

**A STRATEGY OF INSTRUCTION FOR THE STUDENT PIANO
COMPETITION CASE STUDY: THE ROON LEK
(9-12 YEARS OLD) CATEGORY OF
THE YAMAHA THAILAND MUSIC FESTIVAL**

SKOWRUNG SAIBUNMI

**A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT
OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR
THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF ARTS (MUSIC)
FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES
MAHIDOL UNIVERSITY
2012**

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entitled

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The success of this thesis can be succeeded by the attentive support from Assoc. Prof. Dr. Kovit Kantasiri, Chairman of the Master's Thesis Committee, Assist. Prof. Dr. Sakchai Hirunrux, and Dr. Eun-Young Suh, members of the Master's Thesis Committee. They gave me a lot of valuable advice and suggestions in the preparation of this thesis. Furthermore, they kept following up on research progress and providing me encouragement until the completion of this thesis. I appreciate all members of the committee.

I would like to offer special thanks to all the Siam Kolakarn's piano teachers who gave the permission to interview their teaching techniques and opinions. I strongly believe that other piano teachers and students will derive benefit from this thesis.

Besides, I gratefully acknowledge Ms. Carol Hutchinson, Mr. David Richard Wolf, and Mr. Peter Fielding for devoting their time to proofreading this thesis.

Finally, I would love to take this opportunity to express my deep and sincere gratitude to my parents, the most important people in my life who have been taking part in all of my success. Also, I thank all of my college friends who were willing to provide great assistance to finish this thesis.

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A STRATEGY OF INSTRUCTION FOR THE STUDENT PIANO COMPETITION
CASE STUDY: THE ROON LEK (9-12 YEARS OLD) CATEGORY OF THE
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ABSTRACT

This research proposed to identify effective techniques and studio instruction that lead to student success in piano competitions in the Roon Lek (9-12 years old) category of the Yamaha Thailand Music Festival. The instrument used in this research was a semi-structured interview of ten piano teachers who had students advance to the final round in at least two years of the competition. The results were as follows:

1. Teaching Techniques: Most teachers begin their teaching by asking students to listen to the music to provide students with an overall image of the music they are going to play, then letting students study and practice themselves. After that, add other details into the pieces. Teachers can use a metronome to help students play with the precise rhythm. For teaching musical expression, teachers can ask students to sing while they are playing, using teachers' storytelling or using metaphors. Furthermore, teachers should record students' performances and let students self-assess. Before the competition, teachers should have students perform to the public as many times as possible.

2. Students' Practicing: For home practice, teachers should tell students what to practice thoroughly each week. Moreover, most teachers get students to practice more at school before the competition.

3. Communication with Parents: Most teachers talk to parents after every class by telling parents about students' progress and about what to practice at home.

4. Related Contexts: Students whose teachers choose to participate in the competition must be students who intend to compete, are enthusiastic, are hard-working, and have discipline to practice. Most teachers ask their students to wear comfortable clothes. For the day before the competition, many teachers ask students to practice comfortably only a little to warm up their fingers. For the competition day, teachers should let students relax by not pressuring them and encouraging them.

KEY WORDS: PIANO COMPETITION / TEACHING TECHNIQUE / YAMAHA
THAILAND MUSIC FESTIVAL / ROON LEK CATEGORY

การศึกษากระบวนการเตรียมนักเรียนเข้าแข่งขันเปียโน กรณีศึกษา การแข่งขันรุ่นเล็กงาน ยามาฮ่า ไทยแลนด์ มิวสิก เฟสติวัล

(A STRATEGY OF INSTRUCTION FOR THE STUDENT PIANO COMPETITION CASE STUDY: THE ROON LEK (9-12 YEARS OLD) CATEGORY OF THE YAMAHA THAILAND MUSIC FESTIVAL)

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บทคัดย่อ

งานวิจัยนี้ มีจุดมุ่งหมายเพื่อค้นหาเทคนิคการสอนที่มีประสิทธิภาพอันนำไปสู่ความสำเร็จของนักเรียนในการแข่งขันเปียโนรุ่นเล็ก งาน Yamaha Thailand Music Festival เครื่องมือที่ใช้ในงานวิจัยครั้งนี้คือ แบบสัมภาษณ์ ซึ่งสัมภาษณ์ครูสอนเปียโน 10 ท่าน ซึ่งเคยมีนักเรียนผ่านเข้าสู่อรอบชิงชนะเลิศในการแข่งขันรายการนี้อย่างน้อย 2 ปี ผลการวิจัยมีดังนี้

วิธีการสอนของครู ซึ่งครูส่วนใหญ่เริ่มการสอนโดยให้ นักเรียนฟังเพลงที่ใช้ในการแข่งขัน เพื่อให้นักเรียนรู้จักและคุ้นเคยกับเพลง จากนั้นจึงให้นักเรียนฝึกซ้อมด้วยตนเอง หลังจากนั้นนักเรียนสามารถบรรเลงเพลงได้คล่องแล้ว ขั้นตอนต่อไปเป็นการเพิ่มรายละเอียดต่างๆ เข้าไปในบทเพลงเพื่อให้เพลงมีความสมบูรณ์มากขึ้น จากนั้นครูจะเป็นผู้ใช้เมโทรโนมประกอบเพื่อให้นักเรียนสามารถบรรเลง ได้ถูกต้องตามจังหวะ สำหรับการสร้างอารมณ์ในบทเพลง บางกรณีครูจะ ให้นักเรียนร้องโน้ตคลอไปกับการบรรเลง หรืออาจใช้การเล่าเรื่องของ รวมถึงการเปรียบเทียบความหมายของสัญลักษณ์ต่างๆ ในบทเพลง กับสิ่งที่นักเรียนคุ้นเคยในชีวิตประจำวัน นอกจากนี้ ครูจะ บันทึกการบรรเลง ของนักเรียน ไว้ ในรูปแบบของเสียงหรือวิดีโอ เพื่อให้ นักเรียนได้ประเมินตนเองหลังการบรรเลงทุกครั้ง จากนั้นเมื่อ นักเรียนสามารถ บรรเลงเพลง ได้คล่องแล้ว ครู จึงให้นักเรียน ได้มีโอกาสดำเนินการแสดงต่อสาธารณชน เพื่อให้นักเรียนเกิดความเคยชินต่อการแสดง บทบาทที่มีผู้ชมจำนวนมาก ซึ่งเป็นการช่วยลดความตื่นเต้นเมื่อต้องขึ้นแสดงบนเวทีการแข่งขัน

การฝึกซ้อมของนักเรียน สำหรับการฝึกซ้อมที่บ้าน ครูควรบอกนักเรียนถึงสิ่งที่ต้องซ้อมในแต่ละ สัปดาห์อย่างละเอียด นอกจากนี้ ครูส่วนใหญ่จะให้นักเรียนมาฝึกซ้อมเพิ่มเติมที่โรงเรียนก่อนการแข่งขันอีกด้วย

การสื่อสารกับผู้ปกครอง ครูส่วนใหญ่มีการพูดคุยกับผู้ปกครองหลังคาเรียนของนักเรียน ทุกครั้ง โดยชี้แจงให้ผู้ปกครองทราบถึงพัฒนาการของนักเรียน และสิ่งที่ครูต้องการให้ฝึกซ้อมต่อไป

บริบทอื่นๆ ได้แก่ คุณลักษณะของนักเรียนที่ครูเลือกเข้าแข่งขัน จะต้องเป็นนักเรียนที่สนใจการแข่งขัน มีความตั้งใจ มีความกระตือรือร้น และมุ่งมั่นในการแข่งขัน อีกทั้งต้องเป็นนักเรียนที่มีความขยันและมีวินัยในการฝึกซ้อม สำหรับเครื่องแต่งกายที่ใช้ในการแข่งขัน ครูจะให้นักเรียนใส่ชุดที่ไม่คับหรือหลวมจนเกินไป ก่อนการแข่งขัน 1 วัน นักเรียนควรฝึกซ้อมเพียงเล็กน้อยเท่านั้น อีกทั้งในวันแข่งขัน ครูส่วนใหญ่จะให้นักเรียนผ่อนคลาย ไม่กดดันนักเรียน แต่จะให้กำลังใจนักเรียนอีกด้วย

คำสำคัญ: การแข่งขันเปียโน / เทคนิคการสอน / ยามาฮ่า ไทยแลนด์ มิวสิก เฟสติวัล / รุ่นเล็ก

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Significance and Background of the Research

Competition has been a part of human culture throughout history as it serves to celebrate excellence. In the music world, the first documented music competitions were held in Athens (Iakovlev, n.d.). In the Middle Ages, music competitions among musicians were commonplace. In 18th century Europe, instrumental competitions frequently involved keyboard and violin and in the 19th century, these competitions expanded to include other instruments, particularly in France. Other than formal events, competitions can be found throughout all music communities. Famous composers, like Handel and Liszt, were frequently involved in the competitions. Handel witnessed a competition between two singers in the presence of the royal family. Liszt once gave a piano performance while another pianist was performing a concert across the street (Abeles, Hoffer and Klotman, 1995, p. 162). Some educators support music competitions as a means of motivating both teachers and students and gaining valuable performance experiences.

Motivation is one of the most important advantages of music competitions. Music competitions can motivate students and teachers in preparation of the pieces (Maddy, 1936). When students know that they have to participate in a competition, they try to work hard and practice more to reach the goal of the competition (Bastien, 1988). Similarly, teachers need to pay more attention to their students' studying and performing. Teachers need to find effective techniques for their students which can also improve their teaching. Moreover, music educators support the performance experiences by attending competitions. Students can gain more experience by facing performance pressure, such as performance anxiety and dealing with the expectations of other participants (Bastien, 1988). The students also gain benefits from receiving comments or evaluations from judges. These evaluations can help students to improve their performances. After receiving the comments from the competition, teachers will

know the strong and weak points of their students which can be encouraged or adjusted (Bastien, 1988).

Music competitions in Thailand are very popular events for young musicians, akin to international music competitions. Many music competitions in Thailand were established and popularized in recent years. These include; Bangkok Chopin Piano Competition, Thailand International Piano Competition, and Siam InterNATional Competition. One of the famous music competitions in Thailand is the Yamaha Thailand Music Festival. First held in 1970, it is a music competition that is held annually for the students of the Yamaha (Siam Kolakarn) Music School and allows students to show their talents and win prizes. Yamaha Thailand Music Festival covers many types of instruments, such as piano, electone¹, guitar, singing, and violin. There are four age categories: Roon Jew which is for students who are not older than eight years old, Roon Lek which is for students who are not older than 12 years old, Roon Klang which is for students who are not older than 16 years old, and Roon Tuapai which is for students who are not older than 20 years old.

Candidates in the Roon Lek category are between 9-12 years old. Ray (2011) describes children between 7-12 years old as being in middle childhood. Children in middle childhood are developing their bodies, personalities, and minds. Children who are interested in the arts or any other subjects will develop and increase their potential in these fields quickly at this stage because they respond strongly to complex things such as complex tempo, wide range of melody, and music expression (Suttajit, 1998). Moreover, they are ready to perceive and develop musical harmony and pitch, and are able to play a musical instrument like a keyboard, unlike younger children. So, this stage is an ideal time to start learning a musical instrument. Even though children in this stage (Roon Lek) increase their potential more than students in the younger stage (Roon Jew), they still cannot judge or make decisions wisely, so they need support and encouragement from their teachers and parents. Students in the Roon Lek category differ from the older students in the upper category (Roon Klang and Roon Tuapai) because the latter two categories have their own intention and ambition to practice, so they try to do their best and win prizes. Teachers still play a significant role for the older students but parents play a lesser role in the learning

¹ An electronic organ produced by Yamaha Corporation.

process. Moreover, the Roon Lek category contains over a hundred competitors every year which is the most popular category for piano students among the four categories. Thus, it is interesting to investigate how teachers teach students in the Roon Lek category, and how they improve students' potential in addition to how parents help their children in practicing at home.

Preparation is important for any music competition. Being well-prepared can build confidence and reduce performance anxiety. In preparation for a music competition, both teachers and students can see the strong and weak points; the strong points can then be promoted and the weak points can be corrected before the competition. In music competitions, everyone wants to be a winner, but there are no prizes for all competitors. In addition to students' potential and effort, their teachers are the key factors of students' success. Skilled teachers can produce better students. Many students who attend music competitions and win prizes sometimes share same teachers. There are many teaching techniques, but some teachers may have more effective techniques that help their students win competitions. Furthermore, teachers need to know many teaching techniques which can improve their teaching and lead to students' success. In Thailand, there are no Thailand-focused publications about piano studio instruction, teaching techniques, or preparing students for music competitions.

This thesis proposes to: (1) identify effective techniques and studio instruction that lead to student success in piano competitions, (2) help teachers to improve their teaching techniques, (3) help students gain useful techniques for practicing to improve their musical skills, and (4) advocate further study on this topic.

For this thesis, piano teachers were interviewed on the following topics:

- Teaching techniques
- Students' practicing
- Communication with parents
- Related contexts

Research Questions

1. Which teaching techniques do teachers use to prepare students for piano competitions?

2. How should students practice?
3. How do teachers communicate with parents to help their children practice?
4. What other factors do teachers use when preparing their students for the competition?

Objective of the Research

To study strategies of instruction for the student piano competition of the Yamaha Thailand Music Festival.

Benefits of the Research

1. To help piano teachers know the process of teaching in preparing students for the piano competition.
2. To advocate further study on this topic.

The Scope of the Study

1. The study of strategies of instructions for the student piano competition.
2. The case study involved piano teachers of the Yamaha (Siam Kolakarn) Music School who had students advance to the final round of the Roon Lek category of the Yamaha Thailand Music Festival in at least two years of competition. It included teaching techniques used to prepare students for the piano competition which were categorized as:

- 2.1 Teaching techniques
- 2.2 Students' practicing
- 2.3 Communication with parents
- 2.4 Related contexts

3. The instrument used in this research was a semi-structured interview. The study involved ten piano teachers who were selected because of their proficiency

of students' participation in the piano competition of the Yamaha Thailand Music Festival. In order for teachers to be eligible for the study, they must have students reached the final round of the Yamaha Thailand Music Festival in at least two years of competition. Eligible teachers were selected with purposive sampling.

Limitations

In this study, interview data collected from ten teachers of the Yamaha (Siam Kolakarn) Music School were analyzed. All of the teachers interviewed had students who advanced to the final round of the Roon Lek category of the Yamaha Thailand Music Festival in at least two years of competition. However, teachers' sex, age, education, school branch, and teaching experiences were not considered. Also, the interviews began after teachers had already selected students for the competition.

Definitions of Terms

Student Piano Competition refers to an event set up for piano students to show their potential in piano playing. The student who performs the best can win a prize.

Yamaha Thailand Music Festival refers to the music competition, which is held annually for the students of the Yamaha (Siam Kolakarn) Music School. It covers many types of instruments such as piano, electone, guitar, violin, and a singing category.

Roon Lek refers to students of the Yamaha (Siam Kolakarn) Music School who attend the piano competition of the Yamaha Thailand Music Festival, and who are nine to twelve years old.

Teacher refers to a teacher of the Yamaha (Siam Kolakarn) Music School, who has had students advanced to the final round of the Roon Lek category of Yamaha Thailand Music Festival in at least two years of competition.

Teaching Technique refers to a method that a teacher uses to teach students to gain musical knowledge and skills for the piano competition of Yamaha Thailand Music Festival.

Students' Practicing refers to ways that students practice at home.

Communication with Parents refers to a conversation between teacher and parents about how parents can help their children practice at home.

Related contexts refers to other things that are related to the strategy of instruction and preparation process.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

In this study, regarding the topic of a strategy of instruction for the student piano competition, the study of work by other researchers and different sources of information contain the following topics:

Music Competition

1. Definition of Music Competition
2. Advantages and Disadvantages of Music Competition
 - 2.1 Advantages of Music Competition
 - 2.2 Disadvantages of Music Competition
3. Piano Competitions in Thailand
 - 3.1 Bangkok Chopin Piano Competition
 - 3.2 Thailand International Piano Competition
 - 3.3 Siam InterNATional Competition
4. Significance of the Yamaha Thailand Music Festival

Characteristics of Children (7-12 years old)

Effective Practice

A Strategy of Instruction for the Student Piano Competition

1. Teaching Techniques
2. Student Practice
3. Communication with Parents
4. Related Contexts

Related Research Works

Music Competition

1. Definition of a Music Competition

A “competition” is a contest in which people try to win by being better, faster, etc., than others: an event in which people compete (*Merriam-Webster's Advanced Learner's Dictionary*, 2010). A music competition is an event that is set up for musicians to show their talents and try to win prizes by doing their best. Its aim is to judge and promote a perfect musical performance in which challenges are presented and lots of expectations are met (McCormick, 2009). A music competition, in other words, is an assessment of both teacher and student (Hallam, 1998). Students are judged on their performances by receiving written or spoken evaluations from judges which are useful for further competitions (Bastien, 1988). A music competition can refer to an event in which a final outcome results in a small number of people winning while many people losing (Abeles, Hoffer, and Klotman, 1995). Sometimes the competitors, who take part in a music competition, may come only to sing and play for the judges. But after the competition, those competitors may not influence or take any role in the world of music (Maddy, 1936). McCormick (2009, p.7-8) describes a music competition as an opportunity for a musical society to control and judge the performances and praise the best performers. The structure of most international music competitions for solo instrument contains three rounds; solo recital, solo recital and chamber music, and concerto with the orchestra. However, a music competition becomes an important event in the world of music and many of them are held to lead performers to a career in music (Abeles, Hoffer, and Klotman, 1995).

Maddy (1936) defines the word “music contest” as an event which focuses mainly on the competitive aspect. Walker (1989, p.186) gives definitions of a music contest which can be divided into two different types; competitive music contest and noncompetitive music contest.

- A competitive music contest is one where competitors are assessed and given a ranking, thus identifying a hierarchy of winners and losers amongst the performers. While some competitions give awards and prizes for the top two or three contestants, some focus only on the top-placed competitors.

- A noncompetitive music contest is one where performers are judged independently from other contestants. Here, musicians receive feedback on their performance without directly competing against their peers. Some of these contests include awards that indicate the performers' level of accomplishment.

2. Advantages and Disadvantages of Music Competitions

Music competitions have both advantages and disadvantages. Some music educators support music competitions as a means of motivating and gaining valuable performing experience, while other music educators resist them because of their competitive aspect, pressure and disappointment.

2.1 Advantages of Music Competitions

Motivation is one of the most important advantages of a music competition. Most music educators support the motivation aspect. Music competitions can motivate students and teachers in preparing the pieces. When students know that they have to participate in a competition, they work harder and practice more to reach the goal of winning the competition and use this opportunity to develop their musical skills. The excitement of a music competition can bring about an improvement in a student's performance and an outstanding performance can affect students in terms of being a good musician. Similarly for the teachers, they need to pay more attention to their students' studies and performances. Techniques, musical elements, and expression while performing will be analyzed carefully. These concepts of motivation for students and teachers follow those of Parncutt and McPherson (2002), Thomas (1992), Bastien (1988), and Maddy (1936). The study of O'Neill about motivation indicates that students who are experienced in performing, even if it is not a good performance, will have more progress in learning musical skills than students who do not have any experience in performing (Parncutt and McPherson, 2002). Participating in music competitions improves students' sense of music in the long-term, develops students' musical standards, and encourages students' performances faster than not attending competitions (Walker, 1989). As Parncutt and McPherson (2002) have noted, "It is possible that motivational patterns may influence children's skill development much sooner in instrumental music learning than in other subject areas."

Another advantage of music competition is performing experiences. Bastien (1988) states that students can gain more experience by facing performance pressure, such as performance anxiety and dealing with the expectations of other participants. The students also gain benefits from receiving comments or evaluations from judges. These evaluations help improve their performances. After receiving the judgments from the competition, teachers will know the strong and weak points of their students which may come from the teachers' own teaching or come from the students. Teachers use the judgments to improve their teaching and solve any problems that occurred. Students also receive comments from other people apart from their teachers, which is helpful for both students and teachers in preparing for future competitions. Moreover, music competitions offer an opportunity not only to perform excellent music but also to hear others' performances, which can expand students' musical experience (Walker, 1989).

