential relationship between verbal utterances and actions. I used letters for each participant, (Em for Emily, Es for Esfir, and so forth) to accelerate the process. The following is an actual section from a page from Emily's lesson. Table 7 shows the verbal and non-verbal script and who set off the utterance or action.

Table 7 – Placement of Verbal or Non-verbal Script on the Transcripts

Em	Es	Verbal Script	Non-verbal Script
	*	Start with three and one.	
	*	"Tra .. Ah .. Ah .. Do .. Si .. Do"	(Es plays through the passage.)
	*	Do something more.	(Es looks at Em's hand position.)
*			(Em plays 2 notes.)

As the layout indicates, I positioned Emily (**Em**) and Esfir (**Es**) on the same line, in the separate columns, with Emily's name in the column to the left of Esfir's name. I added separate columns on the same line of the transcript to the right of Esfir's name to designate whether the communication exchanged between the Esfir and Emily was verbal (talking, singing) or non-verbal (playing the piano, making gestures). I placed an asterisk (*) in the column under the

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initiator of the verbal or non-verbal transaction and typed in what was said or done in the appropriate box. I repeated this process, moving down to the next line for each subsequent transaction, creating a top to bottom transcription layout until I catalogued all transactions. This protocol provided an orderly visual representation of the constant flow of exchange between Esfir and her student.

<u>Coding and Classifying Videotape Transcripts</u>

Selecting the different units of meaning was a recursive, ongoing process. I derived a generic set of codes by cataloguing what Esfir actually said and did during piano lessons. I adapted the categories of Register and its three variables, Tenor, Field, and Mode proposed by Halliday (1978) and used by Russell (1995) and Maguire (1989) to portray the impact of the socially embedded features of the private piano lesson setting. According to Halliday (1978), a "member of a culture typically associates with a situation type" and uses the whole context of the situation to select meaning (p. 25). I did not analyze incomplete sentences unless the words or actions completed previous statements, students' responses, sections where Esfir looked at the music, chitchat about everyday events, and laughter. I analyzed complete sentence, or sentences that were completed with overlapping or simultaneous utterances and actions. To code and classify how Esfir and her students exchanged information during the lessons, I separated all the utterances and actions into verbal and non-verbal groupings according to the various modes of communication. Esfir and her students used five different Modes of Communication – ***TALK***, ***SING***, ***PLAY***, ***GESTURE***, and ***WRITE***. I used ***TALK*** and ***SING*** to signal that vocal means were used to exchange information. More specifically, ***TALK*** indicated that at least one person posed questions, made remarks or explanations, gave instructions, made appraisals, or responded to another

person's words, actions or sounds. *SING* denoted that the singer used musical sounds or syllables to model musical concepts, such as phrasing or rhythm. *PLAY*, *GESTURE*, and *WRITE* represented the non-verbal modes of communication. *PLAY* symbolized the different types of musical actions performed on the piano that were used to demonstrate a desired outcome or strategy, to reinforce a skill that had previously been explained or talked about, or to create a direct copy of another person's playing. *GESTURE* indicated that an intentional body movement, motion, or action was used to provide information about a musical idea, such as the style of playing or the contour of the music. *WRITE* indicated that Esfir used a form of written symbols to convey information to her student. *TALK*, *SING*, *PLAY*, *GESTURE*, and *WRITE* were used singly, simultaneously, or in an overlapping sequence. For example, as Esfir sang, she typically played or moved her body at the same time. I placed this information in the cell to the right of the verbal and non-verbal script. Table 8 shows examples of *TALK*, *SING*, *PLAY*, *GESTURE*, and *WRITE*, as well as the context of their use. The examples are from J.J.'s transcribed videotaped lesson (November 27, 1998).

Table 8 – Placement of the Mode of Communication on the Transcripts

Line Number	J.J.	Es	Verbal script	Non-verbal Script	Mode
14K		*	Pay attention to the end of the bar.		*TALK*
24a		*		(Es demonstrates how to play through the passage.)	*PLAY*
713		*		"Ya .. Pam .. Pa . . Bum ... Ti ... Ra . . Ra"	*SING*
15		*		(Esfir moves arms in circular motion.)	*GESTURE*
27		*	I notice that ___,	(Esfir plays one note, and then circles the note on the music sheet.)	*WRITE*//*TALK* //*PLAY*

I also coded and classified the function of Esfir's utterances according to the following three functional categories – *Proposals*, *Propositions*, and *Appraisals*. I classified as proposals any utterances that Esfir used to regulate technical, sensorial, or psychological behaviors and that her student could interpret as commands, requirements, or instructions to which the appropriate response was an immediate action. I coded all proposals as **P**. The following excerpts from the transcribed videotaped lessons illustrate Esfir's use of proposals and the manner in which she verbalized them. In each circumstance, the student responded by playing through the passage in an attempt to follow Esfir's instructions, commands, declarations, assertions, or appeals:

Esfir appealed to J.J., "*But pay attention [to] the end of each bar*" (J.J., VTL, 1998).

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Esfir commanded J.J., *"Don't press, just pushing at [the keys]"*
(J.J., VTL, 1998).

Esfir instructed Emily, *"Open your eyes honestly and find where is the danger"* (Emily, VTL, 1998).

Esfir cautioned Susan, *"Find the natural position"* (Susan, VTL, 1998).

Although it was theoretically possible to reject or accept her proposals, because of the teacher-student relationship, students usually accepted her Proposals.

I also classified proposals according to the particular point in time and context in which the plan of action was to be followed. I found two types of proposals: *Specific-Tasks-Proposals* (**STP**) and *Everything-For-Your-Life-Proposals* (**EFYLP**). I coded all as *Specific-Tasks-Proposals* (STP) as **P1** and *Everything-For-Your-Life-Proposals* (**EFYLP**) as **P2**. **STP** proposals implied that Esfir instructed or ordered her student to immediately adopt, honor, or carry out a specific plan of action or behavior while working on a particular piece during the lesson. The topics of Esfir's **STP** proposals were specific to the particular lesson and needed to be adhered to immediately. For instance, when Esfir uttered *"forte"* during the lesson, it was typical for her students to immediately respond by playing the passage loudly. Esfir used **EFYLP** to inform her students that although she expected them to immediately respond to her instructions; she also expected them to carry out her instructions in a variety of contexts and to execute life-long musical operations, such as when Esfir instructed J.J. *"to remember not just for this concerto, for everything"* (J. J., VTL, 1998).

All proposals identified by this method were placed into the *Function* column on the transcribed videotape manuscript. The coding and classification

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of proposals are summarized below in Table 9.

Table 9 – Coding and Classification of Proposals

P1	*Specific-Tasks-Proposals* (STP)	Focuses on instructions that are specific to the piece in question.
P2	*Everything-For-Your-Life-Proposals* (EFYLP)	Focuses on life-long instructions.

Next, I classified any utterances Esfir used to suggest, explain, demonstrate, inform, or clarify her views on carrying out musical actions or behaviors as propositions. Additional criteria were that the student responded by affirming or refuting her suggestion, by giving an opinion, or by thinking about what was said at that moment or at a later date and in another context. I coded all propositions as **PR**. Esfir's propositions were either clear-cut statements or explanations that focused on the matter at hand. She usually couched her propositions within metaphors, analogies, or narratives. The following excerpts from J.J.'s transcribed videotaped lessons illustrate Esfir's use of propositions and the manner in which she verbalized them:

> Esfir outlined what she would be covering in J.J.'s lesson. She explained, *"We will talk about general things . . . [including] the reputation of rhythm, and quality of sound, and all these emotional things"*(J.J., VTL, 1998).

I found two types of propositions – *Instrumental Propositions* (**IPR**), which I coded as **PR1**, and *Relationship Propositions* (**RELPR**), which I coded

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as **PR2**. **IPR** propositions focused on notifying, identifying, and clarifying what the students needed to think about. Esfir used **IPR** *Propositions* to point out the conditions of the activity, to offer strategies on how to work without any assistance, to explain how to improve technical aspects, or to interpret the themes in the music. For example, Esfir explained to Susan that the reason pianists move their body when playing an ornament (elaborating on the pre-existing melody) is that *"if you stay here your body will be [stiff]"* (Susan, VTL, 1998). **RELPR** Propositions, which were either clear-cut or embedded within the text, referred to statements or questions that Esfir used to clarify, identify, or point out information about the teacher and the student's personal roles, responsibilities, and relationship. For example, Esfir used the **RELPR** proposition, *"If we don't stop him, he will go too far"*, at the beginning of J.J.'s lesson to convey that it was her responsibility as his teacher to structure what he was to do during the lesson (J.J., VTL, 1998).

Table 10 presents a summary of the coding and classification of the propositions. All of the propositions identified by the above method were placed into the Function column on the transcribed videotape manuscript.

Table 10 – Coding and Classification of Propositions

PR1	*Instrumental Propositions* (IPR)	Focuses on implications and conditions of the activity.
PR2	*Relationship Propositions* (RELPR)	Focuses on personal roles, responsibilities, and interpersonal relationships.

I classified appraisals as any utterance or action that Esfir used to remark, describe, assess, evaluate, judge, measure, or reflect on the quality

or state of her student's performance. I coded all appraisals as **A**. Then I recorded all *Appraisals*, including *Appraisals* that were embedded in metaphors, analogies, or narratives in addition to those that were clear-cut. The following transcript excerpts illustrate Esfir's use of appraisals and the manner in which she verbalized them:

> Esfir complimented Susan's playing, telling her, "*You know that very well.*"
> Esfir's assessment of Susan's playing was that it was "*like a horse running.*" In other words, Susan played the passage too quickly.

I found two types of appraisals – *Value Judgment Appraisals* (VJA), and *Comparative Appraisals* (COMPAS). I coded *Value Judgment Appraisals* (VJA) as A1 and *Comparative Appraisals* (COMPAS) as A2. Esfir used VJA Appraisals to assess her student's general musical performance, improvement, or mastery, as well as to point out problematic areas and details that needed additional work. For example, Esfir pointed out a particular weakness in Emily's performance when she told her, "*This I don't like*" (Emily, VTL, 1998). COMPAS appraisals were rich comments or gestures that specifically focused on acknowledging or commenting on the student's power to learn, progress, or accomplish goals in comparison to past performances and in comparison to other music students. For example, Esfir used both verbal and vocal (Sing) to inform Susan that compared to her previous lesson, "*Now it's much better . . . because you played it before 'Dum . . Dum . . Dum. . Ti'*" (Susan, VTL, 1998). Table 11 presents a summary of the coding and classification of appraisals. All of the *Appraisals* identified by the above method were placed the Function column on the videotape transcriptions.

Table 11 – Coding and Classification of Appraisals

A1	Value Judgment Appraisals (VJA)	Focuses on providing an assessment of a musical performance or activity.
A2	Comparative Appraisals (COMPAS)	Focuses on providing information about the general level of musical mastery in comparison to past performances or to others music students.

During the third stage of analysis, I analyzed the topics that Esfir addressed during piano lessons. I classified all references to musical topics. Esfir covered a wide range and variety of musical topics, including tempo, mood, phrasing, character of the music, musical context, competency, emotional issues, physical movements, technical language, and so on. Four broad categories emerged – Musical Contexts, Developing Technical Competencies, Roles and Relationships, and Emotional Issues.

I classified as *Musical Context* all references to social and cultural settings in which music is experienced, where people engage in making music, and where students acquire an attitude and awareness of the knowledge and information needed to play piano (music lessons, concerts, home, and other music venues). I coded all *Music Context* as **MCT**. The following excerpt shows that Esfir referred to her own practicing experiences to illustrate that the location of the practice sessions or quality of the piano is less important than being dedicated to practicing piano. She added, *"When I was younger . . . I would practice in this little club with an upright piano that was awful"* (Emily's VTL, 1998).

I classified as *Developing Technical Competencies* any references Esfir

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used to build her students' understanding of the music, to help them recognize the demands of the selected piece, and to give them a sense of what they must do to become more competent pianists. I coded all references to *Developing Technical Competencies* as **DTCT**. For example, Esfir explained how to readjust his finger movement by describing how *"fingers are not sensitive [when] they are overworked"* to inform J.J. of the things he must do when playing through this particular piece (J.J.'s VTL, 1998).

A third topic that Esfir typically referred to during piano lessons was *Roles and Relationships*. I classified all references to Esfir's role in developing her piano students' musical competency, all references to the student's regulative role, and all references to social interactions, such as the student-teacher relationship, as *Roles and Relationships Topics*. I coded all references to Roles and Relationship Topics as **RRT.** For example, Esfir instructed Susan to *"go down [and] find [a] natural position"* (VTL, 1998). From my experience as a piano teacher, I interpreted the intention of the utterance as being an aim to develop Susan's conscious awareness of her ability to control where to position her arms while playing.

Esfir also referred to *Emotional Issues.* I classified all references to emotional, aesthethtic, and kinesthetic demands and pleasures of playing the piano as *Emotional Issues Topics.* I coded all references to Emotional Issues Topics as **EIT.** For example, Esfir referred to the topic of emotion during Susan's lesson to advise her that it is beneficial *"to know that and feel it. More feel[ing] than know[ing it] will help you to tell that you know it"* when playing music written by Chopin (VTL, 1998).

All of the topics identified by this method were placed in the Theme column on the transcript. These are displayed in Table 12.

Table 12 – Coding and Classification of Topics

MCT	Musical Contexts	Includes all references to musical settings.
DTCT	Developing Technical Competencies	Includes all references to teaching strategies – scaffolding and using colorful language.
RRT	Roles and Relationships	Includes all references to regulative roles (self, teacher, other) and relationships.
EIT	Emotional Issues	Includes all references to the emotional, aesthetical, and kinesthetic demands of playing music.

Analyzing the Interview Transcripts

In this section, I describe how I transcribed, coded, and analyzed the initial set of interviews and the retrospective interviews with Esfir, Emily, J.J., and Susan. The intention was to portray their perspectives on teaching and learning piano.

Transcribing, Cataloguing, and Coding the Initial Interviews

I transcribed Esfir, Emily, J.J., and Susan's initial interviews. Table 13 displays the Inventory of the Initial Interviews. Column one displays the name of the participant interviewed. Column 2 indicates the date of the interview. The third column shows the number of pages transcribed and column four includes my reflections of the interview.

Table 13 – Inventory of Initial Interviews

Interviewee	Date	Pages Transcribed	Reflections
Esfir	December 25, 1998	28 pages	Interviewed Esfir at my house on Christmas day.
Emily	December 11, 1998	23 pages	Interviewed her at her cousin Romy's house. Their mothers were home at the time. We sat on the floor of her cousin's bedroom.
J.J.	December 9, 1998	38 pages	Interviewed in my kitchen. He was excited to talk about his experiences.
Susan	December 8, 1998	23 pages	Interviewed at her apartment. She seemed relaxed. She emphasized her close relationship with Esfir and her troublesome relationship with her former teachers.

Next, to easily retrieve the data and to recreate the natural flow of the interview, I created four columns: Line, Name of the Interviewer (Neomi), Name of the respondent (Student or Esfir), and Reflections.

I transcribed and laid out segments of the text word for word into the appropriate columns. I gave each new question or response a new number to set apart the questions from the responses. I moved downward and left a space between each new statement made by the respondent and assigned a new letter. I added my reflections and interpretations in the last column for each unit of analysis. I used the same conventions and typefaces that I used for transcribing the videotapes. Table 14 illustrates how I recorded the interviews and numbered the transcript segments. The examples are from Emily's transcribed interview (TI).

Table 14: Recording and Numbering the Interview Segments

Line	Interviewer Neomi	Interviewee Emily	Reflections
63	Explain how you know that you are ready for a concert?		
64		A) Esfir tells me I'm good.	A) Appraisal of ability from teacher.
		B) I usually can tell if I'm doing well.	B) Self- awareness of musical ability.
		C) I usually think that after I practice a lot.	C) Self-regulation and musical competency.
		D) I can usually tell if I'm doing good and it sounds good.	D) Self-awareness of musical ability.
		E) Esfir always has to perfect it.	E) Judgment of musical competency is teacher regulated.

I coded the initial interviews in the following sequence: First, I read the transcribed texts line by line from beginning to end and annotated the texts with my reflections and ideas. Second, I sorted the data into similar and separate thematic clusters by systematically color-coding the words and phrases that related to how Esfir, Emily, J.J., and Susan voiced their opinions and represented their musical experiences to me. Third, I assessed and cross-tabulated each category for connections. Fourth, I defined, named, and described each thematic cluster according to its conceptual structure. Fifth, I placed each excerpt on cards that matched the color-coding to help me locate the major themes and corresponding excerpts. Four broad themes emerged – Personal History and Musical Background, Musical Experiences, Values and Beliefs, and Lessons with Esfir.

I classified as *Personal History and Musical Background* any references Esfir or her students used to provide information about their age, cultural background, general level of schooling, initial experiences with music, first

piano lessons, past teachers, jobs, and summer activities. I color-coded all

Personal History and Musical Background references yellow and coded them

as **PHB**. Table 15 presents examples of references to **PHB** and the focus of the

reference.

Table 15: Personal History and Musical Background References

Name	Excerpt	Focus
Emily	*I also go away to sleep-away camp somewhere else.*	Other extra-curricular activities.
Susan	*[I was] six when I started but I had two years off.*	First piano lessons.
J.J.	*I went to CEGEP in health sciences in an advanced science program.*	General level of schooling.
Esfir	*I was born in Siberia.*	Cultural background

I classified as *General Musical Experiences* all references used to

describe the contexts in which music was experienced (home, school, piano

studio, concerts, competitions, as well as other musical events and musical

communities), the people who mediated their learning (parents, students,

colleagues, musicians, audience, teachers), and what they said or did. I coded

all *General Musical Experiences* as **GME** and color-coded them in blue. I

did not code any references to their experiences with Esfir. Although I was

particularly interested in what transpired during lessons in Esfir's music studio,

the participants' comments about their general musical experiences were more

relevant when interpreting other experiences that influence students' decisions

to continue piano lessons. Table 16 presents examples of references to **GME**

and the focus of the reference.

Table 16: General Musical Experiences References

Name	Excerpt	Focus
Emily	I was three . . . I remembered [my cousins and I] performed in front of my aunts and uncles [at their house in Toronto] and they said, "You're so cute."	Family; feedback on musical competency.
Susan	I had been studying with a teacher from [the university] for three years . . . She always said that I had been doing well.	University teacher; feedback on musical competency.
J.J.	I sang in the choir at university.	University choir members.
Esfir	After four years, I was accepted by the Moscow Conservatory.	Russian music school.

I classified as *Values and Beliefs* any references that pertained to the participant's personal attitude toward learning piano, which I coded as **VB** and color-coded in pink. **VB** statements expressed the students' and teacher's views on acquiring musical competency (teaching and learning strategies, regulative roles), the recognition of musical competency, and coping with the emotional, aesthetical, and kinesthetic aspects of playing piano. Table 17 presents examples of references to **VB** and the focus of the reference.

Table 17: Values and Beliefs References

Name	Excerpt	Focus
Emily	[the fact that] you just love the piano. You don't and you can't go to learn any other instrument except that one to you.	Coping with feelings of failure while playing piano
Susan	I think that in the learning process there is a kind of pain when you are focused on learning.	Referring to the student's regulative role
J.J.	There is always a personal self-accomplishment.	Recognition of musical competency
Esfir	If someone can be particularly stimulated, interested in something, it is very easy to . . . get the skills of the person and to teach something.	Teaching strategies; regulative role

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I classified as *Lessons with Esfir* all references by piano students to their experiences with Esfir. I coded *Lessons with Esfir* as **LWE**, and color-coded them in green. **LWE** references focused on describing their views on Esfir's personality, the manner in which she built meaning (writing, singing, playing, talking, scaffolding instructions, and making up stories), or the function of her use of language (regulating learning, offering explanations, giving feedback, creating a working relationship, selecting tasks, tuning into student needs, maximizing the student's ability, creating a music community). Table 18 presents examples of references to **LWE** and the focus of the reference.

Table 18: Lessons with Esfir References

Name	Excerpt	Focus
Emily	She always wanted to give me challenges	Regulates learning
Lil	It's always related to the music	Offers explanations
Susan	She opened me up musically	Regulates learning, maximizes the student's ability

Transcribing, Cataloguing, and Coding the Retrospective Interviews

A transcriber typed up the retrospective interviews. She wrote down the date and length, and noted her reflections on the quality of the audiotaped interview. For example, she commented that Emily spoke "very fast and she was hard at times to understand" (Transcriber Notes, June, 2002). I used the same coding and color-coding format as the initial interview in order to back up or clarify what I did not understand, and to fill in missing or new information. Table 19 displays an inventory of the retrospective interviews. Column one displays the name of the participant interviewed. Column two shows the date of the interview and the tape number. The third column displays the length of the

interview. I placed the transcriber's comments on the quality of the audiotapes in the last column. There were three tapes for Esfir, two for J.J. and one for Emily, Paulina, Romy and Susan.

Table 19 – Inventory of the Retrospective Interviews

Participant	Date	Length	Transcriber's Reflections
Esfir	Tape #1 September 26, 2002	25 pages	All three tapes were difficult to transcribe because of her Russian accent. The transcriber did not alter or change the grammar.
	Tape #2 September 26, 2002	19 pages	
	Tape #3 October 1, 2002	6 pages	
Emily	June 18, 2002	41 pages	Emily spoke at a fast pace, which made it difficult to understand what she said at times.
J.J.	Tape #1 March 16, 2000	39 pages	Discussion following review of videotaped lesson was difficult to transcribe because he spoke very fast and had an accent.
	Tapes #2 July 10, 2002	27 pages	
Paullina	September 22, 2002	22 pages	Very clear.
Romy	June 19, 2002	27 pages	No problems.
Susan	June 19, 2002	29 pages	Background noise made it difficult to transcribe.

Summary

In this chapter, I described how I selected and analyzed the different and interconnecting themes in the transcribed videotape and interview data. The analysis of videotaped lessons and audiotaped interviews reduced the risk of presenting only one point of view and the risk of chance associations, biases and misrepresentation of Esfir, Emily, J.J., and Susan's experiences and points of view. In the next chapters, I portray various views on why promising piano students continue lessons, first by drawing a portrait of Esfir to document her learning experiences and views on teaching and learning. Then, I illustrate what transpired during lessons with Esfir and introduce J.J., Emily, and Susan's perspectives on their musical experiences, particularly those with Esfir to portray what influences students' to continue taking piano lessons.

CHAPTER SIX

Portrait of Esfir

In this chapter, I draw a portrait of the teacher, Esfir Dyachkov. I portray Esfir's experiences as a piano student with her piano teachers in Russia during the Soviet era and their influence on her own teaching practices. I describe her thoughts on teaching and learning. I conclude by reflecting on how her experiences, values, and beliefs are compatible with the ideas set out by Vygotsky, Halliday, and Wenger. It is interesting to note that although Vygotsky and Esfir are both from Russia, she was not aware of his writings and the similarities in their beliefs on teaching and learning.

According to Lawrence-Lightfoot, portraiture "records and interprets perspectives and experiences of the people they are studying, documenting their voices and visions – their authority, knowledge, and wisdom" (Lawrence-Lightfoot & Davis, 1997, p. xv). The illustrative examples are from the various data sets – interviews, personal conversations, and lesson transcripts to support my thoughts and interpretations on the social, cultural, and psychological factors that influenced the evolution of Esfir's teaching strategies. I begin by presenting the story of her initial experiences with music in Russia, her relationship with her teachers, and her values and beliefs on teaching that form the foundation upon which she approached J.J., Emily, and Susan's piano lessons.

Initial Experiences with Music

Esfir was born in Yakoutsk, Siberia, which was part of the Russian Soviet Socialist Republic. Her experiences as a young promising music student in the former Soviet Russia shaped her musical values and her teaching practices. She began her musical studies when she was five years old with a private

piano teacher in her hometown whom she describes as "very good". Because she showed promising musical talent, her teacher entered her in a competition for young musicians when she was fourteen. It was customary for students showing exceptional learning ability or talent in a particular area, such as in music, to be enrolled in schools for the gifted (McCaskill, 1989). After she won the competition and reviewed the feedback from the judges, she decided to leave Siberia and audition for the Moscow Academy of Music. She was accepted as a student even though she had auditioned after the official auditions were completed which was unusual and contrary to the school's guidelines for acceptance. Her piano teacher was Nathan Fishman. Esfir recalls that at the Academy of Music

> Everything was different, everything, everything, starting from when we were waiting sometimes. My lessons were on Sunday. And sometimes I had to wait for my lesson for three, four hours because we never watched the time. And my professor could work three hours with one pupil. And we were obliged to wait, and no complaining. And [we did] not wait somewhere [else] at the same time. I went to watch other classes if the door was open [because I was] very afraid that he will go out and [find that] I'm still not there just waiting for my turn. Even though it was different, we were so appreciative to the teacher that he works with us. Waiting for many hours, standing next to the door, was normal for us . . .With Fishman . . . it's self-work or many times, repeating one difficult place, just repeating . . . Of course, being a very obedient and very good pupil, I worked for hours every day, around six hours and I was proud. (Esfir, TI, October 2002)

Fishman often had her repeat the same exercise by herself for hours. It was the norm for students at the Moscow Academy of Music to wait outside their teacher's studio for hours before their lessons began and to practice for about six hours each day. Although Esfir found Fishman to be very strict and demanding, she did not resent the constant repetition and appreciated that they regularly worked together. She realizes today that practicing regularly and without questioning her teacher's motives developed her piano technique and her awareness of her musical abilities. Esfir continues to value Fishman's emphasis on hard work. Practicing diligently by herself for hours remains part of her daily regimen. She believes in working closely with her students just as Fishman did with her, and offering students the opportunity to listen and observe others before their lesson begins, just as she experienced at the Academy.

When Esfir graduated from the Academy, she entered the Moscow Conservatory of Music. Whereas her experiences at the Academy taught her the value of hard work, Leonard Roseman, her teacher at the Moscow Conservatory, taught her the value of creating a focus:

> When I entered Moscow Conservatory and I started with Roseman, first of all, I had to relearn. I was really without understanding and this bothered me in a way, [a] completely different way. I had to adjust my movements. For example, I [had to work] on difficult places, knowing exactly what I had to think about and what is the goal. Like now, I say that we should not change often goals; even if it's not right, but we can probably modify it . . . This was the more creative way to work but still it was still a very Russian way. (Esfir, TI, 2002)

Esfir remembers that Roseman's instructions reflected the usual practices of many teachers in Russia and the standards she believes she needed to attain to become a valued member of this community. He focused her lessons primarily on explaining what she needed to pay attention to. He supervised her on how to create a plan of action, such as how to adjust her movement, and then gave her full responsibility for creating a plan of action. He also emphasized the importance of concentrating on her objectives and not straying off in unrelated directions. Esfir acknowledges that Roseman gave her tools to plan, work, or practice piano on her own, as well as to mediate her ability to self-regulate her thoughts and actions with respect to her teaching career. Esfir claims that getting students to work on their own was a routine practice in Russia. She recognizes that Roseman's focus on staying with a plan, teaching her how to work on her own, and selecting repertoire both challenging yet within her realm of ability shaped the foundation of her musical expertise and influenced the formation of the values and beliefs that underlie her approach to teaching piano.

