

OPPRESSIVE EXPERIENCES IN MUSICAL INSTRUMENT LEARNING

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Abstract

This study focuses on student teachers' experiences of instrument teaching and learning from a psychoanalytical perspective. The data were collected from Finnish student teachers from the University of Jyväskylä (N=132) in 2011. They first read a short part from a book written by Juha Itkonen and were then asked to write a narrative about their own thoughts and experiences of instrument teaching and learning. The data were analysed using data-based content analysis, leaning on psychoanalytic theory.

The results show that although changes have been made in Finnish music schools' curricula, there are still many hidden elements in instrument teaching. This casts a dark shadow over the instrument students' learning. Teachers often use 'black education' methods by not giving the students any control over the programme or how to perform. Performance-centred thinking includes elements that destroy the joy, creativity and enjoyment of instrument training and practice.

Keywords: *Instrument teaching, Psychoanalytical point of view, Traumatic experiences*

Background

This article focuses on why many talented music students stop performing or stop playing an instrument after studying it for years (Garam, 2002). Why do so many music students learn virtually nothing from their studies? Tuovila (2003) explored the experiences of new music school pupils and their parents for four years and, following the longitudinal study, almost one half of the children found their studies exasperating. Also, the teachers' evaluations of the children's musical talent and advancement systematically changed for the worse as their studies progressed. What is wrong with the Finnish music school culture?

In many cases, music school and conservatory studies fail and destroy the student's interest and love of music. The reasons for this can be explored from a societal point of view and an institutional level focusing on the requirements of the institute and its curriculum, as well as at a grassroots level in terms of what happens between the teacher and the student. There has been some research into negative music

relationships and music restrictions (Kurkela, 1994; see Syrjäkoski, 2004; Juvonen, 2007, 2008b).

Risk of Art Education Becoming Poorer

The ever-continuing requirements for the acceleration of production in fields of education is one of the most important elements of being a human being, particularly those subjects, which do not produce immediate economic profit. They are pressurised and cut down and their living conditions are made almost impossible: they would rather be closed totally (Toiskallio, 2016a, 50). Toiskallio saw this phenomenon as part of Nussbaum's (2011) worldwide crisis crumbling democracy, where the way of speaking leads to a world of certain significances that aim to confirm the viability of current political and economic systems (Zizek, 2012). This is also associated with the change that has occurred over the course of time in the primary nature of praxis and action as the accomplishment has turned upside down (Arendt 1998). A human being is a unique subject, not a faceless performer who has been conceptualised and defined in a certain way (Levinas, 2003). Nussbaum (2011) is only production, a phenomenon which can be seen in the sociological development of the entire world. Lehtonen (2004, 9) critically assessed the Finnish music education system, calling it *power education*, in which the music school system has been recruiting as many children as possible at an early stage. Many pupils are encouraged to choose a career as professional musicians. The norms, demonstrations and examinations stated above create an exclusion orientation, which soon seizes the system and the selection of the most suitable and competent becomes more efficient with the progress. All the time the group gets smaller, eliminating the least skilled individuals at each stage (Lehtonen, 2004, 9). The Finnish music education system has produced a large group of internationally recognised musicians, singers, conductors, and composers, but has also left behind many variously traumatised and marginalised individuals.

The one-sidedness of the vocabulary used when speaking about education was noted more than two decades ago and a technological language started being used (Carr, 1989). Also, educational professionals have started using this economic-technological language (McMurthy, 1991) replacing *academies* with *accountable resource units* and students being referred to as *customers*. In place of profundity, originality and a high moral, ethical and skill level, came 'programme entreties' and the 'selling' of ideas, aimed at reaching the greatest number of applicants (read: customers). Many actors in the lead, administration and planning of universities and polytechnics have acquired this economic-technological discussion as the only proper way of speaking. Thus, teachers, professors and other actors who have been able to retain their imagination and visualisation feel that the educational field is an oppressive and restrictive working environment that forces people to adopt certain routines.

Imagination is seen as a well of our moral and ethical ideals, i.e., the basis of our ability to function (Rorty, 2008, 8-9). The economic-technological vocabulary contains concepts such as creativity, know-how and continuing learning, but it fundamentally refers to a unidimensional human being, which Marcuse (1964) referred to as early as the 1960s: the distortion of the human being and the ideal of a good life. Rorty (2008) noted that the greatest threat to the goodness of life is people who aim to achieve an autocratic position and the subjugation of others, imagining that they own the "only

truth". This kind of situation may take place between an instrument teacher and their pupil: certain teachers firmly believe that only they possess the right kind of know-how about teaching and learning a musical instrument, the kind of programme that must be chosen and how it should be used and interpreted. The student is not heard at all. Lehtonen (2004) speaks about a similar phenomenon 'epistemic sense of superiority', certainty of the superiority of one's own know-how. Scientific research does not support any of their ideas (Toiskallio, 1993, 2016b) but rather strives to understand that the same phenomena can be learned, understood, and explored in many different ways.

The Pressure on Music Schools and Academies to Change

Changes in the ways of action of music academies and music schools have been demanded over the last two decades. Many newspaper articles have criticised the Finnish music education system. The network of music education can be seen as a production machine that produces top-flight performers, but totally forgets the music hobbyists (Lehtonen, 2004). Music schools and conservatoires only value correctness, traumatising many of their students and branding them untalented. Changes to degree systems and curricula have been demanded and have also been made. There is a will to develop student-based and creativity-supporting ways of action. Nevertheless, it is very easy for a teacher to get into a rut of being only an indicator of mistakes. All it takes is a bad day to transform a pedagogue immersed in constructivism into the worst kind of anti-quoted maestro whose exterior has been polished with constructivism. At that time, the human being inside the student is forgotten as well as why music is taught and what targets it serves. Young teachers teach much the same way they have been taught. There is a tradition going back hundreds of years behind the pedagogic mechanism. Releasing from these teaching models towards wider student-based teaching and teacher's personality can only be achieved by becoming conscious of problems, which takes a long time. Instrument teaching has been considerably explored but not from the point of view of this research (see Baron & Henry, 2010; Davidson, 2010; Faulkner et al., 2010; Jäncke, 2011; Mol et al., 2005; Papageorgi et al., 2010; Shuter-Dyson, 2006).

Psychodynamic Starting points

According to Susanne K. Langer (1967/1982), music sounds like 'the life feels' because the profound power hidden in its non-narrative structures are true to the world of emotions in such a way that cannot be expressed in language. Kurkela (1994) has written about the psychodynamic structures of mind and powers in the study of music, teaching and performing, offering a depth-psychological context. Another important starting point is Lehtonen's (1986, 2007, 2010) view about music and psychoanalysis. This approach also comes from depth psychology. The dissertation of Lång (Psychoanalysis and its application in music research 2004) broadly addresses the same themes. Professor Hägglund (1984) wrote about the psychoanalytic concept of creativity in his article "*Creativity in light of psychoanalysis*". Also, in research on theatre and drama education, it is easy to find ideas about musical self-expression.

Psychoanalysis has been popular in research on arts and creativity. The presence of the subconscious dimension is obvious in the arts and psychoanalysis precisely explores

this part of a human being's psyche. Music, like all art, is essentially a mystery (Lång, 2004). Thus, psychoanalysis offers many opportunities for its exploration. Although we take music as a self-evident truth, we cannot thoroughly explain what it is and why people enjoy it as a hobby.

It would be easy to describe music as a sound organised by human beings, but a musical experience does not require a voice. Beethoven composed many of his compositions when he was deaf and all of us sometimes hear music playing inside our head (Lehtonen, 2004). Music making is not connected with the survival of the human species so evolutionary biology cannot be used as an explanation (Lång, 2004). Music has an enigmatic nature, and it touches something in our subconscious. The significance of music occurs in the subconscious mind. Music strives to explain the unexplainable. If we only explore what happens in the brain while playing music, something essential remains hidden (Langer, 1951, 1953, 1967).

A perspective on Creativity

Exploring of creativity could be likened to showing a beam of light to darkness. We do not get a complete picture of it. In creativity research, it is possible to focus on the creative product, artefact (behaviouristic approach) or highlight the creative processes (psychoanalytic, humanist psychologists). We can concentrate on everyday creativity, problem solving or creativity in the arts. Creativity is often seen in narrow terms and the conception strongly depends on one's own knowledge, attitudes and needs (Heikkilä, 1982, 1985, 1995). Some people focus on rationality (cognitive psychology) and others on emotional experiences (psychoanalytical) or flow experiences (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990, 1997, 2005).

Rational Creativity and Emotional Creativity

Clark (1979) presented four elements from which a synthesis forms creativity. These elements comprise thinking, emotions, sensations, and intuition. According to Clark's model, creativity can be separated as rational thinking and as a function of emotions (Heikkilä, 1985). Rational creativity is conscious problem solving while emotional creativity is activity that stems from the deeper subconscious mind. According to the perspective of emotion-based creativity, creativity is connected to emotional well-being, self-esteem, and the sense of safety of the individual. Emotional creativity is 'outside rational trying' (Heikkilä, 1985) and it cannot be stimulated by conscious efforts. In a creative process, both rational and emotional elements are always present. Music has a direct connection to emotional life and that is why research on musical creativity underlines the significance of the emotions. It is possible to approach the experience of making and experiencing music through the psychoanalytic concept of creativity, the mystery of music.

Psychoanalysis and Psychodynamics behind Creativity

From a psychoanalytic point of view, the origins of creativity are in early childhood, the early interaction between mother and child, and playing. According to psychoanalysis, music is a manifestation of the psyche's inner processes that can be perceived with the

senses (Lång, 2004; Lehtonen, 2007). A human being transforms inner experiences that cannot be articulated by words into musical communication. Psychoanalysis divides the psychic structure into three parts: id, ego, and super-ego. The id contains human instincts and subconscious issues; ego is a system of psychic processes that includes defence mechanisms, self-regulation and conscious thinking; super-ego is the voice of conscience that sets demands. The conscious activities connected to music belong to the ego's circle in which mastering, learning and skills play a key role. Music is also directly connected to the subconscious, in the area of the id. Music is also related to the super-ego that puts forward moral demands and doing things right. The super-ego includes norms, rules and ideals that have been adapted through identification from important people, parents, teachers, and peers. Society at large and culture also offer different norms to identity. The super-ego explains socialisation in a psychodynamic way. The super-ego is particularly present in music critique and music education (Rechardt, 1973, 1978; Lehtonen, 2007, 2010).

Psychoanalysis explores the opportunities for the contents of the subconscious mind to integrate with reality. It tries to make a human being conscious of the subconscious factors impacting the actions. These subconscious factors cause anxiety and activate defence mechanisms as they strive for consciousness. The defence mechanisms act as selective filters, reducing pressure on the ego by misrepresenting the reality. An individual who struggles in the middle of problems directs attention to issues that are favourable from own point of view and does not see their own fault in the problem. The defence mechanisms support our balance but are also the opposite of creativity because the energy which they require is used for repelling new ideas instead of examining them. Through becoming conscious of the contents of the subconscious mind, the individual takes it safely under the rule of ego. It means greater freedom of choice, flexibility of self-image, greater self-esteem, and sense of control (Kurkela, 1994; Lång, 2004; Lehtonen, 2007).

Psychoanalysis explores the process and creativity as an inner event of the psyche. This does not mean that creativity would occur without output. Creative processes always produce something: insight, experience, or concrete product. Creativity cannot be only measured, defined, or evaluated through the product. The starting point is the individual's internal emotional and thinking process, which gradually crystallises into a structure or product (Hägglund, 1984). Creativity is a novel combination of ideas, thoughts and emotional images and the ability to join ostensibly contradictory elements. The created combination is always more than the sum of the partial elements.

Hägglund (1984) divided creativity into three levels: the deepest level stems from the subconscious touching essential pre-vocabulary experiences; sort of basic truths of being. This is what happens when music moves something unrecognised inside our minds. A more superficial level of creativity is based on conscious and subconscious memories and experiences from childhood making them live again. It does not touch subconscious issues such as deep creativity. The most superficial level of creativity is a kind of cleverness or smartness; rational, conscious, problem solving. In a creative process, all levels are present.

In a creative product, there is a significant personal contribution of narcissistic energy invested in it. When an individual sings or plays a musical instrument, different parts of their personality are revealed and can be observed by the listener. The analytical self

can be seen in understanding the musical structures, logic and skilfulness; the motoric self can be seen in a technical ability. The emotional self is shown by emotional loading, and the way of performing shows different personality traits. Performance describes what the performer is like (Kurkela, 1994). The creative process offers the impulses from the subconscious an opportunity to enter the consciousness in the form of artistic expression, and the ego does not need to protect itself (Lehtonen, 2007).

What is Hidden behind Learning?

According to psychodynamics, the human mind is a playingfield for the instincts. There are two basic instincts. Freud called them *Eros* and *Thanatos*. Kurkela (1994) called them *aggression* and *attention*. *Eros* means an endless drive to go forward, search and widen the territory while *Thanatos* and *attention* means an effort to achieve peace, safety, and stability (Lehtonen, 2007). Both powers struggle within us. This two-poled dynamic works as a basic setting in the world of the mind. Jung refers to the same powers using the concepts of *animus* and *anima*, highlighting their symbolic femininity and masculinity (Kurkela, 1994).

In this research, we use the concepts of aggression and attention. Aggression describes the fury of activity within us. It is not a model of behaviour but rather the motor behind it. The power of aggression is a primitive power of life: an infant first wants to eat everything that can be reached. Then it strives to move, stand on two feet and take possession of the world; first physically and then cognitively, through gaining know-how. The power of aggression is channelled into all areas of life and it shows as expansivity, meaning an effort to widen opportunities. Under the control of strong ego, it drives us into the pursuit of enjoyment and activities that produce a symbolic sense of success, as well as activities such as learning, working and hobbies (Kurkela, 1994).

The force of attention drives us to a mood of protection and shelter willing to store and hide, develop and mature in peace; to nurture and cherish. Attention erupts as hiding in oneself. In its most primitive form, it refers to hiding in the mother's womb and later on her lap. Psychic and physic self-protection last through the whole of life as a key aim of human life. Emotions of continuity and permanence are key factors in well-being since early childhood (Kurkela, 1994). Aggression and attention do not work without each other in a healthy mind. They modify each other. Aggression without the restraining effect of attention could show as a primitive greediness, killing, binge eating or obsessional sexuality. Attention without the driving force of aggression would erupt as an exaggeration of safety, withdrawal, or demand of invariance, in its most pathological form, as total spiritual and functional numbness (Kurkela, 1994).

These two opposite poles are mirrored in music making. Learning musical skills is a demonstration of power and control. It penetrates new areas and conquers them, creating satisfaction and enjoyment. In music making, a lot of protectiveness, controlling, waiting and maturing is waiting to emerge. It has a percussive force, belligerence and impressiveness, but also tenderness, turning inwards, compassion and warmth. Music can be a conquest, a haven, or it can penetrate new areas of one's own skills and expression. As the skills develop, it creates strong sense of succeeding and finding new issues. However, it may help as an auditory experience of safety and

continuity in preventing the fundamental fears that stem from silence and loneliness (Kurkela, 1994).

Creative Attitude or Performance Saliency

In music making, two parallel realities are present. The senses include mastering of the instrument, musical style requirements and music conceptualisation. The emotions include the personal-emotional significance of music. Often, when teaching singing or playing a musical instrument, the focus is on the technic-instrumental sense world assuming that emotional expression and an emphasis on being immersed will come automatically. But how can a teacher require immersion, intuition or spontaneity if the teaching has only highlighted control, analyticity and being conscious of issues. These musical realities are parallel, and creativity lives inside both of them. They overlap each other and the creative attitude works as a transmitter. Widening of the borders of expression, musical interaction and becoming immersed in music, so-called stage radiation, are derived from creative starting points that mirror a creative attitude. In a teacher's work, these show as an indistinguishable undertone, a kind of basic setting which is more about how the teacher exists than what they do.

Technical demands and disciplined progress in controlling a musical instrument are not contradictory to the cultivation of a creative attitude. If the teaching conveys a creative attitude, the student sets the targets of studying. The claim that students will not progress if the lessons are fun reflects the Protestant work ethic and the power thinking of the music education system (Lehtonen, 2004). Blood, sweat and tears are not needed in music education because a child learns and develops by playing. The creative attitude also lives among adults in a reality which is reminiscent of playing or game reality. Creativity, the desire for self-expression, is a special human skill, and it has made us what we are. Creativity stems from the human mind's inner dynamics and helps us gain an insight into what music really can be – self-fulfilment, visiting other realities, conquering new worlds, or finding a haven in the wicked world.

Accomplishment is the opposite of creativity. It is lacking the freedom, being restricted from new ways of acting, the inability to renounce, stop something. There, the individual's power of life does not express itself and the content lacks authenticity and touch ability (Kurkela, 1994). Still, outwardly accomplishing performance may seem effective. Sometimes competing, a need to compensate for something and convulsive work generate more than a creative attitude. Nevertheless, the result of creative attitude-based work is more tangible in content (Cziksentmihalyi, 1990, 1997; Kurkela, 1994; Uusikylä, 2002).

The current learning conception in music instrumental pedagogy leans on a constructivist educational science approach. The learner is seen as an active information processor who mirrors new knowledge to already existing knowledge and applies it to practice, thereby building a jigsaw puzzle that is completed piece by piece. Learning is not about receiving information but understanding issues, changing ways of thinking, and seeing matters in a new light. Ultimately learning means changing the human being (Tynjälä, 1999). An important element is the student's intrinsic motivation, which makes learning a self-serving activity in which the ambition grows

through playing where the hunger grows while eating. Aims and targets are set by the student in the presence of intrinsic motivation is there (Tynjälä, 1999).

Symmetrical and Asymmetrical Thinking

Lehtonen (2004) describes the concept of asymmetry: asymmetry schematises and slices reality. It strives to classify, generalise, separate emotion, experience, thinking, imagination and intelligence from each other (Lehtonen, 2004). Symmetrical logic is the structure of subconscious mind thinking. It evaluates identity and symmetry. It includes identity, infinity and unity. According to Lehtonen (2004), the most fundamental of all the music world's negative phenomena is the contradiction in asymmetrical and symmetrical logic in music and overall contemplation. Intelligence has destroyed emotions and words have destroyed experiences. *"Music education has been verbally and logically analysed which is basically unmusical. It has merely become a collection of theories, techniques and survival strategies expressing music's surface structures"* (Lehtonen, 2004, 29). In addition to musical instrument teaching, the phenomenon can be clearly seen in music theory teaching at music academies. The myths of Western art music are also connected to asymmetrical thinking. Lehtonen writes (2004): *"Asymmetrical thinking separates the talented and the untalented, virtuosity and mediocrity, perfection and imperfection, total expertise and lack of expert knowledge, professionalism and amateurism. The desire to make definitions is endless. The conceptions about talent are holy unchallenged lore part of a primeval story"* (p. 45).

Musical talent tests in music schools only measure the perceptive skills of music's surface structure, which is only one aspect of musicality. The mythic reality of music education does not acknowledge the differences in children's developmental rhythm in which there could be major differences between individuals (Lehtonen, 2004). The dissertation by Tuovila (2003) confirms this claim as it shows that the results of musicality tests had no significant connection to success in studying music.

The competitive nature of musical instrument teaching is black education because it renews the existing cultural pain of pedagogue through socialising the student in it. The narcissistic tension is primarily directed at comparing students with each other because there is no strength or power other than in a relationship with others. According to Gothoni (1998), all that is needed to break an individual's self-confidence is a single word from an important person at the wrong moment. According to sociology, the education is socialising for society and different groups. Educational psychology defines education as the development of the personality in interaction between the teacher and the student (Hirsjärvi & Huttunen 1995).

The Narcissistic Economy

The starting point of narcissism is fear. There the individual experiences the biggest causes of fear: loneliness, being abandoned, death, destruction, disappearing into unfamiliarity and nothingness. A child with its fears depends on its mother and her nursing. As the mother answers to her child's needs and shows loving care, she brings comfort and wipes away the fear (Kurkela, 1994).

The outside world and the self-concept are interactive: when self-conception is defenceless, the outer world becomes more threatening; and the more threatening the outer world becomes, the weaker the self-concept. According to psychoanalytic theory, when threatened, the human mind turns to grandiose delusions of grandeur: the more threatening the world feels, the greater the demand for own greatness. Own greatness and excellence create a reaction to the threat (Kurkela, 1994). Power and strength are nurtured in order to help the fear and worry about one's own existence. The narcissistic economy describes how much an individual is willing to invest their energy in external targets (self-objects) in order to achieve a sense of safety. A self-object may be a performance, another person, a position, or something else. The narcissistic economy also acts as a psychodynamic of society. This is when a music school sets its goal of bringing glory and fame through the success of its students. This makes the teachers and students act in an accomplishment-orientated way (Kurkela, 1994).

The super-ego is different in different individuals regarding the degree of difficulty or severity. The super-ego is like a foreman who often disagrees with his/her subordinates (e.g., subconscious instinct demands). The super-ego of some individuals may allow longer 'food breaks' than others. At its best, the super-ego is like a manager who evaluates general appropriateness and adaptability. At its worst, it is a taskmaster and merciless tyrant maintaining an uninterrupted sense of guilt. The super-ego is strongly connected to socialising in music and the world of musical instrument studies.

Play and Creative Attitude

According to Clark (1979), creativity comprises thinking, emotional perceptions and intuition. Creativity is both rationality and emotion. In music making, a synthesis of these elements can be seen: a certain amount of rationality, cognition and logic problem solving, as well as a lot of emotion and intuition. In music, playing is the key word when we are looking for a creative attitude. *Attitude* means a way of orientation to life and oneself; a creative attitude offers the freedom to perform something new, specific and individual or it may offer freedom from performing anything. The creativity in a creative attitude is particularly derived from freedom (Heikkilä, 1985; Kurkela, 1994; Solatie, 2009).

In musical creativity, the musician's need to convey the images of their internal world to the listener is important (Lehtonen, 1986). Musicians and composers modify their musical images into sound pictures that create mental images in the listener (Immonen, 2008). Kurkela (1994) compares musical reality to the realities of play and game in which the joy and power of life are channelled into action. The everyday reality with its utilitarian viewpoints does not belong to joy and power. Musical creativity enjoys the same kind of freedom as children's play. And still, play is never mere 'play' because it manifests reality in an essential way. Similarly, music also expresses something that is essential and real to a human being (Kurkela, 1994). Everyday reality can destroy playing and game realities if the player does not stay inside the game reality but starts to think that winning and losing in the game show the player's ability in connection to everyday reality. Then the game becomes war (Kurkela, 1994). Everyday reality penetrates the game in a way that transforms the playing, the game or the music into a profession. This clearly explains why a musician, professional or student, who takes music seriously, but in the wrong way, can easily lose the joy and freedom of playing

music. Another point of view about what accomplishments in music culture should be oriented to is setting excellence and perfectionism as the principal aim, which plays a key role in Western culture. Then it is not a matter of the instrumental value of excellence but its principled value. Life becomes an instrument for achieving excellence and is no longer the target itself (Kurkela 1994).

What is it that drives society and an individual to aim for excellence? From a narcissistic point of view, the reason is a narcissistic crisis and the attempt to control it. Delusions of grandeur are an attempt by the human mind to survive this crisis. According to the psycho-dynamic theory, the aim of excellence is also an attempt to resolve the threat of the crisis on a societal and cultural level.

The Psychodynamics of an Individual

The harder an individual tries to do their best, the more their personality is invested in the task and the more it becomes experientially a part of the self (Kurkela 1994). The more threatened the outside world, the greater the need for perfection in relation to oneself. This is about unreasonable demands for excellence in one's own performances. Only perfection can save an individual from destruction when narcissistic tension grows disproportionately. And even if the skills were on a high level, the unreasonable ambitions that demand perfection can totally suppress initiative and creativity (Kurkela 1994). In narcissistic tension, a person cannot have freedom in relation to their own actions. Thus, the survival of the play reality becomes impossible and is replaced by fear of own survival. However, although the creative initiation would suffocate, the action can continue mechanically. This is one conceptual way of explaining what the accomplishment means.

A narcissistically more self-sufficient individual can admire and strive for perfection and excellence, but it is not related to human dignity and it is not sought for at any cost. This kind of person is not so heavily dependent on receiving critical feedback (Kurkela, 1994). Kurkela (1994) compares workaholic to drug addiction. Obsessional bustling and moving becomes an absolute value by itself and an individual can feel alive only through the action. Typical of a creative attitude is freedom and independence, while work narcomania is based on extremely heavy dependency (Kurkela, 1994).

Kurkela (1994) also describes the Little Red Riding Hood strategy as a part of accomplishment-orientated action. The student feels (because of transference) that the teacher is somehow weak or incomplete and needs to be happy. Every week, the student brings a present to the teacher in the form of good homework. The teacher is like the big bad wolf waiting in the cottage for the goodies. This is a trap for the teacher: it is possible to adapt the wolf's role and for the teacher to voraciously start waiting for new accomplishments from the student. The teacher starts to live through the student's performances.

“The well of musical creativity can only bubble from inside. Only real power and content can be channelled into action. Music is the target of the performer, not the instrument... Satisfaction comes from the music itself, not from the secondary benefits offered by it. The benefit is secondary if it is based on the parents' or the teachers' (or one's own) ambition. In other words, conditional love. When music is part of a child's primary needs, it becomes a part of their personality on the

level that the child regards as necessary. Then, the child must not have music as a hobby because the self-object demands it (the alternatives would then be abandonment or the horror of annihilation)" (Kurkela, 1994, 345).

In addition to its parents and the teacher, a child may also feel abandoned. This is a matter for the superego, whose tyranny shows in sheer panic if the child has not fulfilled its task, which means practising. This is a matter of secondary consideration regarding music (Kurkela 1994).

The Teacher's Part of Performance-centred Instrument Studying

Like any work for its builder, a pupil with the necessary skills may also be an own creation to the teacher (a self-object). The teacher hopes that their excellence would show through their pupil, who is the teacher's 'masterwork'. The more the pressure is related to the teacher's narcissistic economy, the greater the pupil's expectations: the pupil must not shame the teacher with their performances. If the teacher feels they are safe, they do not have to show their own excellence through the pupil (self-object) (Kurkela, 1994). At worst, the pupil is just a tool to combat the teacher's narcissistic emergency. The most traumatic scenarios could be seen in connection with the course examinations of music schools and conservatoires: the teacher abandons the pupil when they fail. The abandonment means that the teacher has to explain the pupil's failure as a lack of talent. This is how the teacher 'washes their hands' of the case.

In a teaching situation, both the teacher's and the pupil's narcissistic economies are always present. A teacher who is conscious of their responsibility makes the pupil's narcissistic balance a priority (Kurkela, 1997). A harmful situation for a free and creative attitude exists when the student puts the teacher's interests ahead of their own (The Little Red Riding Hood Strategy). Healthy music education means that the teacher does not act in the service of narcissistic emergency and its product, principled excellence.

According to the definition, the superego is the part of the mind structure that superintends, criticises and condemns. It is one of the key components of raising and teaching children. One of the aims of a healthy music education is that the teacher does not ally with the child's superego against freedom by feeding the student's concerns about practising and learning (Kurkela, 1994).

If the teacher conveys the idea that becoming a musician will require major sacrifices and commitment, this idea starts taking on a life of its own in the student's mind and they drift into a cheerless grind or stop playing the instrument altogether. Also, the 'cleanliness training' associated with classical music (Kurkela, 1994) is connected to strict shame and the building of a tied superego. Classical music emphasises controlling structure, stylistic cleanness, purity of tone and the nobility of the emotions. Thus, greater self-control is required than in popular music. This also shows in the concert behaviour of the audience and musicians. The demands for formal self-control eventually make the students rigid because of their sense of shame and fear. The idea of being ridiculed is in the background connected to the teacher's own socialisation in the world of music: Do they believe that the musician's highest ambition is to 'serve music' or vice versa? Is music created because of human beings?

The way of acting of an instrument teacher is always a result of socialisation to the surrounding music culture. The teacher's way of thinking may totally miss the idea of comprehensive education. Then the teacher only appreciates aiming towards a profession, not music as a hobby (see Blair, 2009; Creech & Hallam, 2010). The teacher might also have socialised to asymmetric thinking without ever questioning it. For this kind of teacher, the most important thing is to do things 'right', to represent a certain school in a purist way. The teacher concentrates on honing the student's technique instead of aiming at their overall development. This is essential in performance-centred teaching, which only focuses on technical realisation instead of wholeness or content. Then, the evaluation only targets correctness, fluency and efficacy, which are all parts of evaluating superficial fluency. A hypersensitive, tense and stumbling student only receives feedback about the number of mistakes they have made, regardless of other playing qualities. The criteria for the evaluation are the key issues that keep performance-centred teaching alive (Lehtonen, 2004).

Enthusiasm has been described as one of the most important qualities of an instrument teacher. However, sometimes enthusiasm is directed more at principled excellence than the actual music teaching. Many teachers cite their own qualitative standards to justify their inability to tolerate musical weakness and incompleteness in a student's playing.

Lehtonen (2004) described asymmetry as an entirety shattering quality. One aspect of cognitive learning in the basics of music is playing by ear. Sight reading involves complex issues that are not suited to teaching young children. If we compared sight reading with learning to read a book, it would be the same as starting to learn one's mother tongue using a written text. The easiest way for a child to start learning to play an instrument is by imitating what they hear without any analysis. According to Lehtonen (2004), western music has always been based on asymmetric rationalism where intelligent systems have overturned emotion and the vocabulary explanation of music has knocked over the experience. Music education has become in some way of looking unmusical.

Lehtonen (2004) connects the myth of musical talent with asymmetric thinking. For example, psychometric and structural areas of musicality sense the level of pitch, an 'infallible' sense of rhythm and a quick ability to think (Garam, 2002). Understanding the deep level require musical imagination and ability to experience, which do not depend on surface structural qualities. The major focus on surface structural qualities in musical instrument learning significantly directs the attention towards the child's competence or incompetence. Anxiety about one's own sufficiency is one of the reasons why pupils drift away from creativity. In addition, highlighting the structural qualities of musicality, when evaluating a child's musical talent, can cause many children feeling a strong sense of injustice. Tuovila's (2003) dissertation showed that music school's entrance examinations points have no connection with the success of subsequent music studies. When musical instrument studies only target correctness, we are entering a dangerous zone. Avoiding mistakes and the wish to do 'right' lead to a superficial performance and all kinds of atrophy (Pleeth, 1982).

One of the manifestations of asymmetric logic is separating technique and music (Lehtonen, 2004). Symmetric thinking in the world of music is more unusual and the technique becoming self-serving is the essential element of performance-centred pathology and is more a rule than an exception (Pleeth, 1982). In performance-centred

teaching, the aim is not wholeness but trying to do things right, with quality and at a high level without caring at all about the growing disintegration of the musician's uniqueness. In performance-centred teaching, nobody understands that on each skill level, wholeness, uniqueness and unbrokenness should be present. Harmonious musicianship can only develop from these starting points. When addressing performance-centred thinking, the most important issue is to avoid mistakes. Intellectual, conscious knowledge must also be present in music making but it must grow from functional execution in relationship to the musical ideas. One manifestation of asymmetric thinking is that experiencing music and free expression stiffen as a prisoner of different conventions and institutions. Asymmetric thinking simplifies the versatility of the surroundings and destroys musical creativity in music, suppressing the will of the performer. Asymmetric logic is the opposite of a comprehensive (symmetric) musical experience that music education has suppressed for so long (Lehtonen, 2004). The question of an imagined theory about a finger's movement can grow so important that every musical idea must pay homage to it. The nucleus of music is destroyed and the noble primitive instinct stops working. Before long, the whole reserve of means and technique will wither (Pleeth, 1982).

Another reason for the self-serving nature of technique may be the fact that such a reliability on playing is being sought that does not exist at all. This may manifest as mechanical honing of the composition although the necessary technique has already been acquired. This is an action that is not based on a creative attitude. According to psychoanalytic thinking the narcissistic economy leads to ensuring after ensuring the technique to maximise the success of the musical performance as the superego requires diligence and trying. The uniqueness of music playing has been broken and the pitiful development of a dropout increases instead of developing into a musician.

Aim of the Study and Research Questions

In educational science the concepts related to a performance-centred education are among other theories describing motivation, orientation and learning direction. Different ways of orientation are, for example, performance orientation and task orientation. Different levels of learning are, for example, surface and deep-orientated learning, as well as holistic and atomistic learning strategies. The concept of meta-cognition is also related to performance-centred thinking. These ways of perceiving do not explain the reason, width or dimensions that are essential to performance-centred thinking.

The context of the present research touches upon many central conceptions of educational science: education, socialisation, educational profitability compared to process-like action, as well as concepts of education, growth, learning, learning strategies, development, as well as depictions of man, morals and values. According to this, the concept of performance-centred thinking and teaching penetrates all research targets of central educational science, as well as many of the questions addressing the issue of being a human being. Regarding educational science, the research is part of educational psychology, in the area of music psychology in music education.

This research has not restricted the subject to a specific era, skill level or level of music studies. Performance-centred teaching is about something that is common to all skill

levels of music. Something breaks together with performance salience in performance-centred thinking but remains unbroken when dealing with the opposite: creative attitude, wholeness of the musician, uniqueness (Pleeth, 1982).

The research questions are as follows:

1. *How does performance-centred thinking show in musical instrument studies?*
2. *Why does a pupil, student, teacher or music institution drift into performance-centred teaching?*
3. *What kind of thinking and values assist, support or prevent performance-centeredness?*
4. *What are the consequences of performance-centred teaching and thinking?*

The Data and Method of Analysis

The data comprises 132 short narratives of Finnish student teachers about playing musical instruments and learning to play an instrument. Before writing their narratives, they read a short part of a book written by Itkonen (2005) about playing and studying a musical instrument. The student teachers reflected on their own experiences concerning the themes of the story and wrote about them. The data were collected in 2011.

In the data analysis, we used a narrative approach, which has become increasingly used in many fields of science (see, for example, Bruner, 1987, 1991; Burr, 1995; Czarniawska, 1998; Hyvärinen, 2004). In a narrative research an individual is seen as an active and significance-seeking actor who develops a self-concept in interaction with the environment and others. The research approach is based on social constructivism according to which the individuals build their own identity by developing narratives about themselves and the environment (Riessman, 1993).

The data include the narratives of 121 girls and 11 boys, which adequately reflects the distribution of student teachers at Jyväskylä University. The analysis was conducted using data-based content analysis through which the views of the respondents are mirrored in the theoretical approach of the article at searching for similarities and differences. The narratives were grouped and put into different categories according to their contents before analysing their message thoroughly. The most descriptive expressions were selected to be presented in the text.

Results

In this chapter we answer the research questions in the order that we presented them, adding the respondents' quotes to show the original example responses. After analysing the results, we connected the findings to the theoretical background and the research literature.

How does performance-centred thinking show in instrument studying?

Performance-centred thinking shows in almost all of the respondents' narratives. It is closely connected to the objectives of music schools, which are oriented towards becoming a professional musician. Those students who only want to play for pleasure

and as a hobby are not suitable for this aim at all and they are dropped out of the system destroying their music hobby, as the following quotes show.

“If the hobby’s main target is to perform a series of pieces as well as possible, what’s the main reason for having such a hobby? I played piano for nine years until I stopped playing because of a lack of enthusiasm... What’s the benefit of knowing each note by heart? Why should I play only what the teacher wants me to play and what the requirements say? I didn’t start playing the piano because of the teacher. But now afterwards it seems so.” (T1)

Having piano lessons for nine years without deriving any pleasure from them and not knowing the reason for having lessons point strongly to the superego’s action; superego harasses the individual to act the way the student has been convinced to believe: Instrument learning requires intense training without joy or playfulness.

Lehtonen (2004) referred to this kind of Protestant work ethic and the power system of music education. Also, learning musical pieces by heart has been described as being useless and a burden. The respondents could not influence the programme they had during their lessons. The lessons totally destroyed the student’s intrinsic motivation. This seems to be the main reason for ending their lessons: the student may not be aware of their own role in the decision making about the programme. Maybe this explains why only elderly people attend symphony orchestra concerts and young conservatoire students are rarely seen at such concerts. After their lessons, they put their headphones on and listen to their favourite music, which is certainly not the music they are learning to play in their lessons. Juvonen called this paradox an *orientation crisis* (2008a, 68; 2008b). This may also be caused by other contradictions between the student and the teacher, not only about choosing the programme to be played.

“It feels like the society is connected to playing, which causes at least one reason for losing the pleasure of instrument learning. Teachers should not be embarrassed about making mistakes in performances. During a performance it’s easy to start thinking about your own sufficiency when you’re not able to play everything perfectly.” (W4)

In their responses, the student teachers reflect on performing from the point of view of developing the whole of society. The embarrassment of their teacher or parents as a result of their making mistakes in playing was also mentioned, which strongly supports the previously mentioned ‘cleanness training’, referring to only concentrating on playing the right notes and not making any technical mistakes in classical music teaching, which strives for technical perfection and is based on the teacher’s asymmetric thinking in which the target is not the student’s comprehensive growth, but a total indulgence in perfecting the technical details in music. This is a typical example of the asymmetric logic described by Lehtonen (2004), in which a piece of music is split into unconnected sections from which the most important issue is highlighted: faultless and technically accomplished playing by heart forgets the wholeness of the music: the intellectual mind totally dismisses the emotional side and musical enunciation. The students’ concern about their own insufficiency appears to always be present in nearly all the respondents’ narratives about their musical instrument hobby. The phenomenon is caused by the narcissistic economy: the threat from the outside world is perceived as being very strong and contributes to reducing one’s belief in one’s own success. The demand for achieving greatness that could answer the requirements of the outside

world is very significant and creates a sense of insufficiency. This is one of the main reasons for discontinuing lessons. Also, the previously described embarrassment of parents, teacher, or even the entire musical institute, through making mistakes in an important performance shows the psychodynamic narcissism of society: the key focus is on bringing glory to the teacher, parents and music institute instead of being able to enjoy the music and its creative expression.

"I have been playing musical instruments at a music school since I was six. After the entrance exam, I started playing the violin and later changed to piano and guitar.

Although I enjoyed playing, the mandatory tests and performances, qualifications and music theory tests together with continuously changing teachers (some were good and some were not so good; one even told me to stop playing the piano because of my lack of talent) took away the pleasure of playing... When I played my homework at the lesson, I was constantly thinking: will I make the same mistake again in a certain place?" (W9)

The entrance exam, that was taken at least a couple of years ago in music schools, showed the students that they were being assessed and that their talent was constantly being compared to that of other students. The mandatory tests in the spring and autumn and the increasingly demanding course examinations with different sections (prima vista, scales, triads, cadences, etc.), together with the demand to simultaneously progress in the music theory examinations, destroyed the joy of studying music.

The requirement to study music theory must have been one of the main reasons for ending music hobby. Also, this is proof of the existence of the asymmetric logic in music studies: music theory has been detached from live music. It has become a superficial expressing structure, and the student cannot understand its connection to music making when playing a musical instrument. Many teachers have a way of teaching whereby they interrupt the student when a minor mistake is made, meaning they are teaching the pupil to stop playing at certain points in the music. These are the points that the pupils are already afraid of when they start to play.

When certain teachers tell a student to stop playing because of a lack of talent, it shows both cruelty and the teacher's total irresponsibility towards the student and their psychic and emotional well-being. Almost all music students can remember at least one teacher who used to make them cry a lot. Also, this can usually be explained by imagining the teacher's high demands on the student. This goes on although making demands is different to disrespectful behaviour. Unfortunately, this kind of behaviour is often passed down from one generation of teachers to the next one. This may also mean that the teacher uses the student to repel the teacher's own narcissistic anxiety: when the student fails, the teacher abandons them and tells them to stop playing as a hobby because of their lack of talent, 'washing their own hands' while trying to save the credibility of their own superior talent and giftedness.

Why does a music institute, teacher or student drift into performance-centred acting?

Because music institutes enjoy economic support from the state, they have been forced to justify their role as educators. When the peak performances of western art music

have been the guarantee of teaching quality and its most important target, performances and examinations have naturally been the measurement that has formed the basis of evaluating the music institute's learning results (Tuovila, 2003). The examination- and performance-centred focus has produced thousands of professional musicians in Finland and Finnish music education has been globally acknowledged. The aim of music education has been to attain a professional skill, which has been the primary target of studying.

There is also a flip side to this coin. While the most talented and motivated students have enjoyed a high-quality music education system that is suited to their aims and characteristics, many music students dropped out thinking to be failed music students (compare Anttila, 2004; Lehtonen, 2004). The examination-centred teaching culture's relatedness to practical music making has also been criticised. The life-long pedagogue Karhilo describes this phenomenon in the music journal *Rondo* as follows: Finland is full of well-educated pianists who are not even able to accompany songs in a family gathering – because it was not part of their music school's curriculum (see Kuusisaari, 1997).

Perhaps, even stronger criticism than against the instrument teaching, has been directed towards teaching the “basics of music”, which has been separated from the music itself. The *Rondo* journal in 1989 featured many articles criticising music theory and solfège teaching, describing them as unnecessary relics of the past that had no connection with practical music making (Koivisto, 1989; Vapaavuori, 1989; von Creutlein, 1989). Vapaavuori (1989) also raised the ever-current questions: *What has happened to the ability to add chords to a piece of music, or free accompaniment skills? What about improvising skills?* Forcing pupils into the same examination tube does not make it possible to address each pupil's personal needs and aims. In the worst cases, examination-centred teaching was like a continuous qualifying session: the most talented and most motivated students, as well as those with the strongest mental qualities, could achieve the ‘goal’ and the others had to abandon their hobby and drop out. According to Heino and Ojala (1999), the pedagogical quality or music schools' ways of action had previously never been questioned. If the pupils did not achieve the given objectives, the fault was automatically their own.

A performance-centred teaching was also criticized in the 2000s. Changes have been made, which can be seen in the Curriculum 2002 as broadness and removal of the SML's (Finnish Music Teachers Association) examination criteria and model programmes. The current official line of learning conception is based on a starting point in which the goal of teaching is to develop a positive music relationship. This does not mean that previous issues are automatically forgotten. Almost all adults today received their music education in a performance-centred learning environment – the old traditions live on in their memories and possibly also in teachers' conceptions of teaching. Despite the official changes, the old values and ways of action live on as an institution-centred and teacher-centred teaching, guiding the teaching in the everyday life of music schools.

These days, music schools have many ways of flexibly applying a broad curriculum. The duration of instrument lessons can be changed and there can be years free from general subjects (music theory, solfège etc.) or group playing (Pohjannoro, 2010). These flexible solutions have also been criticised.

“...I think that even elementary schools are more flexible than music schools and that’s strange! Isn’t it possible to find different paths for hobbyists? They are usually not found. I also think that this broad curriculum could be flexible. And mandatory music theory studies must be more flexible. What is most important is that the urge to play an instrument and the love of music should be kept alive. The hobby should continue and not be stopped by all these study modules. And there should be an opportunity to choose optional subjects and not just say: we have this curriculum – take it or leave it. This is often the way things are done and I cannot accept it.” (W21)

As the quote shows, the organisation of studies is dependent on the actual education institute or music school. The studies depend on the attitudes and values behind the planning. On an institutional level the changes are slow and, by simply studying the official papers, you could believe that the changes had already taken place. However, music education in music schools is like a large ship that turns slowly because the old methods of teaching and old practices of organising the action are deeply rooted in the culture and everyday life of the institutions. Nevertheless, it is possible to change a course. The principals of the music schools are ready and capable of reacting to the changes taking place all around us.

The performance-centred thinking in music institutes is based on the fact that the curricula were originally designed for educating students to become professional musicians and there was no room for students with music as a hobby who had no major targets for their studies. Conservatory-level institutes in particular had a clear focus on educating professional musicians.

“Also, the rigidity and dullness of the curriculum did not make studying interesting. The teaching should be more motivating and meaningful in order to retain the student’s enthusiasm. There should also be more room in the learning process. Creativity should also have more room in the learning.” (W4)

When a joyful instrument playing hobby turns into an exam-focused grind, it gives birth to a narcissistic emergency. The narcissistic economy of an education institute, as well as teachers and students, tell us something about their anguish. When a student struggles against it enough, the whole notion of playing an instrument may be associated with too many negative issues. Nevertheless, this does not open enough the performance-centred thinking and drifting away from a creative attitude. Pleeth (1983) spoke about the disappearance of instrument playing’s creativity as a breaking of unity and comprehensiveness. The fear of being laughed at is constantly present, based on a world in which the teacher had socialised during their own studies.

“The perfection associated with the classical music genre is particularly merciless: completeness must be targeted in both technique and expression; in other words, the required technical performance must be mastered perfectly before moving on to expression. I mean it must be completely perfect and faultless. I had to spend many hours practising one trill or scale because in my next lesson it had to be mastered perfectly.” (W9)

“I played viola for eight years and one reason for stopping was the performance-centred thinking aimed at the next qualification exam. It was not possible to

simply play for the sake of enjoyment. This is a matter that should be taken into account because the endless performing started making me anxious.” (W44)

Playing an instrument requires great technical skill, virtuosity and precise motoric abilities. Still, technique and musical expression are two quite different issues. They do not differ from each other in what happens in performance-centred playing. They are completely separated from each other. This can be compared to children’s speech learning. A child learns speech sounds, words and clauses in their various contexts, expressing the intrinsic ideas in speaking in which no part of it is separated from what the child wants to say and express. For example, a child can practise the letter R separately but, as a whole, the child does not miss the connection with the expressed idea. Every skill is utilised right away, no matter whether the child is not sufficiently capable of expressing the intrinsic ideas. In instrument playing and practising, one may practice one simple phrase hour after hour as long as the connection to the context disappears from sight. In performance-centred action, the performance and technical part become self-serving. The student practises to reach such reliability in playing which does not exist. The narcissistic economy results in confirmation after confirmation in order to ensure the maximum success of the performance according to the superego: making of repeated attempts again and again. Pleeth (1983) spoke about the oneness and completeness of concepts, both of which mean the same thing in this context. Separating technical performance from expression in music happens quite easily when learning to play a musical instrument. It is rarer for it not to happen.

“...My biggest fear in matinées and concerts was forgetting the order of the notes; everything else was secondary as long as I didn’t forget how to play the piece. Of course, my fears became true and I had to start playing from the beginning and then made a mistake in the same place in front of an embarrassed audience and teacher. That was my last matinée because I stopped playing the clarinet after three years at this point.

I couldn’t see that learning to play an instrument at music school was worth the trouble as the pieces were dull and did not reflect my own musical taste.” (W17)

To Kurkela’s (1994) definition of creative attitude we can add the unity of the above-mentioned mental images, intelligence, musical thinking and movements. Then the music becomes a target for the subject, not an instrument for carrying out the parents’ or teacher’s ambitions. In performance-centred action it often jams or blocks, but the activity still continues on some meaningless level. The activity does not happen as part of a student’s primary needs but for secondary reasons based on the fear of being abandoned.