2.2 Disadvantages of Music Competitions

Many music educators resist music competitions. Some music educators claim that musical competitions are a way to compete with other people for their own glory. It cannot lead to the real result of learning music or even identify what students gain from music lessons. One of the disadvantages that many music educators are concerned with the most is students' feelings. Some students may feel uncomfortable in performing under pressure (McCormick, 2009). Performing under pressure can cause performance anxiety, which can affect the performance. Walker (1989) claims that the pressure and bad failure feelings which can affect students when they are disappointed by judgments or comments from others may seriously discourage students. In any competition, there are winners and losers. The number of losers is always greater than the number of winners. "One person's triumph requires another's relative loss," claimed by Thomas (1992). Participating in music competitions may not be worth it if there are fewer winners but more losers (Abeles, Hoffer, and Klotman, 1995). The losers may think that they are not good enough but in fact this may not necessarily be true. The competition awards only one winner, so the rest of the competitors cannot reach the highest point. This is the reason why music educators claim that music competitions cannot present a real result of learning music. The final result of learning music is not to be a winner but to have the capability to

play and understand music. In a competition, music is used as a way to win a prize but is not used for its real musical value. Moreover, the judgments are only the judges' individual views which make the results subjective.

Abeles, Hoffer, and Klotman (1995) describe that gaining motivation from music competitions is not necessary as they assert that the motivation for sport competitions differ from music competitions. In general, athletes can forget the loss faster than musicians. Beating someone in a music competition cannot build characteristics for musicians; characteristics can be built from collecting musical skills. In fact, students can gain musical skills from attending music competitions; however, the final goal of a music competition is to win, not to receive musical skills. Moreover, students who participate in music competitions use music to beat other competitors in the competition instead of playing delightfully.

3. Thailand Piano Competitions

Piano competitions in Thailand are very popular events for young pianists. Many piano competitions have been established and popularized in recent years.

3.1 Bangkok Chopin Piano Competition

The Bangkok Chopin Piano Competition is hosted by the Bangkok Chopin Society to present young talent in piano performances, especially for Chopin's works. It is held every three years. This competition is open to pianists of all nationalities who have resided in Thailand for at least two years.

In this competition, there are four age categories; First-Age Category (10-12 years old), Second-Age Category (13-15 years old), Third-Age Category (16-18 years old) and Fourth-Age Category (19-26 years old). There is only one stage for each category except the Fourth-Age Category that requires three stages.

According to the Ninth Bangkok Chopin Piano Competition in 2011, the repertoire for each category consists of one work by Bach and many works by Chopin. For the First-Age Category, competitors need to perform one Two-part Invention by Bach, one Mazurka, one Waltz and one Polonaise by Chopin. For the Second-Age Category, competitors need to perform one Three-part Invention by Bach, one Etude, two Mazurkas, one Nocturne, one Waltz and one Polonaise by Chopin. For the Third-Age Category, competitors need to perform two pieces from the French Suites by

Bach, one Nocturne, one Etude, two Mazurkas, one Polonaise and one more work by Chopin chosen from the given list. In the Fourth-Age Category, competitors are required to perform in two stages. In the First stage, competitors need to perform one Prelude and Fugue by Bach, one Nocturne, one Etude and one Polonaise by Chopin. The Second stage requires one work chosen from the given list and one whole set of Mazurkas by Chopin.

There are four prizes for this competition. The competitor who gets the highest score in each category will get each prize.

3.2 Thailand International Piano Competition

The Thailand International Piano Competition is a piano competition hosted by the College of Music, Mahidol University. It provides an opportunity for young pianists of all nationalities whose ages are between 15-24 years old.

This competition consists of three rounds: First Round, Semi-Final Round and Final Round. There is also one Tape Audition Round which is a Preliminary Audition. Candidates should send a video recording or a DVD which includes 20-30 minutes of solo music. The judges will advance 20 pianists from the Tape Audition Round to the First Round, ten pianists to the Semi-Final Round and six pianists to the Final Round.

According to the Second Thailand International Piano Competition in 2011, the repertoire for the Tape Audition Round consists of three pieces: one piece by a classical composer, one piece by a romantic composer and one last piece chosen by the competitor. The duration of the performance for this round is 20-30 minutes. For the First Round, the competitor is required to perform a 30-35 minute recital, including two etudes by different composers, one Prelude and Fugue by Bach and one other piece chosen by the competitor. For the Semi-Final Round, the competitor is required to perform a 45-50 minute recital, including one complete Classical Sonata, one piece by a romantic composer, one piece from the 20th century period, and any piece chosen by the competitor from any period. For the Final Round, the competitor is required to perform a 15-20 minute solo recital and one concerto chosen from the given list to perform with the full orchestra.

There are three prizes: First Prize, Second Prize and Third Prize. There are three more special prizes for the rest of three finalists in the Final Round. In addition to the money awarded, the First Prize winner also receives a Yamaha Grand Piano C2 and a concerto performance with the Thailand Philharmonic Orchestra the following year.

3.3 Siam InterNATional Piano Competition

The Siam InterNATional Piano Competition is a piano competition hosted by the National Culture Commission and Nat Studio. The objectives of this competition are to encourage musical competence and raise the international standards of young people, to spread the mastership in piano music of His Majesty the King, to promote friendship and culture diversity between individuals in classical piano music, and to create individuality in young people. This competition is held every three years and provides an opportunity for all nationalities of pianists who are 7-18 years old.

There are four age categories; 7-9 years old, 10-12 years old, 13-15 years old and 16-18 years old. There are two rounds for each category: Preliminary Round and Final Round.

The repertoire for each category consists of works by various composers. The Preliminary Round requires three pieces from different composers and different time periods. For the Final Round, the competitor is required to perform three pieces: two pieces by famous composers and one piece by His Majesty the King. The special aspect of this competition is that the competitor needs to perform one piece composed by His Majesty the King. This is as one objective of the competition is to promote the mastership in piano music of His Majesty the King.

There are three prizes for each category: First Prize (Puangroy Prize), Second Prize (Piyabhand Prize) and Third Prize (Pantipa Prize). In addition to the money awarded, the winners of each prize and category will have an opportunity to perform to a public audience.

4. Significance of the Yamaha Thailand Music Festival

The Yamaha Thailand Music Festival was first held in 1970. It is held annually for students of the Yamaha (Siam Kolakarn) Music School and allows

students to show their talents and win prizes. The Yamaha Thailand Music Festival covers various types of instruments such as piano, electone, guitar, singing, and violin. Some instruments contain more categories. For the piano, there are classical piano (solo piano) and piano duet. For the electone, there are solo electone, electone ensemble and electone Stagea² band. For the guitar, there are classical guitar (solo guitar) and guitar ensemble.

The objectives of this competition are to show potentials and abilities of young musicians who study music under the curriculum of Music Worldwide Education System from Japan which is an international curriculum. It is a chance to exchange knowledge and musical experience between Yamaha students from all over the country. The Yamaha Thailand Music Festival provides an opportunity for young generations to show their talents in music to the public. It is also a starting point to encourage young generations to enter the world of music, as well as developing their musical skills and improve playing abilities to a world standard.

There are two rounds for the Yamaha Thailand Music Festival; preliminary and final rounds. The preliminary round is divided into five sections, based on the regions of Thailand: Bangkok, middle and eastern, northern, northeastern, and southern parts. Each part uses the same judges and covers five categories of instruments, which are piano, electone, guitar, violin, and singing. The prizes of the preliminary round are awarded in four levels: Gold, Silver, Bronze, and honorable mention. The students who get the Yamaha Golden Prize from the preliminary round are allowed to attend the final round. The preliminary round is held in October to November of the previous year. The final round is held in May of year of the final. For example, the Yamaha Thailand Music Festival 2012, the preliminary round was held in October to November 2011 and the final round will be held in May 2012. In every year, there are over a thousand students who apply for the Yamaha Thailand Music Festival. From the report of the Siam Music Yamaha Co., Ltd., who conducts this competition, 2,177 students from all over the country applied for the preliminary round of all instrument categories of the Yamaha Thailand Music Festival in 2010. Then, 320 competitors passed through to the final round.

² the newest model of the electone.

In the piano competition of the Yamaha Thailand Music Festival, there are four age categories; Roon Jew (the youngest group) is for students who are not more than eight years old, Roon Lek (the younger group) is for students who are not more than 12 years old, Roon Klang (the middle group) is for students who are not more than 16 years old, and Roon Tuapai (the oldest group) is for students who are not more than 20 years old.

According to the regulations of the Yamaha Thailand Music Festival 2012, the repertoires of the piano competition for the preliminary round are at least two pieces from the given list, which is from different periods including an etude and an exercise piece. There is a time limit for each category. For Roon Jew, the length of the two pieces must not be longer than two minutes. Roon Lek, the time limit is no longer than three minutes. For Roon Klang, the time limit is no longer than five minutes. For Roon Tuapai, the time limit is no longer than six minutes. For all of the categories, if there is time left, students can select the third piece to make up the length of time within the time limit.

The rules of judgment cover four aspects (Siam Music Yamaha Co., Ltd., 2011, p. 10). Technique and accuracy are the first point that the judge will consider. Next, the style and expression; students have to pass on musical interpretation by making the audience understand the composers' intents. Moreover, balance is another point. Students have to pay attention to the balancing of the hands as well as the dynamics, articulation, and other elements. The last point is the stage presentation. Students have to perform the music with good posture and manner.

Characteristics of Children (7-12 years old)

Children who are between 7-12 years old can be described as being in middle childhood (Ray, 2011). Children's bodies, personalities, and minds develop continually during this stage. They conceive reasonably concrete objects but cannot develop abstract thoughts. Children who are interested in the arts or any other fields will develop and increase their potential in those fields quickly at this stage. They also have more concentration than children in the younger stage, are well-adjusted to friends and schools, and like receiving rewards after accomplishing something.

Children in this stage develop many areas but for judgment and reasoning, they cannot develop efficiently; they cannot judge or make decision wisely or solve problems by setting hypotheses.

Children's musical development mainly involves brain development, partly physical, emotion, and social skills (Suttajit, 1998). For children who are 9-11 years old or in primary 4-6, their musical development is increased. Children in this stage respond more to complex things such as complex tempo, a wide range of melody, and musical expression. Moreover, they are ready to perceive and develop musical harmony and pitch, and are able to play a musical instrument like a keyboard, which unlike younger children. So, this stage is an ideal time to start learning a musical instrument. Children's voice quality is developed; they are able to sing various styles of song. They signify their fondness for music. Parents need to support their children so that their children gain confidence, and then provide them with music lessons of their choice. Furthermore, children in this stage have more reading ability; parents may provide children with musical books, for example, the history of music or composer's biography in order to expand their interest and develop the musical knowledge. Most children in middle childhood can listen to music longer than children in the younger stage. Participating in concerts or musical events exposes children to the world of music.

Effective Practice

According to Webster's "practice" is "to perform or train repeatedly in order to become proficient". It cannot be denied that repetition is the most important process in musical practicing (Pedrick, 1998). On the other hand, many students use practice time in repeating mistakes without correcting them (Oare, 2011).

An effective practice consists of five stages; setup, preparation, warm-up, maintenance, and advancement (Pedrick, 1998).

- Setup. Students need to remove all distractions and make a practice room quiet. Then, they need to gather all necessary materials for practice, for instance: the instruments, sheet music, books, metronome, music stand, pencil, or recording equipment. Moreover, the instrument used should be in a good condition.

- Preparation. Mental and physical preparation is also important. Students need to focus and concentrate on practice; engaging minds and focusing on hands. Furthermore, this is the time to set goals for practice about what and how much to complete for the week's practice. For physical preparation, students relax muscle and free tension in every part of their bodies. This brings correct posture and makes playing easier. It also avoids health problems.

- Warm-up. After preparing the practice environment, students are ready to practice. Beginning with finger exercises such as scales, arpeggios, or etudes which need to be given attention on techniques, form of hands, and posture. When students feel comfortable with their instruments and hands, it is time to move to the next process.

- Maintenance. This is the most important session in practice. It is a time for students to review what they have learned in class. Unfortunately, many students skip this step then start learning new materials. Reviewing and maintaining techniques and reflecting on problems that occurred provides students with opportunities to learn new techniques which will not make them suffer when facing these techniques in the future.

- Advancement. Examining a new piece and gathering its information as much as possible is the first step towards learning new material. The following elements must be considered: key, time signature, dynamics, structure, and any possible problem points. Once students consider all elements, they read and play the piece without stopping to correct mistakes. Reading and playing the whole piece provides students with an understanding of the overall work. The next step is to read and play the piece again. By this time, mistakes that occur during the piece need to be separated and solved immediately by taking the problematic passage out and repeating it slowly and carefully until students can perform it without any mistakes. When students can overcome this mistake using this process, they can reapply it in order to correct other mistakes.

Finally, after students are confident with their pieces, they are better able to perform for as many as audiences they can.

A Strategy of Instruction for Student Piano Competition

1. Teaching Techniques

- **Preparation Duration**

When teachers decide to let their students enter the piano competitions, teachers have the duty to train their students to perform under pressure (Bastien, 1988). Teacher should give students enough time, at least three months, to prepare and accomplish the pieces for the competition (Stafford, 2006). The pieces for the competition will normally be announced about one year or at least six months before the competition day, so it is better to prepare as soon as possible. The teachers should have some time supposing there are some mistakes or unexpected things occur (Zeigler and Ostromencki, 1995). Not being ready for the competition can make students scared and embarrassed. In contrast, the well-prepared students will have fun and be stimulated in the competition and students who select their own pieces for the competition will be more enthusiastic.

- **Views of Judges**

According to an article by Zeigler and Ostromencki (1995), different judges will look at different details, so teachers need to be aware of every detail. The basic points that the judges will look for are posture (the way students sit at the piano), hand position, use of hands and wrists, touching the piano, and use of the pedal. Following the composer's intent, paying attention to the tempo, notes, dynamics, phrasing, and articulations are the ways to get best performance and high ratings from judges. The style of the piece, techniques, and musicianship are important and should also be prepared exhaustively (Bastien, 1988).

- **Practice Method**

In teaching students for the competition, teachers should let students study the notes and find the right fingers first because playing with the right fingers will make the sound of notes flow (Berger, 2009). The basic way to improve hands and fingers' potential is playing scales (Stafford, 2006). If students can play scales in different tempo, rhythm, and articulation well, they will have no problem in using hands and fingers to play the pieces, because there will be some scales or some parts

of scales in it. Furthermore, teachers should encourage students to first practice using separate hands. When students become familiar with each hand then they should practice with both hands together. It is important to teach students to play by phrase, not by bars or lines, because it will give more musical sense and each phrase should be practiced with separate hands at first (Berger, 2009). Moreover, students do better if they do not work on more than one or two measures at a time because it is not easy for minds and hands to do too many tasks at the same time (Satz and Satz, 2009). If the section that students are learning is too complicated, teachers should encourage them to break that section into small parts, because practicing a section which is too long will take a longer time to learn. The concept of practicing and repeating in phrases can be used to solve the mistakes of difficult points in piece. When the mistakes occur, students should not go back and restart playing from the beginning, teachers should tell them to keep practicing those problematic sections or phrases (Berger, 2009).

- **Using a Metronome**

In the competition, playing pieces with a correct and steady tempo is required. Sometimes students are asked to play in fast tempo, but it is more appropriate to play slower, so that the piece can be played accurately (Bastien, 1988). In addition, using a metronome to keep the tempo steady is another useful way (Berger, 2009). It can show problems of playing that piece. Moreover, a metronome can help students to increase their speed by an amount so small that ears cannot hear it. So, teachers can use a metronome to make students play in time, then build up to the real tempo little by little (Satz and Satz, 2009). If students keep increasing the speed every time they practice, finally they will reach the real tempo that they are supposed to play. Playing the piece in very fast tempo is also beneficial, because playing faster than the real tempo will allow students to know how much they can handle the piece and which parts they are still not good at.

- **Memorization**

One more thing that the competitions require is memorizing the pieces. Analyzing the key, form or structure, sequences, chord progressions, cadences, scales, and any difficult points or little details of the piece can help students to memorize easier and can help shorten time for memorizing (Hallam, 1998, Zeigler and Ostromencki, 1995, Pierce, 1993, and Reichling, 1989). Some students memorize the

pieces by repeating the entire piece over and over again to make their fingers learn to play automatically without thinking; this will cause students to forget the whole piece (Satz and Satz, 2009). Phrases or sections should be memorized, not individual note. Satz and Satz (2009) also state that teachers can ask students to analyze the notes and finger patterns then keep practicing on these things after first making sure that students are confident. After that, the same process should be repeated with the next difficult section. Finally, students will find that they have memorized each section by learning through the sections. Besides, finding the specific sections to focus on during performances can help students to recover the piece when they get lost whilst memorizing the piece (Miller, 2004). Furthermore, memorizing scales can help students to be better in auditions and music will flow more easily (Pierce, 1993). Practicing slowly is one way to help memorize a piece (Stafford, 2006). It provides a chance to pay attention to every detail of the piece. Playing the piece from memory also provides students with expression and musicality (Hargreaves and North, 1997). Moreover, if students know their music by memory, they will feel deeper in their music (Pierce, 1993).

- **Listening**

Listening to the recording or watching concerts or videos of the works they have been playing is useful because students need to get an overall image of the music they are going to play (Oare, 2011). Hargreaves and North (1997) state, according to the conversation with Jane Davidson and Jonathan Smith, they both agree that well-known performances motivate students. Moreover, while students are listening to music, they are developing an aural image of characteristic tone and style. For the best result in listening, teachers should guide students to proper recordings that will help students to identify rhythmic, harmonic, melodic, and formal patterns which can develop students' sense of music of the style they are studying (Oare, 2011). According to Oare's study, there are many advantages of getting the overall image before playing: (1) students can use listening to help them to understand the notes, (2) listening can be used as a self-assessment, because students already know how their music should sound, and (3) students can imitate the sound as well as improve their musical accuracy and expression by listening to the music. Furthermore, listening can be useful throughout students' musical careers or lives. All elements of music are

experienced by the ears. So it is important to build students to be good listeners (Hartsell, 1963).

- **Recording Student's Performance**

In addition to listening to the performances of other performers, students should also listen to their own performance, because sound recording can be beneficial in improving several expressive dimensions (Woody, 2000). Moreover, teachers can record students' performances, and then let students listen or watch their own performance to see their mistakes (Bastien, 1998). Young students are not aware of their own mistakes in their playing, while professionals are more aware of their strengths and weaknesses (Oare, 2011).

- **Musical Expression (Expressivity)**

According to the study of Woody (2000), it shows that musicians in his study think that musical expression is one of the most important or perhaps the most important aspects of performance. As Budd (1985), Davies (2001), and Juslin (2001) stated, "Music is heard as expressive by listeners" (as cited in Lindstrom et al, 2003, p. 23). There are many teaching strategies to teach students expressive skills. The three most popular strategies are teacher modeling, the use of metaphors, and felt emotion (Lindstrom et al, 2003, and Woody, 2000).

- *Teacher Modeling*

Many music educators suggest that teacher modeling is a good way to teach students performance skills and also expressive performance (Woody, 2002, and Anderson, 1981). The study of Woody (2000) shows that private lessons provide the opportunities for music students to develop skills in expressive performance. As Woody (2000) noted, "it also appears that within private instruction, modeling is a popular technique of teaching expressivity" (p. 20). Teacher modeling provides students with an opportunity to perceive an aural concept of what they are trying to achieve and involves students focusing on playing accurately following the teachers' instructions (Karlsson and Juslin, 2008, and Leonard and House, 1972). Furthermore, when teachers give students expressive models, students are required to process and remember aural performance information (Woody, 2002). As Anderson (1981) stated, "it is assumed that students who develop the aural concept then have the capability to improve their performance" (p. 24). Students can improve their

performance skills and attain much of their expressive ability through imitation of models (Oare, 2011 and Woody, 2000).

