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TEACHERS' PERCEPTION AND EXPECTATION OF STUDENTS:
INFLUENCES ON TEACHING AND STUDENT SUCCESS IN THE
APPLIED PIANO LESSON

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By

WILLIAM H. BUDAI

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TEACHERS' PERCEPTION AND EXPECTATION OF STUDENTS:
INFLUENCES ON TEACHING AND STUDENT SUCCESS IN THE
APPLIED PIANO LESSON

A Dissertation APPROVED FOR THE
SCHOOL OF MUSIC

BY

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ABSTRACT

TEACHERS' PERCEPTION AND EXPECTATION OF STUDENTS: INFLUENCES ON TEACHING AND STUDENT SUCCESS IN THE APPLIED PIANO LESSON

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Dr. Jane Magrath

Teachers' expectations are inferences made about the future behavior or achievement of a student, based on what the teacher knows about the student at the given moment. These inferences can eventually cause a student to behave or achieve in ways that confirm the teacher's expectations. The purpose of this study was to determine how novice and experienced piano teachers' perceptions and expectations of their students influenced their teaching.

Four novice and four experienced teachers completed an instructional survey, were interviewed by the researcher, and were videotaped teaching a "talented" student and a "less proficient" student over four lessons. Eight lessons were videotaped with each teacher, 64 lessons total for the study. In addition, two independent panels of three observers reviewed the videotapes to identify and code the teacher's behavior in the lesson. The data from the surveys, the interviews, and videotapes were integrated using the grounded theory methodology of qualitative research.

Seventy-six distinct student characteristics affecting a teacher's perception were identified. These included physical, cognitive, and behavioral characteristics and were classified as either student-independent – naturally occurring characteristics outside the control or power of the student (those characteristics the student cannot change) or student-dependent – characteristics or learned behaviors within the control or power of the student to change, modify, or develop. Of the 76 behaviors identified, the student's attitude was found to be of greatest significance. Teachers' perceptions and expectations were also affected by their own background, beliefs, and the goals they set for themselves and their students.

These perceptions and the resulting expectations had a direct impact on the teacher's behavior in the lesson. Fifty-three general teaching strategies as well as 36 student-specific teaching strategies were identified. The teaching strategies employed by both novice and experienced teachers varied with their perception of the student as either talented or less proficient. The disparate teacher interactions in turn directly affected the student's success or failure in the piano lesson. In addition to the teacher's perception and the student's attitude, the role of the parent was also established as an important factor determining the student's success or failure in the applied piano lesson.

TEACHERS' PERCEPTION AND EXPECTATION OF STUDENTS:
INFLUENCES ON TEACHING AND STUDENT SUCCESS IN THE
APPLIED PIANO LESSON

CHAPTER ONE
INTRODUCTION

Background

Teachers' expectations are inferences made about the future behavior or achievement of a student based on what the teacher knows about the student at the given moment (Good & Brophy, 1997). These inferences can eventually cause a student to behave or achieve in ways that confirm the teacher's expectations (Brehm & Kassin, 1996). In the wonderfully complex and dynamic world of education, teachers' perceptions and expectations of their students can have an enormous impact on the quality of teaching each student receives. It can also have a profound influence on the ultimate success or failure each student will experience in private lessons.

Students labeled as "low achievers" typically receive differential treatment in the classroom. Cotton (1989) and Good (1981, 1993) both found that teachers usually call on these students less often and wait a shorter time for them to respond than they do for high achievers. Teachers also readily give low achievers answers rather than try to improve their poor responses, and are less likely to praise their successes but more likely to criticize their failures. Given that low achievers are less likely to be able to answer

correctly in the first place, these students often believe a good strategy for them is to remain passive.

Teachers' perceptions and expectations affect not only their interactions with students, but their teaching strategies as well. Low achievers are frequently offered less exciting instruction, fewer opportunities to learn new material, less emphasis on meaning and conceptualization, and more rote drill and practice activities (Cotton, 1989). These students then become bored by the sameness and eventually may learn to invest less energy, which in turn causes the teacher to perceive the need for even more structure and even smaller steps. "The fact that a student could not do something yesterday does not mean that he or she cannot do it today, but the teacher will not find out unless the student is given a chance" (Good & Brophy, 1997, p. 111).

A common characteristic of highly effective teachers is their refusal to change their attitudes or expectations for students, regardless of the students' race or ethnicity, life experiences and interests, family wealth or stability (Omotani & Omotani, 1996). As Hilliard (1991) states in Lumsden (1997), "our current ceiling for students is really much closer to where the floor ought to be" (p. 2). The other side of the coin, however, is just as true; positive expectations can be carried to the point of distorting reality. Good and Brophy (1997) point out that students typically show large individual differences in learning ability, which cannot be eliminated simply through wishful thinking. Teachers only frustrate both themselves and their students when they set unrealistically high standards that students cannot attain. Appropriate expectations must be determined, and more importantly, teachers need to be aware of the impact these expectations have on their teaching.

Problem Statement

While applied music instruction has always played a significant part in music education, relatively little research has been done to investigate this distinctive instructional model. One-on-one instruction allows the teacher and student to develop a unique relationship, often formed over many years. The private music teacher constructs a very complex picture of the student based on both personal and musical information (Kennell, 1989).

What teachers “do” in the private lesson is determined by what they “know” (i.e., perceive) about: (a) the student, (b) the music, and (c) teaching interventions/strategies. The teacher’s perceptions of the student will influence the teacher’s expectations for that student. These expectations will in turn influence the teaching interventions used in the lesson and the teacher’s interactions with the student. “Expectations are expressed in actions and actions in turn reflect expectations” (Clarcken, 1995, p. 4). It is therefore important that researchers, teachers, and musicians understand the factors involved in the teacher’s formation of attitudes toward the student and their subsequent effect on instruction and learning. What do teachers know (or perceive) about students, both individually and collectively, and how does that affect their teaching? What is the relationship between the teacher’s knowledge of the student and the teacher’s choice of teaching strategies/interventions (modeling, highlighting features on the score, choosing appropriate repertoire, etc.)? What is the stability of this knowledge? How does it change or persist? Is it different for long-term knowledge versus recent knowledge?

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to determine how novice and experienced piano teachers' perceptions and expectations of their students influence their teaching.

Specifically, the study addressed the following questions:

1. What factors, characteristics, and/or student behaviors influence the teacher's perception of the student?
2. What role do these perceptions have on the formation of expectations for students?
 - a. How does this vary between novice and experienced teachers?
 - b. How does this vary between "talented" and "less proficient" students?
3. What teacher behaviors (interactions) are employed by novice and experienced teachers, and to what degree?
 - a. What effect or impact do these interactions have on the students' success or failure in the piano lesson?
 - b. Do teachers' behaviors match their expectations for their students? To what degree?
 - c. Does the teacher's behavior vary depending on the student (talented vs. less proficient)?
4. How does the teacher's knowledge (or perception) of the student affect his/her:
 - a. Impressions of the student's quality?
 - b. Teaching intervention choices?
 - c. Expectations for student's immediate success in piano?

- d. Expectations for student's long-term success (goal for student trajectory - optimizing the zone of proximal development)?
- e. Choice of literature?
- f. Style of interaction (affinity for student, attempts to motivate student, etc.)?

Need for the Study

Research “clearly establishes that teacher expectations do play a significant role in determining how well and how much students learn” (Bamburg, 1994, p. 6). A teacher will form expectations of his/her students based on a number of factors, including the student's intelligence, past achievement, comments by previous teachers or parents, knowledge about the student's family, interaction with the student, perceived motivation (or lack of), and the student's general work habits (Good & Brophy, 1986). One danger in forming expectations is that they tend to be self-sustaining. Expectations affect both *perception*, causing teachers to “see” what they expect to see and to not notice what they do not expect, and *interpretation*, causing teachers to interpret and sometimes distort what they do see so that it remains consistent with their expectations (Brophy & Good, 1974). While Cooper and Good (1983) found that, in some instances, classroom teachers' perceptions differed from those of observers and students, Babad (1993) showed that teachers are often unaware of their differential behavior toward students.

A study is needed to link teachers' naturally formed expectations to their interactions with students. It is important to understand how these expectations influence the teacher's teaching as well as to investigate how teachers' expectations can become self-fulfilling. Although many researchers have studied the effect of teachers' perception

and expectation on students in the classroom, no one has yet investigated this phenomenon in the private lesson. This researcher postulates the effect of perception and expectation to be even greater in applied lessons due to the unique one-on-one nature of music instruction.

Procedures

This study investigated the influence of teacher's perception and expectation of students through both qualitative and quantitative methodology. Four experienced and four novice teachers of pre-college students initially completed an Instructional Survey providing relevant background information as well as their perception of various teaching behaviors. These teachers were then interviewed and videotaped teaching two students – one identified by the teacher as talented and one identified by the teacher as less proficient – in four lessons. These videotapes were analyzed by two groups of three of independent observers, first, to identify and code the teacher's behavior in the lesson and, secondly, to identify the degree of expectation exhibited in their interactions with the student. The data collected through the surveys and videotapes were then integrated into a grounded theory analysis of the interviews.

Definition of Terms

Coding: Coding is “the analytic processes through which data are fractured, conceptualized, and integrated to form theory” (Strauss & Corbin, 1998, p.3). It involves the formation of categories and concepts by examining individual phrases and sentences from the interview transcripts and assembling these data in new and different ways.

Experienced Teacher: The following minimum requirements for classification as experienced teachers will be observed for the inclusion of participants in this study: (a)

extensive, successful experience (at least 10 years) teaching pre-college students, (b) an established reputation in their respective cities (and surrounding areas) as an excellent teacher (i.e., regional and/or national recognition by peers), and (c) an active member and participant in professional music organizations, such as MENC, MTNA, and/or The World Piano Pedagogy Conference (see Palmer, Stough, Burdenski, and Gonzales, 2001).

Grounded Theory: This qualitative research methodology is primarily concerned with building a theory “from the ground up” (i.e., starting with the participants). The intent of grounded theory is to either generate or discover a new theory, or to elaborate and extend a current theory using data that have been systematically gathered and analyzed. Since this type of theory is largely interested in how people act and react to a phenomenon, interviews and observations are the primary means of data collection.

Novice Teacher: Since most studies dealing with novice teachers are in the field of general education, a novice teacher is typically defined as either a student teacher or a first-year teacher (O’Conner & Fish, 1998). For the purpose of this study, a novice teacher is defined as having less than three years experience teaching private piano lessons and less than six years of collegiate coursework in the art of piano teaching (i.e., no more than the equivalent of a bachelor’s degree in piano or piano pedagogy).

Saturation: This is the point at which the researcher is collecting no new information that would contribute to the development of the theory.

Theoretical Sampling: In theoretical sampling, the process of gathering data is determined by the evolving theory. The participants chosen are those who will

theoretically maximize the researcher's opportunities to discover variations among concepts and to gather to greatest amount of data possible.

Assumptions

This study assumes that each participant will be able to articulate and express his/her thoughts and beliefs adequately in the interview session. It is also assumed that all self-reported data will be accurate and that the videotapes will accurately reflect each teacher in action.

Limitations

The generalizability of this study is limited to the sample population involved. The identification and coding of teachers' behaviors and expectations in the applied lessons are limited to the instruments designed to measure these occurrences.

Delimitations

This study only intends to investigate piano teachers who work primarily with pre-college students. Findings and results may not necessarily be applicable to collegiate teachers. No attempt will be made to measure the degree of teachers' knowledge or expertise, the students' perceptions of the teacher, or other such factors that could indirectly influence and affect a teacher's perception of and expectation for a student.

Organization of the Study

Chapter two contains a review of relevant literature, focusing primarily on attribution theory and expectation theory. The TESA (Teacher Expectation – Student Achievement) interaction model will also be discussed, as will several studies involving the applied music lesson. Chapter three proffers the blended methodology used to address the research questions, while chapter four provides the qualitative analyses of the

research questions through the findings and interpretations. Chapter five offers the discussion, implications, and recommendations for further research.

CHAPTER TWO

RELATED LITERATURE

Introduction

To date, very little music research literature has explicitly addressed the unique relationship between teacher and student in the applied piano lesson. More importantly, teachers' knowledge and perceptions of students have rarely been considered, much less investigated, in this one-on-one model of instruction. There is much research, however, regarding the perceptions and expectations of both teachers and students in the general educational literature. This research, as one would expect, primarily centers around classroom teaching and generally falls into one of two primary categories: attribution theory and expectation theory. These studies provide both an appropriate background and insight into my proposed area of research. The literature review will begin with an overview of current research regarding these two ideas, including self-fulfilling prophecy and the TESA interaction model. The studies involving applied music lessons will then be discussed.

Attribution Theory

Much of the research concerning teacher and student perceptions has centered on the use of attribution theory models in an effort to understand the causes of students' success or failure. "Attribution theories are concerned with how a person perceives the causes of his or her own behavior and the behavior of others" (Arkes & Garske, 1982, p. 319). Weiner (1972) devised an attribution theory involving four sets of causal attribution: ability, effort, task difficulty, and luck. These were then classified as internal

(within the individual) or external (outside the individual). Weiner (1974) then added a second dimension of stable or unstable to define the four sets as ability: internal-stable; effort: internal-unstable; task difficulty: external-stable; luck: external-unstable.

This two-dimensional model was used by Kvet and Watkins (1993) to measure the perception of elementary education majors relating to success in teaching music. This study attempted to determine what factors, according to these students, contributed to success in teaching music, as well as to determine the relative strength of each factor. 219 students were told to list any attributes they believed contributed to success or failure in teaching. No limit was given to their free responses, and over 2,000 statements were collected. These responses were then categorized according to Weiner's two-dimensional attribution model. In the process, additional categories unique to the field of music were formed for a total of nine categories. Five attributes for success and five attributes for failure were chosen as representative of each category. These 90 attributes were then placed on a five point Likert-Type scale and given to 306 elementary education majors to rate.

The most important finding was the identification of four factors contributing to success in teaching music: (a) understanding and organizing for individual differences in children, (b) musical ability/positive feelings for music, (c) proactive personality characteristics, and (d) external factors. As the researchers noted, effort was not identified as a specific factor in this study, although it should most certainly be considered. This study should also be replicated with music majors, particularly students associated with a specialization (such as band students or choir students). This study could also be modified slightly for replication with applied lessons to determine if the

same four factors identified as contributing to success in the classroom teaching of music would apply to the private, one-on-one teaching of music.

The third factor identified in Kvet's research, proactive personality characteristics, is quite prevalent in the literature (see Baker, 1982). Some researchers, such as Madsen and Duke (1985) and Schmidt (1995), have chosen to examine this characteristic from the students' perspective, most notably with regard to teacher feedback. "A person's ability to give and receive appropriate feedback from other individuals appears to be a basic and requisite skill for effective human interaction" (Madsen & Duke, 1985, p. 119).

Madsen and Duke (1985) were especially interested in understanding effective teacher approval/disapproval to further increase effective instruction. These researchers asked 243 students at Florida State University to view a short film designed to contrast approval/disapproval. Eighty-seven of the students had previously spent a semester studying behavior techniques, while the remaining 156 received no such instruction. The film was designed to contrast high rates of teacher approval with equally high rates of teacher disapproval. The teacher's behaviors were in the form of verbalizations, facial expression, and physical gestures.

The results of this study were rather inconclusive. The students trained in behavioral techniques found the approval to be more "meaningful," "beneficial," "valuable," and "effective" than did those students not trained in behavioral techniques. There was no significant difference, however, in their perceptions of teacher disapproval. One could conclude that behavioral training might facilitate a better awareness and assessment of observed behaviors. This study, however, raises the question of

discrepancy between perception and action. As seen by this study, not only did the students' perceptions differ from the teacher's actions on the film, their perceptions differed between the two groups. Brophy (1981) states that "even identical teacher statements made under the same circumstances and with the same intent (to provide encouragement or reinforcement) may be experienced very differently and may have very different effects in different individuals" (p. 23).

As previously mentioned, Schmidt (1995) also researched student perceptions of teacher feedback. By using 120 students enrolled in a summer music camp, he intended to obtain "descriptive data" for the students' attributions of success and failure in music. He was also interested in examining the students' perception of teacher approval and disapproval in relation to grade level, gender, and student attributions of success. Through a free response format, the students were asked to list the most important reason why some students succeed in vocal music and the most important reason why some students fail in vocal music. His results show that choral students are more likely to attribute success to the internal aspects of effort and ability rather than external factors of teacher, task difficulty, or luck. Gender was found to be the only significant variable in the perception of teacher feedback. Perceptions of approval were rated significantly higher by females, while perceptions of disapproval were rated significantly higher by males. While these findings are relevant to classroom or group music instruction, they do not necessarily translate to the unique setting of the applied lesson. Forsythe (1975) demonstrated that teacher verbal behavior affects students differently in music classes than in regular classes. This was true regardless of teacher approval or disapproval. No study, however, has gone the next step and investigated whether teacher behavior affects

students differently in private lessons than in music classes. Such a study could be of great relevance to those desiring to study the applied lesson.

Expectation Theory

Some researchers have suggested that teachers' perceptions of the causes of students' behaviors have a direct effect on students' performance in the classroom (Peterson & Barger, 1984). In other words, teacher expectations affect student achievement. "Teachers' expectations are judgments that teachers make about future behavior or academic achievement of their students based on what they know about the student" (Cantor, Kester, & Miller, 2000, p. 4). As Good and Brophy state, "the teachers' behavior is goal directed and thus shaped by their beliefs and expectations about how to accomplish their goals" (Good & Brophy, 1997, p. 79).

Many researchers have focused on the phenomena of teachers' expectations. Research by Rosenthal and Jacobson (1968) first indicated a connection between teachers' expectations for student performance and students' actual performance. After a general test was administered at the beginning of the year, some students were randomly selected and identified to their teachers as "late bloomers." When the same test was readministered at the end of the year, these "late bloomers" outperformed their classmates, particularly in grades one and two. Teachers described these students as more likely to succeed in the future, more interesting, happier, and more intellectually curious than the other students. Although this study remains somewhat controversial as attempts to replicate it have been unsuccessful (see Wineburg, 1988), Raudenbush (1984) also found expectation effects to be greater in grades one and two than in grades three

through six. This proposed study, therefore, intends to focus primarily on younger students (beginners and early-intermediate).

A handful of studies examining teacher bias in tutoring and small group situations exists. Beez (1968) had 60 graduate students teach 20 different symbols in 10 minutes to children from a Headstart Program. Half of the teachers were told their child would have difficulty in learning; the other half were told their child was intelligent. Beez found that the “problem” children were taught fewer symbols, and learned fewer symbols than their “intelligent” counterparts. Those teaching the “problem” children spent more time on non-teaching activities and rated the children lower on achievement and intellectual ability. Beez concluded that these teachers altered their teaching methods and the amount of material taught based on their bias regarding the child’s ability. While this study shows a direct connection between teachers’ perception of students and its effect on teaching methods, the amount of time the teacher spent with each student (10 minutes) is probably inadequate to develop a truly accurate perception of the child’s ability. Both the time spent on instruction and the focus of that instruction are important ways in which expectation might be communicated. These two variables should be considered in any study investigating teacher/student perceptions and expectations.

Rubovits and Maehr (1973) pursued a similar line of study by examining the effects of teacher bias in small groups. Twenty-six undergraduate students were asked to tutor junior high students in groups of four – two of black and two of white ethnicity. The tutors were purposively given inaccurate data about each student. They were told that one student from each ethnic group had a high IQ and was on the school’s gifted track; the other two students had low IQ’s and were on the school’s regular track.