Esfir's Thoughts about Teaching and Learning Piano

During my initial interview with Esfir, she revealed her insights into teachers' roles in mediating their students' decisions to continue piano lessons. In this section, I focus on her perspectives on socializing students into the music community, developing students' musical competencies, teacher and student regulative roles, emotions, and her use of language during lessons to provide insight into what she values when she teaches her students.

<u>Socialization into Communities of Musical Practice</u>

Teachers and researchers (Asmus, 1993; Faber, 2003; Lautzenheiser, 1990) have been concerned with how teachers can inspire piano students to continue their piano studies. Esfir claims that when piano teachers *"go with [students] the whole way of development . . . they see your interest. When you go together, when you are one team, then it works"* (Esfir, TI, 1998). She believes that when teachers create an environment where students can socialize with others in meaningful musical activities and share traditional structures, knowledge, and repertoires students are keen to learn. She maintains that such a collaborative environment provides a venue for students to gather information about music repertoires and to express their opinions about how to interpret music.

Esfir expounded on how teachers can create a community of musical practice and on the benefits of incorporating these strategies. She proposes that teachers set up student concerts, have students *"assist lessons of each other,"* or just have students be in the company of others who value learning music (Esfir, TI, 1998). She also claims that the close bond between teachers and students is an invaluable resource to socialize students into a community of musical practice. Presenting students with opportunities and a place to interact and share ideas with other students, teachers, colleagues, and family members provides a venue where students can learn from one another. Esfir acknowledges that *"that's how they learn better . . . and understand better"* (Esfir, TI, 1998). Another benefit of creating a community environment is that students can listen to others play through their whole repertoire. Esfir recognizes that the music studio is a social space where students acquire knowledge about the history and culture of music. It is where students learn by

listening to her play *"for them the whole repertoire, the whole program. We talk about composers,* [tone quality, and sound] (Esfir, TI, 1998).

<u>Developing Musical Abilities</u>

Esfir maintains that teachers' interactions with their students are critical in developing the students' musical abilities. She believes that teachers can change their students' levels of ability through expert guidance and collaborative work. Another practice she believes leads students forward include selecting a program that is *"always on the edge of the maximum of their [students']* *possibilities or even above their possibilities,"* regardless whether the student is young, old, slow, talented, or more advanced (Esfir, TI, 2002). She emphasizes that it is important for teachers to

> *Go up to reach a level of children, whether they are talented or not,*
> *go with them the whole way of development . . . If I have to prepare*
> *somebody for competition, I have to be very concentrated to*
> *prepare them to be ready for certain moment when whole program,*
> *which is sometimes very difficult. With more advanced . . . it is*
> *always to be careful to be ready with the whole program . . . With*
> *little ones; it has to be interesting for them.* (Esfir, TI, 1998)

Esfir believes that the repertoire should cover a wide range of technical and musical challenges, especially when working with more advanced students. Esfir goes on to emphasize that teachers who select tasks that are appropriate to the students' personalities, levels of talent, and levels of maturity awaken their students' musical abilities and enable them to internalize what they have learned. She also recognizes that pushing music students to their limits

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develops their abilities to master musical concepts and actions and to become self-regulated learners. In addition, Esfir believes that her music students' learning begins long before they start lessons. She believes that teachers must consider the students' historical and cultural backgrounds so that they can maximize their students' abilities and develop a life-long interest in music:

> *[Putting the] ceiling high can work [for a] long time. You can develop their interest, etcetera; even their cultural baggage, etcetera that will grow [and] mature.* (Esfir, TI, 2002)

For Esfir's students, the volition to play piano and how they assimilate her instructions are also a product of their prior experiences with other teachers and their participation in other sites of learning. She encourages teachers to select goals that tap into their students' experiences and contexts. This includes providing students with just the right stimulation and encouraging them to be resourceful. Her perspective on the teacher's role in developing students' musical competencies reflects a Vygotskian theoretical perspective on the ZPD and self-regulated learning. Vygotsky (1978) advocates that knowledgeable others (teachers) structure their assistance and learning assignments so that students perform learning tasks on their own.

Regulative Roles

Another important characteristic of teaching that concerns Esfir is the regulative role of the teacher. In the following excerpt, Esfir expounds on the rationale and strategies she uses for developing her students' abilities to regulate their own actions and behaviors:

I am very involved. You saw that I try to calm myself not to take

too much initiation, not to take too much place [when] working with

children because it may create different effect, opposite effect.

They can become too passive and unreliable [if] you put too much

on your role instead of on them to have more initiation . . . It has to

be their decision. To find the stimulation for them, this is our main

thing. (Esfir, TI, 1998)

Esfir points out that it is the teacher's responsibility to prepare students to play through their repertoire. She also advocates that teachers move from directing their students' every action to helping them learn how to take ownership and to proceed on their own. She finds that directing piano students' every move frequently results in a student's boredom, which often leads students to stop taking lessons, whereas encouraging students to figure out what to do on their own usually leads them to identify how to master playing piano and fosters the desire to continue pursuing their musical goals. Esfir also told me that she tries to be cautious about controlling her students and giving too much direction and encouraging them to take more initiative, especially when she feels *"that with [her] corrections, they go in the right direction"* (Esfir, TI, 1998). Esfir's views on providing students with the tools and then gradually giving them responsibility to regulate their actions echoes Vygotsky's (2000) claim that "what the child can do in cooperation today he can do alone tomorrow" (p. 188).

Emotions

According to Vygotsky, thoughts grow out of affective-volitional actions.

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Esfir assumes that when you play piano "*everything is connected with your [emotional] state, with your feelings*" (Esfir, TI, 2002). She explains that

> *When your thought becomes your feelings or your feelings become to be your thought, this is when it starts to work. It cannot be just a thought that you are trying to do without a feeling. It's like fire. It will not cook, be cooked if there is no emotion. It's like gasoline . . . And it is important for teachers . . . to put something on the fire.* (Esfir, TI, 2002)

Although Esfir uses the words emotions and feelings interchangeably, she maintains that emotions are manifested by thoughts and feelings. She also believes that piano students' desire to play piano is associated with their ability to cope with emotional thoughts, such as their anxiety over playing difficult passages or their excitement in finding the music interesting. Playing piano without feeling the music is a hollow accomplishment. It is when students realize that playing is more than just knowing where to place the hands or how to move the body that they can grasp how to play music. She advocates that teachers show students how to "*find a sound that can express feelings of student, to make them feel something, to tell something,*" to enjoy the music instead of emphasizing where to place the next finger, because being able to produce a nice sound can trigger a student's "*lust for music*" (Esfir, TI, 1998).

Esfir is also aware that playing in competitions is stressful and risky, because playing in a competition can traumatize students. She feels that "*it is even dangerous talking about it. It's psychological*"(Esfir, TI, 1998). To prevent students from internalizing that playing in competitions is stressful, Esfir proposes that teachers talk to their students about how they "*will try to prepare*

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[them, the risks and work involved, and that they] will decide" whether they are

ready for the challenge (Esfir, TI, 1998).

Uses of Language in the Lessons

From Esfir's perspective, finding a *"common language"* that is specific

to the teacher and the student develops a student's awareness of how to

master musical skills, including playing, listening, reading. She believes that for

beginners and even those who are advanced

> *once [they] come to take lessons, I start them from zero. It takes*
>
> *sometimes just a couple of weeks from zero, but at the same*
>
> *time it is so essential, so important. After that, we continue*
>
> *always working about to find the common language. They have to*
>
> *understand what I want from them . . . I have to find with them the*
>
> *same vocabulary. What I want from them, they have to understand.*
> (Esfir, TI, 1998)

As Esfir claims, having a "common language" enables piano students to

predict the meanings and intentions of her explanations, such as how to *"get the*

right sound and think ahead . . . the right position of hand or arm or even body"

(Esfir, TI, 1998). She recognizes that verbal language is a way for teachers to

channel information to students about cultural norms and practices. She implies

that language is useful for illuminating the teacher's and students' roles and

relationships, in particular the teacher's responsibility in directing students on

what they need to learn. Esfir believes teaching students a common musical

language gives them a chance to learn the rituals of *"how to practice . . . how to*

interpret the music" (Esfir, TI, 2002).

A common language enables students to understand her expectations and the practices of playing piano, such as how to manipulate the body, hand position, or fingers. She adds that she often gets together with a group of students before and after concerts *"to talk about"* their interpretations of the music that was played. It is interesting to note that Esfir chose to have her son continue his cello studies with his teacher from Russia, Yuli Turofsky, instead of sending him to the Menuhin School of Music in Germany because "it's the Russian school who he knows very well" (Esfir, TI, 1998). She is aware that being familiar with the Russian approach to teaching would make it easier for him to develop his talent. Today her son is a university professor of music and performs with many well-known orchestras and as a soloist. Esfir's stance that having "*a common language*" enables communication reflects Halliday's use of the term 'register'.

Esfir's Musical Experiences and her perspectives on Teaching and Learning from a Theoretical Perspective

From a Vygotskian perspective, human behavior is a consequence of one's lived experiences in a particular sociocultural and historical context. Esfir's musical studies primarily took place in three sociocultural-historical contexts – Yakoutsk, the Moscow Academy of Music, and the Moscow Conservatory of Music, and at three different stages of her life. She began lessons at the age five in Yakoutsk, moved to Moscow at the age of fourteen to study music at the Academy, and entered the Moscow Conservatory of Music four years later where she completed her Doctorate in Music. Esfir explains that her early musical experiences introduced her into musical practices in Russia and socialized her into communities of musical practice. These experiences also influenced her teaching philosophy and practices. Esfir believes that her

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philosophy on teaching and learning, and her teaching practices, are based on "*studying with experienced teachers and musicians in Russia who were experts in piano pedagogy*" (Esfir, Conversation, 2001). She also asserts that "*Wherever we live, we use*" these experiences (Esfir, TI, 2002).

Wenger (1998) points out that social beings actively engage in meaningful activities with others, share common repertoires of knowledge and skills, and develop their competencies in a '*community of practice*'. Lave and Wenger (1991) further explain that "a person's intentions to learn are engaged, and the meaning of learning is configured through the process of becoming a full participant in a sociocultural context" (p. 29). In communities of musical practices, musicians gather together with other musicians to participate in musical activities and in mutual engagement to share musical repertoires and resources (Russell, 2002). Being a student in Yakoutsk, at the Moscow Academy of Music, and at the Moscow Conservatory of Music provided Esfir with the opportunity to participate in music activities, such as concerts and lessons, to observe other students' lessons, to listen to music, to play musical instruments, and to learn musical repertoire and history. Engaging in meaningful musical experiences with her teachers and other music students established her identity as a musician and as a valued member in the music community.

Vygotsky (1978) contends that children's abilities to maximize their potential are contingent on their particular level of development and their interactions with a more knowledgeable adult (teacher or peer). He also argues that knowledgeable adults such as a teacher or peer can maximize children's abilities by being sensitive to what they can do and can potentially accomplish, and by helping them achieve their goals. From Esfir's perspective, a teacher's task is to challenge students to reach their potential abilities. She believes that selecting tasks that advance students' abilities enables them to

be more in control of their learning and increases the likelihood that *"the lust for learning music . . . [will remain] for the rest of their life"* (Esfir, TI, 1998). Esfir's willingness to learn seems to be influenced by her experiences at the Academy and Conservatory, and with her teachers, Fishman and Roseman. For example, Roseman insisted that she *"bring him any difficult piece for the following lesson, by heart"* (Esfir, TI, 2002). Esfir also believes in encouraging students to push beyond their own perceived limit of ability and in developing her students' ZPD (Vygotsky, 1978). She explains that *"sometimes I give them some tricks, [and] write down to program them what they will do tomorrow, how many minutes . . . It's like an injection"* to move them forward so that they can reach their musical potential (Esfir, TI, 2002).

Vygotsky (1978) argues that developing the ability to voluntarily regulate actions means shifting the control from being other-directed to the individual. He argues that children learn to self-regulate their own actions by first mastering the cultural signs and symbols through their social relations with others, and then by transforming and internalizing these "interfunctional connections and relationships" (pp. 50-51). In other words, before a child can decide what to do, a more knowledgeable person can help a child. From a Vygotskian perspective, Esfir sees the necessity for teachers to consciously plan what needs to be focused on while practicing and teaching, and then let students figure out what to do on their own. Esfir maintains that teachers need to show their students how to practice, perform, and interpret the music on their own because *"they have to know what they are looking for, what is the goal, and how to go directly to this goal. After that it is [theirs]"* (Esfir, TI, 1998). She also connects her experiences as a music student at the Academy and Conservatory to her stance on self-regulation; it was customary for teachers to expect their students to go home and work for hours on the topics they covered during the lesson. Esfir also

claims she learned from her teachers the importance of working closely with students and then deliberately requiring them to figure out how to work through problematic sections in the music on their own. Esfir commented during an interview that music teachers help their students find ways to express what they want by throwing "*them a carrot,*" which in her view means to show them what to do, and then by letting them go after it without assistance (TI, 2002). For Esfir, the carrot is a metaphor for what they need to focus on while practicing and referring to their "*own experiences and being creative, which makes their life more interesting*" (Esfir, TI, 2002).

Piano students' emotional responses to the formal and expressive dimensions of the music also play a role in determining whether or not piano students will continue their pursuits. Vygotsky (1971) maintains that the choice to continue or to stop pursuing our goals depends on sensory stimuli, the work of art, as well as the artist's social experiences, needs, interests, and emotions. He explains that through the process of psychological development and sociocultural experiences, humans develop the ability to direct their needs and goals. He also claims that there is a connection between volition to partake in or direct which purposeful actions to pursue and the conscious awareness of the emotional experiences. The next phrase, which Esfir translated from Russian, also portrays her views on the connection between students' conscious awareness of their emotional experience of music and their decision to continue studying it:

> *When your thought becomes your feeling or your feeling becomes your thought, this is when it starts to work. It cannot be just [a] thought that you are trying to do . . . It's like fire. It will not cook, be cooked if there is no emotion.* (Esfir, TI, 2002)

Esfir adds that it is through showing students how to cope with both the stress and elation of playing challenging music, and teaching students how to listen to the music and to feel comfortable while playing that encourages students to want to continue. She maintains that when teachers show *"the pupil [how] to have pleasure or a sort of satisfaction on the process of practicing, he will come home [and] be absolutely eager to try what I told him"* (Esfir, TI, 2002).

Important tenets in both Vygotsky's and Halliday's views on language use are that words and actions of others transmit sociocultural-historical information, transform and regulate behaviors, and empower actions and agency (Maguire, 1999, 2001, 2003). Vygotsky (1962) claimed that adults use language to bring "out the specifically human qualities of the mind and lead people to new developmental levels" (p.104). Children eventually internalize their comments, directives, explanations, and actions of concepts, operations, and appraisals of ability. Esfir believes that what her teachers said and did had an effect on both her playing and her teaching competency. Their instructions and guidance, which were particular to her outstanding musical ability, provided her with the opportunity to become familiar with musical works and to understand that it takes focus and hard work to become a concert pianist. For Halliday (1978), language is used to communicate information to others, to elicit thinking and actions, and to familiarize listeners with the speaker's dialogue so that they can interpret the speaker's intentions and potential meanings. Esfir also recognizes that *"finding a way to communicate with [piano students is essential for them] to understand what I want from them"* and what they need to pay attention to when playing or practicing (Esfir, TI, 1998). Esfir believes in immersing her students into the register of the music lesson *"once they come to take lessons"* so that they will understand each other (Esfir, TI, 1998). For example, I noted that she introduces J.J. at the very beginning of his lessons to the musical concepts of

rhythm, sound, vibrato, and phrasing so that he will understand her instructions, explanations, and her assessment of his playing (Reflective memo, 2002).

Summary

In this chapter, I described Esfir's experiences as a music student at home and at the elite music schools – the Moscow Academy of Music and the Moscow Conservatory of Music. I presented her views on teaching and learning in terms of how teachers socialize their students into the music community, develop their musical abilities, direct them to regulate their actions, focus them on how to deal with their feelings while playing and performing, and use language to channel information to their students. These approaches, Esfir believes, are how teachers keep students interested and involved in learning music. In addition, I tied Esfir's perspective on teaching and learning to Vygotsky's theory of ZPD, self-regulation, learning in the potential, and the connection between affective and volition, Halliday's functional theory of language, and Wenger's notion of the community of practice.

At the heart of Esfir's musical experiences and pedagogical stance is that developing piano students' positive attitude towards learning music is more than showing them how to place their fingers on the keyboard. She understands that piano students' continued interest in learning music is tied to the development of musical skills and the ability to work through challenging music on their own and to cope with the expressive aspects of the music. She is aware that providing a social context introduces students to musical values, practices, and repertoires. Her sense of herself as a teacher show that she is confident that she can provide her students with the social experiences and cultural knowledge needed to maintain their interest in learning music.

CHAPTER SEVEN

Portraits of Interactions in the Music Studio

What did Esfir say and do during J.J., Emily, and Susan's lessons that influenced their respective decisions to continue studying music? Individuals channel information to others, exchange meanings, and regulate behaviors using different modes of language. Vygotsky (1978) argues that language is a tool that humans use to exchange meanings with others about their particular sociocultural environment, various modes of thoughts and actions, as well as their beliefs and values.

Portraiture describes actions and interactions as experienced by people in a given setting (Lawrence-Lightfoot & Davis, 1997). In this chapter, I present portraits of what transpired during J.J., Emily, and Susan's piano lessons in Esfir's music studio before and during their lessons. I portray the interactions and discussions with Esfir during J.J.'s lesson on November 29, 1998, Emily's lesson on November 7, 1998, and Susan's lesson on November 13, 1998 to reveal the complexity, dynamics, and subtlety of how piano students' experiences during lessons influence their decisions to continue studying music. I show how Esfir socialized them into the westernized musical community. I explain how Esfir expanded and developed their musical competencies and their abilities to self-regulate their actions and behaviors. I illustrate how Esfir mediated their ability to cope with the emotional demands of performing. I pay particular attention to some of the ways in which she used language to channel information; I also examine some of the topics she covered, and their significance in forming J.J., Emily, and Susan's decisions to continue their musical pursuits. The descriptions and examples are derived from my field

notes and the transcriptions of the videotaped lessons. Recall the positioning of the pianos in Esfir's studio in Figure 2 in chapter four.

Esfir focused each lesson on goals that were established for each student. The focus of J.J.'s lesson was to prepare him to cope with performing in public. He was about to play in a private concert later that evening, and seemed eager to learn various techniques that might assist him. He was attentive to Esfir's every comment. Esfir focused Emily's lesson on preparing her for the spring 1999 Canadian Music Competition. Students participating in the Canadian Music Competition first compete at the local level, and winners move on to the provincial competition. Adjudicators at the provincial level select those whom they believe are worthy of entering the national competition. Aside from providing Emily with strategies on how to play through her repertoire, Esfir offered her the opportunity to select an alternate plan and choice of repertoire, one that would enable her to cut back on her practice time. During Susan's lesson, the focus was on making sure that her rendition of a Chopin *étude* and *prelude* would meet the standards of the Frederick Chopin International Piano Competition.

Setting the Stage for Interactions in the Lessons

Vygotsky (1978) claims that a person's choice of actions reflects his or her lived experiences in a particular sociocultural context. I begin with narrative vignettes of what transpired the moment J.J. arrived at Esfir's studio on November 29, 1998, when Emily arrived for her lesson on November 7, 1998, and when Susan arrived at Esfir's studio on November 13, 1998 in order to provide a context for Esfir's interventions and discussions that evolved during their lessons.

Setting the Stage for Interactions in J.J.'s Lesson

Music resonates through Esfir's house as J.J. arrives for his lesson. Because he is early, he quietly sits on the chair in the adjacent room behind my video camera and watches Susan's lesson, which is already in progress. After a short interlude, he removes a score from his school bag and flips through a few pages.

As soon as it is time for his lesson to begin, J.J. moves to his place in front of the piano furthest from the window. He organizes himself by turning the knobs of the bench until it reaches the appropriate position and slowly moves his arms into position. At this point Esfir leaves the room. J.J. plays Liszt's *E Flat Major Piano Concerto* non-stop for ten minutes. There is complete silence in the room except for the music that fills up the place. Although the music sheets are on the lectern of the piano, he seldom looks up. He does not pay attention to the phone ringing or when Esfir returns to the room to retrieve a piece of paper. As J.J. releases his foot from the pedal and the final tones dissipate, Esfir's voice rings out from outside the music studio. In halting English, she tells J.J., "*Okay, (. . . .) Many things I want to tell you. I want to write things down.*"

When Esfir returns to the piano room, she acknowledges that his playing was "*good . . . [you] learn a lot . . . [you are] doing very fine.*" Then she outlines general areas that need improvement, such as "*the rhythm and quality of sound*" production. As the

lesson progresses, she plays passages from his repertoire, sings, listens attentively to how J.J. plays through his repertoire, and watches how he responds to her comments. She focuses on skills and strategies that will develop his musical competency, including *"how to control the sound when pressing keys,"* and how to phrase the passage (J.J., VTL, 1998).

From the outset of the lesson, Esfir's implied message is that learning is a socially and culturally situated process and that students meet with their teachers to exchange ideas, to acquire musical competencies, and to be socialized into musical practices. Esfir emphasizes the importance of understanding the fundamental principles of playing the piano, such as pressing keys, playing in rhythm, as well as listening to and making music. She uses talking, gesturing, playing, and singing to appraise J.J.'s overall performance. She implies that he has the ability to meet her expectations. Esfir also lets J.J. know that through her assistance he will become more aware of what he needs to pay attention to when he plays through his repertoire. In addition, her advice that *"it's better to stop immediately"* (J.J., VTL, 1998) when he works on a difficult section and he is tense indicates that she is aware of the consequences of practicing before a performance and that stopping to relax alleviates anxiety. She aims to alleviate his anxiety associated with performing in the concert later that evening. She is also aware, as Storr (1992) found, that anxiety can increase a musician's heart rate or result in muscles contracting, symptoms that are detrimental when performing.

The excerpt from my field notes also reveals that Esfir left the room as soon as J.J. played the first notes of Liszt's *E Flat Major Piano Concerto* because she was confident in his ability to play without her assistance. Her

leaving the room also offered J.J. an opportunity to demonstrate that he had internalized the instructions from his previous lessons and whether he had met her goals. Esfir divulged during her interview that leaving the room provides her students with the opportunity *"to listen [to] how they play [and if they play] with interpretation, how the left hand sounds, [how] they use left pedal"* (Esfir, TI, 2002). She also claims that leaving the room gives her students a space where they can *"learn how to work on their own"* (Esfir, TI, 2002). In other words, Esfir used the beginning of the lesson to introduce J.J. to musical practices, to develop his musical abilities and his ability to self-regulate his actions.

Setting the Stage for Interactions in Emily's Lesson

In this vignette, Esfir sets the stage for what she will discuss with Emily during the lesson:

> Emily arrives as I prepare the recording equipment. The bright sun fills up the room. Although Esfir is out of the room, Emily sits down at the piano closest to the video-recorder and begins to warm up. First she plays scales and then she plays a Kuhlau *Sonatina*. She stops abruptly when Esfir walks into the room and moves to the piano next to the window.

> The lesson proceeds in the usual manner. Esfir invites Emily to replay the piece she had been practicing. She listens attentively to what Emily plays and watches attentively as Emily's fingers move across the keyboard. As soon as Emily finishes playing through the piece, Esfir looks at her and gives her assessment.

As Esfir usually did at the beginning of Emily's lessons, she commented on whether Emily had internalized the information that she had conveyed to her during previous lessons:

> *I'm sure you would do this. This you did not do. What is written there? I don't hear anything. We are just a performer. We have to interpret what is written by the composer. Watch very carefully what he wants. He wants everything. Most real composers write everything that he wants. There are not many signs for that but we can add our experience for that. I can help you to tell some people things.* (Emily's VTL, 1998)

It was apparent right at the beginning of the lesson that Esfir detected that Emily had not worked according to her expectations. Although her tone of voice was harsh and her words were strong, she did not criticize Emily's playing. Instead, she emphasized that it is her role to transmit information to Emily and that it is Emily's responsibility to learn music. Esfir reinforced her role as an experienced and knowledgeable teacher, advising Emily that she would help her interpret the music. She admonished Emily that she needed to listen to the music, to read the musical signs, and to interpret what the composer wrote. In sharing her views on learning, Esfir explained that Emily's ability to internalize how to play piano and to regulate her own actions would grow from Emily's interactions with her. She established that aside from using her knowledge to focus Emily on skills she needed to increase her task mastery, she would explain how to listen to the music, and teach her about music culture through their social interactions. Emily told me during her interview, *"When I don't do the fingering correctly or sometimes I don't do the rhythm correctly, she makes me*

so musical . . . She makes it easy for you to understand what you're supposed to do . . . and that's probably why I love it so much" (Emily, TI, 2002).

Setting the Stage for Interactions in Susan's Lesson

In this vignette, Susan was preparing her repertoire for the Chopin Competition. It was her second piano lesson that week:

> As usual, Susan is early. Esfir sits at the piano closest to the
> window practicing a piece for an upcoming concert. Esfir cordially
> greets Susan as she enters the room, and then refocuses on
> playing different sections of the music, singing, and writing
> comments in her score. Susan watches Esfir at the same time
> as she removes her music from her briefcase. Esfir finally stops
> when Susan sits down at the adjoining piano and places her
> music on the lectern. After informing Esfir that she encountered
> several problems while practicing, Susan immediately begins
> to play through her piece, a Chopin *Ballad*. After a few minutes,
> Esfir quietly leaves the room. Susan's shoulder-length brown hair
> bounces to the rhythm of the music. Esfir only re-enters the room
> when the piece is about to end. Because Esfir's entrance distracts
> Susan, she looks up at Esfir. Then, she refocuses and plays the
> last few phrases of her piece.

> Throughout the lesson, Esfir's comments focus on the major
> problematic areas (playing with emotion, body movement) and
> small details (fingering, pedaling, tempo, dynamics). She also
> discusses how to play with more self-confidence.

According to Vygotsky (2000), instructions mediate or augment the individual's ability to perform various learning tasks. Esfir's approach during Susan's lesson was to provide her with the guidance and support she needed to compete at the Chopin Competition. For example, she focused on helping Susan master the physicality of playing Chopin in the beginning section of the piece by methodically assessing her playing, and then providing her with instructions and suggestions on how to become more physically disciplined when playing:

> You turn too much. Of course it will not work. Why are you turning like this? Go down. Find natural position . . . The separation [and] the turns are a little different and it helps with moving of your body because if you stay here, the body will be [stiff]. (Susan, VTL, 1998)

As Esfir demonstrated what to do, Susan immediately responded by imitating her, even as she talked. Then Esfir listened and watched attentively as Susan played the section by herself. The back and forth dance between Esfir providing the knowledge needed to enter the Chopin Competition and Susan responding to her interventions continued throughout the lesson. Susan continued to play throughout the lesson, often while Esfir was in mid-sentence or demonstrating something on the piano. An important implication of Esfir's instructions at the beginning of the lesson was that participating in the Chopin Competition not only required being able to read the notes on the score or repeatedly playing through the repertoire, but that such preparation involves both mind and body, and music, that is knowing how to control the

body to reproduce a sound. Susan understood Esfir's instructions: She eagerly responded immediately after or during Esfir's talking, singing, or playing.