- *Metaphors*

Many teachers use imagery and metaphors to call attention to the emotional qualities of music in teaching students to perform expressively (Woody, 2002). Kovecses (2002) pointed out that “Metaphors are able to fulfill something that is uncertain or difficult to understand” (as cited in Arrais and Rodrigues, 2007, p. 266). Woody (2000) explained that some information is more easily expressed using metaphorical language than any other way “for example, Barten suggests that it is more efficient to tell a beginner-level flute student to imagine a hot potato in his/her mouth, rather than giving more anatomically-based instructions about an open mouth cavity” (p. 216). The study of Woody (2002) shows the use of imagery and metaphors by professional music teachers in teaching students to perform expressively in which they are concerned about the harmonic mode of major and minor. Traditional western music links the major tonality with happiness and minor with sadness which is affirmed in this study. Moreover, there is a use of the mood category such as ‘serious’, ‘weighty’ or ‘heavy’, and ‘brooding’ to describe the mood of the melody and a use of motion such as ‘skipping’, ‘high stepping’, and ‘walking briskly’ to describe the form of walking that is lively and upbeat.

- *Felt Emotion*

In teaching students to perform expressively, one useful teaching strategy is to focus on the performers felt emotion (Woody, 2000). Students think that it is necessary to feel the intended emotion while playing in order to communicate it to a listener successfully (Lindstrom et al, 2003). There are some comments from the study of Lindstrom et al (2003) about felt emotion, for example, ‘you have to feel the emotion in order for others to feel it’, or ‘listeners are able to differentiate between genuine and faked emotion.’

• **Performance Anxiety and How To Cope With It**

Playing pieces from memory as well as not being well-prepared for a competition can cause performance anxiety. Performance anxiety is caused by an adrenaline rush which occurs before and during performances (Murray, 2011 and Zeigler and Ostromencki, 1995). Many symptoms, for example, sweating, loss of

concentration, memory slips or the inability to control fingers to play the right notes, can be shown as the results of performance anxiety (Murray, 2011). Experienced musicians, who play in orchestras, amateur musicians and music students, have all faced performance anxiety (Steptoe and Fidler, 1987). Therefore, teachers should give students guidance on how to cope with performance anxiety when studying music (Kemenade, Son, and Heesch, 1995).

Teachers should give students enough time for preparation to make sure that students are confident in every detail (Hallam, 1998). Moreover, providing students with an opportunity to perform in front of other people like friends, parents, other students, and someone they do not know, will give students the chance to become familiar with playing under pressure in public, so that students will be relaxed with audiences. Also, practicing in front of audiences before the actual performance can highlight sections that students are still not good at (Murray, 2011 and Stafford, 2006). Thus, teachers can adjust the weak points to make students' performance perfect (Bastien, 1988). Furthermore, students should perform to the public at least two weeks or six weeks before the real competition day (Zeigler and Ostromencki, 1995, and Bastien, 1988). In addition, students may ask family members to do things that can be distracting for the student, because in the real situation, the audience may have annoying manners such as coughing, talking or moving around (Satz and Satz, 2009). Teachers should provide students with opportunities to play on as many different pianos as they can because the pianos at the competition will not be exactly the same as the piano they use to practice at home or school. It will make students get used to the different sound and touch of different pianos.

2. Students' Practicing

Practicing at home is one of the key elements in studying music and getting of performance skills (Anderson, 1981). At home, students will try the new ideas, practice, and have fun experiences (Lewis, 1996). The purposes of practice include developing techniques and interpretation, learning new music, preparing and memorizing music for performance (Hallam, 1998).

- **Amount of Practice and Practice Time**

The study of Ericsson, Krampe, and Tasch-Romer (1993) shows information about the amount of practice time for violin students, the best students in performance class have about 10,000 hours of practice until the age of 21 (as cited in Hargreaves and North, 1997, p.192). Almost all teachers agree that practice should be part of a daily routine of students (Berger, 2009). Practicing consistently every day will be more valuable than practicing longer one day then abstaining from practice for a few days (Satz and Satz, 2009). If students ignore practicing too many days, minds and hands will forget what they have learned. However, students should have at least one day off to let muscles relax and rest, because over practicing can be dangerous as it can hurt fingers and hands. The more students practice, the more advancement they will get (Satz and Satz, 2009). The amount of practice time depends on level, age, and the goals of students. Teachers can ask students to practice 15-20 minutes daily if students are young beginners and increase the amount of time if students are at a higher level. When students keep repeating the pieces but their results are not good, it is time to stop practicing in order to allow hands and brains to forget the mistakes. They should go back to study the piece again as time passes by, then they will find that they can learn the piece easier (Bancroft, 2007). Furthermore, students' goals are another factor. If students plan to continue studying in a music field or if they plan to attend the music competition, the amount of time for practicing must be longer.

Bancroft (2007) suggests that teachers should make agreements with students about practicing time. Let students decide when the proper time for practice will be, which can be before their favorite television show, after the dinner, immediately when they arrive home, or before or after taking a shower, whatever the time, students have to take responsibility for their decided time.

- **Dealing with Mistakes**

Teachers need to encourage students to focus on quality, not quantity of practice (Satz and Satz, 2009). Some students keep repeating mistakes over and over again while students with good practicing habits try to correct those mistakes, before they go deeper into those mistakes, which makes practice more effective (Berger, 2009). The difference between repeating and correcting the mistakes should be considered. Spending too much time practicing in the wrong way is worthless.

Whereas, spending less time practicing in the right way is more valuable. Repeating the whole piece over and over again is also a waste of time (Bancroft, 2007). What teachers should tell students to do so as to make effective practice at home is to find the difficult parts in the piece, consider how they are difficult, and then practice those parts until students are familiar with them. Next, students should play those difficult parts together with a few previous bars to see if students have problems those difficult parts or not. If necessary, students should go back to review those difficult parts again. After students become familiar with this, they may add a few measures after the difficult parts and keep practicing until there are no mistakes. These processes need to be repeated until students can play the whole piece. By doing this method, students will get the effective practice which leads to improved confidence when performing in public.

- **Aural Image**

Sometimes students play the pieces without any idea of what to focus on or what the piece should sound like. They just sit at the piano and play throughout the piece. So, the sound that comes out may not be right (Bancroft, 2007). Therefore, students need to have an aural image of their music before they play it (Barry and Hallam, 2002). Bancroft (2007) suggests that before playing any pieces, students should imagine the sound of the melody first, then sing or hum the melody in their head or out loud which can help students get the overall image of the piece and know what or which part to focus on.

- **Recording Home Practice**

In addition to teachers recording students' performance at school, teachers should ask students to record all practice, good or bad, then encourage students to self-assess during their home practice and write their self-assessment on their practice sheets (Oare, 2011, and Satz and Satz, 2009). Self-tape recording provides students with opportunities to understand their performance-improvement needs (Anderson, 1981). In addition to allowing students to see their performances and assess themselves, it also lets teachers check students' home practice and see what their strengths and weaknesses are. Ultimately, this helps teachers to promote the good points and adjust the bad points.

- **Setting a Goal**

Some musicians have problems motivating themselves to play the pieces, so having an obvious goal can be beneficial (Hallam, 1998). Setting goals is a key element of independent practice, but young students may not know how to set goals (Oare, 2011). Teachers can begin by writing them their daily goal and telling them exactly what should be accomplished and what they must do to reach those goals. Oare (2011) stated that “Students will accomplish more and enjoy practice more when they work to accomplish goals rather than practicing for a required amount of time.” A long-term goal like practicing for the examination, concerts, or competitions is also important (Hallam, 1998). If students have to complete pieces on time, their practice sessions will be the most effective because students have to concentrate on the pieces more than ever. Hallam (1998) describes many ways to help students to concentrate for example: working on interesting parts, setting the goal for a short time, trying to memorize the short parts, playing with a metronome in different tempo, and giving rewards if they can achieve the goal. If students have already practiced too much, it is better to take a break, because students will be unable to concentrate when they are tired or bored (Satz and Satz, 2009).

3. Communication with Parents

Parents have the most influence over children and are the keys to children’s success (Hargreaves & North, 1997). Motivating children to practice from an early age can prepare them to have efficiency in practicing alone when they move to the higher level (Maynard, 2000). Hallam (1998) highlights the importance of family in helping children to be successful musicians. Specifically, parents help children to develop their musical skill, they provide the opportunity for formal instruction, they find children’s talent, they can be supportive in every way, they can control practice time and, also, parents can encourage their children. Practicing at home also provides time for the family to join in children’s studies and see them develop.

- **Talking to Parents**

According to the importance of parents in students’ progress, teachers should guide parents about practicing at home (Lewis, 1996). Young students may

forget what they learned in class and cannot remember what they have to practice at home because they have not developed the capability to remind themselves completely, so they need their parents to remind them to practice and also set a practice schedule (Oare, 2011). Teachers can ask parents to attend classes with their children in order to see what their children learn and what their children ought to practice at home (Maynard, 2006). Teachers should talk to parents after each lesson and write the practice instructions in assignment books as well as guide parents completely on how they can help their children to practice at home, which can help students to practice in the right way and make the practice efficient (Oare, 2011, Berger, 2009, and Lewis 1996). Teachers may ask parents to focus on specific things such as children's hands position, or teachers may ask parents to sing and count out loud for their children (Lewis, 1996). Berger (2009) gives examples of instructions that teachers might tell parents:

- Practice a scale until you can play it with your eyes closed.
- Play each phrase of the piece until you can play it without any mistakes.
- Practice right and left hands separately until you play with no mistakes, and then put them together.
- Practice with a metronome at a speed of 100.
- Count out loud.

- **Non-Musical Parents**

Some parents may think that they have no ability in playing musical instruments or do not know much about music, so they worry that they cannot help their children to practice at home. Thus, teachers should explain to parents that they can help their children to practice by going over the teachers' instructions step by step (Berger, 2009). Hargreaves and North (1997) state that non-musical parents can learn something new about music from helping their children to practice at home.

- **Parents' Encouragement**

Shafer and Stinson (n.d.) suggest that parents should sit beside their children while they are practicing. If parents cannot sit beside children all the time, parents should be nearby as much as possible. Parents should not blame children if their performance is not good, because it will discourage them from playing or even

learning to play that instrument. Parents should give children some compliments and encouragement which can cheer up children (Satz and Satz, 2009). Moreover, parents can ask children to perform the pieces after practice, then discuss their performances and encourage children to keep practicing and learning new pieces (Bancroft, 2007).

- **Practice Place**

One more important thing about home practice is a place. Teachers should discuss with parents what the suitable practice room or space should be. The proper place for practice must be clean, quiet, separated from distracting things, and away from other family members (Lewis, 1996). Moreover, the practice room should have enough good quality air and light, and it should not be too cold or too hot (Satz and Satz, 2009).

4. Related Contexts

- **Clothing**

For the competitions, clothing or costume is also important. Good clothing can improve students' confidence (Satz and Satz, 2009). If students have confidence in their clothing, they will also have confidence in their performance. Good clothing must be comfortable; it should not make students hot, hang down over the hands, making it difficult to play, or make students feel self-conscious. Teachers may ask students to dress in the same clothing for the competition when practicing so as to make students get used to their clothing.

- **The Day Before the Competition**

On the day before the competition, some students want to practice hard but it may be too late (Stafford, 2006). Gurung (2006) stated that students should "take a break from playing or practicing a day before, so your body and mind can have a day of complete rest". Students should not spend many hours at the piano on the day before the competition or even on the competition day (Zeigler and Ostromencki, 1995). If students practice too much and make too many mistakes on the day before the competition, they will have a memory of making mistakes with them at the performance, which can discourage students (Stafford, 2006). Students should not stay up late at night or go to bed early before the competition day because they will wake

up early and they will have time to feel nervous about the competition (Zeigler and Ostromencki, 1995). Students should go to bed at a proper time, so they will have enough rest. What teachers should tell students to do on the day before the competition is relaxation. There are many ideas to help students to relax, such as taking a nice bath, having a nice meal, meditation, and having a good sleep (Stafford, 2006).

- **The Competition Day**

The competition day is the most important day for everyone; students themselves, parents, and also teachers. For young children, teachers can go with students and parents to support and encourage them (Bastien, 1988). Teachers should tell students that there is nothing to worry about; all they need is to enjoy their performances and provide pleasure for the audiences. They should not think about winning the prize, only doing their best. If listening to other candidates makes students nervous, teachers should ask students to stop listening or watching them (Stafford, 2006). Gurung (2006) commented about playing at the competition, “Winning and losing are subjective. Whether you win or lose, your goal should be to play as well as you can, and enjoy yourself.”

Related Research Works

Lekatarakorn (2009) studies the effective factors in piano practice, beginning level, Aum-Aree music school. The research covers three factors: teaching techniques, parental supporting, and home environment. The research finds that teachers should use their practicing techniques with their students, set weekly goals, and find appropriate motivation for each student. For parental supporting, parents should set appropriate practice time and also motivate their children to practice. Home environment is also important. Perfect place for practice should be quiet, separated from any distractions, has enough light, and is in good temperature. Musical instrument should be in good condition to make effective practice.

Prapatrangsee (2007) studies the practicing habits of Mahidol University’s pre-college music school students, particularly the students of woodwind instruments.

The research covers four parts: practicing plan, practicing approach, practicing step, and further studies.

Practicing plan: duration of practice for students is about three hours, from four to seven in the evening, Monday to Friday; exclude weekends and semester break. Most students know what to practice, but they do not know the process of practicing and how appropriate practice should be.

Practicing approach: most students practice from Monday to Friday. They can concentrate on practicing only the first fifteen to twenty minutes. They do not write down what they have practiced. There are only a few students who practice similarly as they perform.

Practicing step: students do not mention posture, correct breathing, and warm up techniques before playing. Most students focus on voicing and fingering. They also practice techniques and focus on musical expression of the pieces.

Further studies: most of students should attend concerts, listen to recordings or even join music camps to develop their musical skills.

Nararak (2006) studies the teaching articulation for basic level piano. The research finds that articulation teaching is important because articulation can promote the real musical value of the piece. Teaching process includes teachers' explanation, sample and demonstration by teachers, discussion and comparison the different quality of practice, and analysis of appropriate practice. There are two problems in articulation teaching; students have learned playing articulation in the wrong way, and students ignore playing the right articulation. So, teachers should encourage students to play the right articulation every time they practice.

Patwong (1998) studies the rehearsal planning and audition for marching band in secondary schools. The research covers three aspects: rehearsal planning, selecting student, and factors that affect the success of band management. The research finds that there is a clear schedule for rehearsals which are daily, weekly, and annually, but it is difficult to follow because there will be some unexpected events occur during semester. There are two methods for selecting students; select students from their physical characteristic and personality, and select from the observation of

students while they are practicing. The factors that affect the success of band management are school's staffs, external organization, and budget. If the staff management is efficient, the external organization will participate and support budget.

Hebert (2005) studies ethnography of a Japanese school band in terms of music competition, cooperation, and community. The research finds that the instruction of Japanese band is different from the Western, and teaching techniques of Japanese band are based on moral education and traditional music. Friends are important in learning process but parents do not have any important role in students' learning. Participation in band is important in musical identities. Japanese school bands are used to represent multicultural music for education which can be transformed in a few generations.

Temple (1973) studies the effectiveness of competition festivals in music education process. The research finds that students who are in competition bands do not sight-read better than students who are in non-competition bands. Participation in competitions sometimes limits students' music achievement. The wider scope of musical activities leads to better sight-reading in students. The experienced band director can manage budget used in the band and can instruct students to gain more musical achievement. Non-competition schools offer students an instrumental music program instead of a competition. Moreover, small schools have problems in managing music program to become high quality.

CHAPTER III

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This proposed research topic identified instruction strategies used by those preparing students for piano competition in a case study involving the Roon Lek category of the Yamaha Thailand Music Festival. Through qualitative inquiry, strategies of instruction were identified through:

Study Group

Instrument (Interviews)

Data Collection

Data Analysis

Study Group

Ten piano teachers of the Yamaha (Siam Kolakarn) Music School, who have had students advance to the final round of the Roon Lek category of the Yamaha Thailand Music Festival in at least two years of competition, were interviewed.

Instrument

Qualitative researchers generally collect data from interviews (Merriam, 2009). The tool used in this research for data collecting was a semi-structured interview. The researcher used interview protocol as a guideline during the interview process. Some of the questions could be flexible, depending on the conversation of the interviewee and time availability. Additional questions could be asked to respond to information offered by the interviewee. The interview focused on strategies of instruction for the student piano competition in the following topics:

1. Teaching techniques
2. Students' practicing

3. Communication with parents

4. Related contexts

Data Collection

The researcher contacted the interviewees for the interviews by meeting individually, telephoning, and sending e-mails. The interview period was the month of February, 2012. The researcher used face-to-face interviews for the interviewees who are in Bangkok. For the interviewees who are in the other provinces, the researcher used telephone or e-mail interview. The interviews took place in the interviewees' schools, homes, or other locations of their choices. The interviews were in Thai language for the convenience in communication between interviewer and interviewees. The interviews were recorded by recording equipment and the researcher took notes on the important points during the interview.

Interview questions are developed from the literature review to examine a strategy of instruction for the student piano competition. Questions are open-ended questions and probes were used to get more information from the interviewees. The in-depth interviews lasted from 30 minutes to an hour, depending on the time available of each interview.

Data Analysis

After the data was collected, the researcher transcribed the data from the recording to text data. The interviews were translated into English after transcribing. Then, the researcher used hand analysis of qualitative data (Creswell, 2008), which is a way to analyze the data by reading through the data, marking, and dividing the data into parts by hand. The next process of analyzing was the coding process (Creswell, 2008). This is a process to categorize the data into categories or segments. During the analysis process, the researcher marked specific themes which each interviewee shares. Followed by the content analysis in which "the content of interviews, field notes, and documents will be analyzed" (Merriam, 2009, p. 205). The process of content analysis consisted of encoding the raw data and categories that have

significant characteristics of the document's content (Merriam, 2009). To better understand the findings, the researcher went back to reread the transcriptions and literature to help explain the findings and the researcher attempted to put them into context.

CHAPTER IV

THE INTERVIEWS OF PIANO TEACHERS

Teaching Techniques

1. The difference between regular teaching and teaching for a competition

Is your regular teaching different from teaching for a competition? How?

Teacher A: “Yes, it is quite different. Teaching in regular class is to teach by following students’ ability, trying to make students happy, and not putting too much pressure on students. Therefore, there needs to be some improvement, not too slow, and parents are fine with their children’s improvement. Teaching for competition is more serious. It needs attention to every detail such as interpretation, articulation, the period of the songs, and suitable pieces for each student. I also provide extra exercises for students like scales or finger exercises such as Czerny or Hanon. Students should learn various skills; from exercising fingers to building up expression in playing pieces.”

Teacher B: “Yes. Teaching in regular class is to teach in an orderly step by step way, no skipping, and every student is able to learn. Teaching for competition skips from learning basic materials to playing real pieces. Every little detail is paid attention to carefully and teachers need to select students who are suited to the competition.”

Teacher C: “Yes, it is different. Teaching in regular class aims to make students happy and play the piano by following their potential. Piano repertoires in class are not as hard as in a competition.”

Teacher D: “Yes, it is different. Teaching for competition has a limit of duration for practice and is strict in every detail in all pieces. For teaching in regular class, it does not have to be strict in every detail in all pieces. For teaching in regular class, there is no certain duration in playing any pieces, it depends on the students’ capability which emphasizes the students’ happiness.”

Teacher E: “Yes, it is different. Teaching in regular class aims at making students be good at basic piano playing first which can help students to play difficult pieces by themselves in the future. Teaching for competition is a bit different; it involves jumping straight to playing difficult pieces which are more difficult than the student’s ability. If students do not know any basic skills, teachers need to teach them quickly and also quickly correct any mistakes that occur during the practice to make them be ready as soon as possible before the competition. Teaching for competition aims to win, but teaching in regular class aims to make students happy and have good basic skills.”

Teacher F: “Yes. Teaching for competition is more serious than teaching in regular class because students need to pay more attention to every detail, including fingers used, the weight of fingers, expression, and performing posture. These details need to be performed more clearly than they need to be in regular class.”

Teacher G: “Yes, it is different. Teaching in regular class is to teach lesson leisurely but teaching for competition requires paying more attention. Teaching for competition in my opinion, emphasizes the students’ happiness. I believe that when students are happy, everything will be fine.”

Teacher H: “Yes, it is different. Students who learn normally in class do not have any inspirations or goals. They learn unhurriedly. However, when students decide to participate in a competition, they have a goal; they realize what they must do each day. Thus, the result of learning in regular class and learning for competition will be different.”

Teacher I: “No, it is not. Teaching in regular class and teaching for competition require the same fundamental teaching. I want students who study in regular class to have good fundamental skills, like students who are going to participate in a competition. However, students who are going to participate in competition will practice a lot and also practice thoroughly to make the sound clear and perfect.”