Although the amount of time given to each student did not differ, the quality of interaction did. The “gifted” students were asked to give more information and were criticized and praised more. In general, the white students received more attention and praise; the black students were criticized more. According to Dusek (1975), this study is a clear demonstration of differential teacher behaviors toward students as a function of expectancy and race.

Peterson and Barger (1984) identified students’ past performances, students’ race, social class, and sex as factors that affect teachers’ perception. Many other studies have investigated the relationship between teachers’ attitudinal responses and student achievement. Helton and Oakland (1977) constructed a study to investigate teachers’ attitudinal responses of attachment, rejection, concern, and indifference among 53 elementary teachers. The elementary school students used in this experiment differed in four personality characteristics (rigid-conforming-orderly; passive-dependent-acquiescent; flexible-nonconforming-untidy; and independent-active-assertive), two levels of academic ability (above average, below average), and gender. This study was based on the experiments of Good and Brophy (1972). They found that the students toward whom the teacher felt attachment were relatively high in academic achievement, while those students toward whom the teacher felt rejection or concern were relatively low in academic achievement. Those students toward whom the teacher felt indifference were of average academic achievement.

Rather than using actual students, Helton and Oakland (1977) gave the teachers 16 stories describing the children. These stories reflected the students’ above-mentioned personality characteristics, academic aptitude, and gender. Upon reading each story, the

teachers were to indicate the degree of attachment, rejection, concern and indifference felt toward each student. They found that students' personality characteristics accounted for most of the variance associated with teachers' feelings of attachment and rejection. Teachers also had a higher feeling of attachment with academically above-average students. The students' ability was the most significant variable in relation to teacher concern; teachers expressed higher feelings of concern for low ability than high ability students, and more concern for boys than for girls. Teacher indifference was influenced by the students' ability and personality characteristics. Teachers tended to be more indifferent to low-ability than high-ability students.

Helton and Oakland's study (1977) provides valuable information for classroom teachers and, perhaps, for private teachers as well. These findings are in agreement with similar studies (Borg, 1998; Cooper & Burger, 1980). As previously mentioned, these studies suggest that teacher expectations affect student achievement. In addition, a number of studies in the field of social psychology (e.g., Jussim, 1989; Jussim & Eccles, 1992; Jussim, Eccles & Madon, 1996) have investigated the relationship between teachers' expectations and self-fulfilling prophecies in regard to student achievement.

Self-fulfilling Prophecy

The notion of self-fulfilling prophecies in the classroom suggests that students frequently confirm teachers' expectations. "Teacher expectancies influence students' academic performance to a greater degree than students' performance influences teachers' expectancies" (Miller & Turnbull, 1986, p. 236). Jussim (1989) outlines three causal relationships between teachers' expectations and student achievement:

1. Teachers' expectations sometimes produce self-fulfilling prophecies; even when the expectations are incorrect, the teachers may evoke performance levels from their students consistent with those expectations.
2. Teachers' expectations may lead to perceptual biases – “the tendency to interpret, perceive, remember, or explain students' actions in ways consistent with their expectations” (Jussim, 1989, p. 469).
3. Teachers' expectations may accurately predict students' achievement without influencing it.

As Jussim and Eccles (1992) state,

The self-fulfilling prophecy hypothesis suggests that teachers' expectations predict students' future achievement, even after controlling for students' prior achievement. The perceptual bias hypothesis suggests that teacher expectations predict their own judgments of students' achievement (i.e. grades) more than they predict independent assessment of students' achievement (standardized test scores) (p. 949).

Jussim's study in 1989 (and replicated in 1992) involved 27 sixth-grade math teachers and 634 students. The teachers and students both filled out questionnaires in the beginning of the year. The teachers assessed the students' talent, effort and performance; the students provided their perceptions and feelings concerning math, the amount of time and effort put into homework, and the value they placed on math. Jussim obtained the students' final grades for the previous academic year, their final grades for sixth grade, and their scores on two standardized achievement tests (CAT and MEAP). He found moderate self-fulfilling prophecy effects on student achievement and motivation, and

moderate biasing effects on the grades teachers assigned to their students. However, Jussim concluded that teacher expectations predicted student performance predominately because the expectations were accurate, rather than because the expectations caused student performance.

Although many of the studies investigating expectation theory involve fictitious students or experimentally induced teacher expectations, Good and Brophy (1997) point out that naturally formed expectations are typically based on real differences in student potential and are generally accurate predictions – rather than indirect causes – of differences in students’ progress. Therefore, a study is needed to link teachers’ naturally formed expectations to their regular, daily (or in the case of applied lessons, weekly) interactions with students to determine how a teacher’s expectations can become self-fulfilling. Since elementary students have the same teacher all day and often interact with that teacher individually throughout the day, it is logical that the teacher’s expectations are primarily communicated through the qualitative aspects of these individualized student-teacher interactions.

Sustaining Expectation Effects

In some instances, teachers naturally expect students to sustain a previously developed pattern of achievement or behavior. Teachers will often teach in such a way as to continue or promote this pattern. Sustaining expectations affect both *perception*, causing teachers to “see” what they expect to see and to not notice what they do not expect, and *interpretation*, causing teachers to interpret and sometimes distort what they do see so that it remains consistent with their expectations (Brophy & Good, 1974).

Tauber (1998) states this idea much more directly: “Teachers, more often than not, get from students what they expect from them” (p. 3).

Several studies have attempted to identify ways of minimizing the effects of sustaining expectations in the classroom. Rosenthal (1974), for example, identified four general factors to maximizing student achievement:

1. Create warm social-emotional relationships with students (climate)
2. Give more feedback about their performance (feedback)
3. Teach them more (and more difficult) material (input)
4. Give them more opportunities to respond and to ask questions (output)

While this four-factor model is an excellent start, research suggests that teachers are more likely to be affected by information leading to negative expectations than by information leading to positive expectations (Persell, 1977). As Brophy (1983) notes, the most sizable teacher expectation effects on student achievement appear to be negative. With this in mind, Good and Brophy (1997) created a list of 18 teacher behaviors that can have a direct impact on sustaining a teacher’s negative expectations. These behaviors include:

1. Waiting less time for low achievers to answer a question
2. Inappropriate reinforcement (rewarding inappropriate behavior or incorrect answers)
3. Criticizing more often for failure and praising less often for success
4. Demanding less from low achievers (e.g., teach less, gratuitous praise, excessive offers of help)

5. Less friendly interactions, including less smiling and fewer other nonverbal indicators of support
6. Less eye contact and other nonverbal communication of attention and responsiveness
7. Less use of effective but time-consuming instructional methods
8. Less acceptance of the ideas and suggestions of low achievers
9. Exposing low achievers to an impoverished curriculum (e.g., overly limited and repetitive content, emphasis on factual recitation rather than on lesson-extending discussion, emphasis on drill and practice tasks rather than application and higher-level thinking tasks).

As with Rosenthal's four factors, many of these behaviors could also translate to the private lesson. "There is growing evidence that the performance of low achievers improves when they are allowed to enroll in more challenging courses or when course content is altered to include more challenging material that traditionally is not available to them. The decision to allow students to engage in more challenging academic work (e.g., move to a higher reading group) can be a powerful strategy for increasing teacher and student performance expectations" (Good & Brophy, 1997, p. 107).

Teacher Expectations and Student Achievement (TESA)

"TESA is a behavioral change program based on expectation theory" (Cantor, et al., 2000, p. 4). Established in 1971 by the Los Angeles County Office of Education, the TESA interaction model provides the following 15 interactions, or teacher behaviors, to heighten a teacher's awareness of their perceptions and the corresponding effect those perceptions have on their behavior in the classroom. These interactions are grouped into

five units, each consisting of three behaviors. Each unit is designed to improve student academic achievement, provide constructive feedback, and strengthen self-esteem.

1. Equitable Distribution of Response Opportunity – The teacher provides an opportunity for the student to respond or perform in classroom learning situations.
2. Affirmation or Correction – The teacher provides feedback to the student about his/her performance.
3. Proximity – The teacher is physically close to the student as he/she works.
4. Individual Helping – The teacher provides individual help to each student.
5. Praise the Learning Performance – The teacher praises the student's learning performance.
6. Courtesy – The teacher uses expressions of courtesy in interactions with the student.
7. Latency – The teacher allows the student enough time to think over a question before assisting the student or ending the opportunity to respond.
8. Reasons for Praise – The teacher gives a reason for praising the student's learning performance.
9. Personal Interest Statements and Compliments – The teacher asks questions, compliments or makes statements related to a student's personal interest or experiences.
10. Delving, Rephrasing, Giving clues – The teacher provides additional information to help the student respond to a question.
11. Listening – The teacher maintains eye contact with the student or indicates to the student that the response was heard.

12. Touching – The teacher touches the student in a respectful, appropriate and friendly manner.
13. Higher-Level Questioning – The teacher asks challenging questions that require the student to do more than simply recall information.
14. Accepting Feelings – The teacher recognizes and accepts a student's feelings in a non-evaluative manner.
15. Desisting – The teacher stops a student's misbehavior in a calm and courteous manner.

Although designed for the classroom, all of these teacher behaviors are immediately applicable to and observable in the private lesson. (Two of these behaviors, Equitable Distribution of Response Opportunity (1) and Individual Helping (4), are actually indigenous to the applied lesson.)

The Applied Lesson

The behavior of teachers and students in the applied lesson has been investigated by a number of researchers. Some of these studies, such as those by Crum (1998), Geringer and Kostka (1984) and Kostka (1984), have specifically investigated student and/or teacher attitudes, while Speer (1991) included the idea of teachers' perceptions. In his study, Speer analyzed sequential patterns of instruction in piano lessons and found, among other things, students perceived as "average" by the teacher received significantly more directive comments than students perceived as "better." He also noted that less experienced teachers exhibited more approvals than did experienced teachers.

Several attempts have been made to provide the basis for a theory to guide the instructional behavior of the applied lesson: Helper (1986) investigated field

independence-field dependence, Kennell (1989) applied Vygotsky's zone of proximal development, and L'Hommedieu (1992) used Bloom's theory of talent development.

Helper (1986) videotaped 20 teachers with three different students each. He found that the teacher's behavior in the applied lesson is comprised primarily of teacher's vocal behavior (predominately making statements), while the student's behavior is dominated by performance with very little vocal behavior. In other words, teacher talks – student plays.

Using Vygotsky's zone of proximal development, Kennell (1989) constructed three "scaffolding techniques" used by teachers in the applied lesson: (a) mark critical features (e.g., highlight or bring to the student's attention a dynamic marking); (b) reduce degrees of freedom (e.g., limiting the number things to do at a time, such as playing a particular section hands separately); and (c) demonstration (modeling for the student). The teacher's choice of scaffolding techniques is dependent upon the teacher's assessment or perception of the problem at hand: is the student's difficulty due to a deficiency in skill or a lack of understanding of a concept? Kennell categorized these assessments as being low skill/low concept, low skill/high concept, high skill/low concept, or high skill/high concept.

L'Hommedieu (1992) conducted a grounded theory study of teacher's effectiveness in the applied lesson, based on Bloom's theory of talent development. Through interviews and observations of three master teachers, he identified four pedagogical behaviors and characteristics that account for their effectiveness:

1. Student selection – These teachers only take students who have already demonstrated success on a smaller scale; they also only consider students whose learning style is adequately matched to the teacher's teaching style.
2. Subject area expertise – These teachers are prominent musicians, regarded as top in their field; they possess extraordinary technical and musical performance skills, a high level of musical detail and nuance, and high standards of performance.
3. Quality of instruction – These teachers demand the highest level of commitment to the learning task, providing clear instructional cues.
4. Consistency – The personal interactions, instructional interactions, standards for preparation and performance, and level of musical and technical detail are virtually invariant from lesson to lesson.

L'Hommedieu points out that, while extraordinarily effective, these teachers exhibit a rather narrow range of teaching strategies and adaptability. Most teachers, including master teachers who work primarily with younger children, are not always able to hand select those students who demonstrate success or an aptitude for music.

Although their expertise in the subject matter and quality of instruction would remain the same, adaptability and variety in the method of instruction would most likely be crucial to their success.

A study by Duke, Flowers, and Wolfe (1997) attempted, among other things, to document the perceptions of teachers, parents and students regarding keyboard study for children. A survey involving 170 teachers and 951 students and their parents revealed that teachers', parents', and students' perceptions of students' attitudes about playing, practicing and lessons were quite uniform. A positive relationship was also found

between teachers' estimates (or perception) of student ability and the length of time practiced each day. This observation correlates with Good and Brophy's (1997) assertion stated previously that naturally formed expectations typically are based on real differences in student potential and are accurate predications rather than indirect causes of differences in student progress. Again, no study has yet taken the next step to investigate the specific relationship between teacher expectations and student success in private lessons.

Conclusion

As discussed throughout this chapter, it seems highly probable that teachers' perceptions and expectations affect their interactions with students, their teaching methods, and student achievement. It is important, then, that researchers begin to study these concepts in regard to the applied lesson model of teaching.

To avoid the discrepancy between perception and action as noted by Madsen and Duke (1985), the researcher should examine perception in relation to specific behavioral actions. While the TESA interaction model offers a comprehensive list of teacher behaviors in the classroom, it is Kennell's (1989) three scaffolding strategies that provide an excellent starting point in evaluating teachers' perceptions and expectations in the applied lesson. As stated earlier, it is logical that the teacher's expectations are primarily communicated through the qualitative aspects of these individualized, regularly occurring student-teacher interactions.

The purpose of this study was to examine these unique, individualized student-teacher interactions in a qualitative fashion in order to identify specifically how a teacher's perception of and expectation for a student influences that student's success in

the applied lesson. “An implicit assumption of researchers has been that if teachers fail to accept responsibility for students’ successes or failures, and thus fail to see a relationship between their behavior and students’ performances, they would be less likely to work to improve their students’ performance” (Clark & Peterson, 1986, p. 282).

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

Rationale

Although much useful information can be collected through surveys and questionnaires, the one-on-one instructional model of the applied lesson lends itself well to qualitative methodology due to its interactive and constantly evolving nature. The unique relationship formed between the student and teacher typically grows and develops over years. This study, therefore, uses principally the grounded theory method of qualitative research. First developed by Glaser and Strauss (1967), grounded theory is primarily concerned with building a theory “from the ground up” (i.e., starting with the participants). The intent of grounded theory is to generate or discover a theory, or to elaborate and extend a current theory, rather than to verify those currently existing in the literature. This is accomplished here through interviews and the collection of secondary data for triangulation.

Grounded theory has as its foundation the theories of symbolic interactionism – the assumption that meaning is gained through interaction with others (Blumer, 1969). Symbolic interactionism is concerned with how a person interprets the gestures or symbols of other individuals, how those individuals interpret the gestures of that person, and how that person understands him/herself in relation to their social context and the gestures of others (Blumer, 1969). Because behavior cannot be understood apart from its social context, meaning is created through human interaction.

Grounded theory, also referred to as the constant comparative method, uses theoretical sampling to achieve saturation, the point at which the researcher is collecting no new information that would contribute to the development of the theory. Theoretical sampling is accomplished by interviewing individuals who can best contribute to the evolving theory.

Sample

Because little research has been conducted involving beginning piano students, this study focused on teachers who specialize in working with younger students. The researcher compared experienced and novice teachers' perceptions and expectations of students. An initial questionnaire (Instructional Survey), interviews and observations, both live and videotape, provided the data. Four experienced and four novice private piano teachers of pre-college students were selected.

For the purpose of this study, an experienced teacher was defined as one who met the following criteria: (a) extensive, successful experience (at least 10 years) teaching pre-college students, (b) an established reputation in his/her respective city and surrounding area as an excellent teacher (i.e., regional and/or national recognition by peers), and (c) an active member and participant in professional music organizations, such as MENC or MTNA. Novice teachers were defined as piano teachers with less than three years of teaching experience and less than six years of collegiate coursework in piano and/or piano pedagogy, with no graduate-level coursework. The researcher first recruited both experienced and novice teachers who were teaching at least ten students at the time of this study.

The students to be videotaped were chosen by their teachers; they were beginning students between the ages of 7 and 13 who had less than four years of piano instruction. The teachers selected their “most talented” or “most promising” beginner along with another student who they believed to be “less talented” or “less proficient.” Each teacher selected students they had taught for a minimum of one year.

Experienced teachers were initially located through what L’Hommedieu (1992) termed “insider’s knowledge.” The researcher invited established piano teachers from the greater Indianapolis area to participate in this study through an open invitation to members of the Indiana Piano Teachers Guild and the Indianapolis Piano Teachers’ Association. Members of these organizations were encouraged to participate or to forward the invitation to other teachers they knew who they felt met the criteria of an experienced teacher.

Locating experienced teachers proved more difficult than imagined, since many teachers who were highly recommended by others did not have beginning-level students between the ages of 7 and 13. The researcher found that experienced teachers typically have older, more advanced students, or students who have had more than four years of piano instruction. As experienced teachers agreed to participate in the study, the researcher called each to ascertain that they met the qualifications and had the appropriate age students before including them in this study.

Novice teachers were first recruited from community arts schools, college preparatory departments, and the education programs of local music stores. The researcher found it difficult to recruit novice teachers for a number of reasons. It was discovered that beginning teachers typically do not have at least 10 students. After

consultation with the committee co-chairs, this requirement was changed to six students. In addition, the researcher located several potential novice teachers who then declined to participate after they were told they would be videotaped. These teachers seemed self-conscious and uncomfortable with the idea of being observed, and especially videotaped. The researcher then expanded his search across the state and into neighboring states, after discussing this with his committee co-chairs, to find teachers who not only met the novice teacher requirements and had the appropriate students, but were also willing to participate. As with the experienced teachers, the researcher called each novice teacher to be sure he/she fulfilled all requirements before inclusion in this study.

Profile of the Participants

The final selection of teachers represents four different states in the Midwest. Each participant was assigned a pseudonym for the purpose of this study.

Novice Teachers

The four novice teachers in this study ranged from ages 20 to 24. Two were male, two were female, and only one had completed a bachelor's degree at the time of the data collection. Three of the teachers taught for a preparatory program in either a church or a university; the other taught lessons in her home. The total number of students taught by the novice teachers was 47. The average number of elementary-age students taught was 8.25, and the average number of junior high or middle school students was 3.5. These four teachers did not have any high school or adult students. The typical length of lessons for three of the teachers was 30 minutes and 45 minutes for the fourth. The piano method books and anthologies used most often were Piano Adventures (Faber & Faber,

1998), Hal Leonard (Kreader, Kern, Keveren, & Rejino, 1996), John Thompson (Thompson, 1994), Bastien (1985), and Masterworks Classics (ed. Magrath, 2000).

Susan

The first teacher, Susan, is a 22-year old senior at a small liberal arts university who teaches 8 students in a church for their community music program. She began studying when she was in the second grade and enjoys teaching that age. “I like beginners a lot...first grade is kind of young to start pianists. I mean, I still like that age, but it’s just hard...my favorite is probably second grade, third grade, fourth grade; somewhere in there, kind of getting into the juicier pieces, you know, but they’re still young enough to listen to me” (Individual Interview, p. 1, 3/10/04). For Susan, memorization and parental support are very important. While she initially began teaching “because it was extra money and thought it would be fun” (Individual Interview, p. 2, 3/10/04), she has grown to enjoy both the teaching and her students. “It doesn’t feel like a job to me. It gets better every single year that I teach” (Individual Interview, p. 12, 3/10/04).