In the next sections, I draw a more detailed portrait of how Esfir socialized J.J., Emily, and Susan into a musical community, developed their musical abilities, informed them about her regulative role, and showed them how to deal with the emotional experiences of playing and performing. I also show the different modes of language used during the lessons.

Socializing Students into a Western Musical Community

Researchers (Lave & Wenger, 1991; Russell, 2002; Wenger, 1998) have studied the benefits of social participation in learning communities. According to Lave and Wenger (1991), "learning is not merely situated in practice; learning is an integral part of generative social practice in the lived-in world" (p. 35). It is through legitimate peripheral participation in a community of practice that learners master the knowledge and skills needed for them to move towards full participation in the sociocultural practices of a community. Russell (2002) concluded that the opportunity of "participating in the pursuit of valued enterprises" with significant others is why members of a community of practice would want to continue to commit their time and energy participating in musical activities (p. 12).

Esfir used the piano lesson to introduce J.J. to the traditional musical forms (concerto, Rondo, jazz), musical terminology (*vibrato, fermata, bémol, subito piano*), repertoire (Liszt, Prokofiev, Verdi), conventions (notation), and practices (singing, practicing, and performing). For example, she elaborated on the different kinds of meaningful social and cultural activities that musicians in a westernized community of musical practice participate in:

The last thing [that we will discuss] is the very beginning . . .You

know [that] sometimes . . . the beginning of [a] piece of a very

good composer [is important]. And if the critic knows [you] like [it]

(. . . .), they will receive your attitude to this music (. . . .) of this

composer. It's important you know . . . Maybe you are somewhere

on the compass a little bit like shy . . . It's not a big concert is it?

No. It depends on you. You know sometimes, we play very little

things, even with Yuli. What did we do? (Both Esfir and J.J. laugh.)

[We played a] little piece of Prokofiev . . . [and] Rondo of Verdi.

It's not chivalrous creativity at all, at all, at all. So, enjoy it! (J.J.,

VTL, 1998)

Esfir's description of how she responds to playing the music of Prokofiev
and Verdi, to reading the critics' remarks, and to playing with the cellist Yuli
Turofsky, gives J.J. a view of a professional community of musical practices and
shows the level of repertoire at which professional musicians play, a level that
J.J. is striving to attain. Her words also reflect her intention to reassure J.J. that
performing in small and intimate recitals, playing through the repertoire, and
communicating with performers and listeners (parents, friends, and colleagues)
are enjoyable and valued activities. After reading Esfir's comments, J.J.
acknowledged that she provided him with opportunities to learn the value of
appreciating works by very well-known composers such as Prokofiev or Verdi as
well as pieces by lesser-known composers, including *"cute and effective encore
pieces"* (J.J.'s email correspondence, 2003).

Esfir also commented on the pleasurable experiences of playing
with significant others, such as Yuli Turofsky. Noteworthy is that she usually
interspersed her comments with playing, singing, and gesturing, which was

evident when she shared with J.J. an enjoyable experiences she had with Yuli
Turofsky.

> *Let me see how Yuli did it . . . It's fun. I know he laughed during the*
> *concert . . . You should see we do. [I do] whatever with Yuli. We*
> *just enjoy a little bit and we know what we are talking about. [Once*
> *we played] like (. . . .) Russian who is completely drunk . . .* (Esfir
> sings, plays with one hand, and beats rhythm with the other hand
> at the same time to emulate a drunk). *"Ti . . Ya . . Barum . . Pa .*
> *. Bum . . Bum . . . . Ra . . . . Ra . Ra . Ra . Ra . Pappa»* And after
> *that I did "Ba . . . Ra"* (Esfir plays Yuli's part and sings at the same
> time to emulate the drunk) *. . . And Yuli felt (. . . .) just like . . . for*
> *fun do that, and he laughed and we couldn't stop laughing.* (J.J.,
> VTL, 1998)

Although it is sometimes difficult to describe what it feels like to play
piano, Esfir portrayed the exhilarating feeling of the performance by making an
analogy of a drunken Russian, mocking the drunk with her singing, playing, and
moving her body as if she were inebriated. Esfir was tactful in reminding J.J.,
so soon before his performance in a recital later that evening, that performing
is a pleasurable and socially meaningful activity. She reinforced that a music
community can be a place of enjoyment and pleasure given the right context,
combination of people, circumstances, and confidence. She also explained that
having a positive attitude towards performing increases the likelihood that he will
continue to participate in a community of musical practice.

Esfir spent Emily's lesson discussing the value of becoming a member
of the music community and describing the general and specific activities that

pianists are typically involved in. She acquainted Emily with piano repertoires (*sonatina*, Kuhlau) and orchestral instruments (violin, cello). She used musical terminology (*crescendo, staccato, bémol, legato*). She also familiarized Emily with the practices of singing, sight-reading, listening, and performing. For example, Esfir referred to orchestral players to explain how musicians begin or end a melodic passage when playing music from the classical period:

> *In classical music like this . . . the end of a phrase . . . just means that violin plays with just one bow. Look, they change bow . . . Let's say that this phrase is written in the orchestra for these violins. It is possible, right? So a group of violins, first violins and second violins, the whole group, thirty people, play this melody and forte . . . Do you know that violin uses bow to play? . . . So when they bow, they go down with the bow and then up. This is the way, how they produce sound. It shows [that the] composer wants all this group of notes to play with one note.* (Emily, VTL, 1998)

Esfir alternated between singing and moving her arms up and down to emulate the bowing action violinists' use when playing a legato passage to get Emily to think about how pianists structure the notes of a phrase and move their body. She also explained why string players use a particular bowing technique when playing legato passages. Esfir's use of the analogy of bowing a stringed instrument provided Emily with a visual image of the types of practices (playing, bowing), and enterprises (meeting as a group to make music to produce sound) orchestral musicians participate in. Emily's eventual explanation, "*Oh, now I get it*" (Emily, VTL, 1998), indicates that she had internalized how to represent the intended sounds in the phrase with the appropriate movements.

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In addition, Esfir was able to advance Emily's knowledge of how to play legato passages by sharing her knowledge of the different aspects of the orchestral community of musical practices. Esfir's actions support Wenger's (1998) notion of community of practice and Russell's (2002) claim that music students learn by acquiring knowledge of the practices, repertoires, and skills shared by a "larger constellation of communities of musical practices" (p. 3).

Esfir used the lesson to refresh Susan's memory of the types of meaningful social activities (playing, singing, practicing) music students participate in as they prepare for concerts and competitions. For example, Esfir did not stop practicing when Susan arrived for her lesson and while she got her music organized. Her decision to continue practicing even before Susan played a note on the piano provided Susan with a visual and aural representation of how a teacher, a respected musician and pedagogue, works and thinks through problematic areas.

Esfir also shared with Susan her knowledge of the traditional practices of performing and playing a Chopin *étude* and *scherzo*. According to musicologist Grout (1960), Chopin's music consists of a series of colorful and picturesque episodes filled with complex harmonies. In particular, his *études* are studies in technique and, at the same time, are "intensely concentrated tone poems" (Grout, 1960, p. 518). His *scherzos* are "independent pieces in which sections of a highly dramatic and gloomy character" alternate with sections that are more expressive (Apel, 1964, p. 664). Apel also claims that playing Chopin demands that pianists must focus on touch, technique, and the imaginative use of the pedal, and must play in a tempo that consists of a "slight pushing and holding back within the phrase of the right hand part while the left hand accompaniment continues in strict time" (p. 517). In the next example, Esfir explains the application of tempo when playing Chopin *Étude* (No. 8):

Feel from inside that it feels like a film that you show in slow

motion. You do (Esfir imitates Susan's playing) [You play] like

a horse running. (Esfir demonstrates what to do by playing the

passage in the traditional manner.) That has to be legato." (Susan,

VTL, 1998)

Through Esfir's imaginative explanations and demonstrations of how

to play in a tempo that evokes passion, Susan acquired a picture of the

characteristic way musicians play and approach learning Chopin *scherzos* and

began to understand the level of competency she needed to compete at the

Chopin Competition.

Developing Students' Musical Abilities

Children augment their learning potential through their interactions with

knowledgeable others (Vygotsky, 1978). Esfir not only introduced her students

to musical practices, activities, traditions, and resources, she used the lesson to

develop their musical abilities.

Esfir used comments such as *very good, very fine, improving,* and *it's*

possible to portray that she was confident in J.J.'s ability to reach his potential

and in his ability to work on his own. She also helped J.J. reach his potential

by focusing on what he could potentially do with her assistance. Typically, she

divided his lessons into different segments, each serving a different purpose

and each typically consisting of a combination of specific and global details

and instructions. In this lesson, there were eight segments: topics to be

covered, technique of pressing the keys, position of the body when playing

octaves, aesthetic aspects of the music, double octaves, strategies for dealing

with performance anxiety, intricate rhythmic passages, and phrasing. Having

commented on J.J.'s overall competency once he finished playing the Liszt *Concerto* at the beginning of the lesson, she outlined the topics they would cover throughout the remainder. She explained to J.J. that

> *We are talking about reputation of rhythm and quality of sound and vibrato and fermata. And all these emotional things are bijou . . . . And we will talk about general; things that I will like you already you . . . [to] remember not just for this concerto, for everything.* (J.J., VTL, 1998)

Esfir informed J.J. that they would focus on bringing out the small and aesthetic details (*emotional things are bijou*) in the rhythm, sound, the technique of rapidly moving from one pitch to another (*vibrato*). She also specified her expectations and insisted that he keep her comments on the small details in mind when playing during the lesson as well as when he played in other contexts. I call this form of instruction an *Everything-For-Your-Life Proposal* because she expected him to remember what she said whenever and wherever he played piano.

Esfir's interventions during the next segment of the lesson also seemed to potentially impact J.J.'s playing level. First, she appraised his ability to press the keys and then she outlined her expectations for him. She also showed him how to apply the appropriate pressure to the notes and added practical advice, such as the instruction to close his eyes so that he could feel the keys as he pressed down. She included gestures, singing, inventive narratives, metaphors, and analogies to ensure that he comprehended her instructions. For example, she drew the shape of an arc with her hand to portray that he needed to

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gradually play louder (*crescendo*). Esfir ended the lesson by foregrounding her sense of the attitude required to become an accomplished pianist:

> *So your attitude towards the first note to the very end is important. Otherwise, it's just like you are playing . . . [it as if you are] a little being shy with (. . . .) a chef d'ouevre* [master composition] or it's not a business that deserves your attention.* (J.J., VTL, 1998)

In this explanation, Esfir emphasizes that the work of the artist is to focus on the aesthetic experience throughout the performance. She also stresses that he needs to regulate his actions. She cautions J.J. to stay focused and not to hold back as he plays through his repertoire. Esfir not only reveals the importance of being focused on the music, she also points out the value of being able to play masterpieces, as well as what J.J. needs to focus on to further his musical abilities. Esfir seems to anticipate that J.J. might be tense while performing in a recital later that evening. Rather than focusing on his anxiety, she encourages him to bring himself into the world of an artist, which means to be connected moment-by-moment to the sounds as he plays the piece. As Esfir previously explained to J.J., his attitude is reflected upon the audience. She reassured him, "*They will clap, and they will love it*" (J.J., VTL, 1998).

Along with teaching Emily about the practices, repertoires, and skills shared by those in communities of music practices, Esfir focused on developing her interpretive and technical skills by guiding her through different steps. She divided Emily's lesson into nine segments, each centered on a particular focus (the roles of the student and teacher, performance anxiety, self-regulated learning), a technical skill (sight-reading, phrasing, playing complex rhythms), or an interpretive skill, and so on. In each section, she gave instructions, asked

questions, elaborated on her values and beliefs, and responded to Emily's questions.

Esfir began the lesson by commenting on Emily's sight-reading skills. Aside from pointing out that she needed to pay closer attention to reading the notes on the score, she also explained that she would help Emily improve her performance. She instructed Emily to "*read what was written there,*" to be prepared, and "*to look at the partition*" (Emily, VTL, 1998). Then she directed Emily limit herself to playing through the passage "*very quick one time, maybe a couple of times,*" being energetic, taking the time to understand what she was doing, and using her inner ears when sight-reading music. She explained that "*It takes not long*" to learn the music, but that repetitive practicing without "*understanding what you are doing*" creates anxiety and provides a "*reason for giving up and stopping*" (Emily, VTL, 1998). During the last segment of the lesson, Esfir reviewed her instructions, replayed the melody, and told Emily, "*You'll learn it if you want to get the meaning, the sense; you'll get it*" (Emily, VTL, 1998). Immediately Emily was able to play the passage, which indicates that she grasped the significance of tapping into the particular technical and interpretive skills they had worked on during the lesson. By organizing her instructions into different segments, Esfir ensured that Emily could concentrate on certain tasks and be able to complete ones that were not possible at the beginning of the lesson. Esfir's scaffolding of her instructions into different segments gives me the impression that she was aware that her advice and directions would develop Emily's practicing skills, diminish her anxiety, and increase the likelihood that she would continue piano lessons. In other words, Esfir's instructions and advice throughout the lesson enabled Emily to play at a new developmental level.

Not only did Esfir introduce Susan to the practices of playing Chopin,

she specifically developed her abilities to play Chopin's *études* and *scherzos*. To facilitate Susan's development, Esfir identified the principle areas that needed more work, provided instructions and advice, modeled what to do on the piano, and structured the learning tasks. She divided the lesson into several basic segments; each segment covered one of the following five broad topics – organizational skills, goal orientation, sound, interpretation, and performance anxiety. Her instructions at the beginning of the lesson were brief and to the point. For example, when Esfir focused the segment on how to organize her practicing, she provided the following instructions:

> "*[Practice] a little section, just one phrase, [be] attentive to how you want to go, [check] what doesn't work, . . . and after that [dedicate] a little time . . . today . . . [and] tomorrow . . . [and to do] everything to reach the richness of the goals.* (Susan, VTL, 1998)

Esfir went on to point out that the benefits of having a plan of action was that "*you know this very second what you are doing*" and that reacting impulsively usually leads to confusion and disorganization. Esfir ended this segment by touching on basic musical elements – seeing ("*eyes*"), feeling ("*hands*"), and thinking ("*brain*") that would lead her to "*reach the richness of her goals,*" which was to play at the Chopin Competition (Susan, VTL, 1998). Implicit in Esfir's comments was her intent to get Susan to recognize her goals and engage her in thinking about what to do. Directing the focus on goal-directed actions maximized and augmented Susan's learning.

Initiating Students' Self-Regulation

Self-regulated learning is "socially rooted and historically developed" (Vygotsky, 1978, p. 57). A child's ability to self-regulate his or her actions

involves a qualitative shift from being directed by a more knowledgeable adult on how to accomplish a task or tasks to gradually assuming the control of his or her actions as he or she begins to master the different aspects of the task. Adults who facilitate the development of self-regulated learning lead individuals to master their actions and to represent their own plans and ideas without their help (Vygotsky, 1981).

Esfir spent a lot of time during J.J.'s lessons developing his ability to self-regulate his learning. During this particular lesson, she commented on a pianist's kinesthetic movement of the body to develop J.J.'s ability to play octaves on his own. Noteworthy in the following example is how Esfir gets J.J. to internalize the experience of playing octaves. As she talks, she alternates between playing the piano and moving her hands towards the wall.

> *When you go to the piano it's nothing connected with pressing. You have just to go into the piano like what I'm playing now. If I want to push the piano to put it, let's say, in the (. . . .) special place (. . . .), to keep it, I will put it in this place. (Esfir stood up and moved her body and arms as if she were pushing the piano.) . . . Yeah, so when you play opus, think about that.* (J.J., VTL, 1998)

Instead of placing the emphasis on the problem of hitting incorrect notes, Esfir used words and actions to familiarize J.J. with the kinesthetic feelings associated with playing octaves. To do so, she employs the analogy of a stagehand pushing the piano into its place on the stage and uses the lesson space and the piano to symbolize how J.J. is to place his hands when playing octaves. She also uses the *I-you* pronouns to advance his ability to play octaves on his own. She uses the pronoun *I* to point out how to play octaves, what to

pay attention to, and how to move his body. She uses the pronoun *you* to get J.J. to think about the kinesthetic experience when playing octaves. One can infer that Esfir's vivid descriptions, accompanied by gestures, references to the lesson space, and encouragement to embody the feelings of playing octaves, plays a significant role in mediating J.J.'s ability to self-regulate how to play octaves. Esfir provides J.J. with the tools he needs to shift his attention away from thinking about whether he makes errors to concentrating on the kinesthetic experience of playing. Encouraging J.J. to take the initiative to think about how to move his body was timely advice and support since he was preparing to play at a concert that evening.

A major goal of Emily's lesson was to get her to be more self-motivated and directed, mainly because Esfir felt that over the previous weeks, Emily had not been practicing efficiently. Instead of berating her for her lack of effort or ability, she placed great emphasis on challenging Emily to think about what to do when practicing at home between her lessons. The following remarks from Esfir illuminate how she got Emily to play the music in rhythm:

> *Music, it's connected with time, but it's live time. It's not time like robot, like metronome . . . Try it now [with] just [the] right hand . . . Do it again. Do it like you like it . . . Do the first "fa" even softer and this note soft and after that change.* (Emily, VTL, 1998)

After she switched from providing explicit directives to prompting her to use her own discretion, Emily was able to play through the passage. However, Esfir's comments, "*You repeated it without me, and it was again mechanical,*" imply that Emily had not integrated her instructions and advice. Because Emily was not able to take charge of her actions, Esfir then shifted her emphasis from

uttering directives to explaining that although "*you know what you want [to do to play in rhythm] . . . unfortunately you always give up*" (Emily VTL, 1998). Esfir once again provided explicit instructions, which included playing the subsequent three phrases louder to build up Emily's knowledge of how to regulate her own learning, followed by advice to "*play for me showing me what you think.*" In other words, Esfir empowered Emily to discover how to play in rhythm on her own by encouraging her to tap into her prior knowledge. Esfir also went out of the room, which I believe gave Emily the privacy to work through difficult passages. Realizing that Emily had not yet grasped what to do, Esfir added more directives, explaining that "*sol diése [is] the more important note.*" It was only after this comment that Emily was able to play the passage. In other words, Esfir mediated Emily's ability to learn and self-regulate her thoughts and actions with respect to phrasing by adjusting her comments to Emily's needs. After Emily played the passage, Esfir complimented her playing and then added, "*Without my help, you cannot survive,*" which seems to indicate that Emily's ability to function independently depended on Esfir's direction.

Researchers Manturzewska (1996), Sloboda and Howe (1991), and Sosniak (1985) found that practicing is essential for those acquiring and maintaining high levels of skills. Esfir focused the majority of her instructions on helping Susan learn how to express Chopin's ideas more clearly and to practice more efficiently on her own so that she would be prepared for the prestigious competition. She outlined the general steps that would lead Susan forward. She frequently began her instructions by using the pronoun *you* and then left it to Susan to figure out the intermediary steps. For example, the utterance, "*Decide what you are doing and do that*" typifies how Esfir emphasized that it was Susan's role to create a plan of action and then to follow this plan when she practiced on her own (Susan, VTL, 1998). Esfir reiterated this directive at the

end of the lesson to ensure that Susan would practice more efficiently on her own, reminding Susan, "*When you practice, you have to plan more that it will be like this.*" Then she instructed her to "*Learn this week for next week,*" indicating that at this stage of her development Susan was now capable of working on her own (Susan, VTL, 1998). In other words, encouraging Susan to readjust her practicing routines and prompting her to create a plan of action in part provided her with the tools she needed to practice efficiently without assistance. Through her utterances and actions, Esfir developed Susan's capacity to direct her own learning and to identify what she needed to.

Esfir provided Susan with other opportunities to learn how to self-regulate her learning. For example, she left the music room at the beginning of the lesson as Susan played Chopin's Étude (No. 8) and again when she played a Chopin *scherzo*. From my perspective, leaving the room provided Susan with a private space to practice and focus on the music, and Esfir with a context to monitor whether Susan had integrated what they worked on during the previous lesson.

Attending to Students' Emotional Experiences of Performing

Performance anxiety is "a form of anxiety preceding or accompanying participation in a musical, theatrical, sporting, or other activity involving public self-presentation before an audience" (Colman, 2001). Performance anxiety can affect a musician's concentration, memory, ability to interpret the music effectively, or confidence (Brotons, 1994). Although some stress when performing is inevitable, and indeed may be desirable, musicians who experience excessive stress often become so discouraged that they give up their performance career (Brotons, 1994; Ely, 1991).

The next excerpt shows how Esfir helped J.J. prepare to cope emotionally with the challenges and joys of performing and playing piano. Her instructions

here focus on practical and formal ways of coping with the stress of performing:

> *Maybe you'll relax today because otherwise you will have too many things. (J.J. gets ready to write.) Actually [there] are two things . . . It's necessary not just to think (. . .), but to control your, to control (. . . .) your (. . . .) thought. The thing is that [you need] (. . . .) to think. Of course, you think . . . But yeah, (. . . .) you deserve it (Esfir points to J.J.) because, it's first of all [a] very serious piece. And, I don't want to always (. . . .) be (. . . .) the mother, especially Jewish mother.* (J.J., VTL, 1998)

To center and focus J.J. on the performance later that evening, Esfir provided him with the knowledge he needed to deal with his emotions during the performance. In a nurturing and reassuring manner, Esfir helped J.J. grapple with his anxiety by providing him with strategies on how to tackle stress. Instead of focusing on wrong notes, Esfir encouraged J.J. to relax and be in contact with his thoughts and feelings about the intensity of the music – music that she values. She also directed his attention to their social-friendship bond. As she reminded J.J., spoon-feeding would not prepare him to deal with stressful situations when she is not there to help him. In Vygotskian terms, Esfir's symbolic representation of which purposeful actions to pursue on his own and their social-friendship bond seem to be intended to help J.J. cope with his emotions.

In her feedback, Esfir rarely paid attention to incorrect notes or faulty body movements. Instead, she encouraged J.J. to think about his relationship with the piano, with the aesthetic aspects of the music, and with himself:

Rely on your feelings and comfort with the piano . . . as well

because sometimes you do too many, too many extra absolutely

necessary movements because you think that it's far . . . You'll

have to look for silence and serenity. You play it better in this case

because we are all excited . . . and we need, every day, we need

to be alone with the music . . . [and] in good contact with yourself.
(J.J., VTL, 1998)

Esfir helped J.J. grapple with his fear of playing incorrect notes by

directing him on how to focus his attention on relaxing and how to concentrate

on being in contact with the composer's music. Rather than focusing on the

problem of playing wrong notes, she encouraged him to find a secluded space

where he could detach himself from his everyday interruptions and stressors,

an environmental place and ethos where he could focus on musical elements,

structures, and general expressive elements in the music. Also significant

here is Esfir's emphasis on exploring spaces where he could differentiate his

feelings of exhilaration that would excite him to continue his musical studies

from debilitating impulses. Esfir's underlying message seems to be that for

musicians, the pursuit of musical goals is in part due to the pleasant feelings

evoked when one concentrates on the music. Vygotsky (1971) claimed that the

aesthetic response to a work of art combined with the encouragement to focus

on realizing, recognizing, and feeling contrasting emotions, as well as on the

rhythm and melodies, "forces us to strive beyond our life towards all that lies

beyond it" (p. 253).

Esfir created a long-term plan that J.J. could use to cope with the tension

of performing. For example, in this excerpt, she instructs him to change his

attitude towards performing and learning the different passages in the music:

Today . . . try to (. . . .) to rework that because if you don't decide

that, if the decision doesn't come from you, from you, from inside,

I cannot help that. And, it's possible to do that. We all pass this in

different periods. We all pass this. Of course, you can tell yourself

(. . .) "Okay, relax!" You will open your mouth a little bit and

it will help you. Put your shoulders down. It will help you. (J.J.,

VTL, 1998)

Esfir advised J.J. to be proactive when figuring out what to do when he had difficulty learning the music. She encouraged him to immediately take his time to reflect on the problematic areas in the music before practicing, and suggested that he itemize his plan of action. In addition, she devised a series of physiological strategies that J.J. could draw on while performing that would ease his tension, such as breathing through his mouth and lowering his shoulders before carrying out his plan-of-action. These forms of technical advice are what professionals know about and rely on in a community of musical practice to reduce their performance anxiety.

Esfir also proceeded on the assumption that J.J. was capable of making his own decisions as to what to practice and how to do it. She encouraged him to decide how he wanted to interpret the music. As well, she pointed out that most students do not take the time to create a plan of action, but over time, most students learn to identify strategies to alleviate debilitating tension. Therefore, teaching J.J. how to control his emotions by appropriating behaviors that could diminish his tension increased the likelihood that J.J. would be able to self-regulate his emotions.

Esfir also concentrated on helping Emily cope with her anxiety and

frustrations over playing music that was challenging, as she did during J.J.'s lesson, she. Esfir did not yell at Emily for being unprepared or for not playing up to her potential. Esfir rarely focused on the notes that Emily played incorrectly. Instead, she used words, such as *energetic, mechanical, angry, droopy, soft, light,* and *beautiful* to describe the character of the music.

Esfir talked about the expressive aspects of the music and the enjoyment of playing. She emphasized that playing piano is *"much more than rhythm and notes . . . It's getting into the music that's important."* She frequently used descriptive adjectives and abstract nouns, such as *enjoyable, happiness, love* to help Emily be in tune with the expressive aspects of music, and to convey the excitement of performing. Esfir created stories to make the emotional experience of being with the music come alive and to get Emily in touch with the pleasure of playing piano. For example, Esfir described the inexplicable magic and feelings of *"joy and happiness"* when you suddenly come *"out of a house that you have been locked in for all your life"* to explain why hearing the expressive aspects of the music makes her passionate about playing piano (Emily, VTL, 1998).

Esfir offered Emily suggestions about what to do when she felt anxious about making mistakes. For example, she recommended that Emily focus more on the music and break the problematic areas into smaller and more manageable increments. Esfir also created the following metaphor as a strategy to help Emily visualize how to deal with performance anxiety:

> You have to know where to play left hand on which notes. Imagine a mountain and you are walking next to the mountain. All of a sudden, you see a large stone just rolling down. It's such a danger. It can kill you . . . So what do you prefer, to close your eyes, to put maybe [your hands] in your head to protect yourself? Probably it's

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better to watch this stone to the very end. If it's necessary, at the

last moment, just stop just to move . . . [and] look at this danger

directly in the eyes of the danger. (Emily, VTL, 1998)

When musicians are tense, their muscles often contract (Storr, 1992). Emily confessed to me before her lesson that she was tense because she had not practiced that week. Esfir was aware that when Emily played through this particular passage, her left hand was hitting the wrong notes because of her tension. To help alleviate the stress, she instructed Emily to visualize the notes in the left hand passage as she played through the entire passage and to remain focused on the music instead of acting impulsively. When Emily played the passage Esfir complimented her, but she also asked her to "*be more positive*" when she replayed it to encourage Emily to perform with confidence. It seems that providing Emily with a visual picture of how to deal with a threatening and dangerous situation, instructing her to focus on the music, and encouraging her to take risks, enabled her to replay the section with competency.