Teacher J: “Yes, it is. Teaching in regular class is to teach in an orderly way following the lesson plan. Students practice normally, but when teaching for competition, students need to practice more than usual to make their performance perfect.”

Summary From the interviews, it was found that nine teachers, Teachers A, B, C, D, E, F, G, H, and J express that regular teaching differs from teaching for a competition. However, there is one teacher, Teacher I who thinks that these two kinds of teaching are similar.

Teachers A, B, C, D, and G express that teaching in a regular class is to teach in an orderly way following the lesson plan, which increases students' potential and aims to make students happy with their learning. This concept conforms to the opinion of Teacher E that teaching students in a regular class aims to make students happy with their lesson and conforms to the opinion of Teacher J in which regular teaching is to teach following the syllabus and giving students normal practice. Moreover, this concept also conforms to the opinion of Teacher H that in regular teaching, students will have no inspirations or goals in what they practice; they only learn in unhurried way following the syllabus. In addition, Teacher E expresses something different: that when teaching in a regular class, teachers need to provide good fundamental skills in playing piano to students, which can allow students to play difficult pieces in the future. Teachers A, B, C, D, F, and G think that teaching in a regular class differs from teaching for a competition in that when teaching for a competition, teachers need to focus carefully on details. This is different from the opinion of Teacher E that teaching for a competition, involves jumping straight to playing pieces that are more difficult than the students' ability, so if students are not ready in any skills, teachers need to teach them those skills in a limited time. This also differs from the opinion of Teacher H in which there are clear goals of what students need to practice in a limited time in teaching for a competition, which differs from the opinion of Teacher J that when teaching for a competition, students need to practice more than usual to make their performance perfect.

Teacher I expresses the opinion that teaching in a regular class does not differ from teaching for a competition because in these two kinds of teaching, teachers need to instruct students gaining good fundamental skills first, which conforms to some of the opinion of Teacher C. However, students need to practice quite a lot, which conforms to the opinion of Teacher J. Moreover, students need to practice carefully and make the sound clear, which conforms to the opinion of Teacher F.

2. Teacher's practice schedule for students

After the teachers have chosen students and repertoires for the competition, they put together a practice schedule for their students such as follows:

Teacher A: "After I have spent about one week in selecting repertoires for each student, (1) I will ask students to play through the pieces with all right notes in the first month. (2) Then in the second month, I may ask students to focus on dynamics, articulation, or the pedal (if necessary). (3) The rest of the time before the competition will be spent on adjustment and additional details such as, finger weight, expression, or using the pedal, which I correct until the last day before the competition. I will tell students and their parents about what I want each student to improve in each month. I also note the improvement of each student each week. We will practice hard after the first three months because the first three months is a time for students to study all notes."

Teacher B: "(1) I provide students with listening skills first. Students should listen to recordings of their pieces to recognize the melody. Then, listen to the rhythm, articulation, or stress. (2) Followed by practice partly with separate hands (right hand first). When the right hand is skilled, then play with the metronome. After that, practice the left hand in the same process. (3) Finally, practice both hands together and use the metronome to control the rhythm every time."

Teacher C: "After selecting the pieces for each student, I tell my students to manage their practice schedule and add more practice time because I will check their progress frequently. For my practice plan, at the beginning of the practice, (1) students need to warm their fingers with finger exercises like Hannon or Czerny. (2) Then, they practice with each hand separately until both hands are skillful. When they practice with the left hand, they should try to sing the melody of the right hand also to see how they both relate to each other. (3) The next step is to practice with both hands together with a slow tempo. (4) When students are familiar with both hands together, try to increase the tempo little by little each time and finally increase to the real tempo."

Teacher D: "I plan to have students practice in an orderly way, not put too much pressure on them, but it should be a constant development. (1) Students should read and play notes of the whole piece. If the notes form in the intervals or chords, used fingers need to be played together at the same time, paying attention to every finger,

and make it sound equal and weighty. The duration of practice of this beginning process depends on the students' readiness and potential; it may take one or two months. (2) I add more detail in the student's performance for instance, dynamics, phrasing, etc, then teach students about the elements of that piece and explain to them what the form of that piece is. (3) I tell students to add musical expression. These are my brief plans; they can be flexible, which depends on the students and the repertoires, because each student has a different learning ability."

Teacher E: "After I select repertoires for students, (1) I ask students to listen to the songs or sometimes I play those songs for students, then I ask students to select the songs they like and want to perform for the competition. (2) Let students study the notes and practice themselves which has to be finished in one or two weeks. (3) After that, I will check their practice and correct the mistakes. This process takes the longest duration to practice because students always play with wrong fingers or wrong notes. I solve this problem by asking students to go back to analyze the fingers, see if they use wrong fingers, hand position, or finger technique or not. Sometimes when students play proficiently but without good techniques, I provide students with finger exercises such as Czerny, Hanon, and also scales, to prepare students to use the right fingers and also help students to read the notes faster. For example, if this phrase is in the key of F major, students should put the first finger on F and the fourth finger will be automatically on B-flat, so they do not need to look at the score and worry about the fingers which make students play this phrase faster. (4) After students play all notes and fingers correctly, I improve their musical expression while performing and add some little details."

Teacher F: "(1) I ask students to listen to the song they need to play first. (2) I teach students about the notes of the melody which mostly is on the right hand by letting students read and try to play by themselves. I tell them to play by phrase and encourage students to sing note names while playing, which can help students to memorize the melody. It is unnecessary to play the whole piece once; I mostly teach by part or section. For example, I only teach the right hand of the A section, (3) when students are familiar with the right hand, move on to the left hand. (4) When they can play both hands separately with skill, try to play them together. The duration of

practice of this first process depends on students' ability and perception; some students can learn fast but some learn slowly."

Teacher G: "After selecting students and their repertoires for the competition, (1) I provide students a chance to study their repertoires and practice on their own. I tell students to practice with separate hands first, (2) when they can play each hand separately without any mistakes, try to combine them. (3) After students play the whole piece well, I tell them the additional details for instance, point them the important sections, and explain how they are special, what the emotion should be, and how they should play these sections. The rest depends on students how they will practice. I usually let students play independently; there is no fix on the performance as to what style is correct. Students are given an opportunity to try various styles and choose the style they like which can present their identity."

Teacher H: "(1) I consider how many months left we have and how many pieces students need to play. Then, I make a plan about what students need to get each month and when students should be ready for the competition. Sometimes I am behind the plan but sometimes I am over it. It depends on the students. (2) After I plan, I begin to teach repertoires for students directly, there is no time to practice exercise or scales because we do not have much time for the competition of the Yamaha Thailand Music Festival. Finger exercises, scales, or arpeggios will be played when we have enough time. For example, if students finish the competition in the Preliminary Round then need to practice for the Final Round, I always skip practicing on those techniques, I tell students to practice repertoires immediately. For the scales or the other techniques, I will look inside the repertoire, if there is a scale, I will bring that scale out and practice separately. (3) The duration that students need to be ready for the Yamaha Thailand Music Festival is one month before the competition. It is not easy to make students be ready in more than one month because they do not have much time to practice."

Teacher I: "(1) I ask students to practice separate hands first, and then practice hands together after they can play each hand well. (2) When they can play the whole piece well, I will adjust the mood of the piece to build the musicality to make that piece more interesting. (3) Next, I will add more details into the piece to make the piece

perfect for students. The most time after students can play the piece well will be spent in the adjustment of the details for example, dynamics, articulation, and, etc.”

Teacher J: “(1) I ask students to practice by themselves first, then come back and play to me each week. If there are any mistakes, I will tell them to correct. So, in the first step, I will let students play all the notes right, which may take about one or two months depending on each student. In addition, students also need to use the right fingers, which they will not have any problems with later. (2) After that, I will focus on details, for instance, which dynamics need to be used in each part, which articulation will be used in each phrase, or what the tempo needs to be. (3) Next, I keep adjusting and add musical expression gradually. Moreover, I need to teach students to understand the mood of the piece first, which can help students to express the feeling of the piece naturally.”

Summary From the interviews, it was found that after teachers select repertoires for students, teachers begin teaching by letting students study and practice by themselves first, then come back and play to teachers each week to check the accuracy. Teachers ask students to practice each separate hand first, then practice both hands together, which conforms to the opinion of Teachers A, C, D, G, I, and J. However, it differs from the opinion of Teachers B, E and F in which students need to listen to the music first, then let students try to practice by themselves and come back and play to teachers to get some correction. Teacher F expresses the opinion that in the beginning duration of practice, it is unnecessary for teachers to ask students to play the whole piece at one time, teachers should ask students to practice part by part; this concept conforms to the opinion of Teacher B. Furthermore, in practicing for a competition, Teachers C and E use extra exercises for example, practicing scales, or finger exercises like Hanon or Czerny, which provide students with finger strength. Moreover, Teacher C suggests that while students practice playing the notes of the left hand, teachers should ask students to sing the notes of the right hand or the melody to provide the understanding of relationship between two hands. When students can play both hands well, teachers can increase the tempo little by little until students finally reach the real exact tempo; this concept conforms to the opinion of Teacher B in which there is the use of a metronome to control the tempo of students’ performances. For practice duration in this first stage, it may take about one or two months depending on students’ potential,

which conforms to the opinion of Teachers A, C, F, and J. Teacher H expresses the opinion that teachers should consider the duration from this moment to the competition, how much time we have left and how many pieces students need to play, then make a plan for each month as to what students need to practice. After that, start practicing those pieces. After students can play all the pieces well, teachers add more details into the pieces, for example, dynamics, articulation, phrasing, and other details. Finally, teachers add musical expression to make the pieces perfect. These concepts conform to the opinions of Teachers A, D, E, G, I, and J.

3. Using a metronome

In the practicing process, a metronome is a piece of equipment to control the tempo and it can also show the problems in playing the piece. Each teacher has an opinion about the metronome and about a using metronome when teaching students for the piano competition as follows:

Teacher A: “Yes, I use the metronome. I use it at the beginning of the practice process when students are familiar with their repertoires. I use it to make students understand basic rhythm. For the slow pieces, I use it at the beginning of practice but when students can play their pieces I stop using the metronome because there will be some rubato or expression. For the fast pieces that drill the fingers I use the metronome continually because when students are skillful with their fingers, they will rush the tempo. Using the metronome is to make students have a beat in their mind. I stop using it when it is nearly the competition day.”

Teacher B: “Yes, I use the metronome when students can play the whole piece. I try using it as soon as possible to control students’ tempo. I reduce using it when it is nearly the competition day but I still use it to make students have a beat in their mind. I try turning on and off the metronome. I ask students to listen to the beat from the metronome then turn it off and let students play through the piece. If the tempo is not much different from the metronome, it is fine.”

Teacher C: “Yes, the metronome can help students to perform better because it keeps the tempo steady. I use the metronome after students can play their repertoires well. We begin with a slow tempo which is slower than the actual tempo, and when students are familiar with this tempo, then speed it up little by little every time students

practice. By increasing the tempo little by little each time, finally students will reach the actual tempo.”

Teacher D: “Yes, the metronome helps students in their practice. Using a metronome is likely to provide students a good fundamental skill because they will understand the basic rhythm of each piece they play. When students have a good basic skill, teachers then can add other details efficiently. I use the metronome when students first read the notes but use it in a slow tempo. When students read the notes fluently, I increase the tempo little by little every time students practice until they reach the actual tempo. When they are good at every detail, one month before the competition, I ask students to practice with the metronome again but in slow tempo like they did in the first process. The reason why I ask students to do this is because I want them to pay attention to every detail in that piece, for example, fingers used, sounds that appear, articulation, dynamics, and expression.”

Teacher E: “Yes, I use the metronome but not every time students practice. I frequently use the metronome when they cannot play the pieces with the right rhythm or do not understand the rhythm. When I ask them to play with the metronome, they will see exactly that they do not play with the right rhythm which makes students understand the rhythm more and then they can practice correctly by themselves at home.”

Teacher F: “It is a necessity to use the metronome. I use it when students play the notes correctly but without the right rhythm. It allows students to see the right rhythm and see if they are playing with the right rhythm or not. When students play the rhythm better, I will stop using it because I want them to play and express their feeling by themselves. Moreover, when using the metronome, if the sound that students produce is not clear, it is better to stop using the metronome, then come back to practice the fingers to make the sound clearer and then continue using the metronome. One month before the competition, I ignore the metronome to let students get used to playing without the metronome to control their rhythm.”

Teacher G: “Yes, I use the metronome but rarely. I do not want to put pressure on students which can cause them to be unhappy when playing the pieces. I also want them to perform by themselves from their feeling and expression. I use the metronome when students are bored or not enthusiastic in performing or practice. The metronome

is like a motivation for students because it seems like something new to them and it is a challenge for them to play exactly the same rhythm as the metronome does.”

Teacher H: “Yes, I do. The metronome is a necessity. I do not use the metronome the first time students study their repertoires. I use it when it is suitable, which means when students play their repertoires quite well. Sometimes, it is unnecessary to play both hands well when using the metronome; it can be used when students play the notes of the right hand correctly but without the good rhythm. I do not use the metronome every time students practice because, in my opinion, the metronome is like a block that locks students and make students’ performance too mechanical.”

Teacher I: “I use a metronome from the beginning of students’ practice to make them play on the beat. When they can play the right rhythm with the metronome, I will switch to not using the metronome until we reach the competition day.”

Teacher J: “A metronome is an important piece of equipment because it helps students to establish a good rhythm, in which rhythm is the most important thing in performing any music. I use the metronome when students cannot play on the beat, which I do not use every time. When students can play with the right rhythm, I will stop using it because I want them to play the right rhythm from inside which is better than using the metronome to control every time they play.”

Summary From the interviews, it was found that Teachers A, C, D, F, H, and I express the opinion that a metronome is an important piece of equipment to keep the rhythm steady in playing pieces and help students to understand the basic rhythm of those pieces. Teachers A, E, F, H, and J use the metronome after students can play the whole piece well, but do not use the metronome every time of practicing; they use the metronome when students cannot play the pieces with the right rhythm and when students can play with the right rhythm, those teachers will stop using it. This concept differs from the opinion of Teacher B and C in which there is a use of the metronome every time students practice after they can play the pieces well. Teacher C asks students to practice with the metronome in slow tempo first, and then increase the tempo gradually every time until students reach the real tempo they have to play finally. This conforms to some of the opinions of Teacher D who starts using the metronome in slow tempo, then increases the tempo gradually. However, these opinions of the teachers above are different from the opinion of Teacher D and I in

which there is a use of the metronome from the beginning of students' practice to allow students to play on the beat. This concept differs from the opinion of Teacher G who uses the metronome to stimulate practice when they are bored. The metronome is used rarely because Teacher G wants students to play from inside more than using the metronome to control every time, which conforms to the opinion of Teacher H in which the metronome is too mechanical, and conforms to the opinion of Teacher J. In addition, Teachers A and F stop using the metronome when it is close to the competition day or when they reach one month before the competition. This concept differs from the opinion of Teacher D in that one month before the competition, Teacher D asks students to practice at a slower tempo than usual with the metronome, which also differs from the opinion of Teachers B and I who use the metronome until the competition day but use it less and less and then switch to not using the metronome.

4. Memorizing techniques

Another important thing for any piano competition is memorizing. The teachers teach their students to memorize the pieces as follows:

Teacher A: "Due to the fact that students who participate in the piano competition of Yamaha Thailand Music Festival in the Roon Lek category have been studying in the JMC² course, they all have good listening skills which also affects memorization. I also ask students to play from memory in each part. For example, every week, I ask students if they can memorize the notes and how much they can memorize, then I ask them to play. If they can memorize all the notes but exclude the dynamics, I will tell them to try to memorize those dynamics, then follow with the articulation. I always ask students to memorize the details when they can memorize all the notes. Furthermore, when students play or practice their pieces, I give an explanation about what the sound should be such as when they reach this point, how it should sound; forte or piano and staccato or legato. My word can help students to memorize faster. Normally, students take about two months to memorize the whole piece after they start to practice. For students who have not been studying the JMC course, I mostly teach

² refers to Junior Music Course which is a fundamental course of Siam Kolakarn (Yamaha) Music School for children who are four to six years old.

them to sing then play exactly like they sing which still works. If they really cannot memorize, I will tell them to memorize little by little.”

Teacher B: “I ask students to listen to the music and sing. When students recognize the melody from listening, they should sing exactly the same as they have listened. They need to sing with correct articulation and dynamics. If students cannot sing correctly or do not understand some details, I will sing for them and ask them to sing with me. Besides, I also have an action when I teach which can help students to know the feeling about that piece. In my opinion, listening and singing are factors that can help students to memorize faster.”

Teacher C: “I teach students to listen to the music. I tell students to listen to a piece they need to play from the CDs or other sources. After they listen and are familiar with the piece, I ask them to sing. They need to sing correctly following the articulation and other details. When they can sing correctly, they need to play exactly the same as they have listened. Sometimes I ask students to sing while they are playing.”

Teacher D: “Since students practice efficiently, they mostly memorize automatically. Moreover, using singing or humming is another way to help students to memorize. For the high-level students, I ask them to analyze the piece they are playing and use the function of the chords to help them in memorization.”

Teacher E: “I suggest it to students in some main or important parts, I do not let students play then memorize automatically. For example, if this piece is in the F key in the first part then moves to the key of C in the second part, which is both in the same pattern, I will tell students that these two keys are related, you move to another position but still use the same fingers. Students are quite familiar with this kind of thing because they used to learn this when they took the JMC class. The repertoires in the JMC book are in the C key but when they appear in the CD, there are additional F and G keys which students get used to by moving to another position but with the same finger. The advantage of taking the JMC class is students have good listening skills, they can sing while playing. I tell them to play like they sing because they will know what the melody or phrasing is and where to pause, which can help students to memorize easier.”

Teacher F: “I ask students to listen to the music first, then sing all notes correctly. It helps students to see their piece overall and know how each part should sound or if it

has any details. Next, I tell students to sing while playing, which they need to play exactly and pay attention to every detail like they sing. I also emphasize students to practice constantly which can make them memorize accurately and efficiently.”

Teacher G: “Most students who participate in the competition are enthusiastic and happy to perform. For the memorization, students listen to the music such as listening from the CD, internet, or YouTube. After that, they practice by themselves consistently then they can memorize. I do not have a special technique, I only tell them to practice regularly.”

Teacher H: “The repertoires for the piano competition of the Yamaha Thailand Music Festival are not very long. Students in the Roon Lek category have been studying in the JMC course which means they can memorize the repertoires by themselves. If it is a long piece, I will suggest that my students see it in a sequence; it is repeated because most of the repertoires contain the same pattern. For example, if there are two phrases that are in the same pattern, I will tell students to use the same fingers but change the position. Students will find that this way can help them to memorize easier and faster.”

Teacher I: “I ask students to imagine a story like this part is like we are in this place or this situation, so the sound should be like this. I always motivate students to think that while they are playing, it is like they are telling a story.”

Teacher J: “I ask students to memorize part by part, which students mostly practice in parts, so it helps students to memorize little by little. When students practice the first part skillfully, they can memorize that part automatically. After that, they will practice the next part and will be able to memorize that part, which will be automatically in order.”

Summary From the interviews, it was found that the most popular method that teachers use to help students in memorization is listening and singing. Teachers B, C, E, and F ask students to listen to music and sing with the right dynamics, articulation, and phrasing, then play exactly like they sing. Teacher G provides students with listening before practicing and Teacher D asks students to sing and hum while practicing. Moreover, Teachers A and J ask students to practice and memorize by part. Teacher E and H recommend students to consider musical phrases in patterns or sequences which can help students to memorize easily and quickly. Sometimes, if students practice efficiently and consistently, they can memorize automatically

without any special tips which conforms to the opinion of Teacher D and G. However, Teacher I uses a different method which is teacher's storytelling, then asking students to imagine a story. Furthermore, Teachers A, E, and H express the opinion that students who participate in the Roon Lek category mostly have learned in the JMC course, which helps students to have good listening skills and enables students to memorize quickly.