Jeff

Jeff, 24, recently completed his bachelor’s degree in piano performance, and teaches 19 students through his university’s preparatory program. He had two pedagogy classes during his undergraduate coursework, but feels he has learned more about teaching from his private lesson teachers than from these classes. During his interview, Jeff expressed a strong desire to improve his teaching and continue learning. “There’s always more I can learn, and there’s always a teacher that knows more than me” (Individual Interview, p. 3, 11/2/04). At the same time, however, he was critical of other

teachers who he believes do not share that same desire. Jeff also believes that every person can be successful at piano, with the proper instruction. “When people come up to me when they’re older and say, ‘you know, I tried to play the piano, but I was just not one of those people who can do it,’ I don’t believe that. I really don’t believe that. I think that they all could play the piano, but were they taught the right way?” (Individual Interview, p. 13, 11/2/04).

Julie

Of the four novice teachers, Julie, at age 20, is not only the youngest, but also the only teacher giving lessons in her home. Recently married, she currently has 11 students and views teaching piano as more of a hobby than a profession. She prefers accompanying others to a solo performance, but stated, “I want to teach my students to try to be soloists for piano” (Individual Interview, p. 1, 3/29/05). In addition to teaching, she also enjoys composing and singing. Although Julie is not enrolled in an undergraduate degree program, she is still studying piano with the pianist of her local symphony. Throughout the interview, Julie showed high respect for many of her former piano teachers.

I think my favorite teacher, my best was probably Mrs. K--, because she was the one that truly filled in the holes of what I didn’t know theory-wise, so I could understand the workings behind every piece and therefore could understand and enjoy it more. She taught me to have more of a love for piano... (Individual Interview, p. 3, 3/29/05).

Steven

Steven, age 23, is completing a BM in piano at a small private university. Like Susan, he also teaches in a church for their community music program, and like Julie, Steven enjoys composition and has written a number of his own pieces. With 9 students, he feels he has always been a good teacher and explains his motivation for teaching: “every lesson I teach, I learn something, and that’s what I like about it” (Individual Interview, p. 3, 3/8/05). However, Steven is also quick to point out his own limitations.

If I had a parent who came in here and they said, you know, “I’ve got a sixteen year old child who has been taking lessons for nine years, and I also have a beginning student and I want them both to take from you” and I would say, “no! The one that’s been taking for a while shouldn’t take from me because I’m obviously not the best choice for any upper level piano student” (Individual Interview, p. 2, 3/8/05).

Steven feels he has had both some poor examples in his previous teachers as well as some excellent role models.

I’ve had some teachers that just blew my mind at how well they were able to challenge you, but yet it wasn’t necessarily them challenging you; they set you up to challenge yourself. And that’s really the only way you learn, when you really want to challenge yourself (Individual Interview, p. 6, 3/8/05).

Experienced Teachers

The four experienced teachers in this study ranged from ages 48 to 66. All four were female and had completed a master’s degree; one had also completed her doctoral

coursework. Together, these teachers represented a combined 130 years of teaching experience. The average length of teaching experience was 32.5 years. All four teachers taught in their home, and one also taught at a university. The total number of students taught by the experienced teachers was 107. The average number of preschool children taught was only 2.25, while the average number of elementary-age students taught was 11.25. These teachers taught an average of 6.25 junior high or middle school students and an average of 4.75 high school students. The average number of adults taught was also 2.25. The typical length of lessons for three of the teachers was 30 or 45 minutes; for the fourth, it was 60 minutes. The piano method books and anthologies used most often were Music Tree (Clark, Goss, & Holland, 2000), Alfred's Basic Piano Library (Palmer, Manus, & Lethco, 1999), Suzuki Piano School (Suzuki, 1995), Piano Adventures (Faber & Faber, 1998), Glover (Glover & Stewart, 1988), Hal Leonard (Kreader, Kern, Keveren, & Rejino, 1996), Piano Discoveries (Vott & Bates, 2001), The Neil A. Kjos Master Composer Library for Piano Students (ed. Snell, 1998), Applause (Olson, 1986), Encore (ed. Magrath, 1990), Celebration Series (ed. Sauerbrei, 2001), and Contemporary Piano Literature (Clark, 1983).

Rachel

Rachel, age 53, has taught piano for over 20 years in several states, as well as in Canada and England. She teaches in a home studio specifically designed for her piano students. Students receive a 30-minute private lesson and then spend an additional 30 minutes either on a keyboard with headphones or using computer-assisted instruction. Her students also meet once a month for studio classes. In addition to her private lessons, Rachel incorporates group instruction to children as young as four using the Suzuki

method (Suzuki, 1995). The variety of instruction she offers supports her belief that “each student [should be] the focus of the teaching, and the students come with a wide variety of needs, of interests, of abilities, of backgrounds, and [the teacher should] provide for them a piano education that fits them...there is no cookie cutter piano student” (Individual Interview, p. 1, 10/14/04). She also believes “you only get out of it what you put into it, both as a teacher and a student” (Individual Interview, p. 2, 10/14/04).

Ann

In her 52 years of teaching, Ann has taught private students of all ages as well as students at the college level. Having the luxury of two grand pianos in her living room, Ann frequently plays for and with her students. She loves performing, and remains very active as both a performer and an arranger, with over a dozen published books of arrangements. One of the unique activities Ann does is identify high school students in her studio who have the potential and interest to become piano teachers. She provides them with a ten-week summer pedagogy course, demonstrating how she teaches beginners, which culminates with a supervised teaching experience for each high school student-teacher. An extremely warm and amiable person, the student’s attitude is very important to Ann. “I usually don’t spend a whole lot of time with a student who I can tell from the beginning that their attitude is wrong. I don’t drop any student because I think that they’re slow or that they are not talented; it’s usually an attitude problem” (Individual Interview, p. 10, 8/24/04).

Nancy

Nancy, 48, has taught for 28 years. She currently has eleven private students, elementary through high school age, and teaches both piano classes and applied piano at a university. Her private students all receive 60-minute lessons and also meet for monthly studio classes. Although she is Suzuki certified, she does not currently teach any Suzuki students. This background, however, does impact her basic philosophy of teaching. She states, “I do believe that all students can play; I do believe that. But I don’t think they’re all equally talented, and I don’t think talent is taught” (Individual Interview, p. 2, 4/23/04). Nancy is a strong proponent of technology in the lesson, utilizing both digital keyboards and computer-assisted instruction. She also maintains detailed records of all her students in a spreadsheet on her computer. An extremely energetic person, Nancy works to inspire all her students. “When they’re struggling, you want to motivate them, you try to understand...I’m always trying to be encouraging. I think that’s my job. I get paid to develop and encourage...” (Individual Interview, p. 21, 4/23/04).

Elizabeth

Elizabeth is active in her local community, serving as president or chair of several music organizations and competitions. Her students participate in many competitions throughout the year and consistently perform well. At age 48, she has completed her doctoral coursework, but sees no need at this point in her life to complete the degree. She currently teaches 25 students in her home, ranging from elementary through high school, with one adult student. Elizabeth thoroughly enjoys her teaching and stresses the importance of cultivating a love for music in her students. “It’s most important to make

the kids enjoy music and have a love for it...I am happy to teach any kid, regardless of ability, if they work at it and they're having a good time and they want to do it"

(Individual Interview, p. 1, 2/24/04).

Data Collection

Data were collected in three stages. First, each participating teacher completed an Instructional Survey (see Appendix A). This questionnaire, modeled very closely after Crum's Piano/Keyboard Instruction Survey (1998), provided relevant background information about the teacher, his/her pedagogical preferences and ratings of various teaching behaviors, as well as a free-response section to gain insight into the teacher's perception of the students whose lessons were videotaped.

In the second stage of data collection, the researcher conducted an interview with each teacher in his/her workplace. The interview focused on the following topics: the participant's philosophy of teaching, goals for themselves and their students, descriptions of the teaching strategies employed with various types of students, and reasons why some students succeed or fail in piano lessons. A list of these topics was presented to each participant with the initial survey to assist them in the formation of their thoughts on these issues before the actual interview. A copy of this list (Appendix B) and the complete interview questions (Appendix C) are included at the end of this dissertation.

For the third and final stage of data collection, the teachers selected their "most talented" or "most promising" beginner and another student who they believed to be "less talented" or "less proficient." Each student was observed and videotaped in four consecutive lessons with the teacher. Eight lessons were videotaped with each teacher; 64 lessons total for this study. While videotaping four lessons with each student does not

provide a comprehensive study of a teacher's teaching style, it does provide a "snapshot," which offers additional insight into comments made during the interview.

The videotapes allow the researcher to authenticate other information gathered, to verify the terminology used, and to better understand the implied meaning of particular words or phrases. Piano teachers will often use the same words to describe different phenomena. These observations provided the opportunity to correlate the participant's terminology with that of the researcher. (For example, what exactly is meant by "early-intermediate," "finger practice," "arm-rotation exercise," etc.?)

Each lesson was videotaped from the moment the student entered the room to the point at which the student left. The length of the lessons varied between 30 and 60 minutes. The camera was situated in each teacher's studio to provide the best possible view of both the student and the teacher without being obtrusive or interfering with the lesson. The researcher used the counter on the camera to keep track of the amount of time the teacher and student spent on each activity throughout the lesson. During each activity, the researcher recorded his observations, thoughts, and questions, which became his field notes for the study.

In addition to the researcher's observation of these lessons, two groups of three independent observers analyzed the videotapes. The first group identified and coded the teacher's behavior in the lesson based on Kennell's (1989) three scaffolding techniques: Marking Critical Features, Reducing Degrees of Freedom, and Demonstration. The researcher added a fourth category of Other Behaviors, containing teacher/student behaviors indigenous to the private lesson (see Table 1).

The second group of observers identified and rated the degree of expectation exhibited in the teacher's interactions with the student by recording and measuring how the teacher introduced a lesson or activity and evaluated the student's performance, as well as their use of praise and criticism. The coding sheets used by these observers were based on those developed by Good and Brophy (1997). These observations are described in more detail in the following description of Data Analysis. To ensure reliability, both groups of observers were first trained on practice videos to make certain they understood the coding procedures. An additional five teachers were recruited in order to create these training videos. No data from these teachers or these videos were used in the actual study.

Due to the large volume of videotape recorded in these 64 lessons (37 hours total) and to assist the observers with their role, the researcher extracted the middle 15 minutes of every lesson and placed them on a separate videotape, to create a single videotape of lessons with each teacher. The observers, then, viewed a total of one hour with each student and two hours with each teacher, for a total of sixteen hours of videotape.

Data Analysis

Using Kennell's (1989) scaffolding techniques as a model, three independent observers reviewed the edited videotapes to identify the type and frequency of 19 specific teacher/student behaviors indigenous to the lessons of beginning piano students. In the training process, the observers agreed to add the additional behaviors of "Student counts out loud" and "Teacher counts out loud" to the list (see Table 1). These observations were recorded on a videotape observation form, provided as Appendix D.

Table 1

Scaffolding Techniques in the Beginning Piano Lesson

Category	Specific Behaviors
A. Mark Critical Features	1. Verbally highlights a specific item in the music 2. Physically highlights (points to, etc.) a specific in the music 3. Written highlight; teacher marks specific item in the music 4. Teacher questions student; asks student to identify a specific item in the music
B. Reduce Degrees of Freedom	1. Student repeats a specific section of a piece 2. Student plays hands separately 3. Student plays at a slower tempo 4. Student sings, but does not play 5. Student taps, claps, etc. the rhythm 6. Student uses physical motions, gestures, etc., but does not play 7. Student names notes (verbal) 8. Student counts out loud
C. Demonstration	1. Teacher plays for the student 2. Teacher models aurally (sings, hums, etc.) 3. Teacher gestures, or uses other physical motions

4. Teacher uses other source for model (recording, etc.)
 5. Teacher counts out loud
- D. Other Behaviors
1. Teacher plays accompaniment part with student (or uses MIDI disks and/or other prerecorded or electronic accompaniments)
 2. Teacher corrects technique/posture (physically touches student, moves students hands, etc.)
 3. Student experiments, creates at the keyboard (improvisatory activities)
 4. Student is off the bench or away from the keyboard engaged in other activities (doing written work in a theory book or at a chalkboard; moving to the beat, etc.)
-

The videotapes were also analyzed by another panel of three independent observers to identify the degree of teachers' expectations exhibited throughout each lesson. Adapted from Good and Brophy (1997), the four coding sheets provided in Appendix E were used by this group of observers to rate the teachers' behavior when introducing a new activity, providing feedback to the student during and after each activity, and in their use of praise and criticism. To assist these observers in their coding, the four sheets were combined onto one page for ease in marking. The data gathered

from the videotapes as well as the data from the questionnaires were integrated into the analysis of the interviews.

The researcher transcribed the interviews verbatim, and a pseudonym was assigned to each participant. With the research questions of this study serving as a guide, the data collected from the interviews and questionnaires were analyzed in accordance with the methods associated with grounded theory. In this method, analysis begins following the first interview and continues throughout the period of data collection. New pieces of information are constantly compared with those already collected to aid in the formation of a theory.

To begin the coding process, the researcher first read through each transcript in its entirety to gain an accurate or complete picture of the interview as well as an overall sense of the content. The researcher then began the process of open coding to assist in the initial formation of categories. This step of the analysis involved the examination of individual phrases and sentences from the transcripts to develop code and category labels – it is the fracturing of data into concepts that can be sorted and labeled. In addition to writing down themes, forming initial codes, and naming categories, open coding also attempted to identify the properties and dimensions of these different codes.

After the initial step of open coding was completed, the researcher compared the transcripts to each other, looking for similar codes and categories that had emerged. These categories were then grouped together into larger over-arching categories, as the researcher began to assemble the data in new and different ways. In this stage of the analysis process, also known as axial coding, the codes were “collapsed” into something more manageable as the categories were developed and the major themes were identified.

In the final stage of analysis, selective coding, the researcher attempted to integrate the categories developed from axial coding to show how they relate to each other. A narrative description detailing the interactions of both experienced and novice teachers with their talented and less proficient students was constructed.

Code Reliability

The goal of qualitative research is to investigate a specific phenomenon in order to extract detailed meaning. During the interpretative process of coding, a second coder was utilized to ensure accuracy on the part of the researcher. The researcher's codes were shown and explained to the second coder, using examples from one of the transcripts. Other transcripts were given to the second coder for her to analyze, using the researcher's codes. The researcher's coding was then compared to that of the second coder, with discrepancies being discussed until agreement reached at least 90%.

Summary

The purpose of this study was to examine the unique, individualized student-teacher interactions of both novice and experienced teachers in a qualitative fashion in order to identify specifically how a teacher's perception of and expectation for a student influences that student's success in the applied lesson. Based on current research, this researcher proposed the following hypotheses:

1. There are specific, identifiable factors, characteristics, and/or student behaviors that can positively or negatively influence the teacher's perception of the student;
2. The teacher's perception of the student will positively or negatively affect his/her:

- a. Impressions of the student's quality
 - b. Teaching intervention choices
 - c. Expectations for student's immediate success in piano
 - d. Expectations for student's long-term success
 - e. Choice of literature
 - f. Style of interaction (affinity for student, attempts to motivate student, etc.);
3. Both novice and experienced teachers' behavior will vary depending on the student (talented vs. less proficient);
 4. Both novice and experienced teachers will have higher expectations for their "more talented" students than they will for their "less talented" students;
 5. There will be a general uniformity in the teaching strategies employed by novice teachers, but a greater discrepancy in the teaching strategies employed by these teachers with their "less talented" students as compared to their "more talented" students;
 6. There will be a wider variety of teaching strategies employed by experienced teachers, but more uniformity in the teaching strategies employed by these teachers with their "less talented" students as compared to their "more talented" students;
 7. Novice teachers, in general, will not have concrete or tangible long-term goals for their students. Experienced teachers, on the other hand, will have such goals for their students.

Teachers' perceptions and expectations of their students can have an enormous impact on the quality of teaching each student receives. Tauber (1998) states "teachers, more often than not, get from students what they expect from them" (p. 3). It is important to understand how these expectations influence the teacher's teaching and what effect they might have on the ultimate success or failure each student will experience in private lessons.

CHAPTER FOUR

FINDINGS AND INTERPRETATIONS

Throughout the data collection process, the researcher was able to triangulate the data gathered from each participant through many different sources: the Instructional Survey, the individual interviews, the observations of lessons and the review of the videotapes, the independent observers' analyses of the videotapes, and the researcher's field notes. Data were collected for each participant and then compared across participants.

Survey Results

The Instructional Surveys (see Appendix A) were reviewed and the average response for each of the four questions using a five-point Likert scale was tabulated. Teachers were asked to rank the importance of teaching 18 different topics for beginning students and how often they teach these topics, as well as identify the proficiency of their average beginning students with each of these topics. The fourth question asked teachers to identify the importance of 24 specific student or teacher behaviors in the private lesson.

Importance of Teaching Specific Topics

Question 1 asked teachers to rank the importance of teaching 18 different topics for beginning students. Experienced teachers ranked all but two topics, social music and performing with others, higher than novice teachers (see Table 2). The largest discrepancy in rankings between teacher groups was in the importance of teaching style period characteristics. The three other categories that had discrepancies greater than 1.00

on a Likert scale between teacher groups all related to music theory: basic chord progressions, basic structure analysis, and composition/arranging. Five categories were ranked 4.00 or higher on a Likert scale by both teacher groups: pieces composed for teaching, scales/arpeggios/exercises, memorization, sight-reading, and ear training. Of least importance to the experienced teachers was the teaching of social music, while novice teachers rated reading chord symbols, singing experiences, and composition/arranging as least important.

Table 2

Question 1: Instructional Survey Results from Experienced and Novice Teachers

How important is each of the following topics for beginning students?

5=very important, 1=irrelevant (E.T.=Experienced Teachers; N.T.=Novice Teachers)

	E.T.	N.T.		E.T.	N.T.
Traditional performance repertoire	4.25	3.50	Reading scores	3.75	3.75
Pieces composed for teaching	5.00	4.00	Style period characteristics	4.25	2.75
Social music (folk, pop, religious)	2.50	3.50	Basic chord progressions	4.25	3.00
Scales/arpeggios/exercises	4.75	4.25	Reading chord symbols	3.00	2.25
Memorization	4.75	4.75	Basic structure analysis	4.50	3.125
Transposition	4.00	3.25	Ear training	4.25	4.25
Improvisation	3.75	2.50	Singing experiences	3.50	2.25
Sight-reading	4.50	4.50	Composition/arranging	3.50	2.25
Harmonizing a melody	3.75	3.00	Performing with others	3.75	4.00

Frequency of Teaching Specific Topics

When asked how often they teach these 18 topics, experienced teachers ranked every category except memorization higher than novice teachers (see Table 3). The responses to this question revealed a discrepancy greater than 1.00 on a Likert scale between teacher groups in several categories: improvisation (with a difference of 1.75), harmonizing a melody, basic chord progressions, reading chord symbols, basic structure analysis, and composition/arranging. Only two categories ranked 4.00 or higher on a

Likert scale by both groups: pieces composed for teaching and scales/arpeggios/exercises. While teachers ranked both the importance and the teaching of scales/arpeggios/exercises 4.00 or higher on a Likert scale, the researcher rarely observed this in the lessons. It was also surprising that the teaching of composition/arranging received a ranking of only 2.00 on the Likert scale by novice teachers since two of the four novice teachers expressed a strong interest in this category during the interviews.

Table 3

Question 2: Instructional Survey Results from Experienced and Novice Teachers

How often do you teach each of the following topics to beginning students?