Boardman (2001) claims that learning is "an interactive enterprise where all dimensions [action, cognition, and emotion] of the whole learner function simultaneously and synergistically" (p. 7). Esfir did not directly specify how to cope with the emotional demands of performing. She approached emotional issues from a holistic perspective, which was to talk about the benefits of focusing simultaneously on being sensitive to feeling what was inherent in the music and recognizing the expressive content in Chopin's music. For example, during Susan's lesson, she referred to the auditory/affective experience by explaining, "*If something's not right, it's because we have feelings.*" She also indirectly tapped into a whole range of emotions to make Susan more aware of the expressive content in the music by creating inventive descriptions (Susan,

VTL, 1998). The following analogy of a frightened dog is an example of how Esfir aroused Susan's emotions:

> *You are like a little dog who wants to bite, but is so afraid [that] he hides. He stays next to the voiture and he just goes a little yap, yap, yap . . . So don't do this. You are a real dog and a wild dog. Yeah. You don't grrr. You don't prepare yourself to bite like grrr.* (Susan, VTL, 1998)

Esfir's use of sensory stimuli was intended to help Susan get in touch with her emotions and internalize how to play with more energy, assuredness, and expression. Highlighting how to evoke the expressive elements in the music was particularly significant since Chopin's music is known for its romantic expressionism (Menuhin & Davis, 1979). Esfir also used this analogy to show Susan how to alleviate her performance anxiety. She instructed Susan to be more prepared and take chances rather than being stymied by music that is challenging.

Esfir's use of visual and auditory stimuli familiarized Susan with the expressive qualities of the music. Her instructions and explanations on how to play, think, and feel helped Susan integrate the expressive qualities in her playing. For example, after Esfir told Susan that the music is *"like a beautiful . . . crochet,"* she was able to bring out the intertwining melodies. Similarly, Esfir's vivid explanation of the ying (*jolly, joke, playful, fun*), and yang (*dramatic, sarcastic*) of playing scherzo facilitated Susan's ability to play through this passage with more seriousness and playfulness. Consider what she tells Susan in this excerpt:

[It's] so dramatic, so jolly. Because of joke and staccato, it's like

opposites . . . So this is most sarcastic. Yeah [more] than a joke

. . . Scherzo is so fun thing sometimes. It's really playful as well.

(Susan, VTL, 1998)

After Susan replayed this phrase, Esfir acknowledged her improvement

("*In this section, you understood what I mean*"). One can also infer that Esfir's

emphasis on the expressive aspects of Chopin's music enabled Susan to play

with more feeling.

Use of Language during Students' Piano Lessons

Speakers use different modes of communication to channel information

and meanings to others (Halliday, 1978). From a Hallidayian perspective,

use of language during music lessons serves many functions. This proved to

be true during the lessons I observed. In this section, I refer to and provide

specific examples of the different modes of language Esfir used during the

three students' lessons and the function of her utterances. I note how she used

verbal language (**TALK**) and non-verbal language, including vocalized sounds

(**SING**), gestures (**GESTURE**), demonstrations on the piano (**PLAY**), and writing

(**WRITE**), to provide the students with the knowledge they needed to become

competent pianists and to develop their ability to make decisions on their own. I

also describe how Esfir typically used proposals to elicit actions, propositions to

stimulate thinking, and appraisals to assess their playing.

As the examination of what transpired during J.J.'s, Emily's, and Susan's

piano lessons shows, there are certain consistencies in the way Esfir used

language. Esfir used talking, listening, vocalizing different sounds, singing,

making gestures, and playing. She alternated between uttering proposals,

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propositions, and appraisals. Esfir's use of proposals, propositions, and appraisals drew attention to her regulative role and her authoritative knowledge of the music. Proposals, propositions, and appraisals were used to develop her students' musical expertise, to expand their potential ability to play piano, and to promote their ability to self-regulate their actions. In general, her proposals, propositions, appraisals were either clear-cut statements, or were embedded in narratives, metaphors, analogies, gestures, or sounds.

Use of Language during J.J.'s Lesson

During J.J.'s lesson Esfir, regularly used different modes of language to delineate the particular areas and topics they needed to pay attention to. For example, she circled the notes on his score and pointed out that *"pressing this key [like this] creates some problems . . . The sound effect is a bad effect. Our hands are getting tired"* (J.J., VTL, 1998). At other times during the lesson, Esfir alternated between talking to pointing to particular areas on J.J.'s music score, to standing behind him, to watching as he played through different sections of his repertoire. For example, after J.J. completed playing a very long and intricate phrase she told him, *"You have to begin to divide your energy for that [phrase]. When you play this, don't give everything. Be clever here"* (J.J., VTL, 1998). As she talked she pointed to the place on the score to make sure that J.J. knew the exact place where he had to tone down his liveliness.

Esfir also shifted between talking, listening, vocalizing different sounds, singing, making gestures, and playing the piano. The following example shows how Esfir wove back and forth between speaking, making gestures, and singing during the segment of this lesson that focused on the technique of playing octaves. Esfir began by playing one note; at the same time, she uttered the following instruction: *"You just put [your body] in this direction, into the piano,*

exactly there and after that there, etcetera. Don't press [the note] after playing."
She followed this instruction with a second instruction to *"just [move your body
in the] direction [of the piano]."* At the same time as she talked, she pushed her
left hand towards the wall and played the right hand. She ended this segment
by commenting, *"It's very new for you"* (J.J., VTL, 1998). However, after he
replayed the segment, she instructed J.J. to "lean a little bit through the piano,
hand like this . . . like this hand" and then she added singing: **"Da . . Da . . Da . .
Di . . Da . . Da . . Da"** to be sure that he was aware of what to do. After repeating
this sequence two more times, she listened to J.J. play through the passage.
Then she remarked: *"This is better,"* thus letting him know that he grasped the
concept of playing octaves. Next she moved on to another topic – specifically,
how to play triplets in time (the ability to play three notes of equal duration in the
time allotted for two). J.J.'s ability to internalize how to play octaves and triplets
was mediated by Esfir's use of talking, singing, making gestures, and playing the
piano.

Esfir's use of Proposals during J.J.'s Lesson: Esfir regularly uttered
proposals. She used proposals to instruct, declare, or demand that J.J. execute,
alter, or discard particular technical, sensorial, or interpretive musical operations.
J.J. usually followed Esfir's proposals with an action. For example, when Esfir
uttered, *"Think about jumping there,"* J.J. responded by playing through the
section. She also uttered proposals to provide J.J. with a model of how to
proceed at that moment (*"You will find that now. Look!"*), or in the future (*"At
home, just practice with closed eyes"*). She used proposals as a tool to pass on
musical cultural and historical norms and to familiarize him with the general and
specific tasks and rules of playing piano, such as western musical traditions,
practices, and operations. For example, after explaining, *"This is the way to*

play these octaves [and] Chopin as well," Esfir's specific instruction to J.J. was to *"unite several notes . . . Remember I told you unite more to the whole body"* (J.J., VTL, 1998). Their purpose was to advance J.J.'s musical ability. When J.J. replayed the octaves, Esfir commented, *"Okay, Good,"* indicating that he had made progress. In the following example, Esfir directs J.J. unequivocally, *"You have to learn [how to play with less tension]"* (J.J., VTL. 1998).

Some of the topics that Esfir covered by uttering *proposals* during the lesson included the following:

> Relaxation techniques – Esfir instructed J.J. to think about *"body comfort plus . . . feeling about where are your hands"* so that he would be more relaxed (J.J., VTL, 1998).

> The logistics of practicing – For example, Esfir declared that to learn how to phrase the section, she wanted J.J. to *"Try it by section, little sections"* (J.J., VTL, 1998).

> The interpretation of the music – For example, Esfir directed J.J. to execute the appropriate dynamics and tempo. She told him to play *"A bit more on the piano. Piano always to that part [and] practice it slower"* (J.J., VTL, 1998).

At times, Esfir uttered proposals that specifically required J.J. to adopt, honor, or carry out a specific plan of action or musical operation at that moment and in the context of the lesson. I categorized these proposals as *Specific-Tasks-Proposals.* Consider the next example when Esfir used a *Specific-Tasks-Proposal* to direct J.J. to readjust his arm movement and focus of attention:

Take what I (. . . .) _____, even if it connects, it connects with the
end of bars (. . . .) not just the end of the phrase. But pay attention
in the end of each bar . . . Finally, if you organize your brain for that
and your attention, it doesn't take more time. Or even if it takes a
little bit more, it's just better . . . [to] use the weight of, to use the
weight of your arm, even the whole half part . . . top part of your
body. (J.J., VTL, 1998)

After instructing J.J. to phrase the entire section, she switched her emphasis to pointing out what J.J. was required to do, which was to remain focused until the last note of the phrase was played, and to use his body to help him connect the sounds. Not only did Esfir demonstrate her expert knowledge, she stressed that altering his physical equilibrium would most likely produce a more desirable sound when he performed later that evening. In addition, her use of *Specific-Tasks-Proposals* provided a bridge between his ability to play piano and his conceptual development of how to press the piano keys. Esfir focused on more than how to execute specific operations, such as realigning J.J.'s hand position or how to play double octaves.

Another way in which Esfir used proposals was to instruct J.J. on how to carry out her directives at different times, in other formats, and /or in different contexts. I categorized these proposals as *Everything-for-Your-Life-Proposals*. *Everything-for-Your-Life-Proposals* are generally less formal and technical than *Specific-Tasks-Proposals*. *Everything-for-Your-Life-Proposals* focused on informing him of the traditional western musical practices. In addition, *Everything-for-Your-Life-Proposals* are more complex than *Specific-Tasks-Proposals*. The intention of the *Everything-for-Your-Life-Proposal* as illustrated in this next excerpt was to get J.J. to devise his own plan of action whenever he

practiced on his own and felt tension building up:

> *Stop . . . more often without waiting a long time. Just cut off and say, 'I'm okay'. The best thing is to preview that finally [when practicing], not when you are already tense. One day before taking the piano, you can put it like on your wall. (J.J., VTL, 1998)*

Prior to uttering this *Everything-for-Your-Life-Proposal*, Esfir concentrated on discussing the tension of performing. She provided pointers on how to move his fingers into the notes and how to play with a more sensitive touch. The intention of Esfir's use of this *Specific-Tasks-Proposal* was for J.J. to change his approach to practicing whenever he felt tense. This is an interesting example of how she used a *Specific-Tasks-Proposal* to get J.J. to reflect on her comments, thoughts, and actions at another time, such as at home while practicing, or when he felt stressed. This may have been an especially useful strategy as he prepared for the recital later that evening.

Although Esfir uttered many proposal statements during J.J.'s piano lesson, she uttered fewer *Specific-Tasks-Proposals* than *Everything-for-Your-Life-Proposals*. The infrequency of *Specific-Tasks-Proposals* may reflect J.J.'s familiarity with his repertoire. He was about to perform in a recital later that evening, and the frequency of *Everything-for-Your-Life-Proposals* may be due to Esfir's knowledge and belief that if she could get J.J. to think about managing his own progress, he would be less concerned about playing incorrect notes and would focus more on the music.

Esfir's use of Propositions during J.J.'s Lesson: Esfir used a significant number of propositions during J.J.'s lesson. She uttered more propositions than proposals. In general, propositions were not specifically action-eliciting. She

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used them as a way to explain a particular strategy or a way of thinking. Esfir covered a variety of topics, all of which focused on expanding J.J.'s knowledge about traditional western musical practices, and which would help him master his own actions and to make his own decisions. Propositions seemed to enhance J.J.'s ability to prepare for stressful, novel, and undirected situations. As J.J. commented during his interviews, Esfir's advice on how to cope with the personal and technical demands of playing and performing played a central role in his decision to pursue a musical career. According to Lazarus (1991), individuals who believe that they you can manage personal and environmental demands and challenges are likely to continue pursuing their goals.

The aim of a given proposition was to provide J.J. with a model of how he could practice on his own. Esfir's propositions presented J.J. with an over-all plan, idea, operation, and behavior that he could choose to employ during the lesson or while playing or practicing on his own:

> *[We] never change the goal; even if it's not good . . . You can*
> *change manners, fashion to go to this goal, the way how you work.*
> *But don't change a goal because sometimes we start to work on*
> *something. It does not work and we change it.* (J.J., VTL, 1998)

Esfir explained to J.J. the importance of setting his own goals, never straying from his original objective, and only changing the approach to the goal when necessary. Although it appeared that Esfir was referring to whatever they were working on at the time, I believe that she also expected J.J. to apply her advice in other situations and contexts, especially when practicing at home.

Esfir used propositions to expand J.J.'s musical knowledge. The following vignette illustrates how she used analogy to acquaint J.J. with the practice of

interpreting and playing the unfolding themes in the development section of Liszt's *Piano Concerto*:

> *It's a development all through, you know, all over this. I can compare that with a brochette . . . You know you have many pieces of meat and some that goes inside it. You cannot use this inside part . . . It's something really [that goes] in this direction, horizontal direction.* (J.J., VTL, 1998)

The analogy explains how the composer wove the thematic material into different segments and fragments. She provided J.J. with a visual image of how the musical themes continuously moved through this section of the piece. The analogy provides a context for J.J. to lift out the unfolding themes as he plays through the concerto.

Esfir also used the analogy of a black jazz musician to provide J.J. with an idea of the type of free flowing movements that were required to effectively play double octaves. She explained, "[*When you*] *do two octaves it's so close. And it's possible [to play] just like, um, you know, black people*" (J.J., VTL, 1998). To make her point, she moved her body as she played a group of octaves to symbolize that she was listening and dancing to jazz. The imagery of Esfir's words seemed to awaken and rouse J.J.'s ability to play double octaves. After J.J. played this section, Esfir proclaimed, "*Yes. You see [what to do]. You feel the difference in the sound. [It's] better,*" acknowledging that there was an improvement in how he played double octaves from when they started working on this section. She also let him know that by internalizing her words he able to notice the difference. In other words, Esfir's creative use of symbolism was a useful tool in leading J.J. towards his ZPD.

Esfir used two types of propositions, *Instrumental Propositions* and *Relationship Propositions*. Esfir's use of *Instrumental Propositions* and *Relationship Propositions* were intended to expand J.J.'s musical knowledge, to empower him to use this knowledge, and to enable him to gain control over what he did during the lesson, or on his own. *Instrumental Propositions* acted as a means to explain formal and informal musical and behavioral elements of the activity or to identify musical terminology, to inform J.J. of the available music activities and resources, and to point out her beliefs and values. Esfir used *Instrumental Propositions* to expand J.J.'s knowledge of how to begin and end a phrase:

> *It's like, it doesn't matter how you finish, how you, yah_____. But, (. . .) if you compare that with the person who comes for the first time to the house, um (. . .), I don't know what is more important, to make an impression when you just arrive or when you leave. Both are important.* (J.J., VTL, 1998)

Because Esfir was aware that J.J. did not grasp how to shape the beginning and the ending of the melodic passage they were working on, she created an analogy of a person coming and leaving the house so that J.J. would have a more vivid image of the how to begin and end the phrase. J.J. could have refuted Esfir's advice this time. However, as he usually did, he followed her suggestion. Although Esfir assumed a regulative role, her use of an *Instrumental Propositions* suggests that she believed that J.J. would gradually internalize her words so that he could regulate his own movements.

Esfir used a significant number of *Relationship Proposition* to differentiate her role from her students' roles, emphasizing that she would provide

information on how to carry out musical actions and that J.J.'s responsibility was to carry out actions. Esfir put a lot of energy into signaling to J.J. how to create his own plan of action. The following example illustrates this point:

> *Unite several notes . . . Remember; I told you unite more up to the whole body. So (. . . .) em (. . . .) even you can . . . And you will want to play one phrase uniting many notes, several bars . . . It sounds better if you are watching and it's a pleasure. You play it better in this case . . . Because we are all excited and talking to friends . . . we need, every day, we need to be alone with music . . . [and] just keep silent and just be (. . . .) ah (. . . .) hum (. . . .) in good contact with yourself and after that we can tell something.*
> (J.J., VTL, 1998)

Not only did Esfir explicitly inform J.J. what to do when phrasing the notes, such as to use his body as a tool to help him connect the notes of the phrase, she also provided a few general pointers that he could think about when playing melodic phrases. Her use of the pronoun *you* seemed to emphasize what needed more focus, such as paying attention to the movement of his elbows and hands, finding a quiet place to think without interruptions, and getting in touch with his feelings. It would seem that Esfir was aware of J.J.'s competencies and his ability to figure out what to do on his own; but she recognized that he still needed her assistance, especially when shaping melodic phrases. Therefore, she selected explanations and tasks that were appropriate for his level of ability. However, getting J.J. personally to experience what it was like to reflect on the music led him to have more control over what he played. Her technique of setting tasks and following up by allowing him to make his own

discoveries played a crucial role in developing his potential musical ability, and strengthened his ability to regulate and direct his own behavior.

Esfir's use of Appraisals during J.J.'s Lesson: Esfir frequently used appraisals to evaluate the general quality of J.J.'s playing abilities and performances. She used *Value Judgment Appraisals* to assess J.J.'s general performance and to call his attention to general or specific details and areas that needed additional work. Esfir repeatedly used words like *good, very good, very fine, very well,* and *very bad.* For instance, after J.J. played through the Khatcheturian, she acknowledged his ability to master the tasks she had set out for him to work on the previous week. She remarked, "*You play at least this piece like good, okay*" (J.J., VTL, 1998). Esfir also used *Comparative Appraisals.* She used *Comparative Appraisals* to evaluate J.J.'s general level of mastery in comparison to his past performances.

Esfir's Creative Use of Language during J.J.'s Lesson: The following examples illustrate that Esfir not only pointed out problematic areas and compared his playing to his past performances; she used various modes of communication (**SING, PLAY,** and **TALK**) and metaphors. For example, she alternated singing (*"Dee . . Ya . . Dee . . Ya . . Da"*) with demonstrating how she expected him to play the passage. She spoke as he played a few notes, looked at the piano keyboard, and continued playing. She told him, "*J.J., J.J., now you did not connect the more important thing for each one for example*" (J.J., VTL, 1998). Then she asked me to turn off the tape recorder. I noted in my observational memos (1998) that J.J. had not yet grasped what to do when I resumed videotaping. It was then that Esfir told J.J.:

[It's] *for nothing! It's just like a little house of hens. You know*

(. . . .) "La . . La . . La . . La . . La" early in the morning and (???)

all awake (. . . .) Yeah. They don't know what happened. (J.J.,

VTL, 1998)

Esfir's figurative language ("*a little house of hens*") created a vivid picture of his disorganized rendition of the beginning and ending of this particular phrase. Not only did her image indicate that his playing was not up to his usual level of performance, her choice of words reflected his particular ability to tap into his imagination. I observed that it was only then that he was able to play this section in the appropriate style. From a Vygotskian perspective, Esfir used *Comparative Appraisals* to identify what J.J. could achieve with her support and guidance, and enabled him to achieve his potential ability. J.J. remarked during his interview that this particular utterance was effective in getting him to internalize Esfir's interpretive approach to the music. As Vygotsky (2000) maintains, "a word is a microcosm of human consciousness" (p. 256).

Use of Language during Emily's Lesson

The manner in which Esfir used language during Emily's lesson was similar to J.J's lesson. She regularly overlapped and switched between talking, singing, playing, and gesturing to foster Emily's conceptual and psychological development. For example, after Emily played through the beginning section of a Kuhlau *Sonatina*, she evaluated what needed additional work by alternating between using **"TALK"** (*You cannot separate these two notes*), **"GESTURE"** (*Pointing to the spot on the score where she already wrote comments two lessons ago*), and "**SING**" (*"Da . . Di . . Di . . Do . . Do"*) (Emily, VTL, 1998). Then she sang, and at the same time bent her body and moved her arms.

Esfir's use of Proposals during Emily's Lesson: In exploring how Esfir used proposals during Emily's lesson, as she did with J.J., she focused her proposals on what and when to execute, alter, or discard an action or actions. Esfir covered a wide variety of topics, such as how to execute technical operations (*"react from the change of arms [and] link without losing tempo!"*), and when to play (*go, stop*) (Emily, VTL, 1998). Emily usually responded by nodding in agreement, singing, or playing through the passage.

I noted that Esfir also used *Specific-Tasks-Proposals* to regulate how to carry out a particular musical operation or plan of action during the lesson and *Every-Thing-For-Your-Life-Proposals* to regulate how to carry out the instructions in the future and in other contexts as she did with J.J. After Esfir uttered a *Specific-Tasks-Proposal*, Emily usually adopted or honored the specific plan of action during the lesson. For example, when Esfir directed Emily to "*try to do doh, to think about it*", Emily immediately responded by humming the music.

Wertsch (1984) claims that shifting from explicit directives to vague hints enables children to perform learning tasks independently and without adult support. In the following *Every-Thing-For-Your-Life-Proposal*, Esfir instructs Emily how to organize her practicing at home when working on a difficult passage. She told her at the end of the lesson, *"Limit yourself. Do it quick one time, maybe a couple of times. That's it!"* (Emily, VTL, 1998). Although Esfir stipulated what she expected Emily to do in this *Every-Thing-For-Your-Life-Proposal*, she did not always specify how Emily was to practice. It is interesting to note that unlike J.J.'s lesson where Esfir regularly used *Every-Thing-For-Your-Life-Proposals*, during Emily's lesson most of the *Every-Thing-For-Your-Life-Proposals* were uttered towards the end of a lesson, which suggests that Esfir believed that Emily had developed the ability to make decisions about how to

practice on her own. It seems that uttering *Specific-Tasks-Proposals*, which are explicit directives, at the beginning of lesson developed Emily's ability to play through problematic sections in her repertoire and play within her zone of ability. Switching to uttering *Every-Thing-For-Your Life Proposals* towards the end of the lesson suggests that Esfir felt her support and guidance during the lesson had provided Emily with the knowledge she needed to perform tasks with only a few vague hints.

Esfir's use of Propositions during Emily's Lesson: As pointed out during J.J.'s lesson, Esfir used propositions more often than proposals. She used propositions to clarify, summarize, and elaborate on musical topics. For example, she explained the benefits of paying attention to fingering ("*The third finger is much stronger than the second and fourth*").

In particular, Esfir used *Instrumental Propositions* to introduce and develop Emily's understanding of musical terminology (*sonatina, mf, bémol, diése*) and musical activities (playing orchestral instruments). She also used *Instrumental Propositions* to outline specific and general strategies that Emily could refer to when sight-reading, practicing, or playing challenging passages. For example, Esfir created a narrative to help Emily play through a passage with intricate polyrhythmic patterns. Playing a passage with polyrhythms requires coordinating "strikingly contrasting rhythms in difference parts of the music fabric" at the same time (Apel, 1964, p. 593). It is my experience that students who attempt to play a polyrhythmic passage for the first time find this task daunting. To develop Emily's ability to play three notes of equal duration per beat in one hand at the same time as she played four notes in the same interval with the other hand, Esfir told her to think about how a person could shove her hand through the center of a wheel while it continues to rotate without being injured.

At the same time, she moved closer to Emily, looked directly at her, moved one arm in a circular, and drew an imaginary straight line with the other arm to emulate how to proceed. Then she played the passage and uttered "*Whoosh*" to give Emily a visual and auditory rendition of the concept. After Emily played through this passage, Esfir uttered, "*Perfect*" (Emily, VTL, 1998). Esfir's creative use of an *Instrumental Proposition* mediated Emily's ability to grasp the concept of playing intricate rhythmic passages with clarity and control.

When Esfir uttered *Relationship Propositions*, she regularly used *you*, *I*, and *we* to designate the teacher and the student's individual and collaborative roles as she did during J.J.'s lesson. For example, she told Emily, "*I will help you. We will do it together . . . I am trying to show, to help you know what to do during practice*" (Emily, VTL, 1998). Not only did Esfir advise Emily that she intended to select strategies for how to practice, she explained that they both assumed a regulative and collaborative role in orchestrating a plan of action. This example also illustrates that uttering *Relationship Propositions* can have practical significance. *Relationship Propositions* provided a framework for expanding Emily's ability to work on her own.

Esfir's use of Appraisals during Emily's Lesson: Esfir used appraisals in a similar way to they way she did during J.J.'s lesson. She used *Value Judgment Appraisals* to assess Emily's general performance or effort. Her comments ranged between *perfectly*, *okay*, *good*, *not so bad*, to *very bad* (Emily, VTL, 1998). She uttered *Value Judgment Appraisals* to point out problematic areas that Emily needed to pay attention to at that moment, or at another time and setting. Some of the problematic areas Esfir focused on during the lesson were Emily's attitude ("*You don't trust yourself*"), reading skills ("*You do not know what is a mistake or not . . . You have no idea [where] to put this poor doh*"), and intonation ("*It's not positive*") (Emily, VTL, 1998).

Esfir also used a significant number of *Comparative Appraisals*, which were used to compare Emily's current performance or actions to her other students, Emily's level of competency before the lesson, or how she anticipated Emily would play in the future. In the following example, Esfir compares Emily's progress in learning a Kuhlau sonatina to her other students:

> *This upsets me very much . . . You are so stubborn like nobody else in my class. And it is just one little thing, just one little thing. I can see the problem in that you prefer to repeat it for me so many times without looking at that, without understanding what you are playing.* (Emily, VTL, 1998)

Esfir was not shy about telling Emily that she was not progressing. Esfir's concern was that Emily was responding to her comments and instructions without thinking through what they had discussed in previous lessons when she worked on her own. However, rather than identifying incorrect notes, Esfir insisted that Emily needed to consciously and deliberately think through her plan. Esfir then left the room. When she returned, Emily was able to play through the passage more competently. Esfir's leaving the room not only provided Emily with a space to think and practice by herself, it also provided her with an opportunity to develop her ability to self-regulate her learning. From a Vygotskian perspective, Esfir used *Comparative Appraisals* to encourage Emily to internalize her remarks and to function independently.