“I played piano in my childhood but after a couple of years I didn’t like it at all. Because my parents pushed me, I kept playing for a few years until they let me stop. My memories of concerts: a piece of music learned by heart was played by one pupil after another and nothing else was important as long as I didn’t forget what I was playing. These concerts are not part of my fondest memories.” (W15)

“Music is mostly about emotion, innovativeness and expressing oneself...My experiences from childhood do not include any of these and I believe they have been lost in the performance-centred thinking that predominates... When you

completely commit to a hobby, the fears, pressure and feelings of enforcing start emerging. Are we allowed to fail sometimes?" (W1)

Why would anyone agree to continue such irrational activity? The narcissistic economy and superego can explain part of it. They reduce freedom and sane faculty to judge; the individual submits to the performance-centred, self-built and guarded slavery influenced by narcissistic economy and superego. Making music in slavery is not performing anymore. In performance-centred action, the guard of the slavery is the individual self. According to the psychodynamic framework, the guard is the individual's own superego and the driving force is the narcissistic emergency.

"When I attended elementary school and lower secondary school, I studied piano two times a week at music school. I loved playing music but I got frustrated at always having to learn everything by heart. Learning to play an instrument in a music school is a very solitary and disciplined activity – you practise music for the examinations and concerts – not for your own pleasure. When I stopped having piano lessons, I didn't touch the piano for many years. Nor will I ever accompany or play together with others because it makes me uncomfortable. My music studying years have left both good and bad memories." (W67)

The original reason for studying music – at least on a profession-targeted level – is, of course, love of music. This is often followed by intrinsic compulsion and desire to learn to play a musical instrument. A young student may give their all, in order to achieve the target – but the development process needs a lot of musical nourishment and joy. Often, teachers do not have enough to offer; they may have lost their own joy of playing music and have become petrified technocrats who now write technocratic prescriptions for playing. A young student obeys them because they believe that the teacher knows best.

According to the individual's psychodynamic idea, performance-centred action is something within which the creative initiative has diminished but the action continues mechanically. According to Lehtonen (2004), the asymmetric schematising and dichotomies related to art music suffocate the performer's own instinct. This is primarily due to a loss of self-confidence, which happens in performance-centred activity. The performing is self-guarded slavery. But the agreement to become a slave requires the loss of self-confidence). According to Lehtonen (2004), asymmetric thinking always searches for dichotomies such as talented/not talented student or first-class student/miserable student. The dichotomic thinking ultimately crushes even those who think they are safe inside it. Often, the first thing a pupil learns in a music school is that they are not talented enough to study music.

"The pieces of music were given by the teacher (all of them classical music, of course). The piano lessons were directed at exam situations and I got 4/5. Well done, give a little more nuance to your playing. Year after year you attend matinées with a red face to admire how the others play like it was coming directly from their spinal cord. When it was your turn to play, your only thought was: "Don't forget anything..." Year after year the same lonely grind supervised by the same teacher." (W14)

Lehtonen (2004) speaks about musical talent concepts and concepts of learning connected to asymmetric thinking. Self-concept is also reduced by the myth of talent.

According to the myth of talent, classical music can only be learned by those who have an overwhelming natural, inborn musical talent.

“Many hobby-based music schools have entrance exams, which mean that music as a hobby is only meant for those who have an inborn musical talent and there is not room for pure amateurs... When you are completely committed to the hobby, fears, pressure and a sense of being, forced start to emerge. Is there a reasonable chance you will fail? If the most important thing about the hobby is to perform a series of pieces as well as possible, what is ultimately the main reason for having such a hobby?” (W1)

The basic skills of a musician may be attainable for many larger groups of people than has been traditionally estimated. One student needed to repeat the same piece 5000 times in order to learn it, while another student only needed to repeat it 500 times. Nevertheless, if the result is the same, we can reasonably say that everyone is capable of learning. And even if everyone is not able to achieve surface-level smoothness as well as some other levels, their music making may still include some interesting and dignified elements.

What kind of contemplation and values assist, support or prevent performance-centred thinking?

One issue connected to the talent myth is the definition of musicality. A music school selects a child who is approximately eight years old, who can sing reasonably well and repeat a rhythm that is clapped to them. Lehtonen (2004) saw these skills as structural perceiving abilities and added that they are only a part of musicality, not the whole truth. These skills mature at varying rates in children's development. A child who has a lively musical imagination and ability but who does not sing correctly may be excluded from a music school. A child who is able to sing correctly is allowed to study because there is no focus on any other deeper musical talents or lack of them.

Another myth pertaining to learning, which affects an individual's self-confidence, is that it is not worth starting to learn to play an instrument at an older age, for example, during puberty. Most children become (if at all) hobbyists, not professionals. Why could an enthusiastic music lover aged 15 not be accepted at music school in the same way as an eight-year-old child who has good pitch? Moreover, there have been cases where an individual who started playing piano at the age of 20 reached a professional level by the age of 25.

Music school curricula state that the aim of the school is to offer an opportunity for children and youngsters to enrich their life with music. Nevertheless, there are age limitations redolent of the former Soviet Union's efficiency education. Music schools justify their early starting age with their examination system: a 15-year-old student may not be able to complete their training programme in sufficient time. However, the entire system has been built; it did not create itself and it should serve people, children and youngsters who want to learn to play a musical instrument. Some steps have already been made in this direction.

“Because I didn’t take lessons in playing an instrument or singing, I didn’t dare start playing an instrument because I thought I was meant to start at a much younger age.

I had thought it was performance-centred and that all hobbyists of my age should already have years of experience behind them. In reality, you can start a music hobby at any age... Music as a hobby is not just about focusing on examinations; at its best it offers musical engagement and enjoyment to the hobbyist.” (W18)

The starting age has also lost its significance because of recent global brain research. Currently, researchers are interested in all the changes engendered by music studies in a child’s brain, even within a short time frame. According to the research, the impact concerns very early developmental stage periods, even the foetal period (Huutilainen, 2009). Music is more significant than all the positive changes that it causes to the thickness and organisation of the cerebral cortex. Thus, only focusing on the significance of music studies in babyhood and early childhood creates a new risk in connection with the hard value thinking of music education.

What are the consequences of performance-centred thinking?

What is the connection between narcissistic anxiety, compulsive intellectualising and asymmetric thinking? Asymmetric thinking may be one way to control the narcissistic anxiety. The simplification of reality creates the illusion of controlling life. This is connected with the compulsive need for a definition but life cannot be controlled by intelligence. The individual’s soul withers, if the life is seen mostly intellectually by defining issues. Using the concepts of depth psychology, we could state that there are many components in the slavery that individuals build for themselves. Metaphorically speaking, the narcissistic economy requires a driving force where the super ego works as a foreman; and asymmetric thinking with its myths creates misleading signs along the road.

“In instrument teaching we should remember that not everyone needs to become a professional musician. Some people just like to play for pleasure. This appears to have been forgotten by many teachers. Of course, learning to play a musical instrument requires practising and discipline. However, in order to retain the motivation and the joy of playing, the practising should be meaningful, experiential and should give more room for creativity.” (W9)

“The most important issue is not about just hitting the right notes in a serious mood but rather doing things together, creating something together and being together in the here and now. We are present and enjoy music making. What could be better than sharing this feeling with others who enjoy the same experience?” (W11)

At worst, creativity and innovativeness are drowned by performance-centred thinking and playing. The first respondent points out that not everyone needs to become a professional musician. The music schools’ entrance exams already give the impression that music studies are only for the most talented individuals. When the student has become deeply committed to the system, this is when a sense of fear, pressure and coercion emerges. There is no room for failure, which kills all kinds of creativity of the activity. There is good a reason for considering playing an instrument as a hobby, learning each note by heart, and selecting a programme to be played. The second writer

misses doing things together and creativity. Playfulness, joy and working according to the child's needs would bring joy to learning to play an instrument. The teacher should be there for the child and try to retain their interest in playing music throughout their life.

"In music there is always some kind of competition and performance-centred thinking which aims to accuracy. In orchestras there is competition about being amongst the best musicians or getting into an even better orchestra. When you play a musical instrument, you are also competing against yourself, as you are required to attain different skill levels – and every performance must be perfect. If you make a mistake during the performance, everyone hears it and this will impact how others see you as a musician. In the world of music, perfection should be forgotten and musicians should be given an opportunity to evolve based on their own interests." (W2)

The writer above notes the element of competitiveness in music studying, which can be seen not only in competing against oneself but also competing against others. In addition to competitiveness, music studying involves a lot of envy and jealousy (Lehtonen, Juvonen & Ruismäki, 2011). When taking different levels of examinations, the competition focuses on playing accurately, striving for perfection and avoiding mistakes. The mistakes create a sense of disgrace and feeling that others no longer regard you as a good musician. The fear of envy and jealousy often present in the musical world causes students to underachieve, feel disinclined to perform and refuse to participate in competitive situations (Lehtonen & Shaughnessy, 2008). Also, the next writer thinks that the pupils' opinions should be heard much more and be taken into account.

"...It feels like society is circling around performing, which is one reason for losing the joy of learning...Children in particular should be taught that life is not about performing and teachers should bring more joy into teaching music...Schools also need teachers who are patient and don't get frustrated in their ongoing work. Pupils quickly notice if a teacher is not interested and gets frustrated when working. This is reflected in the pupils and they may lose their motivation. This shows the importance of the teacher's attitude to what is being taught." (W4)

More room is needed for creativity, rather than performing. The aforementioned respondent views performance as a cause for losing the joy of learning, leaving a sense of inadequacy. The respondent expands the horizon to include the school level. A teacher who loses interest in teaching is one reason for the lack of pupils' motivation.

"I played piano when I was younger and my parents started my interest in music. I don't believe I would have started playing the piano if my father hadn't inherited a beautiful piano from his grandmother. Although I didn't like playing the piano at first (mostly because of difficulties with sight reading and problems concentrating), I was eventually grateful that it led to my interest in music. This is because, over the years, playing the piano became a way of relieving stress and handling issues when I was worried about something. I would sit at the piano and start playing. As soon as I started playing, I forgot all my worries and concentrated only on the music. I strongly believe that children should not be pressured into learning to play an instrument because there's a risk they might

lose interest in music and what otherwise would have been a joyful activity becomes compulsive playing.” (W25)

The above respondent was initially negative about playing the piano, because sight reading was difficult. However, everything worked out well in this particular case and the writer learned to enjoy piano playing and started to use it as a means of relieving stress.

Conclusion

Because the data of this research is almost 10 years old, some changes have taken place in the instrument teaching during this time. There have been many renovations in the curricula of independent music schools showing good will to change the traditional situation and the problems caused by those matters and issues mentioned in this article. Still, the problem is not only at the curriculum level, it is in the thinking, attitudes and ways of acting during the real-life instrument teaching situations. With this we mean teachers, who have been teaching in their own way for decades and who cannot easily change their ways of thinking and acting. This is the real reason for problems: changes can be made in curricula, but they cannot be made inside the teachers' heads. Every change in this deep level takes time, maybe even decades to occur.

There are also doctoral researches being carried out on the current situation in Finnish music schools and conservatoires, as well as in higher levels of instrument teaching on the same issues.

Like the longitudinal research by Tuovila (2003), the results of this research strongly suggest that when performance-centred activity takes place in the context of playing an instrument as a hobby, the hobbyists quickly lose their sense of playfulness and enjoyment. This can be attributed to the structure of the music school system. The system was originally designed to produce musicians for Finnish orchestras, which had been established in most towns. From the system's point of view, the entire curriculum is aimed at the efficient production of professional musicians. This means that those hobbyists who do not take their studies seriously enough are quickly dropped out of the system. Because society at large supports the music school system, it puts pressure on the music schools, which becomes more specific in terms of measuring the number of students and the quality of teaching. The results strongly support Lehtonen's (2004) ideas about moving from inclusion-emphasised teaching to exclusion-emphasised teaching when a high number of students have committed to instrument learning. The narratives in this research clearly mirror the paths that Lehtonen has described, and which traumatise many former hobbyists.

Also, an economic-technological discourse has gained ground in many areas of music education institutes, including universities. Despite much talk about creativity and continuing learning, there is a one-dimensional picture of a human hiding underneath, which has very little to do with a genuine, happy and self-expressive image of man. In many ways, the narratives analysed in this research describe autocratic and domineering teachers who think that only they "know the truth".

Isang in a choir until the second year of upper secondary school and played piano for more than ten years. I always wanted to become a good pianist but too rigid

teaching and the pressure of performing destroyed the joy of playing and I completely stopped playing the piano for several years. Now, because I can play whatever I like, I eagerly practise. (W92)

The 'epistemic sense of superiority' described by Lehtonen is mirrored in many narratives when the respondents described their teachers.

Some narratives show the pleasure and enjoyment of music that the respondents discovered when they stopped having lessons and started playing what they wanted to play. Self-determination and a sense of mastering their own activities are factors behind the motivation and should be given greater consideration in instrument teaching. From a psychoanalytical point of view, it could also be a question of subconscious being interwoven with reality (integration) in which a process of becoming conscious of the subconscious when an individual has taken the subconscious safely under the rule of ego. This is followed by greater freedom of choice, enhancing the flexibility of self-image, strengthening self-esteem, as well as strengthening the sense of experiences of control, resulting in the ability to enjoy playing an instrument again.

Many of the narratives described the lack of creativity and the need to increase it in the entire instrument playing experience. The creative process always engenders something new (inspiration, experience or a specific object). The definition of creativity is always an intrinsic process that crystallises in some handiwork (Hägglund, 1984). This is what the respondents seem to miss. The three-level division of creativity by Hägglund starts with the subconscious, which is based on early preverbal experiences, the basic truths of life. A more superficial level makes the pre-conscious memories from childhood live again, although it does not reach the depth of the previous level. The most superficial level of creativity is cleverness, the conscious resolution of problems. However, in a creative music-making process, all three levels are present. A musically creative product contains great amount of narcissistic energy, and the performer reveals their technical, emotional and personal traits. The creative process offers the elements of the subconscious an opportunity to become consciousness in an artistic form when the ego need not take cover (Lehtonen, 2007).

In music making, the aggression and attention are clear. Learning skills show power and control as they conquer new areas in order to gain satisfaction and enjoyment. However, music also involves tenderness, compassion and warmth brought by affection. These offer a musician strong sense of success and finding something new.

Both intelligence and the emotions are present in music making. Nevertheless, the teaching is often focused on the techno-instrumental side. The expression of emotions often stays unnoticed. The creative approach requires both sides to be present. According to the respondents' narratives, this appears to be missing in instrument teaching, resulting in the loss of joy and enjoyment when playing an instrument.

The maintenance of playfulness and a creative attitude through gamification is part of a human being's special abilities and is derived from an individual's intrinsic dynamics, self-expression and journeys to alternative realities and conquering new worlds. Kurkela (1994) spoke of the creative attitude (position) as he highlighted that the focus is not in the performance or product; it is in the ability to be open to new issues, like a small child when building their own imaginary world, regardless of the opinions of others.

Performing is the opposite to the above because it misses freedom, it closes new possibilities and it lacks the authenticity of content that is untouchable (Kurkela 1994). When playing an instrument, what is most important is the student's intrinsic motivation, which makes learning a self-serving activity and the targets and aims are set by the students themselves (Tynjälä 1999).

The competitiveness and performing in instrument teaching are 'black education' because in such education, only existing cultural pain is renewed and the student is socialised into it. This is related to the narcissistic economy, i.e., how much the individual wants to invest their power in extrinsic targets in order to gain a sense of safety. The narcissistic economy also works as society's psychodynamics when a music school puts as the most important target searching for its own honour through the success of pupils.

The student teachers' narratives about instrument learning expose a harsh reality and black education. Centuries-old traditions hang like an unwritten curriculum above the teaching, shadowing the joy, playfulness and creativity of playing an instrument. The methods and procedures from the past are easily revealed behind the ostensibly constructivist teaching-learning conception and the teachers' hidden objectives cast a shadow over the instrument studies of many talented students. Much has been done to develop the sphere of instrument teaching in music education, but there is still considerably more that needs to be done to make all the hidden elements visible and then reduce them to the barest minimum. They should be replaced by the genuine joy and delight of playing, playfulness and creativity, from where the music originally stems.

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