5=every lesson, 1=never (E.T.=Experienced Teachers; N.T.=Novice Teachers)

	E.T.	N.T.		E.T.	N.T.
Traditional performance repertoire	3.00	3.00	Reading scores	3.50	2.75
Pieces composed for teaching	5.00	4.25	Style period characteristics	3.50	2.75
Social music (folk, pop, religious)	2.75	3.00	Basic chord progressions	4.00	2.75
Scales/arpeggios/exercises	4.00	4.00	Reading chord symbols	3.25	2.00
Memorization	3.75	4.00	Basic structure analysis	4.25	3.00
Transposition	3.25	2.25	Ear training	3.75	3.75
Improvisation	3.50	1.75	Singing experiences	2.75	2.00
Sight-reading	4.75	3.75	Composition/arranging	3.25	2.00
Harmonizing a melody	3.00	1.75	Performing with others	3.50	2.75

In general, the rankings for the first question (how important a topic is) when compared to the rankings for the second question (how often each category is taught) typically indicated that teachers may believe a topic is important, but in actual practice, may find it difficult to include due to limited lesson time. In the interview, Elizabeth commented, “In a half an hour, it’s very difficult – or 45 minutes– to fit everything in” (Individual Interview, p. 2, 2/24/04). The only topics experienced teachers ranked

slightly higher in their teaching than they did in their importance were social music and reading chord symbols to beginning students. For novice teachers, pieces composed for teaching ranked slightly higher in the second question.

Experienced teachers rated singing experiences and teaching social music to beginners as the least frequently taught activities (2.75 on the Likert scale). The lack of teaching social music corresponds to their ranking this category as least important in the first question. Novice teachers rated the teaching of improvisation and harmonizing a melody as their least frequently taught activities for a beginning student (1.75 on the Likert scale). The largest disparity between the importance of a topic as opposed to the actual teaching of that topic was found in the category of traditional performance repertoire for experienced teachers, a variance of 1.50 on the Likert scale, and harmonizing a melody and performing with others for novice teachers, a variance of 1.25 on the Likert scale.

Proficiency of Students with Specific Topics

For the third question, what is the proficiency of your average beginning student, experienced teachers ranked their students higher than novice teachers in every category except sight-reading, which novice teachers ranked .17 higher on the Likert scale (see Table 4).

The question of proficiency levels of beginning students revealed a wide range of responses. One half of the categories showed discrepancies of more than 1.00 on the Likert scale between experienced and novice teachers. Only two categories were ranked 4.00 or higher by both groups: pieces composed for teaching and memorization. The only category that ranked 4.00 or higher on the Likert scale by both teacher groups in all

three questions was pieces composed for teaching. This corresponded to the researcher's field notes that the bulk of lesson time with each teacher is spent on literature.

Table 4

Question 3: Instructional Survey Results from Experienced and Novice Teachers

What is the proficiency of your average beginning students at each of these skills?

5=excellent, 1=incapable (E.T.=Experienced Teachers; N.T.=Novice Teachers)

	E.T.	N.T.		E.T.	N.T.
Traditional performance repertoire	4.00	2.75	Reading scores	2.67	2.60
Pieces composed for teaching	4.33	4.25	Style period characteristics	3.33	2.00
Social music (folk, pop, religious)	4.00	3.00	Basic chord progressions	3.33	2.25
Scales/arpeggios/exercises	3.67	2.75	Reading chord symbols	3.33	2.25
Memorization	4.33	4.00	Basic structure analysis	4.33	3.00
Transposition	3.33	2.50	Ear training	3.67	3.25
Improvisation	3.33	1.75	Singing experiences	3.33	1.75
Sight-reading	3.33	3.50	Composition/arranging	3.33	1.75
Harmonizing a melody	3.00	1.75	Performing with others	3.67	2.75

The experienced teachers ranked their students lowest in proficiency in reading scores. However, the researcher believes there was some confusion by the teachers on this category. In comparing their responses on the survey with the lesson observations, some teachers interpreted this category to mean basic note reading of repertoire, while others may have believed it dealt with open-score reading. Novice teachers ranked their students lowest in proficiency in improvisation, harmonizing a melody, singing experiences, and composition/arranging, which corresponds to question 2, how often they teach these categories.

The Importance of Specific Teacher/Student Behaviors

Question 4 asked teachers to rate the importance of 24 student or teacher behaviors in the applied lesson. The first 19 are the scaffolding techniques that were presented in Table 1, while the last 5 are more general teacher behaviors.

In this question, experienced teachers' responses again ranked higher than novice teachers' responses for most categories, with three exceptions: (a) the teacher verbally highlights an item, (c) the teacher writes in the score, and (k) the student names notes (see Table 5). As a result, the novice teachers had a slightly higher composite average on the scaffolding technique Mark Critical Features, but had notably lower composite averages for the other three techniques.

Table 5

Question 4: Instructional Survey Results from Experienced and Novice Teachers

How important or valuable are the following student/teacher behaviors in the private lesson?

5=very important; 1=irrelevant (E.T.=Experienced Teachers; N.T.=Novice Teachers)

	E.T.	N.T.
MARK CRITICAL FEATURES		
a) The teacher verbally highlights a specific item in the music:	3.75	4.75
b) The teacher physically highlights (points to, etc.) a specific item in the music:	4.75	4.75
c) The teacher writes in the score; marks a specific item in the music:	4.00	4.50
d) The teacher questions the student; asks the student to identify a specific item in the music:	5.00	4.75
Composite Average:	17.50	18.75

REDUCE DEGREES OF FREEDOM

e) The student repeats a specific section of a piece for the teacher:	5.00	4.50
f) The student plays hands separately for the teacher:	4.75	3.75
g) The student plays at a slower tempo for the teacher:	4.75	4.00
h) The student sings, but does not play, for the teacher:	3.50	1.75
i) The student taps, claps, etc. the rhythm for the teacher:	4.50	3.50
j) The student uses physical motions, gestures, etc., in the lesson, but does not play:	4.00	2.00
k) The student names notes (verbally) for the teacher:	4.25	4.50
Composite Average:	30.75	24.00

DEMONSTRATION

l) The teacher plays for the student:	4.00	4.00
m) The teacher models aurally (sings, hums, etc.):	4.25	4.00
n) The teacher gestures, or uses other physical motions:	4.50	4.00
o) The teacher uses other source for model (recording, etc.):	3.75	2.25
Composite Average:	16.50	14.25

OTHER SCAFFOLDING TECHNIQUES

p) The teacher plays accompaniment part with student (or uses MIDI disks and/or other prerecorded or electronic accompaniments):	4.75	3.75
q) The teacher corrects technique/posture (physically touches student, moves student's hands, etc.):	5.00	3.50
r) The student experiments, creates at the keyboard (improvisatory activities):	4.25	2.75
s) The student is off the bench or away from the keyboard engaged in other activities (doing written work in a theory book or at a chalkboard; moving to the beat, etc.):	3.50	2.75
Composite Average:	17.50	12.75

OTHER TEACHER BEHAVIORS

t) The teacher asks challenging questions that require students to do more than simply recall information:	4.50	4.00
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u) The teacher allows the student enough time to think over a question before assisting the student or providing the answer:	4.75	4.50
v) The teacher provides specific reasons for praising the student's learning performance:	5.00	4.50
w) The teacher is courteous and friendly in interactions with student(s):	5.00	5.00
x) The teacher continually modifies his/her expectations for each student depending on their previous success or failure in the lessons:	5.00	5.00
Composite Average	24.25	23.00

Of the 24 student/teacher behaviors, five had a discrepancy between the teacher groups of 1.50 or higher on the Likert scale. The greatest discrepancy of all the questions on the survey, with a difference of 2.00 on the Likert scale, occurred with (j): the importance of physical motions or gestures by the student in the lesson.

Both teacher groups rated 14 of these behaviors 4.00 or higher on the Likert scale. In addition, six behaviors received the highest rating of 5.00 on the Likert scale by experienced teachers, including (q) the teacher corrects technique/posture. This rating and the disparate rating given by novice teachers correlated with the researcher's observation that experienced teachers stress students' posture and hand position a great deal more than novice teachers.

In comparing the teachers' responses on the Instructional Survey to their actual behavior in the lessons, some distinct discrepancies were noted. Although experienced teachers' responses were generally higher for each question, this did not always correspond to the lesson observations.

1. Experienced teachers all ranked transposition as important and indicated that it was taught in most lessons, but it was observed only once.

2. Seventy-five percent of experienced teachers stated that it was very important for students to engage in improvisatory activities with the teacher, but this was never observed in any of the lessons.
3. Experienced teachers believed it was important or very important for the student to be off the bench or away from the keyboard engaged in other activities at some point in the lesson, but this also was never observed. It is possible, however, that the teachers felt somewhat restricted by the video camera, which limited both their movements and the movements of the student. By contrast, the novice teachers felt less strongly about this category, but two novice teachers did engage students in activities off the bench.
4. Although both groups of teachers indicated their belief that playing accompaniment parts with the student was important or very important, this behavior was observed only seven times in the 64 lessons.

It was also noted that every teacher agreed that technology was important and should be used in the applied lesson, but none of these teachers used it in any fashion as part of their lesson time with the student. All teachers ranked using MIDI disks or other pre-recorded accompaniments as important or very important. However, the only teacher to use them relegated it to after the actual teacher-student lesson time, where the student worked on his/her own with headphones. This dichotomy between belief and action seems to imply that teachers either have not truly embraced technology as an important part of the applied lesson, or that they are unaware, uncomfortable, or unsure of how to incorporate technology into their lessons.

Interviews

The interviews were transcribed verbatim and the initial coding process yielded 24 distinct categories, which were condensed and reorganized into three broad categories – Teacher, Student, and Parent – with 14 subcategories (see Table 6). The findings from the interviews are presented first under these three main categories.

Table 6

Open Coding: Codes and Subcategories

1. **The Teacher**
 - Background and characteristics
 - Self-reflection
 - Characteristics of a great teacher
 - Philosophy and expectations
 - Praise and criticism
 - Goals
 - Teacher's goals for students
 - Teacher's goals for self
 - Teacher frustration
 - Perceptions of students
 - Teaching strategies
 - General strategies
 - Teacher's focus or emphasis in the lesson
 - Strategies with less proficient students
 - Strategies with talented students

2. **The Student**
 - General characteristics
 - Best students/talented students
 - Less proficient students/less talented students
 - The ideal student
 - Student frustration
 - Reasons for student success in piano
 - Reasons for student failure in piano

3. **The Role of the Parent**

THE TEACHER

Background and Characteristics

Each teacher interviewed had much to say about the art of teaching in general, as well as his or her own teaching of beginning-level piano students. While they all expressed their love for piano and music making, the experienced teachers also expressed a strong love for teaching and performing that was not articulated by the novice teachers. Where Nancy commented, “I knew I wanted to be a teacher...I love teaching piano” (Individual Interview, p. 1, 4/23/04), Susan said, “I [started] teaching because it was extra money and thought it would be fun” (Individual Interview, p. 2, 3/10/04). Regardless of the number of years teaching, each teacher expressed enjoyment in teaching.

Although the researcher never asked the participants to comment on other teachers, many did in fact talk about their own teachers and the positive impact these educators had on their lives. Ann commented:

I think it all stems from my first teacher. I was scared to death to go to my first lesson...She got down on my level and let me know that she was my friend and I could trust her, and she was such a loving, warm person that she just won my heart right from the first lesson. And it wasn't long after that I decided I was going to be a piano teacher all my life because I wanted to be like this woman (Individual Interview, p. 17, 8/24/04).

At the same time however, both groups of teachers were quick to point out the effect of incompetent teachers. Nancy said,

The attrition in studios within the first two years of study is, I think, 80%. My attrition is 5%. Eighty percent never go beyond two years. Now why

is that? Because teachers hang a shingle out and don't know what they're doing. Honestly. I mean, they can't play, or they can't teach, and-or they can't play and teach (Individual Interview, p. 15, 4/23/04).

Jeff commented,

I think that there's definitely a problem with a lot of teachers, and at times I throw myself in there, because we're thrown into an arena of teaching for very good pay, you know, but we're just not really always prepared, and there are so many teachers out there that are even less prepared than myself and that are teaching...and are ruining so many children (Individual Interview, p. 13, 11/2/04).

These teachers felt strongly about the quality of other piano teachers and believed that poor teachers do more harm than good to their students.

Self Reflection

Both teacher groups were introspective and self-reflective about their teaching. Regardless of their previous experience or the number of years they have taught, these teachers regularly evaluated themselves and expressed a desire to improve. "I'm always evaluating if what I did was incremental enough or suitable" (Nancy, Individual Interview, p. 12, 4/23/04). Jeff said, "I always look at my teaching as something that can improve, and I'm really self-conscious of, like, the way I teach. There's always more I can learn, and there's always a teacher that knows more than me" (Individual Interview, p. 3, 11/2/04). Rachel added,

Is this family really getting their money's worth out of piano lessons?

That's something we need to take seriously, that is the service we're

providing worth what we're asking for? And some kids are getting more than they're paying [for] and some, you wonder (Individual Interview, p. 17, 10/14/04).

These teachers shared many stories describing what seemed to work or did not work with particular students and how they would have, in retrospect, modified their teaching accordingly. Julie shared, "When I began, I gave my poor little student way too much information. He was about six or so, and I think I took him way too hard, so I've learned to back off a lot" (Individual Interview, p. 1, 3/29/05).

Teachers also take their job seriously and hold themselves accountable. Steven said, "If they show up and I feel that they genuinely just don't understand what's going on, I take it more upon myself. It's my responsibility for maybe not describing something or going a little too fast with something" (Individual Interview, p. 9, 3/8/05). Three experienced teachers also expressed sadness or disappointment when students drop out of lessons, which demonstrates how seriously these teachers take their profession.

What Makes a Great Teacher

In response to the question, *What makes a great teacher?*, all four novice teachers stressed flexibility: "You have to be prepared for anything" (Susan: Individual Interview, p. 6, 3/10/04). Interestingly, this characteristic was not mentioned by any of the experienced teachers. The closest comment by an experienced teacher to this idea was Rachel's belief that a great teacher is one who has "a large bag of tricks" (Individual Interview, p. 5, 10/14/04). In his response, Jeff also stressed intuition: "[A great teacher] is just incredibly intuitive" (Individual Interview, p. 5, 11/2/04).

By contrast, the experienced teachers were quite varied in their responses. Elizabeth's idea of a great teacher centered on high expectations: "[A great teacher is] one who is making them play every level of music at a very high level. I mean, every level of difficulty at a high level musically" (Individual Interview, p. 4, 2/24/04). While Ann mentioned several aspects of a great teacher, including having the gift of explanation and a true love of children, Nancy's response was,

I feel that the job of the teacher isn't just to help a student build a skill or to teach them information...our job is to connect things for them...The job of a teacher is to relate one thing to another, that they would normally not get in the book or on the web, or just alone. Bringing it together (Individual Interview, p. 10, 4/23/04).

While both experienced and novice teachers uniformly evaluate their own teaching and strive to improve, this study did not reveal a uniform, idealized concept of what makes a great teacher.

Teacher's Philosophy

The category of teacher's philosophy consisted of many statements that reflected the thought processes of these teachers, including their underlying beliefs and their reasons for using different teaching strategies. For three of the experienced teachers, it was most important for the student to enjoy the lessons, enjoy music, and develop a love for music. If cultivated early enough, this love for music would become a passion that would last their entire lives. Nancy stated it this way: "The best way I can describe it [is] we are building tomorrow's audiences, and that's my job, so what better way to appreciate music but to make music yourself" (Individual Interview, p. 4, 4/23/04).

These teachers also stressed the importance of being encouraging and the importance of helping students grow and develop as musicians and as individuals. As Nancy said, “it’s my job to teach them about themselves and to build the musicianship in the process, and you can’t do one without the other” (Individual Interview, p. 3, 4/23/04).

By contrast, not all of the novice teachers had yet formed a clear or definitive philosophy. Several mentioned specific aspects important to them, such as memorization and parental involvement, or listed benefits of learning piano, such as the development of mental skills and finger agility. Jeff did say, however, “I hope that all of this stuff that we do together is fun” (Individual Interview, p. 2, 11/2/04), and later added, “the highest responsibility is what we’re doing, shaping younger children for the rest of their lives” (Individual Interview, p. 13, 11/2/04). Steven’s underlying philosophy lined up squarely with the experienced teachers: “My job is to help those kids realize that they love music” (Individual Interview, p. 2, 3/8/05).

Goals

There was no overriding consensus between teacher groups or within each group as to the goals they have for their students; their responses were quite eclectic, covering skills and concepts, as well as the ability to share music with others. Novice teachers listed goals such as memorization, participation in festivals and recitals, understanding music, playing accurately, playing for others, continual improvement, and having fun. Experienced teachers’ goals included self-discipline, musicianship, playing for others, sight-reading, and correct use of the hands and body.

There was, however, unanimous agreement among novice teachers as to the primary goal for themselves: to continue learning and improving as teachers. Julie said,

“I want to be able to be the teacher for the student, what they need me to be” (Individual Interview, p. 1, 3/29/05). Jeff said, “My goal is always to be improving, [to] try to bring things in, even if they don’t work and I might feel weird for five minutes during the lesson. Even if something doesn’t work right away, I still try to figure out what’s good about it” (Individual Interview, p. 3, 11/2/04). This goal of self-improvement corresponds to their self-reflective comments about a desire to improve.

Although the desire to improve was expressed by all teachers (as discussed earlier), only one experienced teacher listed this as a personal goal, albeit somewhat differently. Rachel said in response to this question, “I have never taken the time to be certified with the National Music Teachers Association and I ought to do that” (Individual Interview, p. 2, 10/14/04). The other three experienced teachers expressed as their personal goal a desire to achieve the goals they set for their students. In other words, the students’ goals became the teacher’s goals. For example, when asked what goals she has for her students, Ann responded,

I want to help my students find their own place in music; find a way to use their talent in some way, whether they want to go into it professionally or as hobbyists. I want to help them find places to play...I want my students to realize that there is a place for them in music out there (Individual Interview, p. 2, 8/24/04).

When asked what goals she has for herself, her reply was the same: “that’s my goal: to teach them to play in a way that they are eager to share their music with other people...that they will keep their music going all their life, in some way” (Individual Interview, p. 2, 8/24/04).

Frustration

Experienced teachers listed several student behaviors that cause frustration in their teaching: students who do not practice, students who come unprepared week after week, and students who do not listen to or apply what the teacher says. Ann offered her solution to this problem:

I check on myself every now and then. If I have any student that I am dreading coming, if I see them walking up the sidewalk, and I kind of clamp up inside myself and I say, ‘Oh, I need to be on my best behavior here; this isn’t going to be a good experience,’ I don’t keep that student. I just don’t put up with that (Individual Interview, p. 13, 8/24/04).

Although not specifically a frustration, all experienced teachers mentioned time as a constraining factor in the lessons. “I try to include some sight-reading in every lesson, but sometimes the clock just turns, time is up, and we haven’t done any of it” (Ann: Individual Interview, p. 7, 8/24/04).

Novice teachers had very little to say on this subject but did agree that students who don’t practice can lead a teacher to dread or dislike teaching that student. Steven was the most passionate about this.

I’ve had some students that were like nightmares, where they, I mean, like, I really loathed coming to the lesson. Yeah, on a personal level, and I think I could actually say that, I think hate is too strong of a word, but you know, it really did something to me. You know, like I wanted to pull my hair out (Individual Interview, p. 4, 3/8/05).

When pressed further on this issue, Steven later explained why he dreads these lessons: “because it’s taxing, it’s stressful, it’s not easy. It’s like a colicky baby” (Steven: Individual Interview, p. 14, 3/8/05).

Perception of Students

In the coding process, the researcher identified 20 distinct characteristics given by the experienced teachers and 18 from the novice teachers that influenced their perception of students. Further investigation found that these characteristics can be placed into one of two categories: *student-independent characteristics* – naturally occurring characteristics outside the control or power of the student (those characteristics the student cannot change) and *student-dependent characteristics* – characteristics or learned behaviors that are within the control or power of the student to change, modify, or develop (see Table 7).