Esfir's Creative Use of Language during Emily's Lesson: Teachers who form "multiple representations of knowledge of a piece of music" mediate the improvement of their student's level of performance (Sloboda, 1993, p. 91). Esfir

regularly used colorful language (metaphors, narratives, analogies, anecdotes) during Emily's lesson. She covered a wide variety of themes, such as practicing skills, performance anxiety, and playing intricate rhythmic passages. While the issue of practicing is a problem for most musicians, "most musicians probably expend the majority of their musical time and effort on rehearsal" (Sloboda, 1993, p. 90). Esfir shared an anecdote with Emily from her personal experience to explain how all musicians experience practicing difficulties:

> *You know that when I was younger, I did not have a piano at all and I was already a professional musician . . . I could only practice night time in this little club with upright piano that was awful. And I had already a little baby and I worked. I had three to four jobs . . . I was a student in Moscow Conservatory and I lived 120 kilometers, which took me three hours to get there. And just using the time on the train, I learned by heart Bach and everything just by looking at it. . . Okay, now we will do the same. You are on the train now. You do not have piano . . . Just in the train [with] all the people around, some eat, some sleep, some talk bad words and everything, whatever happens you are out of this situation. You are inside your business. Okay, so do it!* (Emily, VTL, 1998)

To encourage Emily to be more productive during practicing, Esfir referred to her own experience as a music student to portray that music students can learn in any context, even those that are atypical, such as she experienced in Russia. She explained that students could maximize their practice time by finding the space to stay focused on their goals as they rehearsed their music. She also emphasized that even when rehearsal contexts and conditions are

not ideal, students can learn by reading through the music and thinking about their tasks, and how to carry out the tasks. Esfir's actions are consistent with Wertsch's (1985) claim that the primary motive in learning is to be directed to a goal.

When Emily finished replaying this section, Esfir acknowledged her improvement. It seemed that Esfir's portrayal of her hard life as a young mother, professional musician, and student at the Moscow University combined with her imaginative instructions on how to block out all auditory and visual interference provided Emily with a visual picture of how to practice on her own. It seems that highlighting the human element focused Emily on playing within her ZPD.

Use of Language during Susan's lesson

Esfir frequently overlapped an utterance with singing, playing, or gesturing to shape Susan's learning, as she did during J.J. and Emily's lessons. Esfir, for example, familiarized Susan with the musical concepts of phrasing and the release of sound by playing piano at the same time as she told her, "*This [is the] preparation,*" and then sang *"Dah . . Ti"* (Susan, VTL, 1998). She also waved her arms as if she were a maestro cuing orchestral musicians as Susan replayed the section. Providing Susan with an aural and visual picture of how and where to accent the notes increased the likelihood that she would play this section with more competence.

Esfir's use of Proposals during Susan's Lesson: Again, proposals were generally terse statements. Proposals were instructions or commands that focused mainly on how to carry out actions and tasks needed to play Chopin such as pedaling. For example, Esfir instructed her on the physiological mechanics of playing ("*Put your hand [in a manner so that it is] comfortable*

when you start fa"), how to express the music (*"Be more demanding in this part, this passage"*), and what to play (*"Start from fa"*) (Susan, VTL, 1998).

Esfir used a significantly greater number of proposals than propositions and appraisals in contrast to her lessons with J.J. and Emily. Esfir usually did not elaborate on how Susan should follow her instructions or fill in the intricate details. Susan usually followed a proposal by playing the piano or responding verbally. Susan regularly interrupted Esfir in mid sentence, which indicates that just hearing Esfir's instruction was enough to trigger her awareness and understanding of what to do.

As indicated during J.J. and Emily's lessons, Esfir used *Specific-Tasks-Proposals* to instruct Susan to carry out musical operations or actions immediately during the lesson that were specific for that piece (*"Not now! Don't play together"* [Susan, VTL, 1998]). Esfir uttered *Everything-for-your-Life-Proposals* to direct Susan to apply her instructions during the lesson as well as in other circumstances, contexts, and time frames. For instance, Esfir explained what Susan should do on an ongoing basis:

> *We will organize this to make a little section, just one phrase. Be attentive to how you want it to go. Check what doesn't work. After that dedicate a little, a little time not just that today you will do like this. Tomorrow you will do like this. You will do everything to reach the richness of the goal.* (Susan, VTL, 1998)

Esfir instructed Susan to create a plan of action whenever she practiced, which was during the lesson and outside the studio, especially at home. She also expected her to apply this strategy to the other pieces in her repertoire. From my knowledge and experience, following Esfir's advice would increase the

probability that Susan would fulfill her goals.

Esfir's use of Propositions during Susan's Lesson: Overall, Esfir used propositions to expand Susan's knowledge of musical concepts, including phrasing and tonality. She used *Instrumental Propositions* to explain cultural (musical terminology), technical (body movement), and interpretive (dynamics) issues. For example, to expand Susan's knowledge of the term *Scherzo*, Esfir explained:

> *The main translation of scherzo is ah (. . . .) you know, [a] joke. I*
> *can give you a lot of examples about scherzo, especially scherzo*
> *[of] Beethoven.* (Susan, VTL, 1998)

Esfir used *Relationship Propositions* to get Susan to think about the value of the teacher's guidance, the students' responsibilities, and collaborative learning. For example, she not only insisted that Susan was responsible for selecting the musical tasks, she reminded Susan that she was aware of "where I can go with my students and what needs to be done" to facilitate the development of their musical competency (Susan, VTL, 1998). She advised Susan that following her guidelines and then taking ownership of what she played leads to mastery ("*If you do it, the more transported you will be. The more effective will be the end[ing]*" [Susan, VTL, 1998]). It seems that Esfir believed that if Susan knew how to manage her own goals, she would be able to immerse herself in the activity. As Csikszentmihalyi (1997) claimed, "when goals are clear . . . and challenges are in balance, attention becomes ordered and fully invested" (p. 31).

Esfir's use of Appraisals during Susan's Lesson: Appraisals were used to assess Susan's musical competency. Susan usually followed Esfir's appraisal by replaying the phrase. When necessary, Esfir added colorful language, playing, and gesturing to clarify her point.

Esfir used *Value Judgment Appraisals* to assess Susan's playing ability. Her appraisals ranged from *yes, okay,* and *much better,* to *"It sounds artificial"* and *"It's not working."* Esfir also used *Value Judgment Appraisals* to point out areas that were problematic, such as Susan's general use of the pedal, which Esfir believed was creating a blurring effect (*"a lot of smoke"* [Susan, VTL, 1998]). Esfir used *Comparative Appraisals* to comment on Susan's current performance in relation to her past performances, how she played in comparison to others who were at the same level of development (*"not clever enough behavior of a clever person"*), and how she expected her to play in the future (Susan, VTL, 1998).

Esfir's Creative Use of Language during Susan's Lesson: Although Esfir usually did not elaborate on the intricacies of playing and performing, she occasionally embedded her instructions, explanations, and appraisals in narratives, analogies, and metaphors. For example, she referred to *"a film that you show* [*a horse running*] *in slow motion"* to suggest how to gradually slow down the tempo (Susan, VTL, 1998). When Esfir used a metaphor, narrative, or analogy, Susan's playing improved. It seems that Esfir's use of colorful language facilitated Susan's ability to internalize musical actions and concepts.

Drawing Connections between Interactions in Esfir's Studio and Theory

The ways in which Esfir engaged the students during the lessons is reflected in Wenger's (1998) social learning theory and the concept of

community of practice. She also referred to the notion that social beings acquire knowledge, a positive attitude towards learning, and competencies through common mutual engagement, joint enterprise, and shared repertoires of knowledge and skills. Esfir provided J.J., Emily, and Susan with the opportunity to acquire knowledge about musical practices (singing, playing, composing) and musical activities (concerts, lessons, competitions) to share the traditions of western classical music and resources (musical repertoire). During J.J.'s lesson, they talked about Liszt and jazz music. Esfir referred to the musicians' culture in Russia during Emily's lesson and musicians associated with the Chopin Music Competition (Van Cliburn) during Susan's lesson. Esfir also invited J.J., Emily, and Susan to meet with other musicians or performers, to share their repertoires of knowledge and skills, especially when rehearsing for a concert or competition.

From a Vygotskian point of view, learning is a profoundly socio-cultural process. One's lived experiences with others in a particular context mediate learning. As Vygotsky (1981) stressed, individuals master on their own what they initially carried out with others. Esfir let J.J. know that what she learned with Yuli, J.J. in turn could learn with her. She shared her experience of practicing under difficult circumstances when she was a student at the Moscow Conservatory of Music to get Emily to stay focused and to block out any outside interference as she practiced. There was a constant back and forth 'dialogue' between Esfir's utterances and Susan's playing through the passage.

Vygotsky draws our attention to the interactions between the more knowledgeable adult and student in mediating a person's learning. Vygotsky (1978) also recognized the importance of selecting, organizing, and presenting a set of tasks suitable to the learner's level of functioning so that he or she could solve problems, carry out tasks, and achieve goals. Esfir instructed them on how to execute specific actions, such as how to play a rhythm or to improve the

sound quality. She adjusted the amount of time she spent on each topic and the type of feedback she gave to each student's particular needs. Her range of topics, instructions, advice, and appraisals reflected each student's prior knowledge and age level. Esfir also linked her students' prior knowledge to new knowledge.

Vygotsky (2000) claims that higher mental functioning, such as self-regulation, is contingent on the interplay between a student's development and instruction that is particular for the student's age level. Esfir encouraged her students to think about and figure out what to do on their own. What is particularly significant about Esfir's teaching is that she spent more time on each topic and used many picturesque analogies, narratives, and metaphors with Emily than was the case with Susan and J.J. One can infer that Esfir adopted a more detailed and comprehensive approach with Emily because she was the youngest of the three students and least familiar with the meanings and intentions of Esfir's utterances, and therefore needed more direction. To ensure that Emily's learning experiences were pleasant rather than stressful, Esfir re-adjusted the program for Emily, withdrawing her from the Canadian Music Competition.

Denzin (1984) has argued that another person's actions, intentions, and verbal expressions function as a channel for an individual to cope emotionally with the environmental demands and provide the rationale for engaging in goal pursuits. Esfir used the lesson to familiarize J.J., Emily, and Susan with ways of coping with the environmental demands of performing and playing music. J.J. claimed that he benefited greatly from Esfir's practical advice on how to sooth his tension ("*open your mouth*", "*make a list of your plans before practicing*", "*be selective about what other activities you participate in*", "*concentrate on music*", "*focus on the benefits of playing piano*").

Teachers who prepare their students to deal with unpredictable and stressful situations increase the likelihood that their students will continue to pursue these activities. Esfir accomplished this by not being derogatory, bossy or controlling, which would only have exacerbated her students' anxiety. Although she criticized J.J., Emily, and Susan's weaknesses, she also addressed their emotional needs, which seemed to act as a springboard for developing their abilities to self-regulate their actions and their respective decisions to continue learning music. She highlighted the playfulness, the kinesthetic aspects, and the aesthetics of the music rather than the stress of performing, which seemed to enable J.J., Emily, and Susan's passion to emerge rather than their anxiety. This information from Esfir seemed to have a decisive impact on J.J.'s ability to manage the demands of playing and to continue to be committed to his musical studies. J.J. acknowledged this fact during his interviews. But at times, she did emphasize that she was upset by their lack of progress and initiative because she deemed it was necessary.

Although Vygotsky does not talk about the relationship between emotion, self-regulation, and motivation in the literal sense of the word, he suggests that a child forms symbolic representations of which purposeful actions to pursue through social connections. From this perspective, Esfir's advice to J.J. and Emily about how to deal with tension on their own may have mediated their emotional consciousness and nurtured their desire to continue their music studies. Esfir's minimal support and guidance on how to deal with stress of learning a challenging and extensive repertoire may account for why Susan changed teachers when she returned from Europe.

Learning is socially mediated through language (Vygotsky, 1978, 2000). Teachers use movement, symbolization, and descriptions as a means to teach both general and more complex actions (Hedegaard, 1996). During the lessons,

Esfir used many functions and forms of language as a tool to mediate J.J., Emily, and Susan's ability to learn to play piano and to enhance their conceptual development. Esfir used imagery to explain how J.J., Emily, and Susan could cope with the elation or tension of performing. As J.J. acknowledged during his interviews, the manner in which Esfir's used language during his lessons mediated his ability to function on his own, developed his positive attitude to learning music, and influenced his decision to become a concert pianist. Esfir's vivid and creative analogies helped Susan to bring out the aesthetic aspects of the music.

The analysis of the interactions during J.J., Emily, and Susan's lesson also reflects Halliday's notion of language as a social semiotic process. According to Halliday, the manner in which a person uses language to channel information to others plays a critical role in transforming another person's ways of thinking and acting; it also has the potential to lead individuals to acquire higher mental concepts. Esfir's use of proposals, propositions, and appraisals equipped J.J., Emily, and Susan with the tools and experiences they needed to develop their own learning potential. Proposals regulated their actions and behaviors, and provided them with instructions on how to proceed immediately or at another time and context. Propositions, which clarified or explained personal or musical information, presented them with explanations of the conditions of the activity, their responsibilities in carrying out this activity, and the value of continuing to pursue the activity. Esfir used appraisals to provide J.J., Emily, and Susan with assessments of their musical performances and their general level of mastery in comparison to past performances. One can infer from the analysis of J.J. and Emily's lessons that Esfir had an impact on their abilities to regulate their own learning and form their desire to continue their lessons. However, Susan complained that she needed instructions that were more

explicit, which was not evident during the particular lessons analyzed previously. When I asked Esfir to explain why she uttered a significantly greater number of *proposals* than *propositions* during Susan's lessons, she explained that she was confident that Susan was familiar with the topics she brought up for discussion:

What I wanted and I knew that she's able to do that . . . I just mentioned something and she got it immediately. But with the others, . . . I have to make theater to re-teach all of them when they come to me . . . to speak the same language as me. (Esfir, MIT, 2002)

From Hallidayian perspective, students need to be familiar with the manner in which teachers use language to express their meanings and intentions. Although Esfir was aware that her students' ability to internalize the topics covered their lesson depended on her recursive use of language, she misjudged Susan's familiarity with the topics covered during her lessons.

Summary

In this section, I portrayed what transpired before and during J.J., Emily, and Susan's piano lessons in Esfir's music studio. Focusing on what Esfir said and did, I provided a representation of how she socializes her students into a community of practice, develops their musical competencies, and helps them become self-regulated learners. I described how she develops her students' abilities to cope with emotional stress and feelings of elation while playing piano. I also described the manner in which Esfir used language to develop musical skills and knowledge. In the following chapters, I portray the students' perspectives on their musical experiences, particularly those with Esfir and how these experiences influenced their decisions to continue taking piano lessons.

CHAPTER EIGHT

Portraits of Three Students: Why they Continue Piano Lessons

In this chapter, I present portraits of J.J., Emily, and Susan's perspectives on what influences piano students to continue taking lessons. I employ Lightfoot-Lawrence and Davis' (1997) notion of portraiture to illustrate how social, cultural, and psychological experiences contribute to their decision to continue investing time and energy taking piano lessons. In particular, I reveal, through our conversations during interviews and email correspondences, their perspectives about how socialization into communities of musical practice, development of musical competencies, regulative roles, and emotional experiences of listening to or performing music, leads to the decision to continue taking piano lessons.

Why J.J. Continues Piano Lessons

Socialization into Communities of Musical Practices

During the interviews with J.J., I sought to discover what he believed led to his determination to continue his musical studies. The following examples are the kinds of musical contexts in which J.J. participated with others in common and meaningful musical activities, and where he learned about music practices, music repertoire, and music competency. These vignettes together show that three communities of musical practice – family, music school, and the professional communities – fostered his initial desire to belong to a community of musicians.

Joining his family in musical activities immersed J.J. in a community of musical practice. As J.J. explained:

*The relatives on my mother's side are all musicians. They all play
something not professionally. They all play. My uncle plays the
saxophone. My uncle plays the violin. His wife plays the piano
at quite a high level now. My mother plays the piano. Everyone
plays something. A lot of them sing. At Christmas, a lot of them
get together and sing. I had a musical background . . . I remember
my uncle playing piano in front of his friends. I believed, but never
thought, I would do it. (J.J., TI, 1998)*

It was while joining his relatives in musical activities as a young boy
that J.J. obtained an insider's view of particular contexts where people he
cared about engaged in musical activities with others. He saw the types of
meaningful musical activities and practices his family members engaged in
– listening to music, singing, and playing instruments. Being in a musical family
(aunts, uncles, mother, and other significant family members) where *"everyone
plays something"* essentially introduced J.J. to the value of learning music and
stimulated his musical imagination. J.J.'s social encounters while studying music
at École St. Sebastian as an adolescent contributed to his socialization as a
musician into a community of musical practice:

*I studied with Micheline Rousseau for a good six years. That's
where I learned the most of my music skills. She was the one who
got me involved in a lot of things. She would have concerts at
Christmas and at the end of the year. She always got us together
to listen to music. And she was very involved in the music school.
There are a lot of concerts there. She was always having students
participating in competitions there. I would go to concerts there. I*

often volunteered to be the usher or worked at the reception after,
serving the food and wine, whatever. Then you meet musicians
and talk to them. I guess that's where my foggy music idea started
to emerge. (J.J., TI, 1998)

J.J. associated his excitement about learning music with his experiences during his lesson, such as learning musical skills, as well as meeting socially with other students and musicians at the competitions and concerts. Participating in musical activities with other music students gave him an opportunity to meet and converse with other musicians about music topics. As well, these events inspired J.J. to learn music, instilling in him the belief that he would one day play piano. Participating with others in activities that have a common focus provided a context for J.J. to develop a sense of himself in a music community.

J.J.'s decision to *"divorce"* himself from studying biochemistry and to switch from studying music as an *"aside"* activity to making it his life passion occurred when he attended concerts with a group of friends.

I don't know what exactly made me do that but when I came to
university I used to go to concerts with friends . . . In biochemistry
I would often go to the concert the night before. The day after
I would be sitting in class and think, "It's so boring, so cold, so
abstract. And I can't make any sense out of this." I remember
saying that to myself. I would be seeing the orchestra, the music
of the orchestra, and saying, "I could do this for a course. And I'm
sitting here in this stupid course trying to memorize this equation

or some biochemical pathway." I said, "Na, no, no. I would rather

spend my time learning music than writing equations or whatever.

Biochemistry and I, we are divorced. (J.J., TI, 1998)

The defining moment that would change J.J.'s career path from being a doctor and studying biochemistry to pursuing a music career occurred when he sat in a biochemistry class the day after attending a concert. His mind drifted off to imagining the tonal passages instead of concentrating on biochemical pathways. J.J. felt indifferent to learning biochemistry. He found biochemistry *"boring, cold, and abstract"*; he did not find learning biochemistry with his classmates a meaningful activity. In contrast, his experiences of attending concerts with his friends at École St. Sebastian and university prompted his desire to belong to a community of music practitioners. He realized that being with fellow students who also valued listening to music nurtured his enthusiasm and excitement to study music. Watching and being part of a group of respected musicians playing through their repertoires immersed him in musical concepts (*crescendo*, *legato*), musical repertoires (Chopin's *Funeral March*, Chopin's *Sonata in B Flat*), musical competencies (pedal technique), and ensemble playing (concertos, master classes, concerts). As well, he found that congregating together with other musicians to listen to music or play instruments is a meaningful way to experience the world. It seems that J.J. internalized this positive attitude and decided to pursue a music career instead of becoming a medical doctor.

Development of Musical Competencies

J.J. associates his awareness of his musical abilities with his discussions with others, his social connections, and his cultural experiences, even from

when he was young. For example, his beliefs about his playing ability seemed to be embedded in the cultural standards established by his parents. He shared that it is culturally acceptable for Vietnamese parents to push their children to "*study hard and get good marks and everything*" (J.J., TI, 2000). It is customary for parents in Chinese cultures to get involved in their children's learning, to value being a good learner, and to emphasize the importance of "diligent study, hard work, and sustained effort" (Curdt-Christiansen, 2003, p. 172). J.J. realized that because of his parents' guidance, their stringent rules and regulations while he was practicing piano at home as a young child, and because of his ability to meet their expectations, his early musical experiences seemed to lay the foundation for his desire as a young adult to become a concert pianist. J.J.'s experience supports Vygotsky's (1978) contention that social interactions with other members of a culture in a sociocultural context foster and shape children's awareness of their ability to realize their potential.

In answer to my question about why he remained determined to become a pianist, J.J. did not blame his poor results on his lack of ability to learn music; indeed his piano marks were acceptable. He attributed his poorer record as a music student to the minimal amount of effort he put into his practicing, a situation due to the fact that his part time job as a waiter took up a considerable amount of his time.

For J.J., being a pianist was not only contingent on his routine activities, which included attending classes, writing exams, and studying, it was also a matter of becoming aware of his plans and recognizing that he could control how he would accomplish his goals. The paradox is that getting "*good marks*" during his first degree did not compel him to continue his academic studies. However, his undergraduate studies in chemistry set the foundation for developing a strong belief system and the self-confidence he needed to overcome the

roadblocks he faced as a music student. J.J.'s optimism about his future as a pianist seemed to be buoyed by his past experiences of learning music and chemistry.

J.J. measures his ability by assessing whether he feels that he "*improved*," that "*playing piano works*," or that "*it's clicking*." As J.J. reported:

> *Ultimately it is myself. I know what I did wrong. Even if they say, "It's really good," Na, Na, Na, I know what was bad and what was good. I always know. Maybe I am too self-critical. I don't know. It is rare when I say, "Oh, it was perfect." Actually, I never say that. The best I ever say is that it was good. That's like really good when I say that. Most of the time, I say, "It is okay. I could have done better." I don't think that I ever had a time when I said, "Oh my God, it was soooo good!" I never said that in my life. It's like on a scale. Good is fair and okay. It's like a logarithmic scale. (J.J., TI, 1998)*

These comments suggest that J.J. did not measure his musical competency against the standards of others or by his scholastic record. J.J. was aware that his ability to play piano contributed to his decision to study piano. His "*logarithmic scale*" seems to act as a barometric instrument that he used to measure the fluctuations in his ability to play in the moment and his improvement since his last lesson. As Bandura (1995) claims, people are more apt to repeat their actions when they have confidence in being able to regulate their actions and to attain their goals.

However, feedback from others (parents, teachers) about his playing and scholastic ability is also important for his continued participation in musical

activities. Although J.J. does not specifically look to his parents or his teachers for affirmation as he did as a youngster, he continues to appreciate those comments and accolades that over time fuel his perception of his self-worth and desire to become a concert pianist. From a Vygotskian perspective, J.J.'s optimism about his future as a pianist and ability to play piano seem to have been buoyed by his prior experiences in various sociocultural contexts.

Regulative Roles

J.J.'s recollection of his early experiences studying piano reveals that the direction to study music came from his parents' bribes and cajoling. "*I would cry half the time. They had to force me. 'If you practice this, you get this. You get that.' They had to bribe me to play piano. That's how I started off*" (J.J., TI, 1998).

J.J.'s parents chose his teachers and insisted that he practice. J.J. also told me that his parents set the guidelines of the acceptable level of competency. Although J.J. viewed his parents' influence as negative when he was young, he now realizes that at that early stage of his music education, he was not yet willing or able to regulate his practicing and that it was through his parents' influence that he began to develop his musical skills and eventually to formulate his own tasks and goals. For example, as a young adult, he "*didn't listen to anyone but [himself]*", choosing to pursue a formal music education instead of abiding by his parents wishes to become a doctor (Personal conversation, 2003). J.J.'s views on his parents' direction is an interesting example of how social interactions in early childhood can lead the way for a shift in control in directing a learning activity from others to the individual.

<u>Emotional Experiences</u>

During his interviews, J.J. frequently interlaced his comments about his musical experiences with the words *passion, love, happiness, having a rush,* or *feeling special.* In the next vignettes, I describe J.J.'s reflections on the significant experience in his life that triggered his emotions, the role his emotions played in his decision to study music, and how he coped with the elation of hearing music as well as with the stress of playing piano. J.J. repeatedly connected his enthusiasm to study music with feelings of elation while performing and playing the piano.

In this vignette, J.J. uses the analogy of acting in a play to performing in a piano concert to explain why he *"loves"* music. The anecdote speaks of his experiences in three music contexts – just before stepping onto the stage, on stage performing his program, and the exit as he leaves the stage:

You Just Get into It

For me it's different before and after I play. I'll give you a quote by Terrence McNally . . . It's about Maria Callas. And she says, "In life there is the entrance, the stage, the exit. And you can't make any skips." In performing, it's a bit like that. There is the preparation before the concert, the actual concert, and after the concert. Now I'll go backwards. After the concert, when you finish playing, it's like having tons of alcohol without the side effects. It's the best feeling ever, ever in life. Now during the concert, it's quite not so different. At the beginning, there's a little nervousness that I am going to make a mistake and freak out that I am going to make a wrong note, blah, blah, blah. But after a while you just get into it. Nothing

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exists anymore except the music. And that is why I love music. It's
like everything disappears. (J.J., TI, 1998)

J.J. connected his passion for playing piano to his ability to cope with his nervousness before playing, to focus solely on the music while playing, and to feel *"out of this world"* after playing. As he explained, all his worries seem to fade away whenever he performs, which he attributed to his ability to concentrate on playing the correct notes of the music because of his preparation before the concert. However, he also realized that he was able to transcend his consciousness and bring himself to a metaphysical or spiritual level where nothing existed except for his feelings of ecstasy.

This meta-awareness seems to be what J.J. experiences while performing, which adds to his desire to play piano. Csikszentmihalyi (1996) refers to what J.J. is describing here as a state of "flow". According to Csikszentmihalyi (1997), "psychic energy can flow freely into whatever thought or task we choose to invest in" (1997, p. 22). He explains that "flow" is a feeling that everything is proceeding automatically, yet at the same time being in a "highly focused state of consciousness," concentrating on the feelings that emerge from hearing the music (p. 110). Steinhard (1998) calls this the *zone of magic.* J.J. seeks opportunities that repeat these experiences, which seem to indicate that he wishes these feelings would continue.

The kinesthetic experience of playing or practicing very technical and virtuosi passages affects J.J. For example, in this excerpt he explains how an auditory/kinesthetic experience playing piano affected him emotionally:

There is a Physical Pleasure

I think that when I play piano there is a physical pleasure involved

in it, especially in the very technical and bravura passages. I say,

"Oh my God! Boom. Boom. Boom. There are octaves and going

fast passages. And it's fun!" It becomes a sport that way when

there is a high bravura style of playing. (J.J., TI, 1998)

The actual awareness of the experience of playing and mastering physically challenging passages, combined with focusing on his goal to become a pianist, gives J.J. a joyous feeling. Csikszentmihalyi (1997) believes that the intensity of our feelings increases with difficult tasks. He claims that "human beings feel best in flow, when they are fully involved in meeting a challenge" (p. 66), as well as when they have clear goals and immediate feedback.

J.J.'s pleasant experience of playing octaves "in the moment," appeared to have had a powerful emotional impact on him. He was excited that he had the technical expertise and musical knowledge to handle the challenges of playing piano. Lazarus (1991) maintains that knowing that we can manage physical demands produces positive emotions, thus influencing what we do in the future.

Performance is a social act. The reaction of the people in the audience and in the choir triggered J.J.'s emotions as he explains in this excerpt:

The Energy from that Actual Crowd

I sang with the choir at university. I was watching. It's amazing

to see how people react. And that's what makes me feel good.

And there's a quote by Maria Callas that says, "Once you have

performed, you have spent all of yourself. All that you have left

is the applause." I believe that that's why I have that rush; all

the energy coming back to me from that actual crowd response.