5. Building musical expression in playing the pieces

Musical expression is claimed by many music educators as the most important aspect in music. Each teacher teaches students to build musical expression in playing the pieces as follows:

Teacher A: "I ask students to sing and use my story-telling. While they are playing, they need to sing along and I add my explanation. For example, this phrase is like someone singing beautifully, this phrase has a fermata which is like someone stopping to breathe or this piece has a dance rhythm. I tell my students how every part or phrase should sound and ask them to try to play like they sing."

Teacher B: "I provide students with the meaning and expression of the piece they are playing first. I explain the meaning of the marking in that piece. Then I explain more about that marking, for example, this part is marked as slow but how slow it is. I need to give students an example of people or objects that they know, for instance, play slower like when we run and get tired, so we need to slow down. If I use the formal meaning to explain it to students, they may not understand. It is better to compare it with something in daily life which helps students to understand clearly."

Teacher C: "In my opinion, teaching expression is quite important because it is a key to making the song melodious. The most effective technique to teach students for me is an imitation. I play for them then ask them to imitate me. I show them what I want then let them imitate exactly what I did. This helps students to perform correctly what the teacher wants."

Teacher D: "Students need to know the style of the piece they are playing first; know the meaning or the composer's intents of that piece. Students need to have the ability to explain that piece, then I add some more details like the dynamics or the other techniques that can help students to express their feeling better. I play for students then

ask them to analyze and imitate me. Sometimes I provide CDs for students to listen to.”

Teacher E: “I tell students to sing while they are playing and I also play then ask them to imitate. Furthermore, I provide imagination for students for instance, this phrase sounds happy but why is it suddenly sad, why? Is it raining? I and my students always make a story together. I need to explain with comparisons, for example, it is soft but how soft; soft like baby, wool, or a Chinese bun? I need to create imagination with students as much as I can because teachers’ words are quite an influence on students. In comparison with something in daily life, I do not use the technical terms like piano, forte, or only loud and soft. For example, I compare the “forte” with shouting at friends; not only calling them, or compare the “ritardando” with the music box that circulates slowly at the end, not like a car stopping when the red light appears. Even when there is a marking in the piece, I need to explain the real meaning that it should be. I explain a lot to make students understand and able to play, sometimes they can play like teachers say but they do not exactly understand, so they cannot practice on their own at home.”

Teacher F: “I explain the meaning of each marking in the piece first. Then I play for them and explain more about the written marking in that piece such as how it should actually sound. After that, I ask students to imitate my performance.”

Teacher G: “Building musical expression depends on students. At first, I provide students with many styles by playing for them and then let students choose the style they like the most. I mostly ask students to create the expression by themselves and play for me. If the expression they create is not much different from the way it should be, it is fine.”

Teacher H: “I ask students to imagine or use story-telling. Students have to think of a picture that represents the piece they play. I ask them to try to play and imagine that if the piece sounds like this, what the picture or story should be. However, at the beginning of the practice, I will show them how to play, then ask them to imitate.”

Teacher I: “Before students can create any musical expression, they need to sing every detail in the piece correctly first. When they sing all details correctly, it means that they reach the musical expression of that piece, and will be easy for students to express their feeling.”

Teacher J: “I ask students to listen to music quite a lot and sing exactly as they have listened. After that, they need to play, following what they have listened and sung to. This helps students to understand the feeling of the piece clearly, which can be expressed perfectly.”

Summary From the interviews, it was found that teachers use various methods in teaching students to build musical expression. Teachers A, E, I and J ask students to sing while they are playing. Students need to sing all details correctly first, then they can express the feeling by passing it on to their playing. Furthermore, there is a method that uses teachers’ storytelling and let students imagine a picture following the teachers’ story and uses a comparison between markings in the piece and something in the students’ daily lives to make the students understand the meanings completely. This concept conforms to the opinions of Teachers A, E and H, and differs from the opinion of Teachers B, D and F who use teachers’ explanations about the meaning of the piece including the markings and symbols in that piece. Moreover, Teachers C, D and F use a method when students imitate teachers’ playing to make the piece perfect as teachers want, which differs from the opinion of Teacher G who gives students the freedom to analyze the piece and build their own musical expression. If the musical expression students build is not much different from what it should be, it will be fine.

6. Listening

Listening can also develop students' playing; listening to the piece that students play from well-known performers, listening from CDs, watching performances from different media, etc. The teachers have opinions about listening as follows:

Teacher A: “If I can find a good version such as on YouTube, I will tell my students to listen to it and watch. If I have a CD of those pieces, I will also give them to students. For example, one of pieces for the Final Round of the Yamaha Thailand Music Festival is the same piece of the Trinity examination of which I have a CD, so I give it to students and ask them to listen. It is for students to get the overall feel of the piece then I need to explain more about the details such as “rubato” which students do not understand, I need to tell them how to play, how it should sound, and what I want them to play.”

Teacher B: “Yes, I suggest that my students listen because listening is the most important thing in my opinion. I select the recordings then ask students to listen. Students need to listen to understand the piece; they recognize the melody because if they cannot recognize the melody, their playing or practicing will be slower. The piano competition of the Yamaha Thailand Music Festival has a limit of duration for practice, so I need to find an efficient way to make students progress fast, and listening is the best way.”

Teacher C: “Yes. I ask students to both listen and watch the recordings. I select a good version of these recordings and bring them to students to listen and watch. I let students only listen and watch the first time. Next, I ask them to look through the score while listening. Then, I explain and analyze that piece for students about how it sounds, where to pay attention or which details are important to focus on. Teachers’ explanations can help students to understand more clearly.”

Teacher D: “Yes, because I think that listening is the most important factor in developing musical ability. I provide many sources to students to listen to constantly, for example, listening to their own, teachers’, friends’ performances, listening from the CDs, or YouTube. These can all help in performance development. I always train students to analyze and describe the piece such as, what the strengths and weaknesses are, and what their views about this piece are.”

Teacher E: “Yes, I do. I mostly provide students with recordings. I ask the students to listen to the piece they are going to play at the beginning stage of practicing. It helps students to see the piece overall, what style it is, how every part sounds or which part is interesting, which make students understand clearly and can produce a good sound when they perform.”

Teacher F: “Yes, I do. I select a good version of the piece students need to play, then ask them to listen. I always ask students to listen to and recognize the melody first. After that, they should listen to the use of dynamics and articulation. Moreover, I explain more about the meaning of the markings that appear in the score and how they should sound.”

Teacher G: “Yes, I do. Students mostly provide themselves with listening matter, for example, from CDs or YouTube. Nevertheless, I always tell my students not to copy

everything from the recording; they can listen to get the overall feel but not copy. I want them to perform from their expression which can present their own identities.”

Teacher H: “Yes, I do. I search and select a good version on YouTube then ask students to listen and watch. It is a necessity that teachers need to select the recordings for students because not every video on YouTube is good. So, I select the video then recommend students to watch. After that, I will tell students how their performances are and what they need to correct.”

Teacher I: “I provide students with listening matter from many sources which I search and recommend them to listen to. I want them to listen to others’ performances because other performers may have different techniques which we can adapt into our performance, for example, how they express emotion, how they use dynamics, or what their posture like. In addition, students can listen to or watch others’ weaknesses, then adapt and adjust to the students’ performances.”

Teacher J: “I provide students with listening material which is exactly the same piece that students play and also similar pieces for instance, the pieces that are in the same period or the same collection. I ask students to listen to musical expression that is produced in that piece, and then adapt it to their playing.”

Summary From the interviews, it was found that all teachers emphasize listening. Teachers A, B, C, D, E, F, H, I, and J select music for students to listen to, which differs from Teacher G who gets students to select the music to listen to by themselves. Listening lets students know the overall feel of that piece which helps students to practice quicker, which conforms to the opinion of Teachers A, B, E, F, and G. Furthermore, Teachers C, D, F, I, and J ask students to listen to details and ask students to analyze the strengths and weaknesses of others’ performances with teachers, which can be adapted to the students’ performances.

7. Recording students' performances

Recording students' performances is aimed to let students self-assess because sometimes students cannot realize the mistakes which occur when playing. The teachers have an opinion about recording students' performances and about assessment after students watch their performance as follows:

Teacher A: “I record students’ performances because students always have physical problems, for instance, some students sit hunchbacked, open the mouth while playing, play with a falling wrist, or shake the legs while playing. I have been thinking how I could solve these problems because when I tell them, they do not know they are doing it, so I record their performances. Then, I let them watch the recording while I tell them the weaknesses which need to be corrected. After watching it, the bad behavior disappears. Besides, parents sometimes record useful teaching techniques which can help students practice at home, such as how to play staccato, or how to use arms when playing.”

Teacher B: “I record students’ performances after they can play the whole piece well. After I record, I let students watch their performance and ask them what they think about their performances or how many mistakes they made. For example, if students made ten mistakes but they can see only six mistakes, I will tell them the rest of four mistakes and also suggest how to correct those mistakes. Recording students’ performances is one way to allow students to play under pressure. I always tell them that recording one time is like performing on stage one time, so they need to try to play perfectly or play with as few mistakes as possible.”

Teacher C: “I record students’ playing then let them watch and comment on the strengths and weaknesses in their playing first. After that, I add more points that they have missed and suggest solution to the mistakes.”

Teacher D: “I record students’ playing. Then I and my students watch the recording and evaluate together. We comment on the strengths and weaknesses in that performance. I also add the way to solve the problems that occur during the piece.”

Teacher E: “After I record students’ playing, I let students watch the performances, then ask them to give their opinion about their performances; what the strengths and weaknesses are. If there are some points that students cannot or do not give, I will tell them those points. Moreover, I tell them to record when they practice at home. Sometimes, parents also record students’ playing in class or some important teaching techniques which can help students’ home practice.”

Teacher F: “I record students’ playing every time they have a class. It provides students with the opportunity to watch and listen to the sound, to see if it is clear or not, and if there are some points that are still not good and need to be improved or not.

Furthermore, students can see their posture while playing. I and my students comment on those things together.”

Teacher G: “I do not record my students’ playing.”

Teacher H: “When we have nearly reached the competition day, I always ask students to perform two times and I record them. Then, I let students watch those recording then ask them which one is better and what the mistakes are in each performance. Students need to know their mistakes because if they do not know, they will not be able to practice on their own at home.”

Teacher I: “I record students’ performances to allow students to see their weaknesses. I ask them to identify their weaknesses that can be seen in that video, then I add more points like dynamics and musical expression that may not be right, and I tell them how to correct later.”

Teacher J: “I record students’ performances to make me correct students’ mistakes correctly and also allow students to see their mistakes in specific points because students mostly may not recognize their mistakes while playing. When students can see their mistakes, I tell them about the corrections which they can use to correct their mistakes.”

Summary From the interviews, it was found that almost all teachers, Teachers B, C, E, H, and I, record students’ performances and let students self-assess, when students need to point out their weaknesses that can be seen in the recording and teachers add more points that students did not point out. This concept differs from the opinion of Teachers A and J who point out the weaknesses to students, and this also differs from the opinion of Teachers D and F that teachers and students assess the strengths and weaknesses together. After students know their weaknesses, teachers provide corrections to allow students to correct and adjust their performance, which conforms to the opinion of Teachers A, B, C, D, E, F, I, and J. However, this concept differs from the opinion of Teacher G who does not record students’ performances, but if there are some mistakes which occur during the practicing, teachers will point out those mistakes to students and ask them to correct them immediately.

8. Performing in public

Performing in public as many times as possible can help students reduce stress and performance anxiety, including getting used to performing on stage. The teachers describe students' performance in public as follows:

Teacher A: "I ask students to perform in the school's lobby. Besides, I set up a mini concert for all students who participate in the competition. All of their parents and relatives (about 30 people) come and stand around, then I ask students to perform. Students can practice performing under pressure, they need to concentrate on their performances but they are happy to play with their friends and show their family members. Furthermore, I have an annual house concert at the Goethe Institute for all of my students who study with me at home, so I also bring students who participate in the competition to this concert. Students who do not participate in the competition can use this stage to practice performing in public, and it is a final rehearsal for students who participate in the competition. This concert is held in April before the Final Round of the Yamaha Thailand Music Festival that is held in May."

Teacher B: "Yes, I ask my students to play in front of other people quite often. Students who participate in the competition normally stay practicing at school all day on Saturday and Sunday. These students always take responsibility for practice; they know that they need to practice for one hour then have 15 minutes break and then go back to practice again. Due to the fact that I teach group lessons, when the time is almost over, I usually ask those students to perform for parents and younger students. I will not tell them that they need to perform because students who participate in the competition need to be ready at all times; when I call them to perform, they need to go and perform immediately. This also provides an opportunity for students to perform to the public."

Teacher C: "Yes. After students can play their pieces well, they will perform on the school stage regularly; every week or every time after they have class. This can make students get used to performing in public and can reduce performance anxiety."

Teacher D: "Yes, I do. After students can play their repertoire quite well, I try to have them perform to the public as many times as they can. At least, they need to perform once a month; it may be on a school stage or other places."

Teacher E: “Yes. Students come and perform in the school’s lobby but not frequently. I usually ask their parents, relatives, and friends to listen to them, so students can see what mistakes they make while playing under pressure, then try to correct those mistakes.”

Teacher F: “Yes. After students can play their pieces well, I will ask them to perform at school. Moreover, students also have an opportunity to perform to audiences in a department store and in various conditions. Before the competition day, there will be a final rehearsal at school and I always ask students to wear the real dresses that they are going to wear for the competition to make the performance realistic, like they are performing on stage.”

Teacher G: “Yes. One month before the competition, I always ask students to perform in the school lobby once a week.”

Teacher H: “Yes. I always ask students to perform in the school lobby after they can play their pieces well or try to have them perform as many times as possible. Moreover, the school manager also books a room outside for all students’ concerts.”

Teacher I: “During one or two months before the competition, I ask students to perform at school every week after their classes to make them familiar with performing in front of other people. It also reduces the excitement when they perform on the real stage.”

Teacher J: “I try to have students perform to the public as many times as possible. When there are events inside and outside school, I always ask them to participate in those events. It will make students get used to performing in public and feel that performing in front of other people is a fun experience.”

Summary From the interviews, it was found that after students can play their pieces well, all teachers have students perform to the public by performing on the school stage or in the school lobby to make them get used to performing in front of a lot of people which can help to reduce the excitement when they need to perform on the real stage. Teachers B, C, G, and I have their students perform every week after students’ lessons, and Teachers D, F, H, and I try to have students perform as many times as possible. In addition, Teachers A, D, F, H, and I have students perform in events outside school to allow students to get used to performing under pressure in different places and situations.

9. Asking experts to listen and correct students' performances

Asking experts to listen to and correct students' performances will provide teachers with various comments and also help them to know students' weaknesses. It leads to improving students' performances. Each teacher explains how experts listen and correct students' performances as follows:

Teacher A: "The school owner will take care of all teachers. She looks at my students' performances and always says that they are fine. I also ask for comments from other teachers. For example, I ask for a comment from one teacher who is a lecturer at the Faculty of Arts and her daughter is one of my students who is going to participate in the competition, so I ask her how each student performs and if there is something which needs to be corrected."

Teacher B: "I ask other teachers to listen to students' performances. I always think that it is better to ask a person who is more professional than me to do this task. I start by selecting students, teaching and disciplining them but finally I always ask other people to help. We all need to help to adjust students' performances to make the perfect performance."

Teacher C: "There are other teachers who listen to students' performances when they perform at school. I ask those teachers for comments on how the performance is; whether it is fine or if there is something which needs to be corrected and what their suggestion is."

Teacher D: "I ask many teachers at school to listen to students' performances and comment on strong and weak points and I use these comments to adjust students' performances to make them perfect."

Teacher E: "I ask students to perform in the school lobby and ask other teachers to listen, comment on strong and weak points, and ask for suggestions for improvement."

Teacher F: "No."

Teacher G: "No."

Teacher H: "I ask other teachers to listen and comment but usually they do not comment because they all trust me. So, there will be no suggestions from other teachers."

Teacher I: "After students can play the whole piece well, I will ask the school owner to listen and comment on the strengths and weaknesses; what is good and what

needs to be corrected, because she has more experience. If there is anything which needs to be corrected, I will ask about the corrections to make students' performances perfect."

Teacher J: "I ask the school owner and other teachers to listen to and criticize students' performances to let me see the strengths and weaknesses which can help students to perform better."

Summary From the interviews, it was found that almost all teachers ask the school owner and other teachers to listen to and criticize students' performances. Teachers A, H, I, and J ask the school owner to listen and Teachers B, C, D, and E ask other teachers to listen. After they listen to students' performances, the teachers will ask for comments to use in adjustment of students' performances. This concept differs from the opinion of Teachers F and G who do not ask other experts to listen to and criticize students' performances while Teacher G expresses the opinion that letting other people criticize students' performances may make students confused, because more people means more opinions. It is better to have students listen only to their teachers.

Students' practicing

1. Practicing at home

Practicing at home is quite important for learning music. After reviewing the literature, the following topics were considered to be useful for home practice:

- Duration of practicing
- Proper time for practicing
- Specific practice process
- Setting the goal for each day practicing

The teachers explain how they tell their students to practice at home as follows:

Teacher A: "I specify the points that students need to practice by marking in colors. If you look at their scores, you will see many colors. For example, students can play all the notes right but I want them to correct the rubato for homework, so I mark it in a

green color and write in their notebooks that they need to correct the green point. For next week, if there is nothing to correct, I mark in another color. Consequently, we use many sheets of scores and we change every month. In conclusion, after students can play all the notes right, I tell students thoroughly what I want them to practice each week to make their performance perfect for them. I still adjust their performance until the last day before the competition because teaching little students is to proceed gradually, they cannot perceive too many things at the same time. For practice time, they all know that they need to practice every day but if there is an examination at their school, I skip some of their practice because I do not want them to be tense. If it is a normal time, they need to practice regularly, and I check from their notebook to see whether they are following my instructions or not. For practice duration, I do not fix how many hours they need to practice, but they need to complete the assignment I give.”

Teacher B: “Due to the fact that students practice plentifully at school, I only tell them to practice ten times without limited time at home. I do not limit the time because students cannot practice within limited time, as there are many distractions for example, they want to watch television or play games. So, I fix only how many times they need to practice, and the need to accomplish the assignment. I always tell them that whether they practice or not, when they meet me next time, they need to play it right. Actually, they practice a lot at school, but when they go back home they just practice a little. I do not put too much pressure on them, because they have to be serious at school and I want them to relax at home.”

Teacher C: “I tell students to practice every day before going to school and after coming back home at least two hours a day. It can be one hour in the morning and one hour in the evening or half an hour in the morning and one and a half hour in the evening, depending on the time is available. I tell students to practice regularly everyday because when they decide to participate in a competition, they need to devote their time to practicing, and they have to spend even more time practicing. Practice time should be further increased when it is almost the competition day. I tell students what to practice, it may not be a daily goal but it might be a weekly goal that students need to achieve. Furthermore, every time students practice at home, they also

have to play finger exercises to drill and warm their fingers and hands before playing the repertoires.”

Teacher D: “Every student has a homework notebook. After class every week, I write what students have to practice or correct in their notebooks. I tell them the practice process step by step from the tempo to any details. For example, the first week, they should practice with this tempo and with this articulation. The following week, they may need to practice with the same tempo and articulation but add more about the dynamics. When they can play everything right, I may increase the tempo which I tell them in detail. Moreover, I also add more about listening skills; I tell students to try to listen to their own performance, consider what the strong and weak points are, and if they can produce the sound they want or not. I encourage them to continually self-evaluate.”

Teacher E: “Every student has a homework notebook. After each class, students write what they have to practice by themselves. They write in their own words what they understand which helps them to remember, because if I write for them they will not memorize what they have to practice. In addition, I always tell their parents the important points. For the duration of practice, I do not fix how long or how many hours students need to practice but they need to practice the things that are written in their notebook, I do not tell them to practice 10 or 20 minutes, I only tell them to achieve the assignment.”

Teacher F: “I do not fix the duration of my students’ practice sessions. I only tell them how many times they have to practice for example; they should practice 20 times every day. In addition, I always tell students that it is not necessary to practice the whole piece at one time, instead they can bring out some parts which they are not good at and keep practicing those parts until they are proficient. Then, they can start playing from the beginning until the end again. If they find another part that they are still not sure about, they should go back to practice only that part again. Furthermore, I tell students to be aware of fingering and hands used because many students play with hands and fingers flat. Before playing the repertoires, students should set the right fingers and hands first. One more important thing that I always tell my students to do is neither to rush their playing nor consider the clarity of sound. Playing in a fast tempo does not mean that they are experts. They should practice in a slow tempo and

focus on producing good and clear sound. When they can play well in a slow tempo, I tell them to increase the tempo. Students need to follow my instruction, not their own desire.”

Teacher G: “There is no limit for the number of hours that students have to practice each day. I tell them that I do not mind how long they practice, but when they attend their next class, they need to accomplish what I have told them last time. If they still cannot play, I ask them to repeat until they can play it. I always tell students what and how to practice in each week.”

Teacher H: “Students who decide to participate in a competition are always responsible, so they know what to practice. At the beginning, I write for them what they have to practice each week, but later on they can remember what they have to practice. If I want to emphasize the important points, I talk to their parents. For daily practice duration, I do not mention how many hours or when students have to practice; I only specify what they have to accomplish. For instance, I write in students’ notebooks or tell them what they have to achieve by the next time and what they have to correct. I do not focus on their practice time and duration; I prefer to focus on the final result.”

Teacher I: “After each weekly class, I write thoroughly what students need to practice and what they need to correct in their music scores which they can see easily. I do not fix daily practice time because each student has a different practice time; it depends on their convenience. For practice duration, every student has the responsibility to practice every day, but I do not focus on how much they need to practice, I only want them to practice and correct mistakes that I told them in their music scores. I always tell my students to concentrate on their practice; they must not worry about other things. It is unnecessary to practice everything in one time; it is better to practice little by little but make it perfect. I always tell them that they practice every day, so it is unnecessary to hurry to practice everything in one day.”

Teacher J: “I tell my students to practice consistently every day with no fixed duration. However, students who participate in competitions, mostly attempt to practice quite a long session. I write in their notebooks what to practice specifically; it is mostly the things they need to correct. I mark in their music scores which is easy for them to see. For example, this week, I want them to add more about dynamics, which

there are diminuendo or crescendo signs in score, so I circle those signs. If I want them to correct the fingerings, I will mark (*) where I want them to correct.”

Summary From the interviews, it was found that all but one teacher (Teacher B) tell students what to practice thoroughly each week. Teachers D, E, and H write what students need to practice in their notebooks. Teacher E asks students to write themselves which can help them remember. Teachers I and J write specifically what students need to practice in their music scores which is easy to see. These concepts differ from the opinion of Teachers C, F, G, and H who all tell students what to practice instead of writing in their notebooks. Teacher H tells students what to practice in the later period of practice because in the early period, she still writes what students need to practice in their notebooks. In addition, Teachers E and H also tell parents about what students need to practice. Moreover, Teacher A uses both methods; telling students and writing in their notebooks what to practice by coloring at the point where students need to correct, then summarizing all those points in their notebooks again. The most popular topic that teachers tell students for home practice is correction of many details, for example, tempo, dynamics, and articulation, which conforms to the opinion of Teachers A, D, and J. Furthermore, Teacher C asks students to practice finger exercises more to strengthen fingers and hand muscles. Teacher F recommends that students practice only the sections that they are not confident about first, which conforms to the opinion of Teacher I. Also, students should be aware of the position of hands and fingers which should not be flat. Moreover, students should not play too fast tempo without the consideration to the sound. Teacher D tells students to self-assess by listening to their strengths and weaknesses. Teacher I tells students to concentrate on every practice and they must not be worrying about anything, which differs from the opinion of Teacher B who does not emphasize practicing at home. Teacher B wants her students to only practice a little at home because they practice at school quite a lot. For practice duration and time, Teachers A, E, G, H, I, and J do not specify how much students need to practice nor when to practice. Teachers B and F count how many times students practice instead of specifying duration, which differs from the opinion of Teacher C who specifies that students must practice in the morning before they go to school and in the evening after school and that students should practice at least two hours a day.

2. Extra practice with teacher

Besides students' practice at their own home, teachers ask their students to practice more at their home or at school, for reasons that are outlined as follows:

Teacher A: "I ask students to practice more at my home. They will practice much after the first three months of practice because in the first three months, they need to play all the notes right at first. In the first three months, I ask students to practice at my home once a week in addition to their regular classes at school. For their regular classes at school, I ask them to arrive 30 minutes early. However, if it gets close to the competition day, I invite them to my home two times more, so they have to practice with me four times a week; three times at my home and one time at school. When they practice with me, I focus more on every detail such as dynamics, articulations, or phrasing. I try to get my students to gather as many details as they can."

Teacher B: "I ask students to practice more at school. They practice a lot in the beginning when they start to learn the pieces and when it is close to the competition day. In the middle of the practice process, they do not practice much. In the beginning, they practice from Wednesday to Sunday but if it is close to the competition day, they practice every day; in the evening of Monday to Friday and all day at the weekend. Actually, I do not have much time to look after them all day at the weekend because I also have to teach, but it is fine if I can see that they are still practicing."

Teacher C: "I do not ask students to practice more at my home, but I ask them to practice more at school as much as they can; I ask them if they are available or not. For example, when they are available during school holidays, I ask them to come and practice at school or practice only in the evening if it is during school time. I may not ask them to practice every day, it depends on students' available time. However, I encourage them to practice every day if it is possible, then I focus more on every detail of the pieces."

Teacher D: "I do not ask students to practice more."

Teacher E: "I do not ask students to practice more at my home, but sometimes I extend the time of students' normal classes because half an hour normal class is not enough for preparing for competitions. I do not extend their classes to practice more every week, I only extend when they have problem in playing the pieces which they

are not able to practice themselves at home. I mostly ask them to practice more at home, rather than practice more at school.”

Teacher F: “I ask students to practice more at school. School holidays are one or two months before the competition, and during this time, I ask students to have extra classes for four days a week, so that they practice with me as much as they can.”

Teacher G: “I ask students to practice one more time a week when we are close to the competition day. Normally students study with me once a week at weekends, but during the one or two months before the competition, I ask them to have one more class on a weekday evening; it may be half an hour or one hour.”

Teacher H: “I ask students to practice more at school, for example, during school holidays, official holidays, or weekends. If students are available, I ask them to come to school. Sometimes, there are some students who are naughty, so their parents leave them with me at school so that they can practice there. They sometimes practice, but sometimes not. However, at least they are at school and they have the opportunity to practice.”

Teacher I: “During the time close to the competition, I try to get students to practice every day at school so that they practice as much as they can.”

Teacher J: “I ask students to practice more about two or three days a week, at school when it is close to the competition. I try to get them to practice as much as possible. School holidays fall before both the preliminary and final round, so I ask them to practice on weekday afternoons. How much they need to practice depends on how well students play. If they can play well, they have to practice for a short session but if they do not play well enough, they need to practice a lot.”

Summary From the interviews, it was found that almost all teachers (Teachers B, C, E, F, G, H, I, and J) get students to practice more at school before the competition. Teachers B, C, F, G, H, I, and J get students to practice on the other days in addition to their normal classes, so that teachers try to get students to practice as much as possible. Teacher B asks students to practice at school from Wednesday to Sunday in the early period of practicing, from Wednesday to Friday in the middle period, and every day in the last period before the competition. Teacher C asks students to practice when they are available during school holidays and in the evening on weekdays after school. Teacher F asks students to practice four days a week on weekdays during

school holidays. Teacher G asks students to practice one more day on a weekday during the one or two month period before the competition. Teacher F asks students to practice more when they are available. Teacher I asks students to practice more at school every day, and Teacher J asks students to practice about two or three days more when it is close to the competition day. In addition, Teacher E extends students' normal classes, but she does not ask students to practice more on the other days. These concepts differ from the opinion of Teacher A who asks students to practice at her home on other days in addition to their normal classes. She asks students to practice one more day a week in the early period of practice and three more days a week when it is close to the competition. Furthermore, Teacher D does not ask students practice more at school or at her home.

Communication with Parents

Parents have the most influence on children and they are the key to children's success. Talking to parents about how their children should practice can make home practice more effective. The teachers explain what they talk to parents as follows:

Teacher A: "I always talk to parents because sometimes students may forget to tell their parents what I said. Moreover, I talk to parents about their children's progress; how they can improve and whether they are behind my plan or not. If they are behind my plan, I tell their parents to look after them and speed up their child's practice. I always note students' progress in my notebook after every class and I will evaluate at the end of the month to see how students have improved. If I find that they have not improved much, I ask their parents to encourage them to practice. However, parents may not know that their children play the pieces right or not because they do not know about notes and other details, so they record their children's performance then send them to me to check the accuracy. Parents mostly help students' home practice by calling them to practice."

Teacher B: "If I tell parents about the details of the pieces, they may not understand. So, I tell students instead. I am quite cautious of having parents take care of the details in the pieces because parents sometimes have no knowledge about

music, so they may spoil students' practice. Thus, I always tell parents that I have already told their children what and where to practice; parents only call them to practice. Parents mostly record students' home practice and bring them back to me to see the strengths and weaknesses which will be corrected later."

Teacher C: "I talk to parents after every student's class. I tell parents about what students need to correct and how they should correct. I ask parents for cooperation in managing students' practice time so that students practice consistently. Moreover, I try to train parents to have the ability to listen in order to help teachers control students' home practice."

Teacher D: "After every student's class, I have a conversation with parents to discuss the students' current situations and progress. For example, I tell parents about the students' intentions, progress from the previous week, what I add to students' playing, and what students need to practice and correct. Moreover, I ask parents for cooperation in controlling students' practice time and duration so that students practice consistently and I ask them to check their child's notebook to see what needs to be practiced each week."

Teacher E: "I tell parents what students need to practice each week by talking to them after each class. I talk to parents, tell them what I taught in today's class, and ask them to follow their child's to practice sessions. Sometimes parents are too serious in teaching their children's inappropriate instruction, for example, the use of crescendo to express too much, but it does not work. So, I always tell parents not to teach too much; students already know what and how to practice. I mostly do not ask parents to teach students, but I ask them to motivate their children to practice."

Teacher F: "I tell parents that their children have decided to participate in the competition, so they need to practice hard. I give them an example that other students also practice hard. I first explain to them that in the early period of practice, students need to practice in slow tempo, and that there is no need to rush. It is important to explain to parents that playing in fast tempo without good sound may lead to a low score. I tell students what tempo they need to play, and parents need to be patient."

Teacher G: "I do not want parents to get involved in students' learning and practicing because most parents do not have musical knowledge, so they may harm students' learning by telling their children to practice in inappropriate ways. I mostly

ask parents to encourage students' to learn and practice, motivate them to practice consistently, and support them in every aspect of learning."

Teacher H: "I explain to parents what the pieces students play look like, what and how to practice, how much time we have left, and what my plan is. Parents always cooperate in motivating students to practice using different methods, for example, some parents ask their children to practice and give rewards. However, students mostly have a responsibility and teachers may not ask parents to help. For some students who are naughty, their parents may leave them at school to practice."

Teacher I: "I talk to parents after every class. I tell parents about their children's progress in each class and tell them what they need to practice. I always ask parents to help calling students to practice more than asking them to help in the teaching of students because parents may teach students in the wrong way which can be a waste of time. It can cause a problem between teacher and parents."

Teacher J: "I tell parents to give students some compliments and ask parents to look after and motivate students to practice every day and have discipline in practice. Moreover, I ask parents to warn students what to practice by looking at what I write each week."

Summary From the interviews, it was found that Teachers A, B, C, D, E, H, and I talk to parents after every students' class by telling parents about students' progress in each class and about what students need to practice at home. However, these teachers do not expect parents to teach students because most parents do not have musical knowledge, which conforms to the opinion of Teachers B and G that do not like parents to get involved in students' learning and practicing because parents may spoil them. The biggest thing that many teachers want parents to do is to look after students' practice by finding appropriate practice time and motivating students to practice consistently, which conforms to the opinion of Teachers A, B, C, D, E, G, H, I, and J. Teacher D and J express that parents can help students to practice by warning students what to practice by looking at what teachers write in students' notebooks. Furthermore, Teacher C tries to train parents to have the ability in listening to help teachers to control students' home practice. Teacher F explains to parents that in the early period of practice, students need to practice in a slow tempo, and parents must not ask students to play fast as the teacher will tell students what tempo they need to

play. In addition, parents of Teachers A and B record students' home practice then report back to teachers in order to check weaknesses and find solutions.

Related Contexts

1. Student's qualifications and characteristics

Student's characteristics are some of the important factors which can bring competition to success. Each teacher chooses students for a competition as follows:

Teacher A: "I choose students who can have individual classes with me because normally they only have group classes which are not enough; I cannot completely teach them. I also consider their age and characteristics, for instance, they have to take discipline in their practice. Moreover, I consider whether their fingers can play the selected pieces or not."

Teacher B: "I choose students who have a strong attention to practice. They may not be smart in classes but they need to have attention to practice, desire to practice, and take responsibility for what I ask them to do. I give them a chance to participate in the competition but I always tell them not to expect anything from their first competition. All they can get from their first competition is good experience and it lets them find out if they are ready for the competition or not. If they do a good job and they want to join next year's competition, I support them. I always provide students with the opportunity to join the competition, which can help to bring out students' talent."

Teacher C: "I choose students who are interested in participating in the competition and who are self-confident. It is also important that their parents cooperate and support their learning and practicing."

Teacher D: "I choose students who have an attention to practice, are hard-working, and have discipline in practice. Moreover, they need to have parents who are supportive and take part in their learning and practicing."

Teacher E: "I consider students' potential and consider how much they can receive what I am going to teach them. I also consider students' readiness and enthusiasm. Sometimes I attempt to have this student compete but if they do not want to and do not

cooperate, I cannot make them compete. Actually, all students have their own potential, but some suit for the competition more than others.”

Teacher F: “I choose students who pay attention in class, are smart, attempt to practice consistently, and respect what I say.”

Teacher G: “I choose students who are interested in the competition and want to try to participate in it. They are not necessarily perfect but they need to be enthusiastic. I believe that students who fail in the competition will become perfect in the future, because they will try to find their weaknesses and adjust them. There are many students who want to participate in the competition every year, and I always support them. There are also students who are bad tempered, and I will tell them to compete only this year.”

Teacher H: “I do not choose students based only on their talent. They need to have intention to participate in the competition and their parents need to support them also. These are the important points to consider when choosing students, because sometimes I see some students who have talent and are ready for the competition but they do not want to participate in it, so I do not choose them. On the other hand, some students are at the middle level but have intention to compete, so I support them and develop them to become better.”

Teacher I: “I choose students who are hard-working, patient, ready to practice hard, have discipline to practice consistently, have intention, and are enthusiastic to develop themselves.”

Teacher J: “I choose students who have intention to compete. They need to be hard-working students and have discipline to practice every day.”

Summary From the interviews, it was found that students whose teachers choose to participate in the competition must be students who intend to compete and are enthusiastic, which conforms to the opinion of Teachers B, C, D, E, G, H, I, and J. They also must be students who are hard-working and have discipline to practice, which conforms to the opinion of Teachers A, B, D, F, I, and J. Moreover, Teacher B and F express the opinion that students who will participate in competition must respect their teachers and have responsibility. Teacher A expresses the opinion that students need to have time to take extra individual classes to let teachers see how much they can play each piece, which conforms to the opinion of Teacher E who

considers how much students are able to perceive what a teacher teaches. Furthermore, Teachers C and H express the opinion that selected students must also have parents who can support them.

2. Parents' qualifications and characteristics

In addition to students' own potential, parents are also key to students' success. Thus, parents' characteristics are also important factors for teachers to consider when choosing students for the competition. Each teacher considers parents' characteristics as follows:

Teacher A: "I also consider parents' characteristics when I choose students for the competition because parents have a duty to drive them to practice. I make an agreement with parents at the beginning of practice that students need to practice with their teacher twice a week ordinarily and four times a week when it is close to the competition. If parents are ok with my schedule, everything is fine. If they cannot accept this, everything is canceled. I need to tell them first, so that there will not be any problems later."

Teacher B: "When I choose students for the competition, first I consider students then parents. I need to talk with parents and determine if they have time to bring students to practice or not because students need to practice a lot. For example, during school holidays, students need to practice in the afternoon; from one to six o'clock and in the evening; five to eight o'clock during school time. If parents are fine with these practice times, I am ready to support their children."

Teacher C: "I choose parents who can bring their children to practice and can look after children's home practice. Parents need to respect me and follow my instructions."

Teacher D: "Parents need to cooperate in everything like they are going to compete themselves. They need to follow their children's practice, give children some compliments, and always by their children's side."

Teacher E: "Parents are quite an important factor. Sometimes I tell students what to practice but they may forget, so parents need to follow their children to see how they practice or whether they practice or not. Parents need to understand what I say, so that they can follow their children to practice correctly at home."

Teacher F: “Parents are most important. Parents must be interested in the competition and cooperate in controlling their children’s home practice.”

Teacher G: “When students intend to compete, their parents need to support them in every aspect. Moreover, they have to be able to bring their children to practice and make sure that their children practice consistently at home.”

Teacher H: “In my opinion, parents are important factors because they have to look after their children in every aspect, including practice at home or bringing their children to practice at school. They need to be able to control their children’s home practice and encourage students.”

Teacher I: “Parents need to cooperate in children’s learning and practicing as well as supporting their children. Moreover, they need to look after children’s home practice and bring children to class consistently. In addition, parents need to cooperate with the teacher.”

Teacher J: “Parents are another factor for choosing students for a competition. Parents need to be interested in a competition and are able to follow their children’s home practice. They need to cooperate and respect me as well as bring their children to practice, following my schedule.”

Summary From the interviews, it was found that parents are quite an important factor that teachers consider when choosing students for a competition. Parents need to cooperate in bringing their children to practice following teachers’ schedules, which conforms to the opinion of Teachers A, B, C, G, H, I, and J. Furthermore, parents need to make sure that their children practice consistently as well as encourage children, which conforms to the opinion of Teachers C, D, E, F, H, and I. In addition, parents need to take an interest in a competition and also support their children when they are participating in the competition, which conforms to the opinion of Teachers F and J. Teachers C, I, and J express the opinion that parents need to follow teachers’ instructions and that there should not be any conflict or problems with teachers.

3. Encouraging Students

When students practice for a competition for a while, they may get bored, tired, or feel that they do not want to compete. Teachers talk to students and solve these problems as follows:

Teacher A: “There is a student who cannot use a foot pedal because she has short legs and the pedal is quite hard, so she cries. I tell her not to worry about this. I always cheer up this student by reminding her that she could not play this piece the previous month but now she can play the piece. However, most students are not bad tempered because their parents always tell them that I intend to teach them without any charge.”

Teacher B: “Sometimes students may become bored, so I ask them to reduce or stop practicing for a short period, except when this happens at the beginning of practice. Mostly, when students can play all the pieces well, they find practicing fun. Students who pass to the final round always enjoy practicing and they can practice without stopping until I tell them to stop. They love to practice.”

Teacher C: “I encourage students. I also provide them with recordings of the previous year’s performance to let them see how good and enjoyable it is to perform on a stage. Sometimes I discuss children’s problems with parents and this helps us to find solutions.”

Teacher D: “I talk to students about what and how much we have practiced from the beginning until now. I also tell them about experiences they will have after the competition.”

Teacher E: “If students are bored, I may ask them to change their pieces. New pieces may be more fun. Sometimes I create some fun activities for them to halt their boredom or I find new teaching techniques.”

Teacher F: “I encourage students and I tell them that when they decide to participate in a competition, they need to practice hard because they perform only one time. Indeed, they practice hard but they perform only for a short period.”

Teacher G: “Nothing.”

Teacher H: “I rarely talk to students about this point. If the pieces they are playing are too difficult for their level, they may feel tired. So, I ask them if they want to compete or not then I encourage them to keep trying. If they are bored because they cannot develop their performance, I motivate them. I need to consider why they are bored or tired.”

Teacher I: “I encourage students and let them see the previous performances. I talk to them about experiences they will have after the competition. For example, they will

meet many new friends from other schools. Moreover, I talk about the rewards that they may get after finishing the competition.”

Teacher J: “I let students see many concert recordings. This motivates them as they want to copy what they see.”

Summary From the interviews, it was found that when students are bored and tired, teachers encourage them which conforms to the opinion of Teachers A, C, F, H, and I. Furthermore, Teachers C, I, and J show students recordings of the previous competition to motivate them to compete. Teachers D and I talk to students about experiences they will have after the competition, which differs from the opinion of Teacher B who asks students to reduce or stop practicing for a short period, and differs from the opinion of Teacher E who asks students to change their repertoires and creates some fun activities. Teacher G has no technique because her students do not have any problems.

4. Clothing

Clothing is another factor that leads to student’s success. Teachers explain the importance of clothing and how they choose clothing for their students as follows:

Teacher A: “Clothing is quite important. I consider the character of students and pieces they play when I choose clothing for them. For example, if the piece is in a fast tempo and feels tricky or if it is in a fast and slow tempo which feels aggressive and sweet at the same time. So I think that students should dress in black with suitable accessories with respect to hair style, I ask them to make the most comfortable hair style which must not make them feel annoyed when they perform on stage. For boys, I search for nice clothing on the internet then I ask their parents to tailor it.”

Teacher B: “Clothing is quite important. I ask students to dress respectably; I do not want them to dress up too much. Sometimes their parents ask me if their children need to wear makeup or not, and I tell them that I want their children to be the main point on stage. So students’ clothing must be comfortable and respectably. For girls, I ask them to wear long dresses, but if their dresses are not ankle length, they need to wear stockings. They also need to wear respectable shoes. I try to educate them to dress respectably and suit to the occasion. For boys, I ask them to dress respectable in

the preliminary round. In addition, I ask them to add blazers in the final round. I need parents to see that the main point is their children's performance, not the clothing."

Teacher C: "Good clothing must make students feel comfortable. It must not be too large or too tight. Also, hair style must be neat and they must not wear bracelets or rings that can be annoying."

Teacher D: "Clothing needs to make students feel comfortable. It must not be tight or make them feel hot. It also has to be respectable and must boost students' confidence."

Teacher E: "Clothing is another key to students' success. Students always want to wear beautiful dresses which also need to make them feel comfortable. Their parents provide the clothing and show it to me to see whether it is fine or not. I always tell students to dress in this clothing, including shoes when they practice at home to see whether it creates any problems or not."

Teacher F: "I and parents choose clothing for students by finding a pattern from various pianists then choose the one that suits students and adapt it. The clothing must make students feel comfortable and confident. It must not be too large or too tight."

Teacher G: "The clothing that students wear for a competition must make students feel comfortable."

Teacher H: "Clothing is another factor. For boys, I ask them to wear white shirts, blazers, and black bow ties. The clothing that girls wear depends on students and parents. Mostly, parents bring me their dresses to see whether they are fine or not. There are various dresses for girls, but for boys I want them to dress similarly. However, their clothing must be respectably and conventional."

Teacher I: "Clothing affects students' confidence. It has to be what students like and feel comfortable when they wear it. Moreover, their clothing must fit; it must not be too large or too tight. I choose clothing for every student which has to suit the pieces they play."

Teacher J: "Clothing can boost the confidence of students. If students wear beautiful dresses, they feel more confident which is reflected in their performance. However, their clothing must suit the time and place and not be too large or too tight."

Summary From the interviews, it was found that clothing is another factor in students' success because it affects students' confidence. Teachers A, B, C, D, E, F, G,

I, and J ask their students to wear comfortable clothes which are not too large or tight. In addition, students must wear a comfortable hair style and they must not wear accessories that can be annoying. Teachers B, D, and J ask students to dress respectably and timely. Moreover, if students wear their favourite dresses, they can feel more confident, which conforms to the opinion of Teachers E, I, and J. Furthermore, Teachers A, D, F, and I choose clothing that suits students' characteristics, their repertoires they play, and the competition. Teacher E expresses the opinion that she does not need her students to dress up too much because she does not want the clothing to be the main point of the performance.

5. The day before the competition

The day before the competition is another important day. Teachers tell students what to do on this day as follows:

Teacher A: "I ask students to practice at school just a little, then go back to practice a bit more at home. I also tell them to go to bed early."

Teacher B: "I tell my students to do their best on this day, because it is the last day for correction. I do not ask them to practice much; only warming up their fingers and hands to ensure that they are ready for the competition on the following day. I tell them not to be too serious, and instead to relax. I also ask them to practice a bit when they go back home. However, I tell them to think that one practice time is like one performance on stage, so they need to make it the most perfect."

Teacher C: "I ask them to practice a little to warm up their fingers as well as try to be calm. I do not pressure them; I only tell them to do their best, to concentrate, and not to be excited."

Teacher D: "I tell students to get enough rest, not to practice but sing the melody in their mind, and feel the musical expression. I encourage them to be brave and be ready to perform on the following day."

Teacher E: "I ask students to practice only a little and ask them to listen to the music. I encourage them and tell them to do their best. I also tell them that if they practice with 100% effort, they will be able to perform 100%, so there is nothing to worry about."

Teacher F: “I ask students to practice a bit, keep calm, take enough rest, and do not worry about anything.”

Teacher G: “I tell students that it is not necessary to practice much; they may practice just a little before they go to bed to warm up their fingers.”

Teacher H: “I ask students to practice but also relax because it is useless to pressure them. If I want to pressure them, I will do it one week before the competition by emphasizing on every detail. However, on the day before competition I ask students to practice slower than the real tempo without a metronome. If some mistakes occur (sometimes students make mistakes that have not occurred before), I will correct them immediately.”

Teacher I: “I ask students to meditate to keep calm. I also ask them to think back to the first day of practicing until now, so that they can play everything perfectly to encourage themselves. Moreover, I tell them to practice just a little and not to worry about anything.”

Teacher J: “I ask students to practice comfortably a bit. When they finish their practice, they can go out and relax with their families.”

Summary From the interviews, it was found that the day before the competition, almost all teachers ask students to practice comfortably only a little to warm up their fingers. Conversely, Teacher D asks students to sing the melody in their mind and feel the musical expression. Also, Teachers A, D, G, and J tell students to take enough rest. Teachers C, G, and I ask students to concentrate, keep calm, and not to worry about anything. Teachers B, C, D, and E express the opinion that teachers do not need to pressure students instead, they need to encourage students to do their best.

6. The competition day

The competition day is the most important day for everyone. Teachers describe what they do and ask their students to do as follows:

Teacher A: “I ask all of my students to meet me in my home. For example, students in the Roon Lek category of this year need to register at seven o’clock, so I ask them to come to my home at six o’clock to play to me for the last time. After that, I encourage to do their best.”

Teacher B: “I do not ask students to practice. Sometimes they practice automatically when they wait for the competition. However, I ask them to bring their metronomes to listen to the rhythm because there are some students who play in different tempo and rhythm which can lower the confidence of students. So, I want them to keep their rhythm and tempo by listening to the metronomes. I do not pressure them, instead I tell them to relax.”

Teacher C: “I ask students to relax and also tell them not to rush their performance. I also tell them to concentrate before they play any pieces, and to play what is in their mind and sing the melody in their mind while playing.”

Teacher D: “There is no teaching on this day. I talk to students about something fun which can make them smile and laugh. I give them some candies and talk about how happy they will feel after the competition.”

Teacher E: “There is no practicing on this day. Students need to have fun and relax.”

Teacher F: “If there is an instrument to practice, I will ask my students to practice a bit. However, students must go to a different place in the final round, so there may not be a practice instrument.”

Teacher G: “I ask students to relax and keep calm. Mostly, students practice at their home. How much they practice depends on how ready they are. Students who are not ready or not confident may practice quite a lot. On the other hand, students who are ready and confident may practice a little or do not practice at all.”

Teacher H: “There is no practice on this day. Students need to relax. I encourage them to do their best and be confident, even if they hear another performance that is different from theirs.”

Teacher I: “I ask students to pay respect to the Buddha and to me to encourage themselves. I tell them to perform like they practice, and not to care about the other performances. I try to make them happy, feel like they are having fun, and not feel pressured.”

Teacher J: “I let students relax and I do not teach them anything. I only tell them to do their best. I encourage them and give them some compliments after they finish their performance. Whether their performance is good or bad, I do not blame them.”

Summary From the interviews, it was found that on the competition day, Teachers B, D, and H do not ask students to practice, which differs from the opinion of Teachers A, F, and G who ask students to practice a little in order to gain confidence. Furthermore, all but one teacher (Teacher F) express the opinion that teachers should let students relax by not pressuring them, encouraging them, and talking about something fun. Teacher B asks students to bring metronomes with them to listen to their tempo so as to gain confidence, which conforms to the opinion of Teachers H and I who make sure that students are confident in their performance. Moreover, Teacher I asks students to pay respect to the Buddha and herself. Teacher J gives students some compliments after they finish their performance.

Parents Interviews

1. Parents' cooperation in children's home practice

Home practice is quite important for learning a musical instrument because it gives students a chance to try new ideas and develop their skills. Parents get involved in their children's home practice as follows:

Parents A: "My husband and I sit with my daughter when she practices and we encourage her. Sometimes she does not want me to sit beside her, so I watch or listen to her from a distance. I mostly do not know whether she plays the pieces right or not because the pieces are quite difficult; there are many notes and they are complicated, so I cannot help her to read the notes. I only help her by calling her to practice and telling her what to practice or correct by looking at her notebook. For practice duration, I do not fix how much she needs to practice; it depends on her. If she is tired after school, I ask her to practice for a short time, but if she has no homework or is not tired, I ask her to practice more. I always tell her to practice consistently everyday because if she ignores practice for a few days, she will improve at a slower rate. If she practices even a little, she will have some improvement."

Parents B: "I mostly call my son to practice. I have no knowledge of music but my husband has. He can read notes, so I tell my husband what the teacher tells my son to practice and correct. I take him to his lessons and my husband teaches him at home. I

mainly ask my son to listen to the CDs that the teacher gives us, which helps him to practice the right notes in the early stage. However, in the later stage, when there are some extra elements, the CDs may not help much. In addition, I reassure him when he is bored or tired. For practice duration, I do not fix how long he has to practice. I try to get him to practice his homework daily, for example, this week he needs to practice the right hand of the first part, the following week he needs to practice both hands together or correct mistakes.”

Parents C: “I actually do not help my daughter much because I do not have musical knowledge. I am afraid that I will teach her the wrong things. I mostly call her to practice and remind her about what to practice because after every lesson, the teacher always tells me what my daughter should practice. For practice duration, I do not fix how long she should practice, it depends on her homework. I always ask her to accomplish her homework and encourage her to practice every day.”

Parents D: “I remind my daughter to practice. I sit beside her sometimes if I am available. When it is close to the competition day, I record her home practice then deliver it to her teacher to check whether there are mistakes that need to be corrected. If there are mistakes that need to be corrected, I tell my daughter. I need to use the recording because I do not have musical knowledge, so I do not know whether she plays correctly. For practice duration, I do not fix how long she needs to practice, but I ask her to practice until she can play everything right. I encourage her to practice every day. However, if there is an examination at school, I ask her to practice every other day because I do not want her to be too tired.”

Parents E: “When my son practices at home, I always sit beside him. Since neither my husband nor I have musical knowledge, we do not know whether he plays correctly or not. I try to listen to his performance; if it sounds strange, then I ask him if he plays it correctly and I ask him to play again. I mostly help him to manage his practice time and remind him to follow his practice schedule. For practice duration, I try to get him to practice at least half an hour daily. However, if he can practice more than this, it is fine.”

Parents F: “I try to make my son’s home practice one of the family activities. I ask him to play a small concert for parents. I give him compliments and encouragement. For his practice, I do not get involved because he should take responsibility; I do not

force him. He knows that if he does not practice, he will not be able to play then his teacher will blame him. For practice duration, he always practices until he can play without any mistakes; there is no time limit.”

Summary From the interviews, it was found that Parents A, B, C, D, and E get involved in their children’s home practice by reminding and motivating them to practice consistently. Parents A and C remind their children what to practice by looking at their notebooks, which differs from Parents F who do not call their child for practice because they want him to take responsibility. Moreover, Parents A, D, E, and F sit beside their children when they practice. Parents D record children’s home practice, then deliver it to the teacher to check. Parents E listen to their child’s practice and if it sounds strange, they ask him to play again. Furthermore, Parents A, B, and F express the opinion that parents need to give children compliments and encourage them as well as reassure them when they are bored or tired.

2. Solving home practice problems

Sometimes, students may have some problems when they practice at home. Do any problems occur during home practice? If yes, how do parents solve these problems?

Parents A: “There are some problems, for example, my daughter can play with separate hands but she cannot play with both hands together, so she gets annoyed and does not want to practice. I tell her to stop practicing and do something else or practice other sections, then come back to practice this section again. In the later stage, when the pieces are more difficult, she may become tired and does not want to play or cannot concentrate on her performance. I cannot help her with the notes, so I try to listen to her playing when she has a class with her teacher or sometimes listen to what her teacher says, then I can help to remind her when she practices at home. When problems occur, I and my husband mostly encourage her.”

Parents B: “Sometimes when my son cannot play the right notes or rhythm, he gets annoyed. So, I reassure him and tell him to keep practicing little by little which helps him to play. The main problem after he can play all pieces well is that he is lazy to practice and he thinks about playing games instead. So, he always practices fast in order to play games. He knows himself that he is anxious about games, so he asks me

to let him play games first, so that he can concentrate on his practicing. I try this method and found that it works. Now he can concentrate more and practice longer.”

Parents C: “The main problem is that my daughter cannot play exactly what she desires, so she pressures herself and sometimes she cries. I reassure her and encourage her. I sometimes ask her to stop practicing. When she feels better, she wants to practice again. If the pieces or some parts are very difficult and she cannot play them, I ask her to stop and wait to ask her teacher in class because practicing in the incorrect way may be a waste of time. So, I ask her to practice other sections that may be easier.”

Parents D: “Some problems occur sometimes, for example, my daughter does not want to practice or cannot play correctly. In which case, I tell her that if she does not practice, I will not take her out to travel, or if she wants something, I tell her that I will give it to her if she practices. If she cannot play any parts, I always tell her to practice until she can play them. I always tell her that the more she tries, the more she will improve. I sometimes give her rewards to motivate her to practice, but I do not give rewards to her every time she practices because she will get used to it.”

Parents E: “The problem is my son is not motivated to practice, so I tell him nicely to practice first. If he practices well, I take him out or buy him ice cream. If this method does not work, I tell him that if he does not want to practice, then he should quit learning. This method always works because he does not really want to quit, but he can be sometimes lazy.”

Parents F: “Mostly, there is no problem because my son needs to take responsibility for his practice sessions. However, sometimes there is a problem like he is lazy, so I hit him because he does not take responsibility; when he decides to participate in a competition, he has to take responsibility to practice. In addition, there is another problem that he cannot play or remember what the teacher taught. In which case, I ask him to wait until the next lesson or phone his teacher because I do not want to teach him as I have no musical knowledge, so I may teach him incorrectly.”

Summary From the interviews, it was found that the main problems during home practice are that students cannot play the pieces and students are lazy to practice. Parents A and C face the problem that their children cannot play the pieces. Parents E face the problem that their children are lazy to practice. Parents B, D, and F face both

problems. When children cannot play the pieces, which can annoy children, Parents A, B, and C encourage and reassure their children. Moreover, Parents A and C ask their children to stop practicing and return to practice when they feel better, which differs from Parents D who ask their child to practice many times until she can play well. In addition, Parents C and F let their children ask their teachers for help. When students are too lazy to practice, Parents D and E make a deal with their children that if their children concentrate on practicing, they will get whatever they want. Parents B allow their child to play games before practice to help him to concentrate better on his practice, otherwise he cannot practice because he is thinking about playing games. Furthermore, Parents E tell their son that he should quit learning if he does not want to practice. Finally, Parents F hit their child if he does not take responsibility for his practice sessions.

From the interview of one teacher, it was found that there are some parents who really want their children to participate in a competition but they do not realize their children's potential nor do they recognize whether their children are ready for the competition. They request that the teacher sends their children to participate in the competition and, if not, they ask why their children are not selected for the competition. So, the teacher explains about suitability of students, but some parents still want their children to participate in the competition even if the teacher deems their children to be unsuitable for the competition. Then the teacher is forced to let those students participate in the competition. As expected, those students do not pass to the final round. However, this lets parents see that their children were not ready for the competition.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSIONS, DISCUSSION AND SUGGESTIONS

Conclusions and Discussion

Teaching Techniques

1. The difference between regular teaching and teaching for a competition

From the interviews, it was found that nine teachers express that regular teaching differs from teaching for a competition. However, there is one teacher thinks that these two kinds of teaching are similar.

1.1 Regular teaching differs from teaching for a competition

- Most teachers think that regular teaching is different from teaching for a competition. As teaching in a regular class is to teach in an orderly way following the lesson plan, which increases students' potential and aims to make students happy with their learning. This is different from teaching for a competition in which there are clear goals of what students need to practice in a limited time and the pieces for a competition are more difficult than in regular classes. So, teachers need to focus carefully on details, for example, interpretation, dynamics, articulation, fingers used, the weight of fingers, performing posture, and musical expression, which conform to the statement of Parncutt and McPherson (2002), Thomas (1992), Bastien (1988), and Maddy (1936). Teaching for a competition involves jumping straight to playing pieces that are more difficult than the students' ability, so if students are not ready in any skills, teachers need to teach them those skills in a limited time.

1.2 Regular teaching does not differ from teaching for a competition

- One teacher expresses the opinion that teaching in a regular class does not differ from teaching for a competition because in these two kinds of

teaching, teachers need to instruct students gaining good fundamental skills first. However, students need to practice quite a lot and they need to practice carefully and make the sound clear, which conforms to the statement of Parncutt and McPherson (2002), Thomas (1992), Bastien (1988), and Maddy (1936).

2. Teacher's practicing plans for students

From the interviews, it was found that after teachers select repertoires for students, teachers begin teaching as follows:

2.1 Asking students to listen to the music first, which conforms to the statement of Oare (2001) that listening to the recording or watching concerts or videos of the works they have been playing is useful, because students need to get an overall image of the music they are going to play.

2.2 Letting students study and practice themselves first, then come back and play to teachers each week to check the accuracy. It is unnecessary for teachers to ask students to play the whole piece at one time, teachers should ask students to practice part by part. This conforms to the statement of Satz and Satz (2009) that students do better if they do not work on more than one or two measures at a time because it is not easy for minds and hands to do too many tasks at the same time. If the section that students are learning is too complicated, teachers should encourage them to break that section into small parts, because practicing a section which is too long will take a longer time to learn.

2.3 Asking students to practice separate hands first, then practice both hands together, which conforms to the statement of Berger (2009).

2.4 When students can play both hands well, teachers can increase the tempo little by little until students finally reach the real exact tempo by using a metronome to control the tempo of students' performances.

2.5 Using extra exercises for example, practicing scales, or finger exercises like Hanon or Czerny, which provide students with finger strength.

2.6 Asking students to sing the notes of the right hand or the melody while students practice playing the notes of the left hand to provide the understanding of relationship between the two hands.

After students can play all the pieces well, teachers add more details into the pieces, for example, dynamics, articulation, phrasing, and other details. Finally, teachers add musical expression to make the pieces perfect.

3. Using a metronome

From the interviews, it was found that most teachers believe that a metronome is an important piece of equipment to keep the rhythm steady in playing pieces and help students to understand the basic rhythm of those pieces. Each teacher expresses the opinion about using a metronome and when to stop using it as follows:

3.1 When and how to use a metronome

- There is a use of the metronome after students can play the whole piece well, but do not use the metronome every time of practicing; they use the metronome when students cannot play the pieces with the precise rhythm and when students can play with the precise rhythm, those teachers will stop using it. This conforms to the statement of Berger (2009).

- Using the metronome every time students practice after they can play the pieces well.

- One teacher asks students to practice with the metronome in slow tempo first, and then increase the tempo gradually every time until students reach the real tempo they have to play finally. This conforms to the statement of Satz and Satz (2009) that a metronome can help students to increase their speed by an amount so small that ears cannot hear it.

- Some teachers use the metronome every time from the beginning of students' practice to allow students to play on the beat.

- One teacher uses the metronome to stimulate practice when students are bored only because she wants her students to play from inside more than using the metronome to control every time.

- Another teacher rarely uses the metronome because the metronome is too mechanical in her opinion.

3.2 When to stop using a metronome

- Some teachers stop using the metronome when it is close to the competition day or when they reach one month before the competition.

- Some teachers use metronome until the competition day but use it less and less and then switch to not using the metronome.

Furthermore, one teacher asks her students to practice at a slower tempo than usual with the metronome one month before the competition, which conforms to the statement of Bastien (1988) that sometimes students are asked to play in fast tempo, but it is more appropriate to play slower, so that the piece can be played accurately.

4. Memorizing techniques

From the interviews, it was found that many methods that teachers use to help students in memorization are as follows:

4.1 The most popular method that teachers use to help students in memorization is listening and singing. Many teachers ask students to listen to music and sing with the right dynamics, articulation, and phrasing, then play exactly like they sing.

4.2 Asking students to sing and hum while practicing.

4.3 Asking students to practice and memorize by part.

4.4 Recommending students to consider musical phrases in patterns or sequences which can help students to memorize easily and quickly, which conforms to the statement of Satz and Satz (2009).

4.5 Using teacher's storytelling, then asking students to imagine a story.

4.6 Some teachers believe that if students practice efficiently and consistently, they can memorize automatically without any special tips.

In addition, some teachers express the opinion that students who participate in the Roon Lek category, mostly have learned in the JMC course, which helps students to have good listening skills and enables students to memorize quickly.

5. Building musical expression in playing the pieces

From the interviews, it was found that many methods that teachers use to build students' musical expression in playing the pieces are as follows:

5.1 Asking students to sing while they are playing which students need to sing all details correctly first, then they can express the feeling by passing it on to their playing. This conforms to the statement of Lindstrom et al (2003) that it is necessary to feel the intended emotion while playing in order to communicate it to a listener successfully.

5.2 Using teachers' storytelling and let students imagine a picture following the teachers' story, which conforms to the statement of Woody (2000).

5.3 Using metaphors by comparing between markings in the piece and something in the students' daily lives to make the students understand the meanings completely. This conforms to the statement of Woody (2000) that many teachers use imagery and metaphors to call attention to the emotional qualities of music in teaching students to perform expressively and some information is more easily expressed using metaphorical language than any other way. Also, this conforms to the statement of Kovecses (2002) that metaphors are able to fulfill something that is uncertain or difficult to understand.

5.4 Using teachers' explanations about the meaning of the piece including the markings and symbols in that piece.

5.5 Using a method when students imitate teachers' playing to make the piece perfect as teachers want, which conforms to the statement of Karlsson and Juslin, (2008) and Leonard and House (1972) that teacher modeling provides students with an opportunity to perceive an aural concept of what they are trying to achieve. It also involves students to focus on playing accurately following the teachers' instructions. Also, this conforms to the statement of Oare (2011) and Woody (2000) that students can improve their performance skills and attain much of their expressive ability through imitation of models.

In addition, one teacher gives students the freedom to analyze the piece and build their own musical expression. If the musical expression students build is not much different from what it should be, it will be fine.

6. Listening

From the interviews, it was found that all teachers emphasize listening. Most teachers select music for students to listen to, which conforms to the statement of Oare (2011) that for the best result in listening, teachers should guide students to proper recordings that will help students to identify rhythmic, harmonic, melodic, and formal patterns which can develop students' sense of music of the style they are studying. However, one teacher gets students to select the music to listen to by themselves. Listening lets students know the overall feel of the piece which helps students to practice quicker, which conforms to the statement of Oare (2011). Furthermore, many teachers ask students to listen to details and ask students to analyze the strengths and weaknesses of others' performances with teachers, which can be adapted to the students' performances. This conforms to the statement of Oare (2011) that students can imitate the sound as well as improve their musical accuracy and expression by listening to the music.

7. Recording students' performances

From the interviews, it was found that almost all teachers record students' performances and let students self-assess, which conforms to the statement of Bastien (1988) and Anderson (1981). After that, teachers evaluate students' performances as follows:

7.1 Students need to point out their weaknesses that can be seen in the recording and teachers add more points that students did not point out, which conforms to the statement of Oare (2011).

7.2 Teachers point out the weaknesses that are seen in the recording to students.

7.3 Teachers and students assess the strengths and weaknesses together.

After students know their weaknesses, teachers provide corrections to allow students to correct and adjust their performances, which conforms to the statement of Anderson (1981).

One teacher does not record students' performances, but if there are some mistakes which occur during the practicing, the teachers will point out those mistakes to students and ask them to correct them immediately.

8. Performing in public

From the interviews, it was found that after students can play their pieces well, all teachers have students perform to the public by performing on the school stage or in the school lobby to make them get used to performing in front of a lot of people, which can help to reduce the excitement or nervousness when they need to perform on the real stage. This conforms to the statement of Stafford (2006). The teachers have their students perform every week after students' lessons or try to have students perform as many times as possible, which conforms to the statement of Zeigler and Ostromencki (1995) and Bastien (1988).

9. Asking experts to listen and correct students' performances

From the interviews, it was found that almost all teachers ask the school owner and other teachers to listen to and criticize students' performances. After they listen to students' performances, the teachers will ask for comments to use in adjustment of students' performances. However, some teachers do not ask other experts to listen to and criticize students' performances while one teacher expresses the opinion that letting other people criticize students' performances may make students confused, because more people means more opinions. It is better to have students listen only to their teachers.

Students' Practicing

1. Practicing at home

From the interviews, it was found that every teacher tells students what to practice each week which can make home practice effective, for example, duration of practicing, proper time for practicing, specific practice process, setting the goal for each day practicing, and other things.

1.1 Telling students what to practice

- Most teachers tell students what to practice thoroughly each week by writing what students need to practice in their notebooks and one teacher asks students to write themselves which can help them remember. These conform to the statement of Oare (2011) in which setting goals is a key element of independent practice, but young students may not know how to set goals. Teachers can begin by writing them their daily goals and telling them exactly what should be accomplished and what they must do to reach those goals.

- Writing specifically what students need to practice in their music scores which is easy to see.

- Telling students what to practice instead of writing in their notebooks.

- In addition to telling students what to practice, some teachers also tell parents about what students need to practice.

Furthermore, one teacher tells students and writes in their notebooks what to practice by coloring in the section where students need to correct, then summarizing all those points in their notebooks again. The most popular topic that teachers tell students for home practice is correction of many details, for example, tempo, dynamics, and articulation.

1.2 Telling students more about other things

- Asking students to practice finger exercises more to strengthen fingers and hand muscles. This conforms to the statement of Pedrick (1998) in which students should warm up their hands and fingers by plying finger exercises such as scales, arpeggios, or etudes which need to be given attention on techniques, form, and posture. It provides students to feel comfortable with their instruments and hands.

- Recommending students to practice only the sections that they are not confident about first. This conforms to the statement of Bancroft (2007) in which what teachers should tell students to do so as to make effective practice at home is to find the difficult parts in the piece, consider how they are difficult, and then practice those parts until students are familiar with them. Also, this conforms to the statement of Pedrick (1998) in which mistakes that occur during the piece need to be

separated and solved immediately by taking the problematic passage out and repeating it slowly and carefully until students can perform it without any mistakes.

- Telling students to be aware of the position of hands and fingers which should not be flat. This conforms to the statement of Pedrick (1998) in which for physical preparation, students relax muscle and free tension in every part of their bodies. This brings correct posture and makes playing easier. It also avoids health problems. In addition, students should not play in too fast tempo without the consideration of the sound.

- Telling students to self-assess by listening to their strengths and weaknesses, which conforms to the statement of Oare (2011) and Satz and Satz (2009).

- Telling students to concentrate on every practice and they must not be worrying about anything.

1.3 Duration of practicing and proper time for practicing

Most teachers do not specify how much students need to practice nor when to practice. They only need their students to accomplish what they have told, which conforms to the statement of Satz and Satz (2009) that teachers need to encourage students to focus on quality, not quantity or practice. However, students know that they have to practice every day, which conforms to the statement of Berger (2009) and Satz and Satz (2009).

- Some teachers count how many times students practice instead of specifying duration.

- Another teacher specifies students to practice in the morning before they go to school and in the evening after school and that students should practice at least two hours a day. This conforms to the statement of Bancroft (2007) in which teachers should make agreements with students about practicing time, which students have to take responsibility for their decided time.

However, one teacher does not emphasize practicing at home. She wants her students to only practice a little at home because they practice at school quite a lot.

2. Extra practice with teacher

From the interviews, it was found that almost all teachers get students to practice more at school before the competition. They get students to practice on the other days in addition to their normal classes, so that teachers try to get students to practice as much as possible.

2.1 One teacher asks students to practice at school from Wednesday to Sunday in the early period of practicing, from Wednesday to Friday in the middle period, and every day in the last period before the competition.

2.2 One teacher asks students to practice when they are available during school holidays and in the evenings on weekdays after school.

2.3 One teacher asks students to practice four days a week on weekdays during school holidays.

2.4 One teacher asks students to practice one more day on a weekday during the one or two month period before the competition.

2.5 One teacher asks students to practice more when they are available.

2.6 One teacher asks students to practice more at school every day.

2.7 One teacher asks students to practice about two or three days more when it is close to the competition day.

In addition, one teacher extends students' normal classes, but she does not ask students to practice more on the other days.

Furthermore, one teacher asks students to practice at her home on the other days in addition to their normal classes. She asks students to practice one more day a week in the early period of practice and three more days a week when it is close to the competition.

Another teacher does not ask students to practice more at school or at her home.

Communication with Parents

Due to the fact that parents have the most influence on children, they are the key to children's success. Most teachers talk to parents after every student's class

by telling parents about students' progress in each class and about what students need to practice at home, which conforms to the statement of Oare (2011), Berger (2009), and Lewis (1996). However, teachers do not expect parents to teach students because most parents do not have musical knowledge, so parents may spoil them. The biggest thing that many teachers want parents to do is to look after students' practice by finding appropriate practice time and motivating students to practice consistently, which conforms to the statement of Oare (2011).

In addition, some teachers express the opinion that parents can help students to practice by warning students what to practice by looking at what teachers write in students' notebooks. Moreover, one teacher tries to train parents to have the ability in listening to help teachers to control students' home practice. Also, another teacher explains to parents that in the early period of practice, students need to practice in a slow tempo, and parents must not ask students to play fast as the teacher will tell students what tempo they need to play.

Furthermore, there are parents of some teachers who record students' home practice then report back to teachers in order to check weaknesses and find solutions.

The researcher has interviewed parents whose children advanced to the final round of the Roon Lek category of the Yamaha Thailand Music Festival as follows:

- Parents' cooperation in children's home practice

From the interviews, it was found that most parents get involved in their children's home practice by reminding and motivating them to practice consistently. Some parents remind their children what to practice by looking at their notebooks, which conforms to the statement of Oare (2011). This differs from one parents do not call their child for practice because they want him to take responsibility. Moreover, many parents sit beside their children when they practice, which conforms to the statement of Shafer and Stinson (n.d.). Some parents record children's home practice then deliver it to the teacher to check. The other parents listen to their child's practice and if it sounds strange, they ask him to play again. In addition, many parents express the opinion that parents need to give children compliments and encourage them as

well as reassure them when they are bored or tired, which conforms to the statement of Satz and Satz (2009) that parents should not blame children if their performance is not good, because it will discourage them from playing or even learning to play that instrument. Parents should give children some compliments and encouragement which can cheer up children.

- Solving home practice problems

From the interviews, it was found that the main problems during home practice are:

1) Students cannot play the pieces. When this problem occurs, which can annoy children, parents use many methods to solve this problem as follows:

- Encouraging and reassuring children, which conforms to the statement of Satz and Satz (2009).

- Asking children to stop practicing and return to practice when they feel better, which conforms to the statement of Bancroft (2007) that when students keep repeating the pieces but their results are not good, it is time to stop practicing in order to allow hands and brains to forget the mistakes. They should go back to study the piece again as time passes by, then they will find that they can learn the piece easier.

- Asking children to practice many times until they can play well.

- Letting children ask their teachers for help.

2) Students are lazy to practice.

- Making a deal with children that if their children concentrate on practicing, they will get whatever they want.

- Allowing child to play games before practice to help him to concentrate better on his practice, otherwise he cannot practice because he is thinking about playing games.

- Telling children that they should quit learning if they do not want to practice.

- Hitting children if they do not take responsibility for their practice sessions.

Related Contexts

1. Student's qualifications and characteristics

From the interviews, it was found that selecting suitable students for the competition is an important factor which can bring competition success. Students whose teachers choose to participate in the competition must be students who intend to compete, are enthusiastic, are hard-working, and have discipline to practice. In addition, those students must respect their teachers and have responsibility. Some teachers express the opinion that students need to have time to take extra individual classes to let teachers see how much they can play each piece and consider how much students are able to perceive what a teacher teaches. Moreover, some teachers express the opinion that selected students must also have parents who can support them.

2. Parents' qualifications and characteristics

From the interviews, it was found that parents' characteristics are factors for teachers to consider when choosing students for the competition. Parents need to cooperate in bringing their children to practice following teachers' schedule and need to make sure that their children practice consistently as well as encourage children. Furthermore, parents need to take an interest in a competition and also support their children when they are participating in the competition. Some teachers express the opinion that parents need to follow teachers' instructions and that there should not be any conflict or problems with teachers.

3. Encouraging Students

From the interviews, it was found that when students practice for a competition for a while, they may get bored, tired, or feel that they do not want to compete. Teachers talk to students and solve these problems as follows:

3.1 Encouraging students, which conforms to the statement of Satz and Satz (2009).

3.2 Showing students recordings of the previous competition to motivate them to compete, which conforms to the statement of Hargreaves and North (1997).

3.3 Talking to students about experiences they will have after the competition.

These methods differ from the method of one teacher who asks students to reduce or stop practicing for a short period. The other teacher asks students to change their repertoires and create some fun activities. There is one teacher who has no technique because her students do not have any problems.

4. Clothing

From the interviews, it was found that clothing is another factor in students' success because it affects students' confidence, which conforms to the statement of Satz and Satz (2009). Most teachers ask their students to wear comfortable clothes which are not too loose or tight. Students must wear a comfortable hair style and they must not wear accessories that can be annoying. In addition, if students wear their favourite dresses, they can feel more confident, which conforms to the statement of Satz and Satz (2009). Furthermore, some teachers choose clothing that suits students' characteristics, their repertoires they play, and the competition. One teacher expresses the opinion that students should not dress up too much because the clothing must not be the main point of the performance.

5. The day before the competition

From the interviews, it was found that almost all teachers ask students to practice comfortably only a little to warm up their fingers, which conforms to the statement of Zeigler and Ostromencki (1995) that students should not spend many hours at the piano on the day before the competition or even on the competition day. This differs from one teacher who asks students to sing the melody in their mind and feel the musical expression, which conforms to the statement of Gurung (2006) that students should take a break from playing or practicing a day before, so your body and mind can have a day of complete rest. Moreover, many teachers tell students to take enough rest, which conforms to the statement of Zeigler and Ostromencki (1995). Some teachers ask students to concentrate, keep calm, and not to worry about anything, which conforms to the statement of Stafford (2006) that what teachers

should tell students to do on the day before the competition is relaxation. There are many ideas to help students to relax, such as taking a nice bath, having a nice meal, meditation, and having a good sleep. In addition, some teachers express the opinion that teachers do not need to pressure students instead, they need to encourage students to do their best.

6. The competition day

From the interviews, it was found that the competition day is the most important day for everyone. Teachers express the opinion about what they do and ask their students to do as follows:

6.1 Most teachers think that teachers should let students relax by not pressuring them, encouraging them, talking about something fun, and give students some compliments after they finish their performance, which conform to the statement of Bastien (1988).

6.2 Some teachers do not ask students to practice, but some still ask students to practice a little in order to gain confidence.

6.3 One teacher asks students to bring metronomes with them to listen to their tempo so as to gain confidence.

6.4 Some teachers talk to students to make sure that students are confident in their performance, which conforms to the statement of Bastien (1988) that teachers should tell students that there is nothing to worry about; all they need is to enjoy their performances and provide pleasure for the audiences.

6.5 The other teacher asks students to pay respect to the Buddha and herself.

From the interview of one teacher, it was found that there are some parents who really want their children to participate in a competition but they do not realize their children's potential nor do they recognize whether their children are ready for the competition. They request that the teacher sends their children to participate in the competition and if not, they ask why their children are not selected for the competition. So, the teacher explains about suitability of students, but some parents still want their children to participate in the competition even if the teacher deems their

children to be unsuitable for the competition. Then the teacher is forced to let those students participate in the competition. As expected, those students do not pass to the final round. However, this lets parents see that their children were not ready for the competition.

Suggestions

1. Suggestions from the Research

From the interviews of ten piano teachers about teaching techniques for student piano competition, it was found that if teachers want to have their students participate in the Roon Lek piano competition of the Yamaha Thailand Music Festival, they should do as follows:

1.1 Asking students to listen to the music first and letting students study and practice themselves which they should practice part by part. After that, teachers should ask students to come back and play to teachers each week to check the accuracy.

1.2 After students can play all the pieces well, the next step is to add more details into the pieces, for example, dynamics, articulation, phrasing, and other details to make the pieces perfect.

1.3 If students cannot play the pieces with the precise rhythm, teachers can use a metronome to solve this problem.

1.4 Musical expression is quite an important aspect in performing pieces. Teachers can teach students to build musical expression in playing the pieces by asking students to sing while they are playing, using teachers' storytelling and let students imagine a picture following the teachers' story, using metaphors or using a method when students imitate teachers' playing.

1.5 Teachers should record students' performances and let students self-assess.

1.6 After students can play their pieces well, teachers should have students perform to the public as many times as possible to make them get used

to performing in front of a lot of people which can help to reduce the excitement when they need to perform on the real stage.

1.7 For home practice, teachers should tell students what to practice thoroughly each week.

1.8 For the day before the competition, teachers should ask students to practice comfortably only a little to warm up their fingers. Also, for the competition day, teachers should let students relax by not pressuring them, encouraging them, talking about something fun, and give students some compliments after they finish their performances.

2. Suggestions for Further Study

2.1 In addition to the Roon Lek category, there are also the Roon Jiew, Roon Klang, and Roon Tuapai in the solo piano event of the Yamaha Thailand Music Festival. So, there should be studies of teaching techniques used to prepare students for the piano competition in these categories. Then the techniques should be compared to see if they are similar or different.

2.1 There is also a piano duet event in the Yamaha Thailand Music Festival. So, there should be a study of the teaching techniques used to prepare students for the piano duet event of the Yamaha Thailand Music Festival.

2.3 There should be studies of teaching techniques used to prepare students for other competitions.

2.4 Due to the fact that parents have the most influence over children and are the keys to children's success, there should be an in-depth study about parents' cooperation in their children's learning.

2.5 Furthermore, there should be a study of students' attitudes in many aspects of the competition.

2.6 There should be an interview of teachers after the competition is over. It can be a discussion and review of the whole preparation, experiences that students gained as well as preparation for further competitions.

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APPENDIX

Question Guides for Interview Piano Teachers

Objectives

To examine preparation processes for student piano competition in the following topics:

1. Teaching techniques
2. Students' practicing
3. Communication with parents
4. Related factors

Question guide for interview is divided into two parts:

Part 1 Teacher's Biography

Part 2 To examine preparation processes for student piano competition

Part 1: Teacher's Biography

Name.....Surname.....Age.....

Workplace.....

Telephone Number.....

Teaching Experience(s).....year(s)

Students participating in piano competition of Yamaha Thailand Music Festival per year (only piano solo, not including piano duet)

Category Year	Roon Jew (youngest category, 6-8 years old)	Roon Lek (younger category, 9-12 years old)	Roon Klang (middle category, 13-15 years old)	Roon Tuapai (oldest category, 16-20 years old)
2011				
2010				
2009				
2008				

Part 2: To examine preparation processes for student piano competition

1. Teaching techniques

1.1 The difference between regular teaching and teaching for a competition

1.2 Teacher's practice schedule for students

1.3 Using a metronome

1.4 Memorizing techniques

1.5 Building musical expression in playing the pieces

1.6 Listening

1.7 Recording students' performances

1.8 Performing in public

1.9 Asking the experts to listen and correct students' performances

2. Students' practicing

2.1 Practicing at home

2.2 Extra practice with teacher

3. Communication with parents

4. Related contexts

4.1 Student's qualifications and characteristics

4.2 Parents' qualifications and characteristics

4.3 Encouraging students

4.4 Clothing

4.5 The day before the competition

4.6 The competition day

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