Although teachers may base their perceptions of students on these characteristics, their perceptions can change when the student does something unexpected. Typically when the student suddenly becomes motivated, inspired, or begins practicing regularly and improving, teachers notice this and change their perceptions accordingly. Elizabeth commented, “You can’t predict, and I’ve been wrong. People have said, ‘Who’s your most talented student?’ and I didn’t predict that a certain person was it, and then he all of a sudden blossomed and went off to New England Conservatory” (Individual Interview, p. 3, 2/24/04).

Table 7

Characteristics Influencing Teachers' Perception of Students

STUDENT CHARACTERISTICS DESCRIBED BY BOTH TEACHER GROUPS	
Student-Independent Characteristics	Example from the interviews
Talent/Natural Ability	"The students that are better students, the ones that work a little harder, that maybe have a little more natural talent...it is easier to delegate to. You just move at a faster clip obviously."
Skill level/Physical Maturity	"Some students seem more ready for the physical ability to play."
Student's Background	"I can tell already she's going to make it all the way and that's because I know her parents, I know her grandparents. She's from a very musical family; a long line of musicians."
Age	"[Younger students] take a lot more patience, and they take a lot more work on the teacher's part."
Parent/Home Environment	"This one's not going to last if there's no piano in the home [to practice on]."
Student-Dependent Characteristics	Example from the interviews
Work Ethic/Practice Habits	"I'm not going to sit and listen to her practice every 10-page piece." "I have some very good students, where they want to learn, they want to practice."
Enjoyment	"I think that her love for what she's doing will take her as far as she wants to go."
Desire	"Kids that don't want to be there, they're a lot of work to teach. You have to work so hard, because it's very difficult for them, so it's twice as hard for you to make it interesting and fun."
Attitude	"I usually don't spend a whole lot of time with a student who I can tell from the beginning that their attitude is wrong."
Involvement/Attention in the Lesson	"I don't know if he's just not concentrating, or sometimes I don't know what's going on."
Progress	"There's a very short amount of time before I can realize that they are not making progress." "The way [different students] improve and how long it takes them to improve changes drastically."
Cooperation/Obedience	"Sometimes the one who things come easy to has their own way of doing it and doesn't want to listen; they just want to do their own [thing]."

ADDITIONAL CHARACTERISTICS DESCRIBED BY EXPERIENCED TEACHERS	
Student-Independent Characteristics	Example the interviews
Intelligence/IQ	“If I get a hold of a student who I can see that their IQ is not as high as normal, I will still work with that student; I just do not expect as much from that student.”
Physical Limitations	“One student I was absolutely wrong about...he was 90% deaf...”
Emotions/Needs	“If a student comes in and I can tell they’re extremely tired or extremely distracted by something emotional, I’ll ask them right off...Usually when they’re really burdened and really emotionally sick, they can’t play anyway. So the lesson is going to be wasted if I just go through the routine.”
Student-Dependent Characteristics	Example from the interviews
Student/Teacher Dominance	“There’s always someone who wants to learn Moonlight Sonata.”
Commitment	“The transfer students are not real committed to fingering.”
Sense of Expectancy	“She comes to each [lesson] with a sense of expectancy, just wondering what new things she’s going to learn today.”
Verbal Responses	“[When students say] ‘I don’t like doing that, it’s boring’...”
Other Activities/Interests	“I suspect every studio has some of those students in this day and age where parents expect their children to do everything available, which leaves no time for sleeping, let alone practicing!”

ADDITIONAL CHARACTERISTICS DESCRIBED BY NOVICE TEACHERS	
Student-Independent Characteristics	Example from the interviews
Memory	“So even though with some of the others I tell them many things, they don’t remember, so you keep telling then and keep telling them.”
Motivation	“Once they figure out, ‘Oh my gosh, I can do this all by myself,’ I think they’re almost, they’re kind of amazed. I think that motivates them in itself.”
Student-Dependent Characteristics	Example from the interviews
Affinity for Teacher	“Sometimes students just don’t like you. You know, some times you just run into a student that just doesn’t connect with you.”
Organization	“I find the kids that are less productive when dealing with piano are just not as organized...”

Student's Likes/Dislikes	"Counting is always the thing that is the worst for a lot of kids in general, because they just don't want to do it."
Student's Future/Career Plans	"Not every student wants to major in music or make it their career."

Teaching Strategies

Both teacher groups provided a wealth of general teaching strategies. In most cases, the strategies were presented in a vague or general manner, with the experienced teachers providing slightly more detail at times. Each of the 53 teaching strategies collected fall into one of four categories: Reduce Degrees of Freedom, Motivate, Demonstrate, and Other (see Table 8). It was noted that approximately two-thirds of the teachers' responses do not align themselves with any of the scaffolding strategies used by the independent panel of observers in critiquing the videotapes. None of the 53 teaching strategies given involved the most commonly used scaffolding technique of Marking Critical Features. Although teachers did this extensively in their lessons, they perhaps did not view this as an actual teaching strategy.

Table 8

General Teaching Strategies

Novice Teachers	Experienced Teachers
Reduce Degrees of Freedom	
▪ Focus on counting first ▪ Clap rhythms ▪ Name notes ▪ Work in sections ▪ Use repetition and drill ▪ Add a little bit at a time; do not do too much at one time ▪ Present only what the student is ready for ▪ Provide clear, specific practice steps	▪ Address rhythm first ▪ Use detailed, incremental steps ▪ Focus on the element most vital to the piece or style ▪ Practice with brain turned on ▪ Show the student how to practice ▪ Write down practice steps ▪ Find different ways to approach a problem or find the same problem in a different piece

and directions	
Use flashcards	
Motivate	
- Provide incentives (for practicing) - Get the student to realize his/her potential - Push the student - Do not push the student too far too fast - Keep the student focused - Avoid guilt trips - Motivate	- Use incentives (rewards) for younger students - Make the student feel good about hard work - Keep it fun - Keep the student inspired - Use music the student enjoys or finds motivating - Have the student “discover” it - Keep repertoire list of pieces student can play at any time - Let the student work on a challenging piece when inspired, as long as s/he follows the teacher’s directions - Have the student play in ensembles - Have momentum – even if momentum is sideways
Demonstrate	
	- Use recitals to learn about other pieces - Give assigned listening - Be a role model for the student; let him/her know the teacher is practicing too
Other	
- Offer lots of wait time - Balance one good (positive) comment with one constructive (negative) comment - Have the student think out loud (“Tell me how you’re figuring this out.”) - Memorize from the very beginning - Use theory books - Work on whatever sticks out in teacher’s head - Let student play through piece completely first - Use analogies	- Observe dynamics from the beginning - Talk about musical elements - Create an image for each piece - Discuss where piece falls in history - Write copious notes for the student - Write goal-centered directions for student - Have pieces at different stages of learning (new, middle, polished) - Ask questions of the student - Use technology - Involve parents

While many of the novice teachers allow the method books (i.e., “Solo” book, “Lesson” book, “Theory” book, etc) to dictate their teaching strategies, their comments

reveal their unique approaches to teaching. Susan believes teachers need to provide clear, specific practice directions. Julie tries not to push the student too far too quickly, but both Jeff and Steven try to push their students at every lesson. Jeff also stressed the importance of not trying to do too many things all at one time, while Steven works first with counting and note reading.

The specific teaching strategies discussed by the experienced teachers also revealed what is important to them in their teaching. Elizabeth's approach of making the student feel good about hard work and finding different ways to approach a problem coincided nicely with her philosophy of teaching – that her job is to help students enjoy music and have fun playing it. Nancy stressed the importance of providing goal-centered practice directions in the student's assignment book; Ann prefers a Bruner-style approach in her desire to teach students how to discover the concepts, rather than simply telling them. Rachel discussed her use of technology and the importance of having momentum, even if that momentum is horizontal (such as changing books) and not vertical (advancing to more difficult repertoire).

There was strong agreement among all the teachers that rhythm is typically the primary area addressed when working on a piece. As Nancy put it, "if that rhythm is not right, I know they haven't counted. I stop them; they're not making music" (Individual Interview, p. 12, 4/23/04). Two experienced teachers also mentioned the importance of posture and hand position, which coincided with the researcher's field notes of the lesson observations.

In addition to these general teaching strategies, both teacher groups also provided specific strategies they favor with talented and less proficient students (see Table 9).

Table 9

Specific Teaching Strategies for Less Proficient and Talented Students

	Novice Teachers	Experienced Teachers
Less Proficient Students	▪ Review and Repetition ▪ Focus on the basics: notes and rhythms ▪ Help students practice ▪ Provide encouragement ▪ Show patterns ▪ Convince student the piece is easy ▪ Provide more structure ▪ Make student log practice time (create charts)	▪ Use repetition, but change activities frequently ▪ Change books (move horizontally) ▪ Make it fun ▪ Have a positive attitude ▪ Keep a repertoire list ▪ Break down steps: take music apart for student ▪ Go slower ▪ Do more of the talking: ask fewer questions ▪ Get the student to be successful with something or at some level ▪ Develop reading skills
Talented Students	▪ Expect more; be harder on these students ▪ Cover more details ▪ Provide a broader sense of the music ▪ Demonstrate more ▪ Use role reversal (the student becomes the teacher) ▪ Develop student's ears so they can become their own teacher ▪ Cover more concepts or more advanced concepts	▪ Work more with interpretation and expression ▪ Be more physically involved in the lesson ("jump, dance and scream") ▪ Get the student to be more physically involved ▪ Encourage students to teach others ▪ Expect students to think for themselves; to figure it out ▪ Do not always point out mistakes ▪ Have the student talk more; do less explaining; ask more questions; ask for their opinions ▪ Perform for them, not their pieces, but similar pieces to demonstrate technique, style, etc. ▪ Provide detailed steps in learning ▪ Provide more performance opportunities ▪ Have higher expectations in terms of perfection – "a higher level of sparkle"

Review and repetition was the technique cited most frequently by novice teachers when working with less proficient students. Although Susan did say she tries to help the

student know how to practice, she also noted that working with less experienced students is “like having practice when it’s supposed to be a lesson” (Individual Interview, p. 5, 3/10/04). Many of the teachers commented on the importance of teaching students how to practice. Jeff put it this way,

I always tell them they are their own carpenter, you know, they have their own tools in their belt they can pull out when I’m not around, you know. And if they have those tools with them, they shouldn’t be worried, and they can accomplish anything they want to do (Individual Interview, p. 11, 11/2/04).

Jeff also strongly believes less proficient students need more structure, as he mentioned this six times.

By contrast, Elizabeth believes it is important to practice with the student in the lesson. “I try to tell them, ‘what we’re doing is practicing. This is how you do it at home’” (Individual Interview, p. 6, 2/24/04). The experienced teachers also use much repetition with less proficient students, but also emphasized the need to change activities frequently. Elizabeth added, “I try to make it fun and funny, so they still have a positive attitude if we’re correcting that rhythm for the 80th time” (Individual Interview, p. 5, 2/24/04). Two teachers mentioned that they will change books – switching to the same level method book in a different series – with a less proficient student so there is some momentum or “progress” taking place. One of the strategies mentioned by Elizabeth was to have these students keep a repertoire list.

We keep a repertoire list and I’ll ask them, “Okay, play something from your repertoire list,” and they don’t know when I’m going to ask, but

they're always supposed to have a couple things that they can perform...The ones that aren't talented love that. I have one little girl that memorized everything in her method book so she can put it in her repertoire... (Individual Interview, p. 6-7, 2/24/04).

The researcher hypothesizes that this activity is an excellent way to build confidence and self-esteem for these students.

Teacher Praise and Criticism

Throughout the interviews, teachers made reference to the area of praise and criticism. While everyone acknowledged the importance of proper praise and constructive criticism, they also acknowledged the difficulties they sometimes face in keeping that balance.

I really respect the whole balance issue, one good with one negative comment – one constructive comment – you know. I try to be one positive ahead of the game. Of course, it's terribly difficult at all times, you know. Sometimes you're just tired as a teacher and you're not always able to (Jeff, Individual Interview, p. 3, 11/2/04).

A review of the videotapes by the independent panel of observers, however, showed a lack of balance, as there was very little direct criticism. Teachers will typically correct mistakes without actually explaining what was wrong. (“Name for me the notes in this measure.”) Many times the criticism is passive (“Let's fix this measure”). The student may not know what was wrong, but s/he understands that a mistake was made, as that is the reason the teacher is engaged in the specific activity (counting a rhythm,

naming notes, etc.). Nancy commented, “It takes a certain amount of self-esteem to take criticism” (Individual Interview, p. 22, 4/23/04).

And while there was little direct criticism, there was much direct and overt praise by all the teachers, much of it being generalized praise. Many teachers are aware of this, but still find it difficult to manage. Nancy discussed this when she commented,

My philosophy, I think too, is based on honesty with kindness. I mean, they know if you’re lying to them. You know, I used to be so positive in my early years that, “oh, that was really good! Oh, that was great!” when it wasn’t. And I still find those little things kind of coming out of my mouth, but then I always say, “now let’s do this,” and I know that we’re getting at something (Individual Interview, p. 3, 4/23/04).

THE STUDENT

Best Students vs. Less Proficient Students

In reviewing the transcripts, the researcher identified and labeled 45 characteristics used by teachers to describe their best students and 39 characteristics used to describe their less-proficient students. These characteristics were then placed into one of four categories: physical, cognitive, behavioral, and other (see Table 10).

In describing their best students, all the experienced teachers mentioned the importance of parents; three teachers stressed this quite dramatically. In one case, this was their first response:

Interviewer: “Describe for me your best students.”

Elizabeth: “They have an environment at home of support and structure.”

(Individual Interview, p. 2, 2/24/04). Only one novice teacher included the parent in her description of best students, and interestingly, only one teacher from each group mentioned the parent in his/her discussion of less proficient students. This is of particular interest with the experienced teachers, since the role of the parent was stressed so much with their best students. Perhaps these teachers feel the parents are partly responsible for the good students, but are not to blame for the poor ones.

Another note of interest was that none of the teachers in either group mentioned talent as a prerequisite to being a “best student.” In fact, two even said the opposite. Rachel, for example, commented, “The most talented is not always the best student” (Individual Interview, p. 3, 10/14/04). Two teachers also discussed a challenge they face when working with best students: a lack of careful attention to details. Ann said, “His hands get ahead of his mind...I guess his weakness would be carelessness and making mistakes. I guess he’s not paying attention sometimes” (Individual Interview, p. 14, 8/24/04).

Practice habits was a key area identified by novice teachers for both best students and less proficient students. Both Jeff and Steven, when describing their best students, simply stated that they practice. On the other side, Susan commented that her less proficient students “don’t practice as much; it’s the biggest thing” (individual Interview, p. 5, 3/10/04).

By contrast, students’ practice habits were only mentioned by one experienced teacher for best students and not at all for less proficient students. Rachel made a

Table 10

Characteristics of Best Students

Experienced Teachers	Novice Teachers
<u>Physical</u> ▪ Dexterous; fast fingers ▪ Great independence between hands ▪ Good listener ▪ Great ear <u>Cognitive</u> ▪ High IQ; smart; bright ▪ Quick learner ▪ Absorbs information ▪ Excellent at transposition ▪ Multitasks ▪ Creative ▪ Concentrates and follows through ▪ Great sight-reader <u>Behavioral</u> ▪ Motivated ▪ Diligent ▪ Determined ▪ High achiever ▪ Loves to be challenged; enjoys a challenge ▪ Learning attitude ▪ Positive attitude ▪ Inquisitive ▪ Disciplined; practices regularly ▪ Works hard ▪ A go-getter <u>Other</u> ▪ Supportive and structured home environment ▪ Committed parents ▪ Rhythmic sense ▪ Much potential ▪ Adapts easily to change ▪ Independent and outspoken ▪ Listens to music	<u>Physical</u> ▪ Great ear <u>Cognitive</u> ▪ Good with interpretation; more musical ▪ Absorbs information ▪ Retains information <u>Behavioral</u> ▪ Interested in piano/music; loves piano ▪ Respectful ▪ Open minded ▪ Excited/eager in lessons ▪ Ready to work ▪ Does what you say right away in the lesson; gets things done promptly <u>Other</u> ▪ Involved parents ▪ Good overall ▪ Organized ▪ Practices; works hard; is consistent ▪ Prompt

Characteristics of Less Proficient Students

Experienced Teachers	Novice Teachers
<u>Physical</u> ▪ Lack of coordination/dexterity ▪ Weak fingers ▪ Never plays correct fingerings ▪ Many skills need to be built or rebuilt (for transfer student) <u>Cognitive</u> ▪ Slow to develop or to learn pieces ▪ Difficulty reading music or grasping concepts ▪ Hard time paying attention or focusing ▪ No idea what key she is in ▪ Have to explain it over and over ▪ Smart; once learned, has it for good ▪ Need more incremental steps or separating of skills ▪ Makes same mistakes over and over <u>Behavioral</u> ▪ Lack of musical aptitude ▪ Lack of rhythmic sense ▪ Lack of respect for teacher by family ▪ Shy; not as apt to talk ▪ Loves school ▪ High achiever (in school) ▪ Works hard <u>Other</u> ▪ Most challenging student ▪ Strong student ▪ Very poised, graceful ▪ Performs well under pressure	<u>Physical</u> ▪ Weak hands/poor technique ▪ Lack of good motor skills <u>Cognitive</u> ▪ Inability to retain information ▪ Lack of focus in lesson ▪ Lack of observational skills ▪ Difficulty with every book <u>Behavioral</u> ▪ Withdrawn or shy ▪ Disrespectful ▪ Inconsistent attendance <u>Other</u> ▪ Lack of parental involvement ▪ Lack of practice and preparation ▪ Involved in too many other activities ▪ Unorganized and unstructured ▪ Slow progress

distinction between less proficient and less desirable students when she commented that less desirable students do not practice, do not like or respond to authority, do not listen, do not want to think for themselves, and always want to do things their own way.

In compiling characteristics for less proficient students, the researcher was surprised that he not only received negative comments, but seven positive descriptive phrases as well from experienced teachers, such as works hard, high achiever, smart, and very poised. This might be due to the teachers' perception that less proficient students are not necessarily poor students, and that they still have good qualities and excel in areas other than piano. Perhaps these teachers tend to see the positive characteristics in every student. Rachel may have inadvertently explained this phenomenon when she mentioned that less proficient students are not necessarily less desirable students.

The Ideal Student

While neither teacher group listed talent in their description of best students, the novice teachers did mention talent in describing their ideal student; experienced teachers used the phrase "musically inclined" (See Table 11). The vast majority of traits given by both groups of teachers relate to the student's attitude toward music and toward the teacher. This seems to imply that anyone who has talent or is musically inclined could be an ideal student if his or her attitude is aligned positively with the teacher's. It also seems that a student's attitude is a bigger factor in how a teacher perceives or labels a student than the student-independent characteristics – those things out of the student's control. In other words, the student can determine the teacher's perception of him/herself through the attitude displayed.

Student Frustration

In the course of the interviews, the teachers made various comments that reveal what they believe to be the cause of student frustration in the lesson. Susan believes students become frustrated when they are pushed into piano lessons by a parent against

Table 11

Characteristics of the Ideal Student

Experienced Teachers	Novice Teachers
▪ Respect for teacher ▪ Willingness to work; love of practice ▪ Keen ear; recognizes mistakes ▪ Ambitious ▪ Perfectionist ▪ Love of improvising ▪ Listener and follows directions ▪ Heart to learn ▪ Real performer ▪ Physical coordination ▪ Musically inclined	▪ Respect for teacher ▪ Prepared ▪ Good ear ▪ Good attitude ▪ Excitement about piano ▪ Enjoyment of composition and is creative ▪ Strong rhythmic sense ▪ Parental involvement and support at home ▪ Talented

their will. According to the experienced teachers, student frustration can be the result of a lack of talent, a lack of physical ability, or a lack of practice. Nancy also suggested that transfer students are more likely to become frustrated because they enter her studio with many incorrect habits that must be addressed.

Why Students Succeed or Fail

Both teacher groups had more to say on why students fail than on why they succeed (see Table 12). It is interesting to note that the role of the parent appears in the responses of both teacher groups for both student success and student failure. Clearly, teachers strongly believe the parent plays a large role in the success or failure of their child in piano lessons. Again, one also sees that over half of the reasons given for student failure fall under the category of student-dependent characteristics, which implies that the student is ultimately responsible for his/her own success or failure.

Table 12

Why Students Succeed or Fail

	Why Students Succeed	Why Students Fail
Experienced Teachers	▪ Inspired by the music ▪ Follow directions ▪ Parental support ▪ Apply themselves	▪ Over committed (too many other activities) ▪ Frustrated ▪ Peer pressure ▪ Lack of personal interest ▪ Lack of practice ▪ Incompetent teacher ▪ Unresponsive to teacher's direction/suggestions ▪ Dishonest about their feelings (so the teacher is unable to motivate) ▪ Lack of parental support ▪ Poor attitude ▪ No discipline
Novice Teachers	▪ Practice ▪ Desire/interest ▪ Parental support ▪ Inspired/loves music	▪ Lack of practice ▪ Lack of parental support ▪ Lack of desire ▪ Lack of attention ▪ No understanding of the reason or worth ▪ Overworked; too many activities

THE PARENT

The Role of the Parent

Each teacher had much to say about the importance of the parent in a child's piano lessons. In all cases, the success of the child in piano lessons was directly tied to the role of the parent, both in the lesson and at home (see Table 13). Rachel said,

[Two students] have parents that have organized practice for them, and the third one, although just as talented and just as intellectually brilliant and creative, he doesn't practice nearly so much, and I'm sure it's just the

mother's tired, and who knows where he'll go, just because of that lack of careful practice (Individual Interview, p. 17-18, 10/14/04).

Table 13

The Role of the Parent

Experienced Teachers	Novice Teachers
▪ Provide support and structure ▪ Practice with the child ▪ Attend lessons; take notes during the lesson; know what is going on ▪ Back up the teacher ▪ Teach children to respect the teacher ▪ Provide discipline ▪ Encourage and compliment the child ▪ Teach the child organization, responsibility, and promptness	▪ Support the student in practicing at home; hold the student accountable ▪ Support the teacher ▪ Sit in on lessons; know what is going on ▪ Be involved and interested ▪ Help the child focus

Jeff, who had much to say about the role of the parent, stressed the importance of the parent over that of the teacher. "I almost want to say that [the] teacher plays a large role, but I think a child can succeed and be very productive with very supportive parents even if the teacher is so-so" (Individual Interview, p. 9, 11/2/04). He also added "I find that there's a definite correlation between a parent's involvement with the student's lesson and somebody who's not involved at all. I mean...I almost have 0% students who are very consistent, very talented, whose parents aren't involved at all. I don't have any. I have hardly any. I maybe have taught a few in my life" (Individual Interview, p. 4, 11/2/04). Ann put it this way:

Those students who have parents who encourage them, that have taught them organization, have taught them responsibility, promptness, those parents who have always been there to compliment them, I feel that those

students have a much better chance of succeeding. But I think it takes that parental support and that parental encouragement for many years before a child finally begins to do it for himself. I really do think that children who are fortunate to have parents who really are interested in them, they're the ones that are really going to succeed, talented or not (Individual Interview, p. 9, 8/24/04).

Lesson Observations and Field Notes

Using the two main categories from the interview coding – teacher and student – as a starting point, each was broken down into its distinctive properties and dimensions (see Table 14) and used as a beginning framework to make the following general comparisons. The third category concerning the role of the parent was not considered since parents were not a part of the videotaping and lesson observations.

Table 14

Lesson Observation Categories with Properties and Dimensions

Categories	Properties	Dimensions
Student involvement in the lesson	Attention	- Amount of time on task - Ability to focus - Teacher's role in maintaining attention
	Verbal	- Asking questions ▪ Number of questions ▪ Questions related to the music at hand ▪ Questions relating to lessons or music in general - Amount of talking not related to the topic or lesson

	Response Rate	- Amount of time between question and answer (wait time) - Amount of time between teacher instruction and student action
	Body Language	- Mannerisms/facial expressions - Number of times teacher must address posture - Yawning
	Student/Teacher Dominance	- Frequency of teacher-led activities (teacher talk/play) vs. - Frequency of student-led Activities (student talk/play)
Teacher involvement in the lesson	Pacing	- Fast/slow - Material covered (several pieces/ only a few pieces) - Amount of time spent on each activity - Number of activities within each topic/piece
	Teacher/Student Dominance	- Same as above, including: - Who leads the lesson; who is in charge? - Who determines when to move on to the next topic/piece, etc.? ▪ Cues taken from student (verbal, body language) ▪ Student achievement of goal
	Scaffolding Techniques	- Marking critical features - Reducing degrees of freedom - Demonstration - Other behaviors (see Table 1)

General Comparisons

All eight students observed with the novice teachers had 30-minute lessons with one exception, who received 60-minute lessons. Four students with the experienced

teachers had 30-minute lessons, while the other four received 60-minute lessons.

However, one of these teachers divided the 60-minute lesson into a traditional 30 minutes of one-on-one instruction followed by an additional 30 minutes of student-led instruction on a computer or a keyboard with headphones.

While all the teachers addressed technique to some degree in the course of each lesson, three of the four experienced teachers had a specific technical regimen for their students that included such activities as scales, Dozen A Day, and other technical exercises created by the teacher for that student. The average amount of time spent on these activities in a 30-minute lesson was approximately five minutes. Only one novice teacher had a specific technical regimen for both the talented and less proficient student, while two other novice teachers had a specific technical regimen only for their talented student. These activities included Dozen A Day, Hanon, and Czerny. The average amount of time these teachers spent on technique in a 30-minute lesson was approximately 7.5 minutes. One experienced and one novice teacher had no specific, defined technical regimen for either student.

The vast majority of lesson time in all 64 lessons observed dealt with literature: novice teachers spent, on average, 68% of their lesson time with talented students on literature and 79% with their less proficient students. Experienced teachers spent 75% of their lesson on literature with their talented students and 72% with their less proficient students. During this time, novice teachers generally listened and worked with their students on an average of 2.6 different pieces per lesson; experienced teachers typically covered slightly more, 3.2 on average. With both groups of teachers, the talented students covered more pieces per lesson than the less proficient students and typically

had a wider variety of activities in each lesson. The average number of pieces covered by experienced teachers with less proficient students was 2.9 compared to 3.5 with talented students. Novice teachers covered an average of 2.2 pieces with less proficient students and 3.0 pieces with talented students. While these numbers initially seem to confirm Cotton's (1989) findings that low achievers are frequently offered fewer opportunities to learn new material, they might also have been affected simply by the dates of observations. In some instances, for example, the student and teacher were preparing for a festival, a recital, or they were close to the end of the school year.

In addition to technique and literature, experienced teachers also included activities pertaining to theory, ear training, and sight-reading in their lessons. The ear-training and sight-reading activities, however, only occurred within the first couple of lessons videotaped, which led the researcher to hypothesize that they were initially included more for the camera than as a part of their regular lesson routine. With novice teachers, the only other additional activity consistently included as part of their lessons was theory work.

Experienced Teachers

Experienced teachers were more likely to engage in drill-type activities and receive results in the lesson. All four experienced teachers practiced with the student at various times in the lesson. The pace of the lessons was much quicker than with novice teachers, which enabled experienced teachers to cover more material, engage in more activities, and achieve more visible results in each lesson. Almost no down time or time off task was observed with these teachers.

In all cases, these teachers were much more actively involved in the lessons, particularly physically, and had a higher energy level. They would frequently touch the students' hands, arms, or shoulders to correct hand position or posture. It was noted that all the experienced teachers were very particular about hand position and posture at the piano. Although all the experienced teachers stressed this, it was hardly ever mentioned or corrected by the novice teachers in this study. One example of an experienced teacher's physical involvement in the lesson was Nancy's strategy of pedaling with the student. She would have the student place her foot on top of the teacher's foot while playing to experience the coordination required for correct pedaling in a particular passage.

The experienced teachers played with the student and for the student at a much higher degree of frequency than the novice teachers. It was also noted that when these teachers played for their students, they almost invariably modeled the piece or passage exactly the way the student should perform it: with proper hand position and posture, a rich, full tone, and proper phrasing. Elizabeth spent virtually the entire lesson with both students (in all four lessons observed) sitting on the piano bench with the student. This close physical proximity allowed her to immediately correct the student's hand position or posture, and allowed her to "jump in" and play with the student at a moment's notice.

As one might expect, experienced teachers set high standards for all their students. Nancy said,

There is a difference between high expectations and high standards...

[Students] always want to know where the bar is. Why would I change where the bar is? I always say "here's the bar and you want to settle for

this here?” Now, does that mean we’re going to hinge our self-esteem on the fact that right now our expectation’s here? Oh no, because we’re remembering where the bar is. Well, what’s our expectation this week? What is it next month? And what is it for next year? (Individual Interview, p. 8, 4/23/04).

These teachers approached both talented and less proficient students in the same manner, working on as many details and expecting much from both types of students. Several experienced teachers had activities where the student was required to perform a passage perfectly three or five times in a row before moving on, and the teachers would hold the students to this without fail. A common refrain from the teacher was, “Should I count that [as correct]?”

While experienced teachers approach talented and less proficient students similarly, the choice of repertoire can change according to how the student is perceived. Elizabeth noted,

Most of my, I would say the average piano students, I use Faber (Piano Adventures, 1998). But for the kids that I think are really going to do something, I think Music Tree (Clark, Goss, & Holland, 2000) is pedagogically excellent, and it’s more challenging; it gets harder...I think a lot of kids, if they’re not talented, they become frustrated with Music Tree, because it’s more difficult (Individual Interview, p. 11, 2/24/04).

This comment seems to support Cotton’s (1989) assertion that low achievers are frequently offered less exciting instruction.

These teachers typically keep personal and detailed records of their students, monitoring their progress. It was noted that when experienced teachers were asked on the Instructional Survey to describe the students to be videotaped, they were much more thorough. Where a novice teacher would provide two or three sentences, the experienced teacher would fill the page provided. Nancy actually attached additional pages to provide a comprehensive, detailed background on her two students.

Experienced teachers were quick to identify the problem in a student's performance and worked definitively and decisively to fix the problem. These teachers were typically systematic in presenting a new piece or concept, often going through several smaller steps with the student first, to build up to the final goal. Nancy even mentioned this in her interview: "I think a sign of good teaching is knowing how to break those steps down and when you need to break them down, and I keep working on that. That's something I continually ask myself as I'm teaching" (Individual Interview, p. 7, 4/23/04).

These teachers also tried to assist the student in learning how to learn, in order to make the student responsible for his/her own progress. Phrases such as "If you were doing this at home right now, what would you need to do?" and "I'm only with you one hour a week; the rest of the time you are alone with the music." were often heard in the lessons. One teacher frequently asked the students to give a "self-report" before playing a piece, to describe the condition they felt the piece was in and to identify any problems.

Novice Teachers

With the exception of one teacher, the pace of each lesson was considerably slower compared to that of the experienced teachers. There was often dead time or time

off task in these lessons. These teachers rarely left their chair beside the piano and almost never played along with their students. Some of the teachers frequently played for their students, but when they did, they would typically reach over, often with only one hand, to give the student an incomplete and inaccurate aural image of the passage. Novice teachers also demonstrated more for their talented students than for their less proficient students. Two of these teachers were considerably less engaged in their lessons, and exhibited much less energy and enthusiasm than the experienced teachers. The other two were more involved in their lessons.

The student's posture and hand position did not appear to be important to these teachers. With one exception, novice teachers never addressed the student's posture or hand position in any of the lessons videotaped, and students were allowed to play each week with incorrect hand position (usually the wrists were too low) and incorrect posture (usually the bench was the wrong height). One possible explanation is that these teachers were uncomfortable addressing the physical aspect of playing piano or unaware of the importance of this area.

As one might expect, the novice teachers were more predictable in the format of their lessons. In these lessons, the student typically performed the first assigned piece in its entirety. The teacher then returned to the beginning to discuss the piece and the performance. The next piece in the book was assigned, and the student played through the second assigned piece in its entirety. This pattern continued until the lesson concluded, usually with the teacher reviewing the student's theory book. Whereas an experienced teacher might begin the lesson with technical activities, have the student start in the middle of a piece, create exercises to assist the student in understanding a concept

or in acquiring a skill, or simply involve the student in a greater variety of activities, the novice teachers almost never varied from the pattern mentioned above. Susan even commented in the interview, “Theory, I hate to say, but it’s usually like at the very end of the lesson if we have time...I would love to work on it more and more, but when they’re there for piano lessons, that’s your main goal, is piano” (Individual Interview, p. 6-7, 3/10/04).

Novice teachers were also less creative and less descriptive in defining terms or in making a point. For example, novice teachers simply talked about dynamics in terms of the student playing too loud or too soft, whereas by contrast an experienced teacher told a student who was playing too loud, “Don’t shout at me!” Where a novice teacher told a student to play more legato, an experienced teacher told her student to use a “Neanderthal nail drag.”

To the researcher’s surprise, one novice teacher decided the week before the recital which piece her students would perform. Other novice teachers made preparations a few weeks in advance, but none of them prepared their students for performance as early or as thoroughly as the experienced teachers, and, in general, did not exhibit the same type of long-term planning.

The novice teachers also set high standards for their students. They typically insisted that the student “get it right” and often stayed with the problem until the goal was accomplished. As with experienced teachers, novice teachers were quick to identify the problem in a student’s performance. However, they were not necessarily as adept at solving the problem. This would obviously be due in part to their fewer years of experience; they have not yet accumulated “a large bag of tricks” (i.e. teaching

strategies), as Rachel put it. One observer commented how she watched a student grow more and more frustrated as the novice teacher was unable to help the student solve a particular problem, but simply kept repeating, “Try it again.”

While Helper’s (1986) description of applied lessons as “teacher talks – student plays” is true for most teachers, this observation was very pronounced with the novice teachers. Although they often had excellent observations, it was found that novice teachers generally told their students many things all at one time without giving the students an opportunity to actually do or experience them. In one instance, a student played through a piece one time at the beginning of the lesson and did not touch the piano again for the next 12 minutes (in a 30-minute lesson) while the teacher talked.

Less-Proficient Students vs. Talented Students

With each pair of students, the student selected by the teacher as the talented student was more energetic, more animated, more personable, and more interactive in the lessons. The less-proficient student was consistently quieter, much more passive, and in some cases, difficult to keep on task for the 30-minute lesson. They often looked bored, yawned, and engaged in less “small talk” in the lesson. While this difference in personality was noted with all eight teachers, it was much more pronounced with the novice teachers’ students. It was also observed that for six of the eight teachers, the student selected as the talented student played at a more advanced level than the less proficient student. The researcher questions whether the teachers are equating talent with level of proficiency.

Four of the eight less proficient students made virtually no progress by the end of the observations. After four lessons, they were either still working on the same problem

spots with the same pieces (no change from week to week), or in three of the cases, the teacher had simply moved on to other pieces.

Both groups of teachers asked the students questions, and both groups of teachers – novice more so than experienced – typically ended up giving the answers to the less proficient students. This may be due in part to the fact that the talented students were more talkative. The less proficient students would either not respond, take much longer to formulate a response, guess if they did not know, or respond with a completely different idea. (In one instance, a novice teacher asked the less proficient student to name the notes in a measure. His response: “Did you see the basketball game last night?”) The teachers’ reactions were to limit the number of questions to these students, since giving students answers enables the teacher to maintain control and pace of the lesson. This finding is in agreement with both Cotton (1989) and Good (1981, 1983) who found that teachers call on low achievers less often and wait a shorter time for them to respond than they do for high achievers. It was also observed that less proficient students need more attempts than the talented students to achieve the goal set by the teacher. They typically did reach the goal, as long as the teacher remained patient to allow the student enough attempts.

Summary

The findings of this study revealed many similarities as well as distinct differences between experienced and novice teachers. All of the teachers enjoyed teaching, were self-reflective, analyzed their own teaching, and expressed a sincere desire to improve. These teachers also agreed on several student-independent and student-dependent characteristics that influenced their perception of students, including talent,

parent/home environment, practice habits, and attitude. In addition, both novice and experienced teachers listed many physical, cognitive, and behavioral characteristics that described their talented and less proficient students.

While all agreed on the importance of specific teaching strategies, these strategies were not always exhibited in their teaching. The teaching strategies employed by novice teachers were typically influenced by method books; strategies employed by experienced teachers were typically influenced by their philosophies of teaching and by specific goals they had for their students. It was observed that novice teachers generally lack concrete goals for students.

Both teacher groups set high standards for their students, but it was the experienced teachers who typically achieved results in the lesson. These teachers' lessons also had a faster pace and emphasized posture and hand position.

Both groups also mentioned the parent as key to a student's success or failure in piano. Other reasons given for success or failure corresponded predominately to the student-dependent characteristics, making the student responsible for his/her own success or failure in the lesson.

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION, IMPLICATIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

In this study, the researcher utilized multiple sources to investigate the perceptions and expectations of novice and experienced piano teachers with both talented and less proficient students. It was conjectured that specific student characteristics affecting teachers' perceptions could be identified and that the resulting teacher expectations and behaviors would vary with talented and less proficient students. Results for the initial hypotheses are summarized first, followed by a general discussion of the findings with its implications. This chapter then concludes with recommendations for further research.

Hypothesis 1

Statement: There are specific, identifiable factors, characteristics, and/or student behaviors that can positively or negatively influence the teacher's perception of the student.

Findings: A teacher's perception of a student is positively or negatively influenced by a variety of identifiable factors, student characteristics, and behaviors. The researcher identified and categorized them as 10 student-independent characteristics and 16 student-dependent characteristics. In addition, 42 specific characteristics of talented students, and 34 characteristics of less proficient students were also identified. It was found that the majority of these specific characteristics identified are student-dependent;

in other words, the student ultimately has the ability to change the teacher's perception.

Attitude was found to be the strongest factor to affect a teacher's perception of a student.

Hypothesis 2

Statement: The teacher's perception of the student will positively or negatively affect his/her impressions of the student's quality, teaching intervention choices, expectations for student's immediate success in piano, expectations for student's long-term success, choice of literature, and style of interaction.

Findings: Teaching intervention choices were positively or negatively affected by the teacher's impression of the student. Students identified by the teacher as less proficient received differential treatment in the lesson. This instruction consisted more of review and repetition with the predominant focus being on the basics of rhythm and note reading. Students identified by the teacher as talented students typically worked more with interpretation and expression.

While the teacher's perception of the student did not appear to affect the teacher's expectations for the student's immediate success in piano – the teachers desired all of their students to be successful in the lesson – their perception did have some effect on their view of the student's long-term success. Most teachers saw the talented student “going as far as she wants to go” (Susan, Individual Interview, p. 12, 3/10/04) or “going to make it all the way” (Ann, Individual Interview, p. 10, 8/24/04). Their beliefs on the future of the less proficient student was more uncertain. In general, the teachers were much less certain that these students would still be taking piano lessons in 5-10 years. Julie even commented, “You can see that some are not going to go far” (Individual Interview, p. 5, 3/29/05). Only one teacher, Nancy, refused to speculate. “I’m at the no

crystal ball stage and really can't even answer the question; I just don't know" (Individual Interview, p. 19, 4/23/04).