Although that's not all of it, I think a great part of it is that. (J.J.,

TI, 1998)

J.J. was aware that learning music and participating in musical activities are not solitary acts. Various social and cultural circumstances – singing in the university choir, being with his fellow choir members, and watching the audience response during a concert, aroused more than just good feelings. He believed that what went on between the choir member, the audience, and himself affected his own inner feelings and thoughts, sparking positive emotions, which in turn ignited his continued interest in studying music. Hearing the applause made him feel proud and developed his positive attitude towards playing piano. He also felt that being appreciated by others for his singing abilities influenced his decision to study music instead of continuing his studies in medicine. Denzin (1984) claims that interpersonal experiences affect our emotions, which in turn inform us how to plan our future actions. Halliday (1978) has also recognized that the encoding of our experiences with our dialogic partners is a recursive, generative process.

J.J. often spoke in emotional terms of his experiences while attending concerts. The emotional power of listening to the sounds of the instruments and the tunes appeared to evoke intense emotions. The following excerpt is essentially a description of his aesthetic response to the music while listening to a cellist and pianist play through their repertoire:

Such is the Power of Music

Music spreads inexorably through the essence of your being. It

is like the myriad of reflections dancing in the water of a rustling

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brook ultimately destined to reach the vastness of the ocean

where the sun seems to shine even brighter in the cloudless sky,

the waves traveling miles and miles finally to crash and explode

against a cliff, its foam dispersing in a fine, diaphanous mist of

billions of microscopic droplets, gently wetting the observer who

does not see it coming. Shivers run through him. Yet, he is warm

under the summer sun. He closes his eyes. A smile is seen on his

lips. He droops his head, and tears are running down his cheeks.

Somewhere else at the same moment, after the last few bars,

a cellist has put down his bow, and the pianist has released his

hands from the keyboard. Silence! Such is the power of music.

(J.J., e-mail correspondence, 2001)

J.J.'s expressive nature created an *"emotional sea"* for him to draw upon, a sea of great power and force, which suggests that for him, music was more than just organizing sounds. Perhaps J.J.'s poetic expressions in the above quotation symbolically reflect his own musical experiences and their profound emotional effect on him. For example, the phrase *"myriad of reflections"* may be an indication of his musical experiences with others and the joy he feels in knowing that he is able to transform and internalize what he learns even when he is under tremendous stress. The words *"shivers"* and *"warmth"* probably represent a range of feelings of excitement resonating through his body as he plays the piano or listens to music. J.J. later clarified that the endless beauty and danger of the ocean have always fascinated him and that *"only music can describe something like that"* (J.J., email correspondence, 2003). He also commented that his appraisal of his aesthetic response to music, in general, fuels his ongoing desire to participate in musical activities.

J.J. also explained that it was through learning about the different aspects of music during lessons and attending musical events that he was able to use poetic imagery, such as *essence of your being, dancing in the water, a rustling brook*, and *shivers run through him* to describe these powerful experiences. This suggests that being in a community of musical practice provided him with the opportunity to experience music at a deep emotional level. Attending the cello concert and visits to the ocean also enabled him to notice how the sound of music evoked similar thoughts and feelings about the pleasures and obstacles when playing piano.

In this section, I describe J.J.'s interpretation of his musical experiences and why he continues to study music. There is no single reason why J.J. invests time and energy pursuing a performance career. The excerpt from my interview with J.J. summarizes the many reasons why he is passionate about playing piano:

J.J.'s Summary on Why he Plays Piano

I could spend a half an hour talking about [why I like to play piano]. But I'll try to make it short. It's not for the money. It's not because I want to be famous. You can count that out. I like being on stage actually. I like the rush of, the act of concertizing. That's some of the reasons. I guess I like to perform. I think that it's a way of expressing myself, the best actually. It is the only form in my life of expression that allows everything. It goes beyond words, writers, and everything. And I guess that is why I play the piano. There are so many, many reasons that kind of coalesce into one. It cannot be that one reason. I can tell you that when I'm also with a lot of musicians, a group of people that play piano or make music or

something, I feel very, very happy that I play piano. It feels like this

[is] making me kind of a community, belonging to a community of

artists. Maybe I play piano because I want to be an artist. I don't

know. I am a very artistic person, not only in the terms of the

piano but in the terms of that I want to see things . . . Actually, I

think I play piano because I am passionate about it and it works.

(J.J., TI, 1998)

J.J. reveals through imagery and metaphors the essence of how various musical and emotional experiences coalesced to spark his passion to become a concert pianist. As J.J. expressed it, the act of playing in concerts gave him a rush and listening to the expressive elements of the music while playing and performing made him feel exuberant. His dedication to study music also emerged from getting together with other musicians and belonging to a *"community of artists."* He was confident that he could express himself artistically. As well, he knew what to and how to do it. Therefore, there are four clearly defined spheres of influence in his determination to continue his musical studies. These are: his participation in communities of musical practices (home, school, concert environments); his assessment of his academic and musical ability; his ability to self-regulate his own progress; and his affective response (anxiety while playing or feeling exhilarated while listening to the expressive elements of the music).

Why Emily Continues Piano Lessons

Socialization into Communities of Musical Practices

Several learning experiences in various musical contexts provided Emily with the opportunities to observe and engage in meaningful musical activities

with others. As a young child, Emily was exposed to music at home and at family-gatherings. Her experiences participating with and observing her parents and significant family members in making music introduced her to the social and cultural practices of a musical community and nurtured her ongoing desire to study music. As she stated, "*I think the reason that I love music so much is also because there's so much music in my family*" (Emily, TI, 2000). Emily talked about being taught to sing *Draidle, Draidle* by her cousin when she was three-years-old and then performing it for her relatives. Listening to her mother practice piano and her father play guitar, and accompanying her father and sister to their respective guitar and piano lessons at a music studio provided her with opportunities to hear music. Knowing that her grandfather played piano and hearing her aunt play at recitals fostered Emily's positive attitude towards learning music. Emily also had the opportunity to learn basic musical skills and practices (playing, singing, reading, tonal harmony, music terminology) when she took formal group music lessons with her aunt and her mother at their music studio. Her experience of playing her repertoire on the radio after she won first prize at the Music for Young Children's competition added to her already positive attitude towards learning music. These initial experiences with her family taught her that gathering together with others to participate in musical activities with competency was a joyful and valued endeavor.

Emily also engaged in musical activities at her elementary and high schools. Although her elementary school did not have a serious music program, she participated in informal singing activities with her classmates. She learned that people get together to sing and share musical repertoires (Chanukah, Hebrew, and Yiddish songs). Emily found that playing the oboe in her high-school band meant that she had the opportunity to get together with others to further her knowledge of music, such as history and musical notation, and to

perform for others. She found that her social contact with other members of her school band was uplifting. In Emily's words:

> *[When] you get into a whole band, it's just as if there is a band around you. It's like a whole group. It's not that you are a soloist. You've got all these supporting people around you.* (Emily, TI, 2002)

Being a member of the high school band introduced Emily to the customary singing and instrumental practices and skills of playing the oboe and various other band instruments, and provided her with opportunities to learn from others and to share knowledge. Socializing with others (parents, family members, friends, music teachers at school, and band members) in various musical communities of practice seemed to lay the foundation for her continued interest in taking piano lessons.

Development of Musical Competencies

Emily's awareness of her musical competency influenced her desire to take piano lessons. She frequently used the words "*getting better,*" or referred to her ability to learn heard pieces, to being able to "*sit down any second of any day and just play anything*" such as Elton John, classical music or jazz, and to feeling accomplished that she played well and "*got it*" (Emily, TI, 1998). She believed that her music ranged in difficulty from being "*really easy*" to being "*really, really hard*" (Emily, TIM, 1998).

Emily revealed that several social factors developed her confidence and ability to play piano. Because her mother taught piano at home, she had the opportunity to compare her playing with her mother's students, many of

whom were her friends. In comparison to her friends and others of her mother's students, her lessons were longer and her repertoire was more challenging. Winning first prize at the Music for Young Children's music competition when she was six-years-old, where an adjudicator set the standards of winning or losing, boosted her desire to play piano. Emily also claimed that significant others, such as her mother, relatives, piano teachers, and friends played a significant role in developing her awareness of her musical competency. In the following example, she refers to their role in establishing how she set her standards:

> *My mom always tells me, "I don't care how you play. However you play is beautiful to me" . . . Whenever my relatives come over, they say, "Play the piano." So I play a little bit. They think it's beautiful and love it . . . Even if it's not perfect, they don't care. . . It's encouraging when people don't look at every single detail.* (Emily, TI, 1998)

Emily does not focus on mistakes. She believes that her positive attitude towards learning music and about herself as a musician reflects her experiences with significant others who do not base their evaluative stance on perfecting every detail. What counted for Emily as an acceptable standard of ability has been her family's positive attitude towards playing for the sake of making music and not for eliciting a perfect rendition of the music. Support from significant knowledgeable others, such as parents or teachers, who encourage students to take risks, leads them towards maximizing their potential and the likelihood that they will continue their learning activities (Wertsch, 1985).

<u>Regulative Roles</u>

For Emily, piano teachers' guidance and support help to make it possible for students to work on their own. Consider Emily's comment about how teachers develop their students' abilities to regulate their own learning:

> *Patience is very important because not everyone comes prepared all the time. Not everyone understands at the first explanation. So, I think it's probably essential that a piano teacher is patient with her student or his student to allow them to understand exactly, exactly what should be performed and what should be played in the pieces. It requires [the student] to fully understand what they're playing . . . It requires patience to allow them to achieve their full potential. (Emily, TI, 2002)*

Emily associated the commitment to learn music with studying with teachers who account for their students' needs, provide them with important information, and then patiently wait for them to figure out what to do on their own. Emily understands that the selection of repertoire that is within a student's ZPD is crucial in developing a student's ability to internalize what the teacher said and to independently figure out what to do on his or her own.

<u>Emotional Experiences</u>

At the heart of Emily's decision to study music was that it was hard to stop taking piano lessons, even during the period when she was less motivated to practice. For Emily, it *"was very special . . . once I heard the piano. I couldn't get to love any other instrument except that one."* The experience of playing her repertoire excited her. She found that *"it feels good"* and *"it's fun"* to play piano

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(Emily, TI, 1998). Emily also acknowledges that

> *Every chord, every note has a different feel to it. Once you*
> *understand that it makes the piece so much more fun to play*
> *because you understand what the composer's trying to say . . . I*
> *love playing because it's something I can express myself through.*
> *I can express my feelings through my pieces. It's like another*
> *language. You take these notes, which are written on a paper, and*
> *you just make the most beautiful music out of it. It's so amazing*
> *that you're doing something you love that makes other people so*
> *happy. I just don't understand how people could stop. Especially at*
> *my age, after everything I've done.* (Emily, TI, 2002)

Emily's experiences of hearing the musical sounds, embodying the feelings of the music, and sharing these experiences with others seemed to make her more passionate about continuing her musical studies. Even her awareness of her mother's reaction after she ended a performance affected her emotionally. For example, in this excerpt, she relates how her mother's pride made her feel:

> *When [my mother] comes to my recital and I'm finished and I'm*
> *bowing. I've performed my piece and she's smiling from ear to ear.*
> *She's so proud. That's also a big, a big part of it. It's important to*
> *me that she's proud of me.* (Emily, TI, 2002)

I believe that her conscious awareness of her mother's reaction triggered feelings of pride and has helped to make performing in concerts a non-

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threatening experience. It seems that her emotional experiences of playing and performing for others and how she symbolizes these interpersonal relationships played a fundamental role in her decision to continue taking piano lessons.

Why Susan Continues Piano Lessons

Socialization into Communities of Musical Practices

Susan reported that her musical experiences in various socially and culturally organized musical contexts (family, church, high school, university, music camps) nurtured her ongoing desire to become a musician. As a young girl, she was initiated into musical practices at home. She found that overhearing her parents and their friends discuss musical issues and musical repertoire provided her with the opportunity to learn about musical language and repertoire, and fostered the belief that participating in musical activities with others is a valuable way to spend your time.

When Susan became older, she joined the church choir, which allowed her to absorb sacred and secular repertoires. Aside from taking formal vocal classes in high school, she volunteered for the after-school music-drama program, which gave her the chance to be with other students who also valued learning music. Susan was not overly enthusiastic about her musical experiences in college and university. Her teachers did not model a positive attitude towards playing piano, particularly those teachers who constantly reprimanded her for failing to abide by their instructions. However, they acquainted her with classical repertoire, musical expression, and piano playing skills.

Susan revealed that her experiences at a music camp in the United States and music programs in Holland and Paris were invaluable. "*Going to concerts or hanging out with people who are like you,*" being a counselor at

the music camp in the United States, and studying in Europe provided her with social contexts to learn about the culture of music performance (Susan, TI, 1998). She found that just *"being around other pianists"* who were enthusiastic about practicing piano, who valued musical competency, and who exchanged ideas nurtured her positive attitude towards playing piano and promoted her identity as a member of a community of musical practice. Susan also reported that a particular teacher at the American music camp *"took me out for coffee and told me how competitions worked and how to do recordings and a lot of things"* (Susan, TI, 1998). She believed this contributed to her commitment to study piano.

Development of Musical Competencies

Susan associated her decision to spend many hours every day practicing piano or attending piano lessons to the development of her musical abilities and the positive feedback she received from credible and significant sources. Even though Susan found that she was *coasting by*, that her *sound was garbage*, and that she was *weak technically*, she believed she could become a soloist (Susan, TI, 1998). She attributed her enthusiasm and commitment to study music to her past accomplishments. For example, she had completed an undergraduate program in piano performance and music education. She had been selected to advance to the second round at the Canadian Music Competition. She learned three Chopin pieces in three weeks, a great accomplishment for any musician. The validation she received from her colleagues, fellow students and her teachers, especially when they assured her that she got her *"language across"* to them was particularly influential in her decision to continue to study music and pursue a performance career (Susan, TI, 1998, 2002).

How did Susan acquire her performance skills? She revealed that

having "*a good teacher [who] directs you forward*" is an essential ingredient for becoming an accomplished pianist (Susan, TI, 1998). In the following excerpt, she also described other instructional characteristics that were useful in developing her musical abilities:

> *I needed to have somebody, a teacher to trust [my personal] issues with, to be able to talk to your teacher, good guidance, . . . and to be at the right teacher at the right time . . . [a teacher who knows] when to push you, . . . who knows the right combination [of how] to realign me, [and] the right chemistry.* (Susan, TI, 1998)

Susan recognized that teachers develop their students' musical competencies by providing more than just instructions on how to play. Teachers who were flexible, who were sensitive to what she could potentially play technically and stylistically, who planned their learning activities around her potential capabilities, and who were there for her when she needed to talk about personal issues, built her awareness, understanding, and self-confidence in her musical abilities. In addition, a teacher's suggestion that she compete at the prestigious International Chopin Competition played a significant role in furthering her musical studies and her wish to become a soloist.

Regulative Roles

When I first interviewed Susan, she acknowledged that she loved playing piano. She attributed this love to being able to self-regulate her own practicing and to solve problems. The following excerpt provides a window into Susan's stance on the benefits of being self-regulated and the types of strategies she claims that she uses when practicing on her own:

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I just love music. I think it's a way of expressing myself beyond words. It's way of telling a story. Its sort of like being given a script and adding your own story to it, shaping it your own way. It's a very personal thing. I want to tell that story and I want to bring out what's inside. I open a score, put it on the piano, and start sight-reading.

First of all, I sight read the whole piece . . . Then, I divide [the piece] into sections and I try to understand how each section relates to each other . . . [By] moving slowly, not skipping stages, playing repertoire that [is] at your limit [of ability leads to] the freedom to interpret the music your way. (Susan, TI, 1998)

Susan acknowledged that being able to recognize the musical elements and expressive characteristics in the music developed her ability to practice on her own. She claimed that being able to regulate her own learning and to work at a pace and level that was within her realm of ability built her competence and nurtured her love of music.

Susan also revealed the types of strategies she uses when practicing on her own. Such tactics as sight-reading the piece, practicing in sections, analyzing her performance, and then figuring out how to adjust her strategies suggest that Susan had internalized the practices set out by her teachers.

Although Susan implied during the first interview that her teachers played a role in directing her ability to work on her own, during the retrospective interview she emphasized the importance of their role in developing her ability to self-regulate her learning. In the following excerpt, Susan stresses the

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significance of the teacher's role in mediating her ability to practice on her own:

> *If I had known how to practice well, I would have done it. I needed*
> *someone to practice with me. That is why I am with Fernando*
> *today. That's what I needed from the age of twenty. I needed*
> *someone to sit there and say, okay, let's do this measure again;*
> *this is how you do it, okay, that's better, now try a bit more like this*
> *instead of saying here's ten pages of music. Come and learn it in*
> *two days.* (Susan, TI, 2002)

Susan relies on her teachers' support and direction. She is aware that she still needs a teacher to show her how to proceed on her own, a teacher who provides support and direction on how to structure her practicing, on what to focus on, and when to play. She believes that teachers who support her by providing explicit prompts, positive feedback, and explanations on how to proceed develop her ability to learn on her own.

Emotional Experiences

Vygotsky (1971) argued that there is an affective-volitional connection between our desires and the emotions that are "provoked by a work of art" (p. 215). Susan also attributed her desire to play piano to her emotional experiences with the expressive aspects of music. She explained that she loved learning how to play piano because:

> *The music can relate who you are and the experiences you lived*
> *in a sort of indirect way . . . Music can say what words can't. Music*

expresses emotion, which on a different level [is] on a higher level.
(Susan, TI, 2002)

Susan portrays how her devotion and motivation to playing piano is connected indirectly to her awareness of the whole experience; connecting to the music was an uplifting experience. The notes on the score triggered her love of playing piano.

Susan associated the word *"love"* with how she felt when she saw the reaction of her parents and friends after she performed at a concert. However, being a musician was not always a comforting and positive experience. She reported that she rarely *"felt good"*. She generally felt *scared* while performing and *"glad"* when it was over (Susan, TI, 1998). In reflecting on what triggered this broad range of emotions, she referred to her experiences with others. For Susan, the anxiety of playing for her teachers at college and university affected her physically and psychologically. The experiences of entering "competitions [and] playing for grades" were unpleasant. The following example illustrates how hearing her piano teacher yelling at her affected her:

> *That would create tension in my shoulders. As I said before, you can't play fast right away . . . When you get screamed at, you get intimidated or you develop tension in your body and in your brain . . . My last teacher, I would have quit or would have gone around being frustrated, dissatisfied, for the rest of my whole life fighting off injuries.* (Susan, TI, 1998)

Although thoughts of quitting music entered her mind during university, her experiences of the expressive elements in music played a more significant

role in inspiring her decision to continue her musical studies than her experiences with her teachers. Her experiences with the aesthetic aspects of the music were self-absorbing. However, when she experienced excessive anxiety, which occurred when she was in Europe preparing for the International Chopin Competition, she dropped out of the competition and returned to Montreal (Susan, TI, 2002). During that point in her life, the stressful consequences of performing competitively outweighed the benefits of participating in the competition. Her inability to cope with her anxiety in part reveals that her teachers did not adequately address this issue.

Why Students Continue Piano Lessons from a Theoretical Perspective

The manner in which humans organize their goal-directed activities reflects particular social interactions with others in a sociocultural-historical setting or settings and their conscious awareness of these socially meaningful activities. J.J., Emily, and Susan based their desires to study music on their past learning experiences with others in various contexts within and outside music lessons. It seems that for J.J., Emily, and Susan, participating in musical activities in various music contexts with their family members played a meaningful role in nurturing their continued interest in studying music. Emily, J.J., and Susan also attributed their motivation to continue their music studies to their teachers' presence.

For Susan and J.J., the opportunity to engage in music-making and music-learning with others at college, university and master classes played a more significant role than their parents. J.J. and Susan acknowledged that meeting with music teachers and other music students, friends, and musicians at events during their adolescence and as college students developed their present interest in studying music.

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The premises underlying Wenger's (1998) concept of community of practice – common mutual engagement, joint enterprise, and shared repertoires of knowledge and skills – are evident for each of these three students. Engaging with other social beings is a principal aspect of learning. Repertoires, attitudes, and skills are learned in communities of practice through observing and participating with significant others in valued and meaningful enterprises. For example, Emily and J.J. were introduced to musical practices, performance standards, and the value of learning music by practicing piano, singing, and observing family members play instruments.

From a Vygotskian perspective, music students' experiences with more knowledgeable adults in authentic sociocultural activities lead them to master complex tasks and to the ability to develop the ability to self-regulate their behavior. J.J., Emily, and Susan's decisions about their futures as pianists seemed to be buoyed up by past learning experiences. Being with their families, watching their relatives participate in musical activities shaped Emily and J.J.'s positive attitudes towards music.

Experiences outside the family play a more significant role in motivating older students to learn music (Bloom, 1985). Although J.J. and Susan's parents introduced them to music, their parents played a less significant role in their commitment to learn music. Susan found that her musical experiences at various institutions (high school, church, CEJEP, university, and summer music programs in the United Sates and Europe) played a more meaningful role in her decision to become a soloist. J.J. revealed that listening to musical performances and dialoguing with the performers, other students, and teachers were invaluable. These experiences provided J.J. and Susan with opportunities to develop their awareness of the kinds of traditional activities and repertoire professional musicians participate in and value.

J.J.'s belief in his ability to self-regulate his action as an adult seemed to be shaped by meeting his parents' scholastic and musical expectations and acquiring musical knowledge from his teachers. Emily appeared to base her assessment of her musical abilities on her experiences with others by comparing her playing to that of her friends and her mother's piano students' playing. She relied on her family's assessment of her playing. She also believed that her experiences with her mother and aunt at their music school as a young child and her mother's additional advice during practice sessions enhanced her ability to self-regulate her actions. Although Susan attributed her musicality to her teachers' input, to her own hard work, and to her ability to reach the second level at the Canadian Music Competition, she was concerned with whether she could meet the standards set by adjudicators at university and at competitions.

J.J., Emily, and Susan connected their inspiration to study music to the emotional experience of performing in concerts, playing physically demanding repertoires, seeing the audience's response, and experiencing the expressive aspects of the music. They characteristically concentrated on their excitement, feelings of happiness, and elation over hearing the aesthetic qualities of the music, playing physically challenging passages, and reacting to audiences rather than responding to their stress. Although J.J. and Emily spoke about how they coped with stressful events such as performing on stage or playing a challenging repertoire, they focused more on talking about their positive experiences. J.J. also focused on the music and his body rather than on thinking about how difficult the tasks were, which I believe was facilitated by his ability to draw on past learning experiences. All three students also connected their desire to continue their lessons to social-emotional-relational experiences. They related that being surrounded by others who also appreciated the aesthetic aspects of music made playing piano more enjoyable. J.J., Emily, and Susan's

use of words to describe their experiences of the formal and expressive aspects of the music connects to Vygotsky's (1971) description of how the intended or assigned effects of the artist's (composer) artwork influence the degree of intensity in which recipients pursue their passions:

> Music by itself is isolated from our everyday behavior; it does not drive us to do anything, it only creates a vague and enormous desire for some deeds or actions; it opens the way for the emergence of powerful, hidden forces within us; it acts like an earthquake as it throws open unknown and hidden strata. The view that art returns us to atavism rather than projecting us into the future is erroneous. Although music does not generate any direct actions, its fundamental effect, the direction it imparts to psychic catharsis, is essential for the kind of forces it will release, what it will release, and what it will push into the background. Art is the organization of our future behavior. It is a requirement that may never be fulfilled but that forces us to strive beyond our life toward all that lies beyond it. (p. 253)

From a Vygotskian perspective, music is not merely an auditory perception. Music functions as a catalyst that arouses and releases emotions, which propels individuals to continue pursuing their passions. For J.J., Emily, and Susan, the satisfaction of being able to cope with playing difficult passages and the emotional experience of listening to expressive dimensions of the music are major factors in their decisions to continue investing time and energy into studying music. Another reason compelling them to continue is the feeling of belonging to a community of musical practice.

Summary

In this chapter, I presented selected examples from the piano students' interviews of music experiences that influenced their decisions to continue their piano studies. These students revealed that their experiences in their various overlapping communities of musical practice nurtured their positive attitudes towards learning music. For the three students, it was joining family members in music activities, and attending a music program or event at school or at a concert. They talked about the connection between the types of social and cultural experiences that led them to develop musical competencies and the ability to self-regulate their learning with their long-term affiliation with music learning. The students showed that experiencing the formal and expressive aspects of the music, and the kinesthetic experience of playing piano, fueled their desires to play. They also referred to the effect of being able to cope with the stress and elation of performing, and seeing the reaction of the audience members in influencing their on-going interests to be involved in music. All the students revealed that their teachers influenced their decisions to continue. To fully understand the teacher's role in the decision to continue piano lessons, I introduce in the next chapter J.J, Emily, and Susan's reflections of their experiences with Esfir, including how she used language during their piano lessons.

CHAPTER NINE

J.J., Emily, and Susan Portray Esfir's Role in their Decisions
to Continue Piano Lessons

Portraits are shaped through illuminating the participants' perspectives of their experiences, values, and feelings (Lawrence-Lightfoot & Davis, 1997). In this chapter, I present J.J., Emily, and Susan's perspectives of their encounters and experiences during their interactions and lessons with Esfir. These portraits are derived from the interviews and email correspondences I had with them. I address how they perceived Esfir socialized them into communities of musical practice, developed their musical competencies, and shaped their ability to regulate their learning. I include details about how her focus on coping with the emotional experience of playing and performing motivated them to continue their studies. I also refer to how Esfir's use language affected them. I include both the students' accolades for Esfir and their criticisms of her approach.

J.J. Portrays Esfir's Role in his Decisions

When J.J. spoke about his lessons with Esfir, he referred to how she socialized him into social and cultural musical practices and traditions. Particularly significant for J.J. was meeting Esfir's other students at various musical events, or at her intimate pre-concert sessions, which were usually held a few days before the actual exam or performance. At these events, he listened to other students play through their repertoires, students who like him, valued musical skills and knowledge. Meeting with the other students gave him an opportunity "*to get experience with the natural stage context*" (J.J., TI, 1998). Rehearsing his program in Esfir's studio familiarized him with the traditions of performing. Esfir's advice prepared him mentally for the upcoming performance.

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His acquaintance with a variety of repertoires, idioms of musical language and practices nurtured his love of music. Furthermore, Esfir's emphasis on *"mental preparation"* of what to do before, during, and after the actual performance helped him to cope with his performance anxiety (J.J., TI, 1998).

J.J. believed that his potential to accomplish his dream of becoming a concert pianist was due to his experiences with Esfir. He remarked that he needed Esfir *"at this time in [his] life,"* and noted that since he began lessons with Esfir he felt *"so much"* better about his ability to play piano (J.J., TI, 1998). He found that her holistic and demanding approach to teaching was helpful in developing his ability to maximize his musical potential. He stated, *"Everything that I play now I learned from Esfir"* (J.J., TI, 1998). Although he described Esfir as being *"extremely demanding,"* he found that her encouragement to think about the music and her emphasis on self-discovery expanded his musical growth. For J.J., her *"strong"* but *"good-natured"* persona enabled him to discover his self-worth (J.J., TI, 2002).

J.J. also attributed his determination to study music to the fact that Esfir *"not only teaches piano but she teaches music"* (J.J., TI, 1998). He appreciated that she focused on *"more than the actual notes"* and conventional musical terminology (J.J., TI, 1998). He liked the way she explained the *"little details"* in the music and their general applicability to other pieces and circumstances. As J.J. went on to explain, Esfir not only provided technical instructions, she in fact taught him *"life lessons at the same time"* (J.J., TI, 1998). She helped him become more focused on his musical goals by showing him how to filter through a wide-range of circumstances. He recalled a lesson when she spent the entire time discussing how to balance his social life, his school assignments, and his work as a waiter at a restaurant with his music responsibilities. He told me that because he was determined to become a concert pianist, he followed Esfir's

advice and directed his attention to his practicing instead of going out with his friends.

J.J. provides us with a glimpse into how Esfir's implicit teaching principles and musical values affected his attitude towards music and promoted his sense of confidence. J.J. was eager to tell me that he preferred his lessons with Esfir because "there is not even a comparison in terms of what I learned [with her to what was learned] in university. There is no comparison at all" (J.J., TI, 1998). Although he did not regard what he learned from his university instructors as "bad," he found that Esfir made it possible for him to make a uniquely tremendous improvement in only two years.

In painting his image of how Esfir kept him inspired, he referred to her Russian musical background and traditions. He preferred her approach to learning and her emphasis on hard work. He found that her expert guidance and instructions were interesting and more effective than those of his teachers in university. He appreciated her constant advice to pay attention to the music. As J.J. explained, her emphasis on the music worked better for him than his former music teachers' general emphasis "on the wrong notes and technique and things like that" (J.J., TI, 1998). J.J. found that her criticisms were more meaningful to him because not only did she allow him to take risks, she encouraged him to attempt to get in touch with his inner feelings as he played through his repertoire.

J.J. felt that Esfir developed his confidence in his ability to play piano. Esfir awakened functions that were just developing by adjusting her instructions and advice to his capabilities and focusing on his overall musical abilities rather than assessing distinct skills. Her constant emphasis on his musical ability, on being disciplined, and on practicing "in a clever way" seemed to encourage J.J. to believe in his musical competency (J.J., TI, 1998). His decision to continue

taking piano lessons was also fueled by the way she critiqued his playing. J.J. understood immediately what he had to do to improve. In contrast, his other teachers concentrated on critiquing "*wrong notes and technique*" (J.J., TI, 1998). In J.J., we have a stunning example of how different teachers send different attributional messages to a student, which influence a student's decision to act or not.

Behaviors and actions are shaped by socially constructing knowledge with others in a particular sociocultural setting (Wertsch & Bivens, 1992). J.J. attributed his ability to transfer what he learned to the musical activities that were carried out with Esfir in her music studio and to the manner in which he worked with Esfir. In particular, the lure of discovery during his lessons made a lasting impression on him. He explained that Esfir's encouragement to learn and discover what to do on his own shaped his ability to take control over what he learned and to formulate his own plans of action. He explained that Esfir got him to discover what to do on his own by "*always [making him] see it in a new way*" and "*actually [making him] discover new things about the music*" (J.J., TI, 1998).

J.J.'s attitude concerning his ability to self-regulate his learning also reflects his experiences during his lessons with Esfir. He commented on how she first guided him and then transferred the control of learning to him. J.J. explained that after he played through his piece, "*she would say that it is good and then she would say, 'But, but, but'*" (J.J., TI, 1998). From J.J.'s perspective, it was the "*things she makes me think about and those little things that she adds*" that he liked about her teaching (J.J., TI, 1998).

Aside from developing his sensory, technical, and interpretive skills, Esfir had a unique way of getting J.J. to figure out what to do on his own. She showed him how to see the music "*in a new way*," to "*discover new things about the music*," and to get him to think about "*a lot of things*," such as hinting about the

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relevance of the "*little details*" and their general applicability (J.J., TI, 1998). For J.J., a teacher's directives to "*Play this faster. Play this louder. You hit a wrong note*" only focuses him on how to perform musical tasks, or how to change what he did wrong (J.J., TI, 1998). In other words, these instructions were meaningful only "*for that single piece and nothing else*" (J.J., TI, 1998)

Denzin maintained that emotional meaning evolves from our lived experiences with others. He stated that

> Regardless of the personal relationship between the person and the emotional associate, the associate is a significant emotional other because of his [sic] presence in the individual's emotional experience is and becomes a significant part of the meaning, order, and significance of that experience. (Denzin, 1984, p.93)

Esfir used the context of the music lesson to develop an emotional relationship with her students. J.J.'s portrayal of the intensity of his learning experiences with Esfir suggests a special kind of chemistry between them that made him feel more complete. He explained that even though "*she is extremely demanding,*" and sometimes makes him feel bad, her "*teaching [is] a kind of energy that fills*" him up (J.J., TI, 1998).

In addition, Esfir's emphasis on the expressive aspects of the music and on getting him "*to think and feel at the same time as opposed to exclusively thinking or feeling, which is no good*" when listening to or performing music also motivated him to study music (J.J., TI, 1998). J.J. attributed to Esfir the development of his ability to constructively channel the emotions that he experienced as a student of piano and as a performer.

Tolstoy (1967) claims that a teacher "who has at his tongue's end the

explanation of what it is that is bothering his pupil" has a profound effect on the student's interest in learning (pp. 56-57). J.J. frequently referred to the manner in which Esfir communicated her ideas to him. J.J. explained that Esfir's use of language got him to think about how he was going to play the piano. He revealed that giving him "*all those points to think about*" during the lesson were invaluable and "*very encouraging*" (J.J., TI, 1998). In other words, Esfir's pointers prompted him to think about her comments after the lesson was over. Her advice helped J.J. select and plan what he needed to do on his own. J.J. also saw that over time Esfir's words influenced his ability to function on his own.

As well as pointing out what he needed to pay attention to, J.J. recognized that Esfir did not allow any mistakes to go uncorrected. Yet she never commented on them in a derogatory manner. He pointed out that even when she discussed a section that needed more work, she would "*never scream at you 'Faster, faster, faster,' or 'No, no, no. Why did you do that'*" (J.J., TI, 1998). In fact, they often "just listened, did nothing but look at the music, [and] just wrote a few things down" for him to think about.

J.J. also commented on Esfir's creative use of language. He attributed her ingenious use of analogies to her knowing just what he needed focus on. When "*she [said] things*" to him, for example, "*the cows running down the hill,*" or "*chickens flying away,*" she would make him "*feel bad without having to resort to more violent words*" (J.J., TI, 1998). He found that by her arousing his imagination and providing him with information, he could "*picture . . . what she meant*" and play the section correctly (J.J., TI, 1998). J.J. also believed that her creative use of language was instrumental in stimulating his eagerness to take charge and play through difficult sections in the music. It appears that if he had continued with those teachers who resorted to screaming unhelpful comments, his initiative may have been stifled and he may have decided to stop his lessons

all together. Esfir's language use encouraged J.J. to continue his musical studies.

Emily Portrays Esfir's Role in her Decisions

Like J.J., Emily continued to go to her lessons "every single week" because Esfir fostered her deep connection to music by creating a community-like-environment (Emily, TI, 2002). Emily found that Esfir's pre-concert rehearsals played a significant role in socializing her into a community of musical practice. Emily revealed that Esfir familiarized her with the practices and rituals of performing. Not only did Esfir inform her and the other students about "where to sit and where to stand, what order we are going to be in and how to say our piece," she had them rehearse the entrance ("We come in. We walk over. We take a bow. Esfir claps."), the performance ("We go and sit down, and we play."), and the conclusion of the performance ("We come up. We take a bow and we go out. She claps.") (Emily, TI, 1998). These rehearsals provided Emily with opportunities to share her repertoires with the others students and to listen to the other students perform with competency. Emily also found that having Esfir and the other students around her at pre-concert practice sessions nurtured her identity as a competent musician and her commitment to continue taking lessons.

Emily believes that Esfir made her "the musician that she is today" because she focused her on "what needed changing" (Emily, TI, 1998). She found that Esfir's guidance and support augmented her ability to perform musical tasks. She regarded Esfir's high expectations as invaluable in developing her musical competencies. Emily also acknowledged that her determination to continue lessons reflected Esfir's expertise in knowing when to give her "a break" from playing an intensive but challenging repertoire.

Emily valued Esfir's input and the ingenious way Esfir supervised her progress, particularly how she got her *"ready and perfect"* for the concerts, especially since she did so without pushing her (Emily, TI, 1998). She admired the manner in which she organized her one-hour lessons and adjusted the program to her needs. She believed that Esfir developed her music abilities because she knew her strengths and weaknesses, and that she *"picks pieces according to what will work out"* for her (Emily, TI, 2002).

Emily noted that Esfir reinforced what she could do and showed her what to do when she struggled with a piece. Emily recounted that Esfir outlined the *"details"* that she needed to pay attention to, and specified the specific sections that needed more work instead of reprimanding her for not knowing what to do. She also disclosed that Esfir worked closely with her until she perfected a piece, often breaking it into sections. Emily found that when she followed Esfir's recommendations at home, what she previously found hard was soon *"like a piece of cake"* (Emily, TI, 2002).

Emily acknowledged that another reason she continues to take piano lessons with Esfir is because Esfir has *"given [her] so many challenges"* (Emily, TI, 2002). Emily finds that being provided with so many different kinds of challenging pieces (concertos, small duets, long three-to four-movement pieces, and simple two-page pieces) keeps her interested. Knowing that she *"can play . . . whatever it is, [that she] can do it, [and overcome] so many obstacles"*, not only plays a vital role in her musical development, it is the reason why she is *"still going to continue playing"* piano (Emily, TI, 2002). In other words, studying with a teacher who has tailored her program, her teaching approach, and her choice of repertoire to her zone of musical abilities has not only developed Emily's competence and confidence; it has fueled her desire to continue her music studies.

Emily associated her decision to continue to play piano to the manner in which Esfir "*opened up so many doors in music for*" her, which she believes mediated her ability to overcome "*so many obstacles*" on her own (Emily, TI, 2002). From Emily's perspective, at first Esfir would offer her the guidance and support she needed, such as working on one bar at a time. She found that when Esfir noticed that she was progressing, she would "*gradually*" decrease the amount of guidance and increase her encouragement that Emily might "*learn these sections perfectly*" on her own, experiment, and "*do different things with the music*" (Emily, TI, 2002). Emily revealed that Esfir's emphasis on her ability to work efficiently on her own sustained her enthusiasm to take piano lessons.

Emily reported that her love of music was related to how Esfir helped her deal with the emotional issues that arose while practicing challenging pieces or performing at Esfir's recitals. For example, she found that Esfir's instructions and advice calmed her fears and apprehension whenever she started a new piece, had difficulty with a passage, or arrived inadequately prepared for her lesson.

Esfir eased her tension by being patient and working closely with her. She also put her at ease by clarifying how to play complicated passages in the music, pointing out what needed additional work, and assuring her that she was able to learn whatever she set her mind to do. Such advice as encouraging her to find a context where she could be "*one with the music*" alleviated her anxiety about hitting the correct notes (Emily, TI, 2002). Emily also found that leaving her alone in the music room to play through her piece or to practice a particular section by herself alleviated her concern about making mistakes and allowed her to focus more on the music itself. Emily's decision to continue learning music was fostered by studying with a teacher who endorsed risk-taking. In addition, Esfir's providing a context where Emily could focus on the sounds rather than on

the technical procedures and structures helped her to deal with her performance anxiety.

Emily maintained that Esfir also motivated her to play piano because she would *"always find something that you really like"* and the music that she selected was aesthetically pleasing for her to play (Emily, TI, 1998). Emily disclosed that highlighting the expressive aspects of the music by adding colorful adjectives (*calm, gentle, soothing, nice,* or *mad*) and inventive metaphors created an inner calm and brought out *"such joy and happiness . . . [which she claims is why she loves playing piano] so much"* (Emily, TI, 1998). For example, Esfir's instruction to *"imagine that this is a lullaby and your sister burst into the room and starts yelling at the top of her lungs"* enabled Emily to understood immediately how to bring out the dramatic aspects in a certain piece (Emily, TI, 2002).

Esfir's use of language played a decisive role in Emily's positive attitude towards continuing her piano lessons. Emily associated her interest and commitment to study music to the manner in which Esfir would *"show you the way and she [would] tell you exactly what to do"* (Emily, TI, 1998). Emily remarked that Esfir kept her interested in learning music by never yelling at her. She also recognized that Esfir's creative use of language enabled her to *"visualize"* how to solve and practice difficult and problematic portions of the music on her own (Emily, TI, 1998). For example, Emily recalled that when Esfir told her, *"You're going into a new world. You're in the* Wizard of Oz. *You are going to the top of the mountain and all of a sudden you see the Emerald City,"* Esfir had known *"EXACTLY what to say to make [her] understand"* that the next passage was similar except that it was an octave higher (Emily, TI, 1998). It is important to note that because Emily was familiar with the register of the lesson,

she was able to interpret the essence behind Esfir's imaginative use of words. Emily responded positively to Esfir's ability to link her instructions to Emily's prior knowledge (Mota, 1999).

Susan Portrays Esfir's Role in her Decisions

Susan found that Esfir nurtured her continued interest in learning music by inviting her to join her at concerts, soirées, competitions, and other social milieus and by giving her the opportunity to watch her videotape of the Van Cliburn Piano Competition and listen to recordings from her private collection. For Susan, having opportunities to socialize with other musicians and to listen to Esfir's recordings was "*her way of saying you are worth it*" (Susan, TI, 1998). It seemed that the opportunity to meet, converse with, and watch others promoted Susan's positive attitude towards studying music.

Susan credited Esfir for developing her musical skills. She also revealed that the manner in which Esfir developed her musical expertise was a new experience for her. She found that Esfir built a foundation by starting her from the beginning. She acknowledged that Esfir "*put a lot of effort*" into her lessons and worked closely with her (Susan, TI, 2002). Susan associated her awareness of her playing skills with Esfir's feedback on her playing. In Susan's words, Esfir told her that she was "*not bad,*" "*very, very, very good,*" "*you're great,*" that she had improved ("*You play better*"), and that she had the potential to improve in the future ("*You're going to get it*") (Susan, TI, 1998). Susan also referred to Esfir's thoroughness ("*She is not letting mistakes go*") and her selection of serious and challenging music (Susan, TI, 1998). She acknowledged that Esfir identified what needed further study and explained how to do it. She valued Esfir's comments on style and technique, and her interesting interpretive and "*extra musical ideas*" (Susan, TI, 2002). She also thought highly of Esfir's

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flexibility, in particular her ability to change her direction from the previous year when *"she was preparing me for a short term"* (Susan, TI, 1998). Susan found that Esfir's *"being much pickier"* and *"pushing [her] more"* was *"preparing [her] to play well for the rest of [her] life"* (Susan, TI, 1998).

Susan was aware that Esfir's authoritarian approach moved *"her forward"*. She found that *"with Esfir, I get constantly reminded that I am a student and that I have a lot to learn from her"* (Susan, TI, 1998). Despite the fact that Esfir *"pretty much freaked out"* when Susan told her that she wanted to enter the Chopin Competition, Esfir took control of the situation (Susan, TI, 2002). Although Esfir showed her how to direct her own learning, Susan was concerned that Esfir rarely provided explicit musical interpretations.

When I spoke to Susan after she returned from Europe, she complained about Esfir's authoritarian stance. That Esfir tried *"to sculpture and mold"* her made Susan feel *"like a child . . . like a machine"* (Susan, TI, 2002). Susan believed that although Esfir developed her abilities to play *"singing melodies"* by showing her how to be *"more sensitive to chords and harmony"*, she did not develop her abilities to function independently (Susan, TI, 2002).

Susan maintained that *"the most important thing about"* her lessons with Esfir was the focus on the music, sound quality, and musicianship (Susan, TI, 1998). Susan attributed her ability to play *"double thirds more quickly"* and the intensity with which she studied piano to Esfir's emphasis on listening to the expressive aspects of the music (Susan, TI, 1998).

Susan noted how Esfir's compliments and encouragement helped her cope with the stress of performing. She also found that because Esfir provided her with opportunities to perform for others at her house, she felt less stressed when she performed in public. However, playing for Esfir's colleague, an accredited teacher in the field of piano performance, left Susan emotionally

drained because the colleague's comments were harsh. After Susan heard the critical review of her technique and style base, she left "*depressed*" and was "*upset*" for the rest of the night (Susan, TI, 2002). Although Susan claimed that this anxiety-provoking incident kept her interested, pushing her to practice with more awareness and effort, she was still haunted by this experience when I interviewed her four years later. In fact, Susan did not resume lessons with Esfir after she returned to Montreal.

Susan claimed that Esfir's use of language was different from her other teachers. She found that Esfir's instructions focused her on how to practice more efficiently. When Esfir lectured her or advised her on how to interpret the music, she knew what to pay attention to when practicing or playing. Although Esfir occasionally scolded her, she never yelled at her when I was present during her lessons. Susan responded to her comments by absorbing everything, which she believed made "*a big difference*" in developing the "*foundation that [she] had lacked all those years*" (Susan, TI, 1998). However, in a recent conversation with Susan, she clarified that Esfir's comments became harsher and sometimes derogatory as the deadline to send in demo tape needed to obtain a grant to study in Europe with a teacher who would prepare her for the competition neared. She complained that Esfir tried "to motivate her by berating her" (Susan, Personal Conversation, 2004).

Connections between Theory and Students' Reflections
of Esfir's Role in their Decisions

According to Vygotsky (1978), "we are aware of ourselves, for we are aware of others" (p. 30). J.J. and Emily were aware that their commitment to study music was associated with their experiences with Esfir. They claimed that their experiences during their lessons with Esfir had a more positive

impact on their respective decisions to continue their musical studies than their experiences with other teachers.

Central to Wenger's (1998) concept of community of practice is that members of a community meet together to share repertoires of knowledge and skills, as well as to familiarize each other with the practices of the community. Music students who continue participating in their music program attribute their decision to continue their music studies with studying a teacher who provides a context for them to learn about music structures, music knowledge, and music competency by having them work with the other students (Corenblum & Marshall, 1998). It seems clear that J.J., Emily, and Susan understood that Esfir socialized them into a musical community and it had value because they learned about the traditions of music performance and repertoires.

From a Vygotskian perspective, children and adult's experiences with more knowledgeable others in an authentic sociocultural activity context can lead to their ability to gradually transform and internalize what they learn and to master complex tasks on their own. As Vygotsky (1981) claimed,

> Any function in the child's cultural development appears twice
> or on two plains. First it appears on the social plane, and then
> on a psychological plane. First it appears between people as
> an interpsychologcal category, and then within the child as an
> intrapsychological category. (p. 163)

J.J., Emily, and Susan contend that Esfir provided them with the strategies, knowledge, and support they needed to think and reason musically. J.J. and Emily attributed their eagerness to continue studying piano to her emphasis on self-discovery and autonomy. Her focus on thinking about how to

apply what was learned in the lesson to other pieces of music, and her holistic approach to teaching musical skills and strategies, developed their musical competencies.

Researchers (Denzin, 1984; Vygotsky, 1971, 2000) have addressed the connection between interpersonal-emotional experiences and the choices that individuals make. According to Vygotsky (1971), musicians' social experiences enable them to recognize and channel their emotionally aroused energy to the aesthetical aspects of the music. J.J., Esfir provided Emily and Susan with the energy and focus they needed to cope with their elation and stress when playing or performing.

When Susan returned from Europe, however, she had a change of heart. It may be that Susan misinterpreted Esfir's words and decision to teach her three lessons a week. Although Susan believed she had *"the musical instincts to enter the Chopin Competition"* (Susan, TI, 2002), I believe that Susan's desire to participate in this prestigious event was so powerful that she focused all her energy into learning her repertoire and did not hear what Esfir told her about the enormity of her goal. In failing to follow her teacher's advice, Susan may have thwarted her personal goal to be a concert pianist. This remains to be seen.

Halliday (1978) addressed the function of an individual's language in eliciting another person's actions and thoughts, in making tasks more relevant, and in channeling information to them. J.J. maintained that through her use of language, Esfir revealed *"interesting musical insights"* that helped him learn musical skills and strategies. For example, she wrote explicit directives on the score and offered suggestions about *"everything that is piano playing,"* including hints on what to think about and feel when producing the appropriate sound (J.J., TI, 2002). Emily noted that Esfir's interesting stories led her forward. Susan attributed her ability to solve difficult tasks to Esfir's verbal directives.

Summary

In this chapter, I presented J.J., Emily, and Susan's reflections of their experiences with Esfir. I specifically referred to how they described her role in socializing them into the music community, in developing their musical competencies, and shaping their abilities to regulate their own learning. I also captured how Esfir's focus on emotional issues and her use of language affected them.

CHAPTER TEN

Conclusions, Implications, Coda, and Postlude

In this chapter, I present the social, cultural, and psychological influences on promising piano students' decisions to continue their piano lessons, including the role of their teachers and the effect of their teachers' language on the decisions. I reflect on implications that this study has for music educators, parents, and music students. I discuss how the findings of this study can be applied to those involved in the field of music education, and the significance of this study for cross-disciplinary application. I present recommendations for future areas of potential research. I reflect on my experiences with my teachers and revisit the participants.

Conclusions

On the basis of the analysis of the data, I conclude that promising piano students are inclined to continue piano lessons if they have opportunities to participate in music activities and attend music events with family members and others who value learning music. Acquiring musical knowledge, internalizing the practices and meanings involved in playing piano, being aware that they can self-regulate their own learning, and being able to cope with the emotional experiences of playing and performing music, play major roles in supporting piano students' determination to continue their piano studies.

The conclusions of this study also lead me to believe that teachers play a key role in influencing piano students' continued interest in learning music. Teachers who adopt a holistic approach to teaching, which includes socializing their students into a music community, as well as developing their musical competency, their ability to regulate their own learning, and their ability to cope

with the emotional experiences of playing and performing piano, play a major role in the decision to continue. Their use of language during lessons can lead their students to reach their potential, to be less anxious about attaining perfection, and more motivated to take piano lessons.

Why Promising Piano Students Continue Piano Lessons

The literature reveals that although showing early ability plays a role in shaping students' decisions to continue their studies (Davidson, 1999; Gagné, 1993; Gardner, 1985; Sloboda & Howe, 1991), students' determination to be involved in musical endeavors depends on their social experiences with significant others within a particular sociocultural milieux (Halliday, 1978; Vygotsky, 1978; Wenger, 1998). My inquiry furthers Vygotsky, Halliday, and Wenger's theoretical arguments by concluding that promising piano students' decisions to continue lessons reflect their meaningful socially constructed experiences in a sociocultural-historical context. The conclusions derived from the study show that musical experiences with significant others in various communities of musical practice play a significant role in influencing the decision to continue. Engaging with others who value learning music affects piano students' identities as musicians and affects their ways of seeing the world of music, and themselves in it. Socializing students into a musical community provides an opportunity to teach them about what people in a music community value and do. For Esfir's three students, musical experiences with their teachers, colleagues, parents and friends at home, in school, church halls, concert halls, and music studio settings played key roles in inspiring them to continue taking piano lessons.

It also became clear that piano students associate their decision to continue piano lessons with being able to reach standards that are within

their zones of ability (Vygotsky, 1978). The three students and Esfir agree that teachers who select repertoires that are both challenging and within students' approximate zones of ability boost the students' confidence and enable them to internalize musical meaning.

The findings of this research indicate that being self-regulated provides the impetus for piano students to continue taking lessons. All three students expressed that their confidence in being able to play challenging repertoire, to improve, and to figure out how to organize and execute courses of action on their own were factors in their decisions to further their music studies.

Promising piano students are more likely to be inspired to continue piano lessons if they can cope with the stresses of performing challenging repertoires, and/or the elation of hearing the expressive aspects of the music. Responding to the kinesthetic experiences of playing piano was also a factor in J.J., Emily, and Susan's respective decisions to continue in their musical endeavors.

The Role of the Piano Teacher

The conclusions derived from the findings of this qualitative inquiry also indicate that piano teachers' *holistic-whole-person* approach plays a significant role in their students' decisions to continue their lessons. Rooted in the decision process are students' experiences with a teacher who inspires them to learn by creating a community-like atmosphere. Socializing students into the community broadens their understanding of musical concepts. As I discussed in the previous chapters, music students acquire a positive attitude towards learning by engaging in music activities with other members of the global music community. Meeting with others in music contexts socializes piano students into a music community. Creating a community context as Esfir did presents students with opportunities to exchange ideas, share their knowledge about

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music practices (singing, playing, listening), repertoire, and competency, and discuss the significance and worthiness of belonging to a music community with other students. Esfir provided J.J., Emily, and Susan with many opportunities, which included meeting with other musicians and music students both during group rehearsal sessions and discussions after recitals, as well as during piano and theory lessons.

Group get-togethers, group lessons, group theory classes, and class recitals provide an important context for students to learn that competence is valued (Wenger, 1998). For the three students in this inquiry, pre-concert get-togethers provided the opportunity to listen to how others performed with competency and provided a non-threatening context for students to prepare for actual performances. Setting up group practice sessions enables students to learn through collaboration what they can do and what needs further work. For example, when two of Esfir's students had difficulty learning their repertoire, and their lessons were back-to-back, she alternated their places during their "experimental lesson" every few minutes, thus creating a space where they had the possibility to observe how the other student worked through difficult and challenging repertoire. Esfir also engaged her older students' help with the younger or less experienced students, especially when one of her more experienced students arrived early for his or her lesson. Teachers' elaborations on their personal experiences in music communities give credence for students to engage in musical learning. Esfir's frequent references to her experiences, commitment, and focus as a student in Russia not only reassured her students that playing piano is pleasurable, she established that playing piano is valued.