There was no clear difference in the choice of literature. All teachers primarily used various method books, but no books were favored for talented students over less proficient students, with the exception of Elizabeth: she prefers Music Tree (Clark, Goss, & Holland, 2000) for talented students, as she finds it to be pedagogically excellent and more challenging. Talented students, however, were given more pieces and a greater variety of pieces, as well as more performance opportunities.

While the teacher's style of interaction was affected by their perception of the student, leading to the use of different teaching strategies, the interaction between teacher and student was primarily affected by the different personalities of the talented and less proficient students. The talented students were much more energetic, more animated, and more interactive in the lessons than the less proficient students. This contrast in student behavior led some teachers to become more animated when teaching the talented student and more subdued when working with their less proficient student.

Hypothesis 3

Statement: Both novice and experienced teachers' behavior will vary depending on the student (talented vs. less proficient).

Findings: The teachers' general behavior – informal interactions before or after the lesson, their use of praise or criticism, mannerisms during the lesson – did not noticeably change from one student to the other. However, three novice teachers and two experienced teachers did exhibit at times slightly less patience when working with their less proficient student.

Hypothesis 4

Statement: Both novice and experienced teachers will have higher expectations for their more talented students than they will for their less talented students.

Findings: While most teachers had reasonable expectations for all their students, both teacher groups did set higher expectations for their talented students. Several teachers mentioned this directly in the interview. Susan commented, “Someone who is not as proficient in piano...I’m kind of like, ‘well, okay, let’s do the notes.’ Whereas, someone who’s more talented, ‘well, why don’t you have the notes?’” (Individual Interview, p. 8, 3/10/04). Jeff related a discussion with a talented student where he explained to him, “I may not require you to do this, but I still expect you to do it...I’m not going to tell you to go do this, but it’s something at your level I expect you to do” (Individual Interview, p. 8, 11/2/04). This was observed with the experienced teachers as well. Ann said, “I tend to expect the better students to think for themselves” (Individual Interview, p. 8, 8/24/04). Nancy addressed this when discussing her less proficient students. “I might just be tired of a student coming unprepared week after week, and in my own mind, I’m going, ‘oh, here we go again,’ and I might just expect less” (Individual Interview, p.13, 4/23/04).

Hypothesis 5

Statement: There will be a general uniformity in the teaching strategies employed by novice teachers, but a greater discrepancy in the teaching strategies employed by these teachers with their less talented students as compared to their more talented students.

Findings: There was a general agreement among novice teachers in the teaching strategies employed in their lessons. Review and repetition, along with a focus on the

basics of note reading and rhythm, were the dominant teaching strategies in these lessons. There was also uniformity (and predictability) in the format of these lessons, with hardly any variance from week to week. A greater discrepancy in the teaching strategies employed by these teachers with their less talented students as compared to their more talented students was not observed in the lessons.

Hypothesis 6

Statement: There will be a wider variety of teaching strategies employed by experienced teachers, but more uniformity in the teaching strategies employed by these teachers with their less talented students as compared to their more talented students

Findings: Experienced teachers did exhibit a wider variety of teaching strategies in their lessons and discussed these in the interviews as well. An overall faster pace to these lessons allowed the teachers to cover more activities, which provided more opportunities for various teaching strategies. These teachers did in fact employ a greater variety of teaching strategies with their talented students as compared to their less talented students, but this difference was not significant.

Hypothesis 7

Statement: Novice teachers, in general, will not have concrete or tangible long-term goals for their students. Experienced teachers, on the other hand, will have such goals for their students.

Findings: This hypothesis was supported by the research. Throughout the interviews and lesson observations, the novice teachers generally did not exhibit any long-term planning for their students. Some of these teachers would discuss with their students their involvement in a future recital or festival, but were still deciding on the

repertoire only a few weeks before the performance. In her interview, Susan admitted, “I don’t think there are any set goals that I have. It’s just, I go lesson by lesson, what needs to be done that week” (Individual Interview, p. 3, 3/10/04).

By contrast, experienced teachers did have specific goals for each student and were able to articulate these to the researcher. These teachers would also frequently plan out the year in advance with the student (to finish a particular method book by a certain date, to learn the technique or theory requirements for a particular festival, to participate in a piano duet recital, etc.).

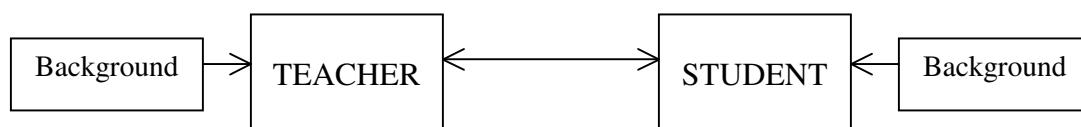
Discussion

Of the initial 24 categories that were formed from the coding process, 16 described or comprised the teacher, while 7 categories encompassed the student in our traditional one-on-one instructional model (see figure 1). The exchange of ideas, questions, goals, attitudes, etc. works both ways, and is represented by the two arrows. Each person comes into the lesson with his/her own conceptions and preconceptions of teaching or learning, knowledge of self, knowledge of music, and emotional state (Kennell, 1989). This is represented in Figure 1 as “background.”

A significant finding of this study was the importance of the parent in the applied piano lesson. The role of the parent permeated many of the categories, from teachers’

Figure 1

Teacher-Student Relationship

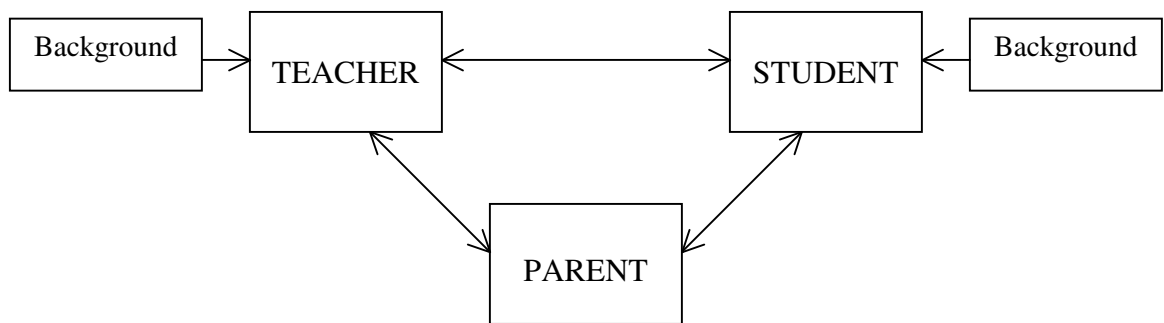


descriptions of both talented students and less proficient students to reasons why students succeed or fail; all of the teachers at some point discussed the importance of the parent in the success of the child's musical education. As Jeff commented, "I think the most important thing that has played a role in success, may it be large success or small success but success in general, has been parents" (Individual Interview, p. 9, 11/2/04).

Given the importance of the parent, the traditional applied lesson consisting of teacher-student might better be represented by a triangular relationship including the parent (see Figure 2). Nancy expressed this triangular relationship when she commented, "My job is to teach them; their job is to [practice]; the parent's job is to make them do that" (Individual Interview, p. 4, 4/23/04).

Figure 2

Teacher-Student-Parent Relationship

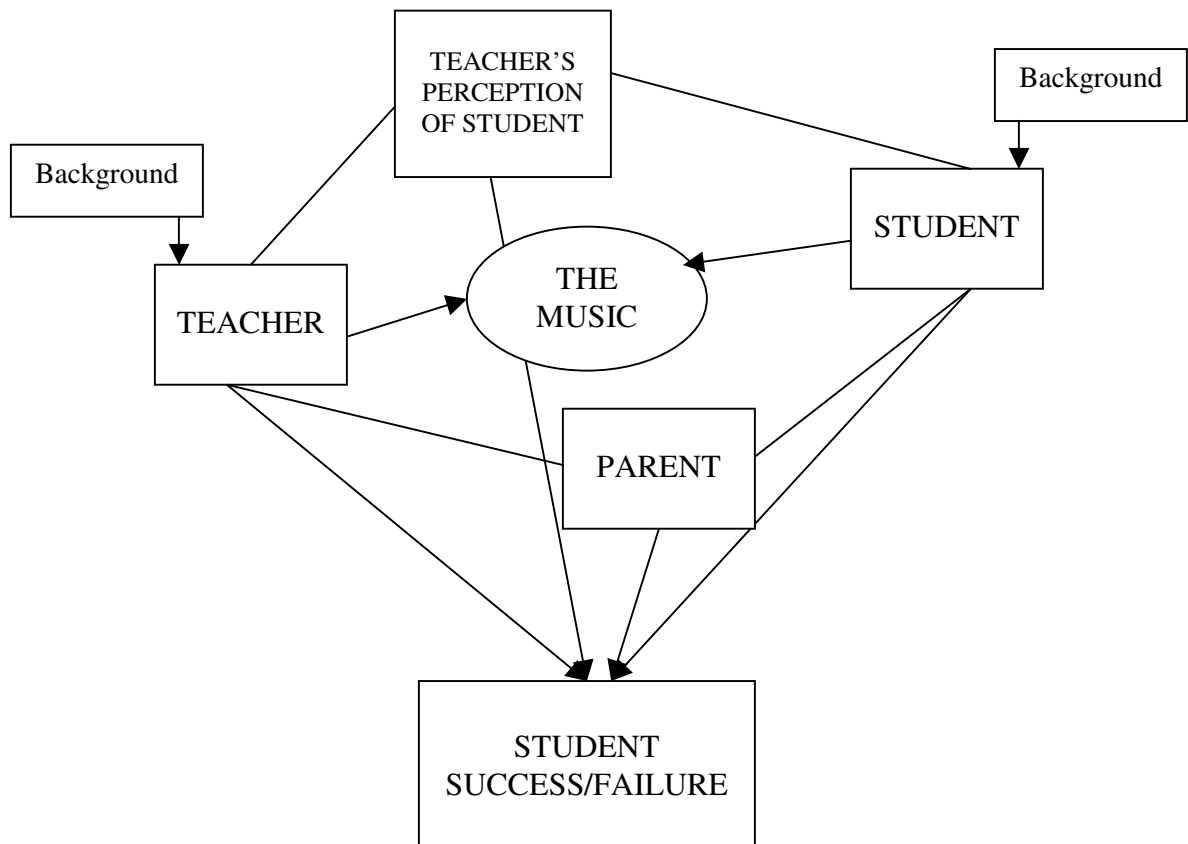


Because the common thread between the many categories developed from the interviews, and in turn, the ultimate concern of the teacher in general, is the success or failure of the student, this concept became the central phenomenon. The end result of all

teaching should be to produce successful students. The teacher's perception of the student is also the link between the teacher and the student, since the teacher's response to the student, their choice of teaching strategies, or scaffolding techniques, is dependent upon how they perceive the student or the musical problem at hand. In other words, there are four factors affecting the student's success or failure: the teacher, the student, the parent, and the interactions/perceptions between the student and the teacher (see Figure 3).

Figure 3

Factors Affecting Student Success or Failure



Implications

While a student's physical and cognitive characteristics play a role in determining a teacher's perception of that student, the student's behavioral characteristics, and in particular his/her attitude, play a predominant role in the teacher labeling that student as either "talented" or "less proficient." Those identified as talented students had an attitude that matched the teachers' philosophy, namely that they enjoy the music and the lessons: the student's attitude is aligned with what is important to the teacher. This connection between the teacher's expectations (as determined by what is important to them) and the student's attitude leads to a "talented student" and general success in the lessons. Student failure, then, can be viewed as a disjunction of teacher expectations and student attributes.

While the formation of expectations is based in part upon the teachers' perceptions of students, it is the resulting teacher interactions that will ultimately influence a child's success or failure in the lessons. As Goldenberg (1992) noted, expectations do matter, but actions resulting from those expectations are equally important. As teachers revealed in the interviews, those students labeled by the teacher as talented do in fact receive preferential instruction. Talented students cover more details and more concepts, as well as more advanced concepts. They receive the benefit of a greater variety of scaffolding strategies and more meaningful interaction with the teacher. Ann said, "I ask them more questions, and I'll ask their opinion on things" (Individual Interview, p. 8, 8/24/04). These students work more with interpretation and expression, moving beyond simply reading the notes, and they are given more opportunities for performance. Even the teachers are more actively involved in these

lessons. Elizabeth noted in her lessons with talented students, “I jump and dance and scream; I make them get up and dance with me” (Individual Interview, p. 5, 2/24/04).

Less proficient students, however, spend more time in their lessons on the basics of rhythm and note reading. Review and repetition are the predominant teaching strategies, and the lessons typically move at a slower pace. The student talks less, and the teacher asks fewer questions. As was noted by Stanovich (1986) and Cotton (1989), the less proficient students in this study received less exciting instruction, fewer opportunities to learn new material or new concepts, less emphasis on meaning and conceptualization, and more rote drill and repetition. These teaching strategies lead to unrewarding musical experiences, which can cause the student to invest less interest and involvement, and in turn further delay his/her development. The teacher’s response is to provide even more review and repetition and fewer opportunities to learn new material or concepts, which only exacerbates the downward spiral towards a lack of motivation and student failure.

The talented students, however, find their lessons to be enjoyable and rewarding. This positive musical experience motivates them to practice more and, as a result, receive more stimulating instruction at subsequent lessons; this continues to create rewarding musical experiences and further develops their musical abilities.

There is some evidence suggesting that the performance of less proficient students improves when they begin to tackle more challenging pieces, when the lesson format is altered to include a greater variety of activities, or when the teacher employs more variety in their teaching interactions. While any one of these can be a powerful tool to increase both teacher and student performance, setting unrealistic expectations only leads to frustration by both the student and the teacher.

One important key, as observed in these lessons, is the choice of literature. The most interested and engaged a particular less proficient student ever became in her lessons was when she was allowed to play “Ode to Joy,” a piece that had not been assigned by the teacher, but had been found by the student in another book. In dealing with an unmotivated student who never practices and has disengaged parents, the teacher should re-evaluate his/her goal or agenda for that student. Perhaps the goal should not be to teach music or piano in the general sense, but to simply teach one piece: find the piece of music that will truly motivate the student and get the student to achieve some measure of success in the 30-minute lesson – the only time all week that they are at the piano.

Stanovich (1986) noted that students who enjoy reading will read more, which, in turn, continues to improve their reading ability. This same principle applies to piano: the upward spiral of success increases motivation, which leads to greater success and greater motivation. Elizabeth commented, “If a kid finds a piece of music, even if it’s too difficult, they’re really inspired. I let them work on it, and it seems that they grow by leaps and bounds. If they really want to play something and they’ll work at it, that’s our deal: ‘okay, then if you’re going to work at it, you’re going to do what I say!’” (Individual Interview, p. 3, 2/24/04). With the student mentioned above, success in the lesson may eventually motivate her to continue this success on her own at home (i.e., she will begin to practice at home.)

Another key, also observed in these lessons, was asking questions. When discussing her talented students, Ann mentioned, “I ask them more questions, and I’ll ask their opinion on things” (Individual Interview, p. 8, 8/24/04). The success and the benefits of this teaching technique, however, should be applied with all students. Asking

questions can force the student to think for him/herself and actively engages the student in the lesson. Ann noted, “[The student is] going to remember things if they discovered it better than if the teacher said it” (Individual Interview, p. 9, 8/24/04).

Steven related a story about how he was able to successfully draw a less proficient student into the lesson simply by asking him if he knew how a piano worked. For the first time, the lesson had meaning for the student, as the teacher had piqued his interest and curiosity, simply by discussing the inner mechanism of the piano. By finding out what interests the student and using that to form a connection, an unmotivated student can be drawn into the lessons. “[That is] the beauty of one-on-one [instruction]. I ask them a lot, ‘how do you feel about that? Does that feel easy?’” (Nancy, Individual Interview, p. 9, 4/23/04). The simple teaching interaction of asking the right questions can effectively interrupt a downward spiral leading to student failure and reaffirm to the student the meaning and purpose of the activity or lesson.

Recommendations for Further Research

Based on the findings presented in this study, several recommendations can be made for further research. To begin with, the students involved in this study were all beginning-level students. While it would be difficult to identify novice teachers with advanced students, further research should be conducted to determine if the findings presented here are applicable to intermediate and advanced students as well. While a teachers’ description of their talented and less proficient students may not change, a comparison of their teaching strategies employed with older, more advanced students would be of significant interest. As a small number of participants were used in this

study in order to perform in-depth analysis, further studies could include a larger number of participants in order to gather more generalized information.

This study focused only on the teacher: their perceptions of students and the factors they believe influence a student's success. Further research should investigate the other two sides of the triangle: the student and the parent. Both the student's and the parent's perceptions of the teacher as well as their own roles in the applied music paradigm could be analyzed to determine their thoughts and beliefs about what constitutes a talented student or what factors lead to student success in the lesson. These perceptions could also be compared to the teacher's viewpoint, the findings in this study, to gain a more complete picture of the complex interactions which take place in the applied lesson.

One particular observation from this study invites further investigation. It was noted that, in general, the talented students chosen for videotaping by the novice teachers played at a higher level (i.e., more difficult music) than the less proficient students. With the experienced teachers, the opposite was true: the students they chose as talented were either younger or were playing at a more elementary level. This would imply that novice teachers more readily equate talent with level of achievement, but experienced teachers base their decision more on potential. A study designed specifically to investigate these varying definitions of talent would be of significant interest.

Similarly, a study comparing talent with a student's hand position and posture might also be of value. As was previously noted, the researcher observed in this study that students labeled by the teacher as talented typically had better hand position and posture at the piano when compared to students labeled as less proficient. If both

students began lessons with the same teacher, does a good, or correct, hand position come more naturally to one student than the other? If a better hand position would make playing the piano significantly easier, what impact would this have on the student's ultimate success in the lessons? Could a teacher "change" a less proficient student into a talented student by focusing on and perfecting a student's hand position? These questions could be addressed by such a study.

Summary

The purpose of this study was to determine how novice and experienced piano teachers' perceptions and expectations of their students influenced their teaching. More specifically, this study attempted to identify the student characteristics that influence a teacher's perception, the role these perceptions have on the teacher's formation of expectations, and the resulting teacher interactions employed in the lesson. Findings of this study suggest that teachers' perceptions of students and the resulting formation of expectations for those students are more complex than has been indicated by previous research.

There are numerous student characteristics which influence the teacher's perception, and in turn, their expectations for a student. These characteristics include physical, cognitive, and behavioral characteristics, which can be classified as either student-independent – naturally occurring characteristics outside the control or power of the student (those characteristics the student cannot change) or student-dependent – characteristics or learned behaviors that are within the control or power of the student to change, modify, or develop. Of the 76 behaviors identified, the student's attitude was found to be of greatest significance. Teacher's perceptions and expectations are also

affected by their own background, their beliefs, and the goals set for themselves and their students.

These perceptions and the resulting expectations have a direct impact on the teacher's behavior in the lesson: the teaching strategies employed by both novice and experienced teachers vary with their perception of the student as either talented or less proficient. The disparate teacher interactions in turn directly affect the student's success or failure in the piano lesson. In addition to the teacher's perception and the student's attitude, the role of the parent was also established as an important factor determining the student's success or failure in the applied piano lesson.

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APPENDIX A

INSTRUCTIONAL SURVEY

Instructional Survey

Please provide the following information. Write "N/A" if a particular question does not apply to your situation. All information submitted will be kept completely confidential.

Name _____ Age _____

Address _____

Home phone _____ Work phone _____

E-mail _____

1. Please indicate your highest level of music education: (circle one)

- a) High School
- b) Some college study
- c) Bachelors degree
- d) Some graduate study
- e) Master's degree
- f) Doctoral degree

2. How many years have you taught piano?

3. Where do you primarily teach piano? (circle one)

- a) In your home
- b) In a church or music store
- c) In a non-collegiate/community arts school
- d) In an institution of higher learning
- e) Other _____

4. Which of the following do you use in your studio: (circle all that apply)

- a) Traditional/acoustic piano
- b) Digital/Electronic keyboard
- c) Computer and/or instructional software

5. How many private students do you teach weekly?

- a) Preschool _____
- b) Elementary _____
- c) Jr./Middle school _____
- d) High School _____
- e) Adult (18 to 60) _____
- f) Adult (over 60) _____
- Total: _____

6. How many hours do you typically teach private lessons per week? _____

7. How many minutes is your typical lesson? _____

8. Which piano methods do you use most often? (please list)

9. Which anthologies do you use most often? (please list)

For this study, a beginning student is defined as any student between the ages of 7 and 13 who has had less than 4 years of piano instruction.

10. How important is each of the following topics for beginning students? Circle one choice for each topic. 5=very important, 1=irrelevant

Traditional performance repertoire	5 4 3 2 1	Reading scores	5 4 3 2 1
Pieces composed for teaching	5 4 3 2 1	Style period characteristics	5 4 3 2 1
Social music (folk, pop, religious)	5 4 3 2 1	Basic chord progressions	5 4 3 2 1
Scales/arpeggios/exercises	5 4 3 2 1	Reading chord symbols	5 4 3 2 1
Memorization	5 4 3 2 1	Basic structure analysis	5 4 3 2 1
Transposition	5 4 3 2 1	Ear training	5 4 3 2 1
Improvisation	5 4 3 2 1	Singing experiences	5 4 3 2 1
Sight reading	5 4 3 2 1	Composition/arranging	5 4 3 2 1
Harmonizing a melody	5 4 3 2 1	Performing with other musicians	5 4 3 2 1

11. How often do you teach each of the following topics to beginning students? Circle one choice for each topic. 5=every lesson, 1=never

Traditional performance repertoire	5 4 3 2 1	Reading scores	5 4 3 2 1
Pieces composed for teaching	5 4 3 2 1	Style period characteristics	5 4 3 2 1
Social music (folk, pop, religious)	5 4 3 2 1	Basic chord progressions	5 4 3 2 1
Scales/arpeggios/exercises	5 4 3 2 1	Reading chord symbols	5 4 3 2 1
Memorization	5 4 3 2 1	Basic structure analysis	5 4 3 2 1
Transposition	5 4 3 2 1	Ear training	5 4 3 2 1
Improvisation	5 4 3 2 1	Singing experiences	5 4 3 2 1
Sight reading	5 4 3 2 1	Composition/arranging	5 4 3 2 1
Harmonizing a melody	5 4 3 2 1	Performing with other musicians	5 4 3 2 1

12. What is the proficiency of your average beginning students at each of these skills? Circle one choice for each topic. 5=excellent, 1=incapable

Traditional performance repertoire	5 4 3 2 1	Reading scores	5 4 3 2 1
Pieces composed for teaching	5 4 3 2 1	Style period characteristics	5 4 3 2 1
Social music (folk, pop, religious)	5 4 3 2 1	Basic chord progressions	5 4 3 2 1
Scales/arpeggios/exercises	5 4 3 2 1	Reading chord symbols	5 4 3 2 1
Memorization	5 4 3 2 1	Basic structure analysis	5 4 3 2 1
Transposition	5 4 3 2 1	Ear training	5 4 3 2 1
Improvisation	5 4 3 2 1	Singing experiences	5 4 3 2 1
Sight reading	5 4 3 2 1	Composition/arranging	5 4 3 2 1
Harmonizing a melody	5 4 3 2 1	Performing with other musicians	5 4 3 2 1

13. How important or valuable are the following student/teacher behaviors in the private lesson? Circle one choice for each behavior.
5=very important, 1=irrelevant
- a) The teacher verbally highlights a specific item in the music:
5 4 3 2 1
 - b) The teacher physically highlights (points to, etc.) a specific item in the music:
5 4 3 2 1
 - c) The teacher writes in the score; marks a specific item in the music:
5 4 3 2 1
 - d) The teacher questions the student; asks the student to identify a specific item in the music:
5 4 3 2 1
 - e) The student repeats a specific section of a piece for the teacher:
5 4 3 2 1
 - f) The student plays hands separately for the teacher:
5 4 3 2 1
 - g) The student plays at a slower tempo for the teacher:
5 4 3 2 1
 - h) The student sings, but does not play, for the teacher:
5 4 3 2 1
 - i) The student taps, claps, etc. the rhythm for the teacher:
5 4 3 2 1
 - j) The student uses physical motions, gestures, etc., in the lesson, but does not play:
5 4 3 2 1
 - k) The student names notes (verbally) for the teacher:
5 4 3 2 1
 - l) The teacher plays for the student:
5 4 3 2 1
 - m) The teacher models aurally (sings, hums, etc.):
5 4 3 2 1

- n) The teacher gestures, or uses other physical motions:
5 4 3 2 1
- o) The teacher uses other source for model (recording, etc.):
5 4 3 2 1
- p) The teacher plays accompaniment part with student (or uses MIDI disks and/or other prerecorded or electronic accompaniments):
5 4 3 2 1
- q) The teacher corrects technique/posture (physically touches student, moves student's hands, etc.):
5 4 3 2 1
- r) The student experiments, creates at the keyboard (improvisatory activities):
5 4 3 2 1
- s) The student is off the bench or away from the keyboard engaged in other activities (doing written work in a theory book or at a chalkboard; moving to the beat, etc.):
5 4 3 2 1
- t) The teacher asks challenging questions that require students to do more than simply recall information:
5 4 3 2 1
- u) The teacher allows the student enough time to think over a question before assisting the student or providing the answer:
5 4 3 2 1
- v) The teacher provides specific reasons for praising the student's learning performance:
5 4 3 2 1
- w) The teacher is courteous and friendly in interactions with student(s):
5 4 3 2 1
- x) The teacher continually modifies his/her expectations for each student depending on their previous success or failure in the lessons:
5 4 3 2 1

14. Please describe below the two students you have selected for me to videotape. How long have you known each student? How do these students compare to your other students? What are their strengths and/or weaknesses?

Thank you for your time! Please return this questionnaire in the enclosed envelope to:

Bill Budai
9139 Hardwood Ct.
Indianapolis, IN 46250

E-mail: wbudai@iupui.edu

APPENDIX B

PARTICIPANT LETTER

General Topics for the Interview

[To be given to the participant before the first interview]

For this interview, I am interested in *your views and opinions* concerning teacher/student interactions and teacher perception of students. I would like to ask you some questions concerning the following areas:

- Your philosophy of teaching
- Goals you have for your students and for yourself
- General descriptions of your students
- Teaching strategies used with various types of students
- Why some students succeed or fail in piano

During the interview, please feel free to answer my questions any way you desire.

I am not looking for “right” answers, only your *opinions* in these areas. You are also free to not answer any question(s) if you choose, for any reason.

Thank-you for your time and assistance!

Bill Budai

9139 Hardwood Ct.
Indianapolis, IN 46250
Phone: (317) 849-8266
E-mail: wbudai@iupui.edu

APPENDIX C

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Interview Questions

- 1 Tell me a little about yourself; your background and teaching experience.
- 2 Describe your philosophy of teaching. What is important in your teaching?
- 3 What general goals do you have for your students? Are these goals for all your students?
- 4 What goals do you have for yourself?
- 5 Describe your best students. What makes them your best students? (What behaviors or other factors contribute?) Have they always been your best students?
- 6 Describe your less proficient students. What makes them less proficient? (behaviors, other factors, etc.) Have they always been less proficient?
- 7 Do your expectations change at all when teaching less proficient students? How?
- 8 Describe your ideal student. (Do any of your best students fit this description?)
- 9 What makes a good/great teacher? (ask for specific words)
- 10 What is generally your first priority when working with students? Is there a hierarchy of ideas or concepts? What types of things do you do?
- 11 How do you decide what to “fix” in a lesson? How do you go about doing this?
- 12 How do you approach teaching your best students? What are some of the strategies or teaching techniques you use only with your better students?

- 13 How do you approach teaching your less proficient students? What are some of the strategies or teaching techniques you use only with these students?
- 14 What would you say is the single most important reason why some students succeed in piano? What can teachers do to encourage this?
- 15 What would you say is the single most important reason why some students fail in piano? What can teachers do to prevent this?
- 16 Have you ever had a student who you thought wouldn't "make it" (succeed) in piano? What did you do? Did it work?
- 17 Take your newest student, the one you've known for the least amount of time. How successful do you think he/she will be? Why is that?
- 18 Take the student you've known for the longest amount of time. Has this student met your expectations? How?
- 19 Many teachers dread some students' lessons. Why is that?
- 20 Let's talk about the students I'm going to observe. What is the first thing that comes to mind when ____ walks through the door for his/her lesson?
- 21 Where would you place ____ on this "continuum" of less proficient versus highly proficient or talented students?
- 22 What are your expectations for this student? On what do you base these expectations?
- 23 How successful do you feel ____ will become with piano in the future?
- 24 Has your perception of ____ changed over the time you've taught him/her? In what ways?
- 25 Do you have any other thoughts on teacher's perceptions and how they influence your teaching or your students?

APPENDIX D

VIDEOTAPE OBSERVATION FORM

Videotape Observation Form

Tape Number: _____

Observer: _____

Time Begin	Time End	Interaction	Comments

APPENDIX E

VIDEOTAPE CODING SHEETS

Videotape Coding Sheets

FORM 1 – Introducing lessons, activities, assignments

USE: When the teacher is introducing or beginning the lesson, a new activity, or making an assignment.

PURPOSE: To determine how the teacher views the lesson. (e.g., is it worthwhile and enjoyable?)

DIRECTIONS: Observe teacher behavior when introducing activities and making assignments. For each codable instance observed, record the numbers (consecutively) of each category applicable to the teacher's behavior. Record also the time (videotape counter) at which the behavior occurs.

BEHAVIOR CATEGORIES:

CODES: TIME:

1.	Gushes, gives overdramatic buildup	1.	_____	_____
2.	Predicts student will enjoy activity	2.	_____	_____
3.	Mentions information or skills student will learn	3.	_____	_____
4.	Makes no attempt to motivate; starts right into activity	4.	_____	_____
5.	Apologizes or expresses sympathy ("Sorry, but you have to...")	5.	_____	_____
6.	Bribes, promises external reward for good attention/work	6.	_____	_____
7.	Threatens punishment or penalty for poor work	7.	_____	_____
8.	Presents the activity itself as a penalty or punishment	8.	_____	_____
9.	Other (specify)	9.	_____	_____
NOTES:		10.	_____	_____
		11.	_____	_____
		12.	_____	_____
		13.	_____	_____
		14.	_____	_____
		15.	_____	_____
		16.	_____	_____
		17.	_____	_____
		18.	_____	_____
		19.	_____	_____
		20.	_____	_____

FORM 2 – Evaluations after lessons and activities

USE: When the teacher ends any activity or the lesson

PURPOSE: To determine whether the teacher stresses learning or compliance in making evaluations.

DIRECTIONS: When the teacher ends an activity or the lesson, code any summary evaluations he or she makes about the student's performance during the activity. Record also the time (videotape counter) at which the activity occurs.

BEHAVIOR CATEGORIES:

CODES: TIME:

1.	Praises progress in specific terms; labels knowledge or skill learned	1.	_____	_____
2.	Criticizes performance or indicates weaknesses in specific terms	2.	_____	_____
3.	Praises generally poor performance (for doing well)	3.	_____	_____
4.	Criticizes generally poor performance	4.	_____	_____
5.	Ambiguous general praise ("You were very good today")	5.	_____	_____
6.	Ambiguous general criticism ("You weren't very good today")	6.	_____	_____
7.	Praises good attention or good behavior	7.	_____	_____
8.	Criticizes poor attention or misbehavior	8.	_____	_____
9.	No general evaluations of performance were made	9.	_____	_____
10.	Other (specify)	10.	_____	_____
NOTES:		11.	_____	_____
		12.	_____	_____
		13.	_____	_____
		14.	_____	_____
		15.	_____	_____
		16.	_____	_____
		17.	_____	_____
		18.	_____	_____
		19.	_____	_____
		20.	_____	_____

FORM 3 – Praise

USE: Whenever the teacher praises a student.

PURPOSE: To determine what behaviors the teacher reinforces through praise.

DIRECTIONS: Whenever the teacher praises the student, code the category that applies and record the time (videotape counter) at which the praise occurs.

BEHAVIOR CATEGORIES:

1. Perseverance or effort
2. Progress (relative to the past) toward achievement
3. Success (right answer, right note, etc.); achievement
4. Good thinking, good suggestion, good guess, nice try
5. Imagination, creativity, originality
6. Attention to detail, careful work
7. Good or compliant behavior, pays attention
8. Other (specify)

CODES: TIME:

NOTES:

1.	_____	_____
2.	_____	_____
3.	_____	_____
4.	_____	_____
5.	_____	_____
6.	_____	_____
7.	_____	_____
8.	_____	_____
9.	_____	_____
10.	_____	_____
11.	_____	_____
12.	_____	_____
13.	_____	_____
14.	_____	_____
15.	_____	_____
16.	_____	_____
17.	_____	_____
18.	_____	_____
19.	_____	_____
20.	_____	_____

FORM 4 – Criticism

USE: Whenever the teacher criticizes a student.

PURPOSE: To determine what behaviors the teacher singles out for criticism.

DIRECTIONS: Whenever the teacher criticizes the student, code the category that applies as well at the time (videotape counter) at which the behavior occurs.

BEHAVIOR CATEGORIES:

1. Lack of effort or persistence; doesn't try; gives up easily
2. Poor progress (relative to expectations); could do better
3. Failure (can't answer, can't play, etc.); lack of achievement
4. Faulty thinking, wild guess, failure to think before responding or playing
5. Lack of originality or imagination
6. Sloppiness or carelessness
8. Misbehaves, inattentive
9. Other (specify)

CODES: TIME:

NOTES:

1.	_____	_____
2.	_____	_____
3.	_____	_____
4.	_____	_____
5.	_____	_____
6.	_____	_____
7.	_____	_____
8.	_____	_____
9.	_____	_____
10.	_____	_____
11.	_____	_____
12.	_____	_____
13.	_____	_____
14.	_____	_____
15.	_____	_____
16.	_____	_____
17.	_____	_____
18.	_____	_____
19.	_____	_____
20.	_____	_____

APPENDIX F

PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORMS

INFORMED CONSENT FORM
Piano Teachers' Expectations
William H. Budai, principal investigator

Consent Letter for Adult Participants

I would like to investigate a piano teacher's perceptions of his/her students and what relation this perception has to his/her teaching. There is a great need to understand what factors shape our perception and how we approach our students. This study, which is part of the requirements for a PhD at the University of Oklahoma, is designed to identify these factors. Your participation will help future teachers improve the quality of their teaching.

If you agree to participate in this study, you will be asked to complete an initial survey and to participate in an interview, which will last no more than 90 minutes. During the interview, I will take notes for later analysis. So that I may remember and understand all that you say, I will use a tape recorder to record the discussion. After the session, I will replay the tape and transcribe your comments. These tapes will then be stored in a locked filing cabinet.

I would also like to videotape you teaching four lessons to two different students (8 lessons total). These tapes will be reviewed by two panels of three independent observers to document the teaching strategies employed in your lessons. After viewing, these tapes will also be kept in a locked filing cabinet.

All information collected will be kept completely confidential; pseudonyms will be used for you, your students, and your location so that reports about the inquiry will not identify individuals or place names. This study will result in a dissertation at the University of Oklahoma, and the analysis may also result in published articles and presentations at professional conferences.

There are no foreseeable risks of participation in this study for you. Your participation is strictly voluntary, and you may withdraw at any time. You may also decline to participate. You will not be penalized in any way for withdrawing or declining. If at any time you have any questions or concerns about your rights as a research participant, you may contact the Institutional Review Board (IRB) at (405) 325-8110, or my advisor, Dr. Nancy Barry, at (405) 325-4146.

If you have further questions or concerns, please feel free to contact me. Please keep the attached copy of this letter for future reference. Thank you in advance for your cooperation and support.

William Budai
Doctoral Candidate, Piano Pedagogy
9139 Hardwood Ct.
Indianapolis, IN 46250
Phone: (317) 849-8266
E-mail: wbudai@iupui.edu

Please indicate whether or not you wish to participate by initialing the statements below and signing your name. Please sign both copies of this consent form. Return one copy to William Budai and keep one copy.

_____ I give my permission to be audio-taped during the interview.

_____ I give my permission to be videotaped while teaching.

I agree to participate in the above-described research project. I have read this consent form, and I understand my participation is voluntary and that I may withdraw at any time without penalty or loss of benefits.

Signature

Date

INFORMED CONSENT FORM
Piano Teachers' Expectations
William H. Budai, principal investigator

Parental Permission Letter for Student Participants

I would like to investigate a piano teacher's perceptions of his/her students and what relation this perception has to his/her teaching. There is a great need to understand what factors shape a teacher's perception and how they approach their students. This study, which is part of the requirements for a PhD at the University of Oklahoma, is designed to identify these factors. Your child's participation will help future teachers improve the quality of their teaching.

I would like to videotape four piano lessons of your child with his/her teacher. These videotapes will be reviewed by two different panels of three independent observers to document the teaching strategies employed by your teacher in these lessons. After viewing, these tapes will be erased. This project will be explained in terms that your son or daughter can understand, and your child will participate only if he or she is willing to do so. Your child will not be penalized in any way for choosing not to participate.

All information collected will be kept completely confidential; pseudonyms will be used for the teacher, the student, and the location so that reports about the inquiry will not identify individuals or place names. This study will result in a dissertation at the University of Oklahoma, and the analysis may also result in published articles and presentations at professional conferences.

There are no foreseeable risks of participation in this study for you or your child. Participation is strictly voluntary, and you may withdraw your child at any time. You and your child will not be penalized in any way for withdrawing or declining to participate. If at any time you have any questions or concerns about your child's rights as a research participant, you may contact the Institutional Review Board (IRB) at (405) 325-8110, or my advisor, Dr. Nancy Barry, at (405) 325-4146.

If you have further questions or concerns, please feel free to contact me. Please keep the attached copy of this letter for future reference. Thank you in advance for your cooperation and support.

William Budai
Doctoral Candidate, Piano Pedagogy
9139 Hardwood Ct.
Indianapolis, IN 46250
Phone: (317) 848-8066
E-mail: wbudai@iupui.edu

Please sign both copies of this consent form. Return one copy to William Budai and keep one copy.

CONSENT STATEMENT

I grant permission for my child to participate in the above-described research project. I have read this consent form, and I understand participation is voluntary and that I may withdraw my child at any time without penalty or loss of benefits. I also hereby give permission for my child to be videotaped in his/her piano lessons.

Child's name

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date

ASSENT STATEMENT
Piano Teachers' Expectations
William H. Budai, principal investigator

Assent Statement for Student Participants

(This explanation is read to the student participant by their teacher and then signed by the student.)

This person is talking with different piano teachers and watching them teach in order to better understand what we do in our lessons. He would like to videotape our lesson today and then share it with some other people to see what kinds of things I do and say.

Your parents have given their permission for him to videotape our lesson, but we want to make sure that this is something you want to do right now. If you decide you don't want him to tape the lesson, he will turn off the video camera. You will not be punished in any way if you don't want him to videotape this lesson.

Is it O.K. for him to videotape this lesson today?

Do you understand that you can ask him to stop at any time?

Signature

Date