When teachers select appropriate tasks and explain the procedures and concepts needed to master the tasks, students are more motivated to continue their studies (Vygotsky, 2000). Piano teachers maintain their students' desire to

study piano by helping them reach their musical potential. The three students in this study credited Esfir with the development of their musical ability. According to Vygotsky (2000),

> The only good kind of instruction is that which marches ahead of development and leads it; it must be aimed not so much at the ripe as at the ripening functions. It remains necessary to determine the lowest threshold at which instruction in, say, arithmetic may begin, since a certain minimal ripeness of functions is required. But we must consider the upper threshold as well; instruction must be oriented toward the future, not the past. (pp. 188-189)

Master music teachers lead their students forward by focusing their students on what can be accomplished with support and help (Lautzenheiser, 1990). They bring new insight to their students by explaining how to master musical tasks and by adjusting their teaching tactics to suit their students' needs and particular situations. They encourage their students to analyze their weaknesses and strengths, as well as to take calculated risks. In many ways, several of Esfir's teaching practices reflect the premises underlying basic Vygotskian concepts, such as zone of proximal development (ZPD), internalization, and self-regulation, and Lautzenheiser's description of how a good teacher keeps piano students motivated to continue their music studies. It is clear that for Esfir and her students, music teachers' knowledge and awareness of where students are developmentally is crucial in leading students to new developmental levels. Esfir's attunement with where her students were developmentally, the manner in which she provided support and guidance, and the fact that she collaborated with them on how to work through problematic

areas enabled them to become aware of their ability to reach for and attain playing standards that were within their zone of proximal development. Not only did she tell them when they had not performed up to their potential, she also helped them transform their musical abilities to higher developmental levels by creating for each a program that reflected his or her age, stage of development, and range of abilities. She selected learning activities and repertoire that suited each of her student's needs. It is conceivable that if Esfir had not suggested that Emily change from preparing for the Canadian Piano Competition to playing a different and more enjoyable repertoire when her interest waned, Emily might not be taking piano lessons with Esfir today. Significant here is that a piano teacher who develops a student's potential by selecting repertoire and learning tasks that are within that student's approximate level of ability, by providing the necessary assistance, and by modifying tasks and learning objectives to the student's particular needs builds the student's confidence and inspires him or her to continue with lessons.

This study's findings show that piano teachers function as a conduit for shaping their students' abilities to internalize knowledge and to take charge of their own learning. Teaching piano students how to internalize interpersonal forms of knowing mediates their abilities to regulate their learning (Vygotsky, 1978, 2000); and being able to master and control how to play piano plays a significant role in encouraging students to continue learning. Each of Esfir's students reported that the manner in which Esfir developed his or her personal style in performing and interpreting the music motivated him or her to play piano. Stamer (1999) concluded that high school choral students studying with teachers who pay attention to their musical development and support self-discovery are motivated to engage in music learning. Evidence suggests that during the lessons, Esfir's attentiveness to when her students had internalized

the necessary skills and knowledge of how to carry out various specific and global actions, such as playing complicated rhythmic passages, developed her students' potential to regulate their own learning. She encouraged her students to create their own versions of how to play through a given passage by leaving the room at certain intervals during the lesson, which provided a physical space where students could master the art of playing their piece on their own, and a place where she could function as a supportive listener.

Two of Esfir's students reported that the manner in which she developed their personal style of performing and interpreting the music kept them interested in continuing piano lessons. Susan's reaction was different. She complained that Esfir did not give her enough direction. She contradicted herself however, claiming that Esfir did not encourage her to develop her own interpretation. Did Esfir misjudge how Susan responded to her directives and explanations? Would Susan still be taking lessons with Esfir if she had readjusted both the extent and the nature of her direction? Although teachers are not always able to accurately assess their students' readiness to direct their own learning, the findings of this inquiry lend support to the conclusion that teachers need to be attentive to their students' progress and must reflect on whether their teaching approach is effective in mediating their students' abilities to monitor and regulate their own learning. Susan's insistence on her competence to enter the Chopin competition is evidence of her self-regulation and illustrates that self-regulation is not appropriate at all times in all circumstances. Students need to learn how to balance when to take a self-regulative stance with knowing when to take an expert's advice.

Vygotsky proposed that our volition to pursue our interests is a product of our affective response to sensory stimuli, the development of our ability to deal with sensory stimuli, and our social experiences. The review of the literature

showed that music students' emotional experiences of the expressive aspects of music inspire them to continue their musical endeavors (Burnsed, 1998; Dubal, 1984; Gregory, Worrall & Sarge, 1996; Juslin & Sloboda, 2001; Scruton, 1997). Gregory, Worrall, and Sage (1996) show in their study of young music students' emotional responses to music that children react to the expressive aspects of music. Many researchers (Bresler, 1996; Duke, Flowers, & Wolfe, 1997; Haack, 1990; Mackworth-Young, 1990) have also emphasized that it is important for music educators to show their students how to tap into their feelings.

My analysis of what transpired during the piano lessons and the students' reflections on their experiences with Esfir indicate that their emotional responses to the expressive and formal aspects of music motivate them to pursue their music interests. The students revealed that Esfir offered technical advice, focused her instructions on how to develop their cognitive skills, and she provided them with tools that were useful in dealing with the emotional issues that arose while playing through or working on their repertoire. They explained that she familiarized them with the joy of learning music by shifting their attention from executing correct notes to concentrating on the experience of playing music. The analysis of the videotape transcripts showed that Esfir highlighted the expressive elements in the music. She also offered practical suggestions on how to deal with performance anxiety and how to gain control over emotional arousal, which included relaxation techniques and advice on how to focus on the musical elements. These strategies were effective in focusing students on the music, building their confidence, and diminishing their fears and insecurities. For two of the students, Esfir's support and direction on how to deal with performance anxiety built their self-esteem, which undoubtedly contributed to their commitment to continue their lessons. Although Esfir initially advised her against entering the Chopin Competition, Susan felt that she did

not receive adequate direction in terms of how to deal with emotional issues that arose as she prepared her repertoire, which may explain why Susan did not return to Esfir when she returned from Europe and temporarily stopped piano lessons. In other words, there is a connection between how a teacher prepares a student to deal with the emotional intensity and demands of preparing for a competition or performance and that his or her students' decisions to continue with piano lessons. However, sometimes teachers have to accept that there are circumstances that are too far beyond the realm of their musical knowledge and experience for them to deal with adequately.

The Role of the Teacher's Use of Language in the Lesson

The analysis of the interview and videotaped lesson data also revealed that what teachers say and do during piano lessons plays a crucial role in mediating their students' intentions and decisions. Vygotsky (2000) argued that "thought and speech turn out to be the key to the nature of human consciousness" (p. 256). Rostwell and West (2001) concluded that instrumental music teachers' use of language affects their students' learning. They found that students frequently drop out of music within the first year when they take individual lessons with a teacher who tends to make utterances that have an instructive function than on those with an expressive or analytic function.

Piano teachers' use of language can enhance their students' cognitive development and affect their identities as musicians. It can also be a factor in whether or not students continue lessons. Students studying with teachers who merely provide instructions and direct what is going to happen become dependent and unable to regulate their own learning (Rostwell & West, 2001). Esfir was able to keep her students interested in learning music by selecting instructions, explanations, and appraisals that reflected her students' abilities

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and life circumstances. Although she uttered instructions on how to carry out tasks, her use of fewer *Specific-Tasks-Proposals* (instructions to be carried out at that moment) than *Everything-for-your-Life-Proposals* (instructions that can be carried out at other times and in other contexts) implied that her regulative role was temporary and intermittent. Uttering a significant number of *Everything-for-your-Life-Proposals* generally invites students to carry out instructions throughout their musical career. This strategy is particularly critical in so far as musicians spend great amounts of time working on their own (Rostwell & West, 2001).

Music students "who are left without additional information" often lack motivation, and subsequently quit their music lessons (Rostwell & West, 2001, p. 9). Propositions, utterances that focus on encouraging students to think, are invaluable in getting piano students to regulate their own learning. Other benefits of using propositions are that they encourage students to think on their own and to take risks. Teachers contribute to their students' decisions to invest time and energy in their music studies by using more propositions and *Everything-For-Your-Life-Proposals*, and fewer *Specific-Tasks-Proposals*. Teachers who focus almost exclusively on *Specific-Tasks-Proposals* (instructions that are to be carried immediately in the lesson) do not provide students with opportunities to understand what they are doing, thus contributing to a student's decisions to stop lessons. For example, Esfir uttered more proposals than propositions during Susan's lessons. The fact that Susan relied on Esfir's instructions, and started playing as soon as Esfir uttered an instruction, indicates that not having the knowledge to work on her own may have been the reason why she eventually stopped her lessons with Esfir, but continued with different teacher. The findings of this inquiry also lead me to conclude that music teachers' use of language affects their students emotionally. Not only did Esfir explain how to

work through challenging repertoires in an unthreatening manner, she dialogued with her students about their personal emotional issues and offered suggestions on how to overcome performance anxiety. For the three students in this inquiry, studying music with a teacher who used encouragement instead of threats was an exhilarating experience.

Piano teachers can use appraisals to evaluate the level of their students' performance at a particular moment and to suggest what they could potentially accomplish in the future with a teacher's support and guidance. Appraisals are useful in developing students' awareness of their musical abilities and identifying areas where they could play more proficiently in the future. Esfir, by focusing on what her students could do as opposed to what they failed to do, and by using inventive narratives, metaphors, analogies, sounds, and gestures to appraise her students' playing, developed her students' competence and confidence in their ability to play through their repertoire. Esfir's graphic analogies, such as "*cows running down the hill*"; "*chickens are flying away,*" enabled J.J. to identify problems and play through given passages more proficiently (J.J., TI, 1998). In addition, Esfir's inventive use of language was significant with respect to motivating her students to continue their music studies.

Implications for Teaching

The findings have several implications for those in the field of education, and indeed for those in other fields. How to sustain a student's interest in learning so that he or she will continue his or her studies is a concern for any teacher. In the next section, I recommend ways in which music teachers and generalists can engage students and influence their desire to continue their studies.

Establishing a Student's Identity as a Musician

From Vygotskian and Wengerian perspectives, music students' learning develops from experiences with others in social and cultural contexts. Yet, for most piano students, their primary contact is with the teacher, or occurs during year-end recitals or at piano competitions. The findings of this inquiry, which indicate that group learning provides students with opportunities to be socialized into the practices of a music community and to learn about the benefits of taking music classes, support other similar studies (Bresler, 1996; Rostwell & West, 2001; Russell, 1995, 2002). In any group activity, there will be an opportunity for a more capable person to assist another (Vygotsky, 2000). Group activities such as listening to recordings with other students, attending student recitals, or dialoguing about the manner in which performers interpret music diminish student isolation. Pre-rehearsal get-togethers, group theory classes, and ensemble playing provide access to the musical community and information about the kinds of activities musicians can participate in. Group activities offer an opportunity for students to develop music knowledge in an unthreatening environment. Otherwise, students "have no opportunity to share with their peers their experiences" (Rostwell & West, 2001, p. 9).

Nurturing Musical Competencies through Social Interactions

There is certainly a need for further contextualized research on how promising music students' experiences in the teacher's private piano studio influence their intent to continue musical studies. The findings of this research indicate that teacher support and guidance is key in furthering piano students' musical growth and influencing their decision to continue taking piano lessons. Working collaboratively with teachers allows students to develop their abilities. Yet, as revealed through anecdotal accounts and my personal experiences

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and observations while teaching music, many teachers provide feedback on their students' musical competencies by focusing on external markers, such as piano exam results, error-free performances, or competitions. My first teacher, Ms. Goldbar, used the BIG GOLD STAR as an incentive. Even the speakers at the Quebec Music Teachers Association (QMTA) meetings in 1999 and the information in the QMTA's newsletters focused exclusively on the upcoming music festivals and competitions (QMTA Newsletter, 1999).

Working within as Student's Musical Potential

Teachers need to take note of the significance of structuring a teaching approach based on what their students can potentially accomplish with their guidance. Students are more likely to continue taking piano lessons if their teachers select repertoire that builds on their musical abilities and if their teachers employ strategies that develop their abilities to monitor and regulate their own remembering and thinking. When teachers select repertoires that are technically within their students' levels of comprehension and are musically satisfying, they instill a sense of hope, confidence, and a desire to continue lessons. It is also essential for teachers to assess their students' developmental potential and to structure learning tasks around what they believe their students can complete with their assistance. Teachers, who focus their instructions, advice, and feedback on their students' proximal zones of development, contribute to their students' sense of efficacy and a life-long interest in participating in musical activities. They can also lead their students to new developmental levels by providing them with encouragement and direction on how to play the repertoire, and by considering how their students react to their explanations and instructions. Students studying with teachers who impose preset standards and values on them often feel inadequate and are more likely

to stop lessons. For example, Esfir's tendency to focus Susan's lessons around the standards established by those who generally participate in the Chopin Competition and not on her particular needs and abilities contributed to Susan's eventual decision to stop lessons with her.

Transfer of Learning – From Teacher Direction to Student Direction

When teachers select pieces that are technically within a student's level of comprehension and are musically satisfying, they instill a sense of hope, confidence, and a desire to continue piano lessons. Teachers need to analyze whether the degree and type of support they offer provides the direction and type of experience needed for their students' readiness to work on their own. Their assessment involves determining whether their students can identify the concepts and principles that they had been working on together during the lessons and whether the students can adapt this information and set of tasks to other circumstances and in other contexts on their own.

Teachers can mediate their students' abilities to solve how to play challenging music, how to approach difficult musical tasks, how to plan solutions, and how to control their own behavior by focusing their comments and questions on their students' particular needs and circumstances. Teachers must take note that using *Everything-For-Your-Life-Proposals* and propositions provides students with the knowledge of what to do (physical movements, reading skills) and the encouragement to work on their own.

To develop their students' abilities to work on their own, piano teachers should not overlook the importance of adopting a flexible yet direct teaching approach wherein they continually intersperse explicit instructions with guided suggestions and vague hints. Teachers who encourage students to take charge of their learning shape their understanding of how work on their own.

This strategy plays a significant part in developing student enthusiasm and self-esteem. Merely providing instructions, as Esfir did with Susan, can leave students frustrated and their development stagnant because they do not have the skills to work on their own.

Experiencing the Joy and Stress of Playing Piano

How piano students deal with the emotional experience of learning and playing piano either gets in the way of their learning or increases the satisfaction that derives from intimate musical experiences. Teachers need to pay attention to the emotional issues that arise from playing the piano. For example, they can offer strategies on how to deal with the emotional impact of hearing the expressive dimensions of music, or the tension associated with playing in a competition. Teachers can give students a chance to rehearse their program before a performance or competition and can offer advice on how to cope with the anxiety associated with playing in competitions and recitals. Teachers can help their students manage the elation of hearing music. Reducing anxiety can develop a student's enthusiasm, zeal, and confidence, which motivate that student to persist even in the face of setbacks. Teachers can create individually-tailored music programs that reduce the detrimental effects of performance anxiety, that liberate their students from eliciting a perfect rendition of a piece or meeting the standards set by a committee of judges at a competition, and that encourage them to take more risks.

Teacher Education

Unfortunately, most piano teachers in North America graduate without a practicum in piano pedagogy. Few universities require their undergraduate music students whose major instrument is piano to take courses in piano

pedagogy. Yet, most performance majors spend a considerable amount of time teaching once they graduate from university. They do not have training in or knowledge of the types of group activities that would be most beneficial for their students. They begin teaching with little experience in how to pace their advice, or how to make their instructions interesting and relevant. Most novice teachers are not sure when they should be supportive, and when to encourage self-discovery. Prospective piano teachers who themselves studied under a teacher-centered approach are often unaware of the benefits of being flexible, that is, gradually decreasing the teacher's support and uttering explicit directives when needed. Therefore, I recommend the following:

Require all music students whose major instrument is piano take courses and workshops in piano pedagogy, including students in performance and a general music programs. They would learn about the benefits of offering group activities to students, developing students' potential abilities, and encouraging students to work on their own. They would acquire knowledge about teaching strategies, including ways to be more effective when dealing with emotional issues that arise during lessons, and ways to tailor comments during lessons so that they can be more effective in keeping their students interested in continuing with piano lessons.

Provide opportunities for novice teachers throughout their training to observe and dialogue with others in their field, as well as to practice teaching before groups of fellow students and teachers.

Establish an ongoing mentoring system for novice teachers. This would provide a context for novice teachers to articulate their thoughts with others who are more knowledgeable. These mentoring groups would be useful for piano performance students and novice piano teachers. Such groups potentially have cross-disciplinary application, especially in contexts where there is a one-on-one

relationship, such as parent-child, tutor-student, or therapist-patient.

Implications for Future Research

I found that I obtained different and contradictory information when I interviewed the participants after a period of four years. Therefore, I intend to interview my participants again five years from now. I am particularly interested in exploring in greater depth whether there is a connection between the teacher's use of proposals, propositions, and appraisals and the students' decisions to continue lessons with their piano teacher for many years. My study could be taken one step further by analyzing in depth how novice and expert piano teachers use proposals, propositions, and appraisals when teaching promising piano students and their average students.

Research on parental contributions would add depth to these findings. For example, researchers could investigate how parental support, encouragement, and involvement at home influences Esfir's students desire to invest time and energy into studying the piano.

It would be interesting for me or for other researchers to use my methodology to explore the different traditions and strategies that are used by Russian-trained, British-trained, and American-trained teachers to influence promising students at different age levels (pre-adolescent, adolescent, and college age students) to continue piano lessons.

Many new questions arose during the study, including: (1) How do different teaching approaches, such as teacher-directed and student-directed teaching, affect students' decisions?; and (2) How does the Russian pedagogical approach to teaching piano influence promising piano students' decisions to continue their music studies?

Reflections

A limitation of this study is that I asked Esfir to select only promising students. The outcome may have been different had she selected students with average talent. The findings could have been influenced by Esfir's bias of selecting students who would be more positively influenced by her teaching.

Another limitation is that the students were at different stages of their musical training; and level of development certainly affects how students perceive themselves and how they express their perceptions. Susan had graduated with a Bachelor of Music. J.J. had earned a Bachelor of Science and had started an undergraduate music program. Emily was still in elementary school. An examination of piano performance students in a university music program using the same interpretive framework and analytic approach would be one way to move beyond these limitations of teacher bias and students' different stages and ages of development. On the other hand, with the possible exception of Susan, Esfir seems to adapt her teaching approach to each student's developmental needs.

Coda

In retrospect, I realize that Jacob Wolfe established my identity as a musician who belonged to a community of musical practice. For example, he introduced me to the benefits of learning music and expanded my knowledge of the language of music and music idioms. He taught me about the production and application of musical notation, acoustics, harmony, and melody. He brought me into his recording studio and had me listen to different interpretations of the music on his state-of-the-art high-fidelity record player. The manner in which he used language during my lessons developed my musical knowledge. He taught

me how to take charge of my learning. He made me feel confident and proud of my musical prowess.

I realize that working one-on-one with Jacob Wolfe, thus experiencing the benefits of his assistance, his directives, and his understanding of my zone of proximal development (Vygotsky, 1978) nurtured my potential musical ability. His instructions and encouragement helped me to develop my own interpretation of the music and promoted my ability to regulate my own behavior. His profound knowledge about music and his advice on how to deal with performance anxiety helped me cope with the elation and stress of listening to and responding to sound, rhythm, and tonality while playing through my repertoire. It is no wonder that my interest in learning music was sustained.

Although Ms. Goldbar introduced me to a music culture, her autocratic, controlling style of teaching discouraged me from learning music. However, my early experiences with my supportive family, coupled with my experiences with Jacob Wolfe established the foundation for my decision to continue my musical studies. Jacob Wolfe's introduction to the practices was a liberating and exhilarating experience.

Postlude

Revisiting the Participants

J.J. continues to take piano lessons with Esfir. He performs at soirées, conferences, and other events. He teaches private students and as been an assistant teacher at Esfir's summer music camp. He continues to work full time in a field unrelated to music, but as he told me, his salary enables him to take piano lessons. He recently decided to return to university to pursue his other passion, aerospace engineering. He explained that his motivation to study science at this time of his life is connected to his desire

to work in an environment where challenge will be on par with evolution. It will also give me the opportunity to use the full extent of my scientific insight and intellect, as well as [his] creative abilities. Why limit your knowledge to one field, when capabilities and personal leadership might permit you to explore more than one. (J.J., email correspondence, 2004)

Emily has recently graduated from high school and will enter CEGEP in the fall. She still finds time in her busy schedule to take lessons from Esfir.

Susan recently obtained her Artist's Diploma from a university in Montreal. She continues to take lessons, but not with Esfir. She teaches piano in her private studio, as well as at a music conservatory that is affiliated with a university in Montreal. She performs as a soloist and intends to play benefit concerts throughout Canada next summer.

Esfir continues to teach piano. One of her students won first prize at the Canadian piano competition. Her music camp, Camp Musicale Tutti, which she has been running for the past nine years, was a huge success. She is looking forward to teaching at Lanaudiére and performing at the gala concert at the Lanaudiére Music Festival. She is preparing for her busy concert season. In the fall, she will perform as a soloist with I Musici Orchestra.

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LIST OF APPENDICES

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Appendix B

First set of Interview Questions to students

1.   What is your name?

2.   How old are you?

3.   What is your level of schooling?

   3.1   What school do you /did you attend?

4.   How many years have you been taking piano lessons?

   4.1   How many years have you been involved in music?

5.   What age did you start piano lessons?

   5.1   When did you start lessons with Esfir?

6.   Why do you like to play or practice piano?

   6.1   Are there pieces you do not like to practice?

7.   How do you learn a piece?

8.   How do you know that your playing has improved?

   8.1   How do you know that the pieces you prepared for a recital have improved?

   8.2   How does it feel when you play well?

9.   Explain what happens during piano lessons.

10.   Describe your lessons with Esfir.

   10.1   What does she do to encourage you?

   10.2   What happens when the piece is difficult?

11.   Did you study with other teachers?

   11.1   What were they like?

   11.2   How are they different from Esfir?

   11.3   How is Esfir different from your teacher at school?

12. Do you take piano exams, participate in competitions, or play in concerts?

    12.1 How does Esfir prepare you for exams, competitions, or concerts?

13. Who or what influenced your decision to play piano?

14. Describe what contributes to promising piano students' decisions to continue studying piano.

Appendix C

First set of Interview Questions to the Teacher

1.   Describe your background (age, nationality).

2.   Describe your musical background (level or music education,

      teachers, institutions).

3.   What is the focus of the piano lesson?

4.   How do you prepare a student for an exam, audition, competition,

      or concert?

5.   Describe the characteristics that differentiate one student from

      another.

6.   How do you identify students who have promising ability?

7.   Describe what influences students to continue piano studies.

8.   What is the role of the teacher in mediating a student's decision to

      continue his or her music studies?

Appendix D

Retrospective Interview Questions to Students

1. What music activities have you been participating in over the last few years?

2. Explain why you continue to take piano lessons?

3. For those who have changed teachers: Explain why you decided to change.

4. What role did Esfir play in your decision to continue lessons with her or change to another teacher?

5. Describe what happens during the lesson.

   5.1 Clarify how you felt about me videotaping your lessons.

   5.2 Why does Esfir leave the room? Explain how you feel about this.

   5.3 Describe a particular incident that occurred during the videotaping that affected you.

6. Describe how Esfir gets you to learn a piece.

   6.1 Does she discuss what to do with you? If so, describe what she does.

   6.2 Does she give you an opportunity to add your own interpretation? If so, describe what she does.

7. Explain how Esfir explains what to do.

8. What is Esfir's reaction when you are not prepared?

9. What qualities does a teacher need to get their students to learn?

   9.1 What qualities does Esfir have?

9.2   What would you like her to do differently?

10.   What else attracts you to learning music (Parents, aesthetical aspects of the music, friends going to concerts, and so on)?

11.   When we last met, you told me that you loved to play piano. Can you explain what you meant?

Appendix E

Retrospective Interview Questions to Esfir

1. What musical activities have you been involved in since I last interviewed you outside your private teaching?

2. Describe the music program in Russia.

   2.1 Describe how the Russian pedagogical system influenced your teaching.

3. Describe your experiences with your teachers at the Moscow Conservatory and Academy of Music.

   3.1 How have they influenced your teaching?

4. How do you get your students to improve?

5. Explain why you leave the room when your students play through their pieces.

   5.1 Explain what you do when your students do not practice.

   5.2 Explain what you do when your students do not pay attention to your instructions.

   5.3 I noticed that you sometimes teach more than one student at a time. Explain why you often teach several students at a time.

6. Describe how you plan for the lesson. Do you decide what to do prior to the lesson or during the lesson?

7. Explain why you do not focus primarily on technique.

   7.1 Explain why you focus more on providing general information.

   7.2 Explain why you use metaphors, analogies, and narratives.

8. How do you inform your students about their improvement?

9. What do you do to get students to work on their own?

10. Explain how the cultural differences in Russia influenced your teaching in Canada and vice versa.

11. What role do emotion and the aesthetics of the music play in learning how to play the piano.

    11.1 Do you think that there is a connection between emotion, the aesthetical aspects of the music, and a student's decision to continue studying music? If so, how would you explain the connection?

12. When I last interviewed you, Emily did not seem to be motivated. Explain why you think she continues to take lessons.

    12.1 What role do you think you played in her decision to continue?

13. Explain why you had another teacher listen to Susan play through her repertoire.

    13.1 Susan frequently interrupted your explanations. How should teachers deal with students who do not listen to their explanations?

    13.2 During her lessons, you spent a considerable amount of time listing instructions, which was different from how you communicated with your other students. Explain your reason for this form of communication.

14. What is your philosophy of teaching and learning?

Appendix F

P A R T I C I P A N T   C O N S E N T   F O R M
(To be attached to Letter to Parent)

The components of motivation in gifted music students' success and the role of the expert teacher in fostering success

Name of Participant: Date:

_____   No, I prefer not participate in the study.

_____   Yes, I agree to participate in research on The components of motivation in gifted music students' success and the role of the expert teacher in fostering success to be used for Neomi Kronish's Ph. D. study.

_____   I would like to see the final thesis before it is published.

_____   I understand that I may withdraw this consent and discontinue participation in this project at any time and without penalty or prejudice.

_____   I understand that my identity will be concealed. I understand that the contents of the audio-tapes, video-tapes, and ongoing conversations will be confidential to Neomi Kronish and I will be identified by a pseudonym.

_____   I understand that the anticipated uses of the data are solely for Neomi Kronish's doctoral thesis or other scholarly publications, communications and dissemination.

_____   I have read the attached description of the project.

_____   I understand that the results will be used solely by Neomi Kronish for her doctoral thesis or other scholarly articles.

_____   I understand the purposes of the research and the conditions of my participation.

I freely consent to participate in the study.

Name (Please print)   _____

Signature   _____

Date:

Appendix H

P A R E N T A L   C O N S E N T   F O R M
(To be attached to Letter to Parent)

<u>The components of motivation in gifted music students' success and the role of the expert teacher in fostering success</u>

Name of Participant: Date:

_____   No, I prefer that my child not participate in the study.

_____   Yes, I agree to let my child participate in research on <u>The components of motivation in gifted music students' success and the role of the expert teacher in fostering success</u> to be used for Neomi Kronish's Ph. D. study.

_____   I would like to see the final thesis before it is published.

_____   I understand that my child is free to withdraw this consent and discontinue participation in this project at any time and without penalty or prejudice.

_____   I understand that my child's identity will be concealed. I understand that the contents of the audio-tapes, video-tapes, and ongoing conversations will be confidential to Neomi Kronish and my child will be identified by a pseudonym.

_____   I understand that the anticipated uses of the data are solely for Neomi Kronish's doctoral thesis or other scholarly publications, communications and dissemination.

_____   I have read the attached description of the project.

_____   I understand that the results will be used solely by Neomi Kronish for her doctoral thesis or other scholarly articles.

_____   I understand the purposes of the research and the conditions of my participation.

I freely consent and voluntarily agree that my child can participate in the study.

Parent Name (Please print)   _____

Signature   _____

Date: