Contemporary Piano Pedagogy and Creative Teaching in the One-to-one Context in Higher Education Institutions in Mainland China

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Abstract

This research focuses on contemporary piano pedagogy and creative teaching in the one-to-one lesson in higher music education institutions in mainland China. This qualitative study explores the student-teacher relationship in the one-to-one lesson; teaching methods, materials and pedagogical philosophies; the role and application of creativity and creative teaching in contemporary piano pedagogy, and institutional influences on pedagogy. Data, gathered through one-to-one semi-structured interviews with piano students, teachers, a principal, and head of departments, and videoed piano lessons in Chinese higher education institutions, was thematically analysed. The findings show that the one-to-one lesson plays a significant role for piano students to gain knowledge. The teaching is technique-oriented, focuses on specific work in detail, prioritises classical repertoire and appears to concern the negative aspects of what students were not good at. The master-apprentice approach dominates and is seen by these teachers as being widely applied in one-to-one pedagogy. The findings also suggest that teaching methods were shown as didactic; demonstration and directives were frequently used, and students were learning through imitation and obeying directives.

Additionally, the findings also indicate that due to global influences that link creativity to technological innovation and economic conditions there was generally a positive attitude from the participants regarding creativity and creative teaching in the field of music. Despite this seemingly positive motivation, it was found that the students' independence and creativity were not given much room to develop in the one-to-one piano pedagogy in the current research, and creativity appeared to be lacking within the videoed lessons. Therefore, potential barriers that relate to creative teaching in this context are discussed in detail; in addition, a framework for creative teaching in piano pedagogy in higher education institutions in mainland China is provided.

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Declaration

I declare that this thesis is a presentation of original work and I am the sole author. This work has not previously been presented for a degree or other qualification at this University or elsewhere. All sources are acknowledged as references.

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION AND LITERATURE REVIEW

1.1 Introduction

This research focuses on contemporary piano pedagogy and creative teaching in the one-to-one lesson in higher music education institutions in mainland China. This qualitative study explores the student-teacher relationship in the one-to-one lesson; teaching methods, materials, and pedagogical philosophies; the role and application of creativity and creative teaching in contemporary piano pedagogy, and institutional influences on pedagogy. This section will build the rationale for the thesis by defining and discussing creativity in music and music performance, as well as factors that influence creativity in music performance in general.

Creativity in music is frequently associated with composition and improvisation (Ashley, 2014; Müller, 2023; Wendzich & Andrews, 2022), but there is also a creative element present when students perform and reproduce music from the score (Clarke, 2011). Diverse and flexible expression has been considered to be creative performance in music; however, this does not imply that a performance should be over-expressed in relation to the marks on the score, and it must still adhere to the appropriate stylistic boundaries (Clarke, 2011; Bishop, 2018). Expression can be viewed further as improvisational adaptability; hence, flexibility in music performance plays an important function in the development of creativity (Clarke, 2011). Moreover, performativity in musical performance could also involve the inclusion of performance gestures as part of enhancing creativity (Davidson, 2014). Further improvisational and compositional activities can contribute to the development of creativity in music performance (Riveire, 2006; Wendzich & Andrews, 2022), both in group and one-to-one contexts. In a group setting, students may be able to freely express themselves, develop higher-order thinking skills such as critical thinking, and problem-solving, and establish a closer relationship with music (Azzara, 2022); one-to-one settings can likewise allow for these attributes to develop.

Developing students' creativity requires educators to become improvisational teachers and to be able to teach in a reflective manner (Salvador & Knapp, 2022). Increasing creativity in music performance requires teachers to emphasise students' musical expression in addition to technique-related perspectives such as fingering (Graham, 1998). In addition, creativity exists in the student-teacher relationship, and a strong and positive student-teacher relationship not only develop students' creative performance, but also stimulates students' creativity in general (de Bruin, 2022). Throughout the teaching process, teachers should foster conversational interactions with students and monitor their behaviour as improvising artists (Salvador & Knapp, 2022); this suggests the importance of the types of student-teacher relationship used.

In both Western and Chinese contexts, the master-apprentice model is commonly used in one-to-one piano instruction (Jørgensen, 2000; Li & Timmers (2021); however, the creative performance of pupils does not appear to develop well under this model. Student-centred teaching is a form of active learning in which students actively participate in their own education as opposed to being inactive knowledge recipients (Brown, 2008). Supporting students' self-expression, posing open-ended questions, and fostering students' creative thoughts are essential for fostering creative performance among students (Horng et al., 2005; Kupers & Dijk, 2020). Students must feel that their ideas are valued and that they can take risks. In addition, teachers' creativity is essential for fostering students' creativity; employing a variety of teaching methods is essential for nurturing students' creative performance, as it encourages students to generate and explore their ideas while providing room and allowing for options (Kupers & Dijk, 2020). These concerns are further explored in subsequent sections and chapters of this thesis.

Following this preliminary introduction to creativity, this chapter explores understandings of creativity in the Western context (section 1.2), followed by a discussion of the potential benefits of creative teaching (section 1.3). This chapter then examines theories on the social-environmental influences on creativity (section 1.4), with a focus on the Chinese context, its policies and traditions surrounding creative education (section 1.5 and section 1.6). Finally, the chapter will discuss the factors that might influence creative teaching, such as teaching models, teaching strategies and the characteristics of creative teachers (section 1.7). Additionally, the chapter investigates literature relating to Western-dominated theory

applied to the development of creativity in a Chinese context in order to identify characteristics that may help in enhancing creative teaching in one-to-one piano instruction (section 1.7).

1.2 Understanding Creativity in the Western Context

Csikszentmihalyi (2015) suggests that creativity can be defined as 'an idea or product that is original, valued, and implemented' (p. 162). According to Simonton and Damian (2013), there are two more requirements for an idea to be considered creative: in addition to being novel and beneficial, creative ideas must also be unexpected; moreover, the idea must be functional and effective. Csikszentmihalyi refers to two types: 'little c' creativity and 'Big C' creativity: 'little c' creativity means everyday creativity, which entails developing a novel concept or beneficial solution to a problem; however, 'Big C' creativity has an important influence on society (Csikszentmihalyi, 1996). Sternberg (2006b) also illustrates that creative concepts are both unique and useful. Therefore, Boden (2009) concluded that 'creativity can be defined as the ability to generate novel, and valuable, ideas' (p. 24). She indicated valuable and multiple connotations of the term, including intriguing, useful, attractive, straightforward, and richly complex (Boden, 2009). Regarding novelty, Boden suggested two different meanings: psychological and historical:

> A psychological novelty, or P-creative idea, is one that's new to the person who generated it. It doesn't matter how many times, if any, other people have had that idea before. A historical novelty, or H-creative is one that is P-creative and has never occurred in history before (p. 24).

This aligns with the views of Odena (2019) concerning two types of creativity: traditional and innovative. Traditional creativity can be conceptualised as H-creative, a historical novelty, whereas innovative creativity can be conceived as P-creative, a psychological novelty. The latter concept is related to 'the psychological notion of imaginative thinking and can be displayed in any valued pursuit. It is thinking style manifested in actions' (Odena, 2019, p. 513). Odena demonstrates that traditional, or historical creativity refers to those who introduce entirely new things to the world, and that the community recognises these people; therefore, this concept is associated with the expertise that brings the world a new and professional product. However, Odena is concerned that if educators or practitioners evaluate the creativity of their students through the lens of traditional creativity, the results

can be quite confusing. Therefore, innovative creativity, or P-creative ideas have wide application in the educational system, where creativity could be 'progressive and reconstructivist, where there is an emphasis on the interests of the students and democratic ways of behaving' (Odena, 2019, p. 513). Creativity in this sense might build upon and redevelop ideas that have been proposed by others.

Regardless of where the act of creativity originates and the domain of application, Niu and Sternberg (2006) emphasise further that, from a Western viewpoint, novelty, individualism and usefulness are the distinguishing characteristics of modern society. Therefore, creativity may align closely to the expectations of such a society. Additionally, creativity has an inclusive quality, as Niu and Sternberg (2006) highlight, in that it can be viewed as belonging to every individual rather than a chosen few in a Western perspective. This is supported by Newton and Newton (2014), who consider that creativity is a skill that everyone should possess, such as the capacity to solve unique problems and develop something new for oneself within daily life; this is referred to as 'little c' creativity, as noted above (Csikszentmihalyi, 1996). Therefore, it appears that Western scholars view creativity as a type of universal potential, which is consistent with Odena's (2019) definition of creativity as a thinking style expressed through actions.

Nevertheless, Niu and Sternberg (2006) observe that in individualistic societies, such as those more commonly seen in Western countries, creativity is promoted more than in a collectivist society (such as China), since value is often held to be connected with what people accomplish individually and thus they might be prepared to 'defy the crowd' (p. 24). While it may appear that such a cultural framework fosters creativity, Leddy (1990) believes that creativity cannot be separated from relevant knowledge held by a person. This is confirmed by Perkins (2009), who indicates that a creative maker might be a person who can explain more about their knowledge than others, which suggests that a rich knowledge background is also needed in the creative process. However, if creative explanation needs to be developed further in the creative process, this could be difficult to achieve in a country such as China where education is exam-focused and presenting the answers is important (Cortazzi & Jin, 1996; Mingyuan, 2006). Moreover, Morris and Leung (2010) discover that although novelty and usefulness are defined features of creativity, Western perspectives prioritise novelty while Easterners stress

usefulness; this may have an impact on related uses of creativity in instrumental music teaching.

Discussing creativity in teaching, Lin (2009) proposes a pedagogical framework that fosters creativity through three independent and interacting elements: teaching for creativity, teaching creatively, and creative learning. Lin (2009) believes that teaching for creativity focuses on the students, encouraging and developing their creativity throughout the teaching process, whereas creative teaching prioritises the teachers' innovative and effective teaching methods. Despite these different aspects, Lin (2009) states that there are commonalities and interrelated elements between those two components. This is because the teacher might be able to stimulate the students' creativity by employing imaginative methods to encourage their creativity, while teaching for creativity requires the teacher to provide creative teaching contexts that value students' creativity, therefore another key component of Lin's later model is creative learning. Consequently, the three components of Lin's approach are inextricably connected, interact, and ultimately foster creativity in the pedagogical process. Lin (2011) also observes links between prompting creativity and teachers' improvisational performance which were also noted by Sawyer (2004), who emphasised the need for teaching to be improvisational in order to foster creativity, in contrast to 'scripted instruction' (Sawyer, 2004, p. 152). However, the distinctive feature of teaching in the Chinese context involves being authoritarian and teacher-centred; teachers are expected to have everything planned and under control, and not to be improvisational and creative in the classroom; and they are responsible for providing correct information to the students, who are considered as dependent on teachers for knowledge acquisition (Chen, 2015).

In terms of music education, Espeland (2023) argued that the notion of creativity in music education should not be limited to music itself, but should be viewed as 'an overarching value for music education and beyond' (p. 4); additionally, the concept of renewing and reinvention should serve as a foundation for cultivating creativity. Webster (1990) considers that creative thinking is a vital aspect to be considered in creative development, describing it as:

> A dynamic mental process that alternates between divergent (imaginative) and convergent (factual) thinking, moving in stages over time. It is enabled by internal musical skills and outside conditions and results in a final musical product which is new for the creator (Webster, 1990, p. 28).

Webster (1990) also indicates that if creative thinking could be focused in the teaching process, then the pedagogical process will be emphasised, rather than results. Again, this has implications for its use within the Chinese educational context, where results are significant markers of achievement (Chen, 2015). Bernhard (2022) suggests that risk-taking should be encouraged in a teaching and learning environment where creativity is emphasised. In addition, Brinkman (2010) points out that while Amabile's three-part approach for creativity (expertise, motivation and creative thinking) is oriented toward business, it is equally applicable to music education. For instance, Brinkman (2010) considers that a teacher's competence/expertise requires a certain combination of skills, which includes not just musical ability, but also pedagogical, planning and organisational skills; the role of learner motivation should be also acknowledged in generating ideas on how to resolve problems and employing and evaluating solutions proposed by students.

Developing students' creativity, according to Salvador and Knapp (2022), requires educators to become 'improvisational artists' (p. 94) and to be able to teach in a reflective manner, requiring educators to 'plan, teach, and reflect on teaching' (p. 94). Prior to teaching, instructors need to prepare creative music activities for students; throughout the teaching process, teachers should build conversational interactions with individuals and monitor their behaviours as improvisational artists. Therefore, Odena (2019) indicates that what teachers believe about creativity is significant and it is evident that music teachers could ideally develop a concept of creativity in order to guide their actions, as the selection and implementation of musical creativity practises will depend on their perceptions of how creativity is defined. Creativity in music education is often connected with composition and improvisation, but there is also an element of creativity involved when students perform and reproduce music (Odena, 2019). The next section will explore how creativity might be defined in music performance, focusing on creative expression and performativity.

1.2.1 Creative performance: expression and performativity

Clarke (2011) stated that 'the most intensively studied aspect of performance in the art music tradition, and one that is closely related to a consideration of creativity, is expression' (p. 19). Clarke believes that originality is significant in determining if an expression is creative, but this does not imply that the performance should be over-expressed in relation to the marks on the score, and it still needs to respect the stylistic boundaries. This is confirmed by Bishop

(2018): achieving a balance between uniqueness and acceptability in musical performance necessitates maintaining flexibility within a certain set of aesthetic limits. Through an analysis of studies on creativity in the performance of Western performing art music, Clarke (2011) concluded that expressive qualities are creative elements of music performance, as the differences in 'timing, dynamic, and articulatory features of the performances express the performers' understanding of the metrical structure' (p. 20). Even if there is no proof that the performer was consciously attempting to explain or articulate their choices concerning the many possible interpretations, the performance is nevertheless creative. Moreover, expression can be viewed as further 'improvisatory flexibility' (Clarke, 2011, p. 23), as creativity in music performance does not generally imply deviating from the music score; and hence, flexibility in music performance (e.g. in the choices made concerning expression, articulation, and timing) plays an important function in the development of creativity.

Zheng and Leung (2021) illustrate that although creativity means musical playing, it exists in subtle changes, such as 're-shaping the tempo and dynamics of musical phrases' (p. 2); this seems to align with Clarke's views stated above. In instrumental pedagogy, Graham (1998) states that increasing creativity in music performance requires teachers to enhance students' musical expression rather than prioritise technique-related perspectives such as fingering. Nonetheless, musical expression may also include fostering students' performativity through ensuring that they have the technical competence to realise their musical creativity.

Kartomi (2014) indicates that 'performativity… refers to all the describable and analysable aspects of a performer's or group's competence or accomplishment while performing, including the sounds, movements, and gestures that the artist(s) produce' (p. 190). Davidson (2014) analysed performance videos from Lang Lang and found that the pianist not only interpreted all the performance directions on the score, but also 'built upon socially modelled behaviours … his performance reveals that the embodied performance brings the work to life, drawing on highly expressive physical gestures that are used in a range of other types of social encounters' (p. 183). Therefore, Davidson (2014) argued that Lang Lang's performance gestures demonstrated a high level of 'emotional investment' (p. 183) on the part of the musician, and displayed a creative persona, and hence showed more creative performance than if the performer had not used their gestures to highlight the expressive choices that were

made. Consequently, performativity in musical performance could also involve the inclusion of performance gestures as part of enhancing creativity.

1.2.2. Improvisation and composition

As described above (1.3.1) in relation to Clarke's (2011) concept of 'improvisatory flexibility', there are also other improvisation activities that are directly linked to one's creative thinking. Ashley (2014) explores improvisation in relation to several perspectives, including neurobiology, human interaction, and musical development, and states that improvisation assists in the development of imaginative thought, since when improvisation is required, one's internal process is more closely associated with imagination, and this internal processing and imagery are necessary to musical improvisation. Simultaneously, musical improvisation fosters individuals' creativity. Riveire (2006) suggests that improvisation might be a challenging task, but also observes that it encourages and fosters individual creativity. In the process of improvisation, Azzara (2002) considers that students are able to express themselves more freely, increase their higher order thinking abilities such as critical thinking and problem-solving, and develop independence, creativity, and establish a closer relationship with music. In a group setting, Ashley (2014) recommended promoting group improvisation activities, such as cooperative improvisation, as a valuable method for fostering the creativity of individuals.

In higher education context, Müller (2023) also emphasises the significance of improvisation in classical instrumental performance and education. The article demonstrates that the precise reproduction of the musical score was not supported until the latter half of the 19th century; therefore, improvisational activity will be beneficial for professional musicians in developing their own creativity and allowing them to put their ideas into practice. Sangiorgio (2023) also confirms that classical music repertoire can be a source of collaborative creative activities for students. Students can use the classical music knowledge they have acquired to re-imagine and rearrange the elements into a new composition. In this process, integrating creative activities into their current learning, connecting diverse skills and supporting their potential future teaching. Zhang (2023) conducted research that focused on developing improvisational activities in the context of higher music education in China, showing that such exercises have developed the creative thinking of music students. Atton et al. (2022) also discovered that improvisational creativities and approaches in higher music education are

advantageous. Engagement with free improvisation in the context of higher education by group musicians comprising of staff and students not only benefited the students' creativity, but also diminished institutional hierarchy and authority. Throughout this context, everyone's contributions, ideas, and opinions were deemed equally acceptable, and the process showed the growth of students' self-assurance, curiosity, creativity, and communication, as well as the transfer of knowledge and development of skills.

Koutsoupidou (2008) focused on two different teaching styles in the music classroom: teacher-led and student-led. While both teaching approaches benefit on children's musical development, the research found that student-led activities and what was referred to as a creative teaching style may enhance students' creativity, especially via the use of improvisation as an effective teaching technique (Koutsoupidou, 2008). In the following year, Koutsoupidou and Hargreaves (2009) conducted a study with two experimental groups, one for teacher-centred teaching and the other for a creative teaching style, facilitating improvisational activities for 6-year-old students over a 6-month period. They discovered that the group using improvisational activities significantly developed students' creativity by measuring the improvisations' extensiveness, flexibility, originality, and syntax. This is confirmed by Ramón and Chacón-López (2021), who also conducted research on the influence of musical improvisation on the creativity of children aged 8-11. Their findings supported those findings of Koutsoupidou and Hargreaves (2009), who found that a six-month programme of musical improvisation activities for children significantly increased their creativity.

Wendzich and Andrews (2022) also conducted collaborative compositional research in a school context, with the goal of composing a new piece with professional composers, teachers and students. In the composing process, teachers encouraged their students musically and contributed their own innovative thoughts and expertise. The students also contributed their musical and creative ideas, which involved 'thematic, melodic, rhythmic, and instrumental aspects of the composition' (p. 372). It seems again that collaborative composing activities assist students acquire higher-order thinking abilities, leading to more independence in learning, which is beneficial for fostering students' creativity; therefore, the research cited here provides music educators with a justification for incorporating

collaborative composition activities into various programmes for students at various levels, and in different contexts.

1.2.3 Creativity in the student-teacher relationship

de Bruin (2022) suggests that the student-teacher relationship in instrumental music lessons is a 'dynamic and ever-evolving interpersonal relationship' (p. 527). A strong and positive interaction not only improves students' performance, but also develops their character. Moreover, if relationality is capable of involving creative pedagogies, then rich and engaged learning could develop. de Bruin identifies that 'meaning is constructed between music teacher and music student, the awareness of creativity, novelty, and personal innovation is brought to bear in the learning process, where both teacher and student are the constructors and arbiters of usefulness and value' (p. 529). In such a relationship, emphasis is placed on an equal relationship between the student and the teacher, and on mutual respect, consideration of creativity, and constructive learning (de Bruin, 2022).

de Bruin (2022) proposes that the REIR framework of pedagogy aligns with creativity, which emphasises four characteristics that educators must be aware of: recognition, empathy, insightfulness and responsiveness. Recognition requires that educators be self-reflective and adaptable in their understanding of students' specific skills and their ability to improvise creative strategies that have an effect on each student. Building on recognition, empathy requires instructors to establish a connection between their awareness and the appraisal of what is necessary to enhance student receptivity. Insightfulness necessitates that educators dig into their students' experiences to uncover what others cannot and then respond in a creative manner that takes learners' perspectives and traits into consideration. In order for educators to be responsive to students' needs in a timely and effective manner, they must appreciate the creative process and its end result. de Bruin (2022) believes that educators' comprehension of the conceptual REIR framework, which provides a relational view on how teachers may pedagogically engage students in a creative process, encourages students' creative tendency and engagement in the learning process.

1.2.4 Evaluating creativity

Considering the evaluation of creative work, Kaufman et al. (2013) conducted a study to determine the level of competence required. They discovered that creativity might be seen differently by novices and experts; consequently, expertise is required to evaluate creative work. This might encourage music educators to gain not only domain specific knowledge, but pedagogical related expertise. Ott and Pozzi (2010) developed an approach to assess creativity-focused learning beyond the music. This approach evaluates creative learning using cognitive, affective, and meta-cognitive concepts. Each aspect contains several bullet points that can be evaluated; for example, generating, planning, and producing sit within the cognitive concept, such as mixing and comparing ideas in the generating stage. Meta-cognitive entails monitoring, controlling, and assessing; affective elements involve receiving and reacting to creative ideas. While designing creative learning activities for students, teachers are advised to utilise this approach to track their observations (Ott & Pozzi, 2010). However, assessing and evaluating students' creativity may be a difficult assignment for teachers, requiring not just domain-specific expertise, but the ability to understand the learning of students on several levels as well as the musical quality of the outcome or product.

Assessing creativity in the higher education sector, according to Balchin (2006), may be a significant challenge for educators. Balchin (2006) states that ‘creativity is manifested in the engagements of learners in creative processes’ (p. 174), thus, there are several processes and situations within which creative actions may occur and products can be produced, and therefore higher education should use a range of assessment methods. Balchin (2006) recommends that creativity should be explored and assessed collaboratively by teachers and students throughout the learning process in higher education. This could be aided by Balchin’s (2006) creative feedback card, with criteria including ‘uniqueness, associations of ideas, risk-taking, potential, operability, craftsmanship, and appeal’ (p. 178). Consequently, various types of assessment not only support students in developing their creativity, but understanding the meaning of creativity can be socially constructed by teachers and students, and care must be taken with assessment methods to evaluate creativity. This is supported by Odena (2023), who provided several recommendations for nurturing the musical and general creativity of students in the context of higher music education, such as presenting assessment criteria and providing regular feedback. Students would have access to formative feedback

throughout the assignment and could use it to improve their future work. Zhang (2023) designed a study on creativity assessment in the Chinese context, emphasising interpretation of Western music and integrating improvisational activity in the higher music education context; the results indicate that such activities enhanced the creative thinking of students. Consequently, creative assessment might improve the creative abilities of students in a higher education setting.

Successfully evaluating creativity in music performance, especially in Western classical performance can only be achieved by unique creative understanding (Williamon, Thompson, Lisboa & Wiffen, 2006). These authors suggest that assessing creativity, nonetheless, can be split into two perspectives: originality and value. Value and originality must operate within the constraints of stylistic boundaries, and creativity in performance should indeed emerge in relation to these boundaries if the performance is to be deemed appropriately original and valued. This includes all the outputs within a specific creative tradition, operating within 'socio-cultural, stylistic, and/or professional constraints' (Williamon, Thompson, Lisboa & Wiffen, 2006, p. 172); therefore, Clarke's considerations of expression, articulation and timings would need to be deployed with relation to acceptable stylistic conventions relating to the genre of music being performed.

1.3 Creative Teaching

Duan and Cheng (2018) note that creative teaching might cultivate students' creative thinking, and in turn stimulate their autonomous learning and therefore move them from passive learning to active learning, which might be beneficial to students. Reilly et al. (2011) also argue that creative teaching is required to address the different educational demands of students 'as lessons are planned and improvised to meet the varied needs, interests, and abilities of students as well as conforming to the formal policy, curriculum and available resources' (p. 533). According to Rinkevich (2011), academic accomplishment, cognitive growth and learning efficiency might all be enhanced by creative teaching. This is in line with Palaniappan's (2008) research, in which the students who received creative teaching outperformed those who merely followed instructions, since creative teaching makes learning processes more meaningful than in traditional, rote-based approaches. According to Wang (2017), creative teaching not only increases students' confidence in learning and aids in the retention of their learning interests, but also contributes to the development of

students' creativity, professional development, work competence and problem-solving skills. However, as Cremin and Chappell (2021) point out, despite widespread recognition of the importance of creative pedagogies on a global scale, there is insufficient research on the nature and operation of creative pedagogies.

Brinkman (2010) suggests that creative teaching combines teaching for creativity and creative teaching in music education. Brinkman believes that teaching creatively may keep teachers engaged in their teaching and maintains students' attention by inventing novel methods for achieving objectives, while also allowing for the emergence of unexpected and unforeseen outcomes; teaching for creativity requires demonstrating how to be creative to students. Burnard (2012a) notes that the terms teaching for creativity and teaching creatively are considered synonymous, which means 'creating a positive learning environment in which both teachers and students can take risks, engage in imaginative activity' (p. 167). Thus, Brinkman and Burnard both emphasise the importance of creating a teaching and learning context in which students and teachers can actively participate and take risks; additionally, they emphasise the importance of inventing creative teaching methods that capture both teachers and students' attention.

Cremin and Chappell (2021) conducted a comprehensive analysis of 35 papers on creative teaching practices and identified seven common teaching characteristics: 'generating and exploring ideas; encouraging autonomy and agency; playfulness; problem-solving; risk-taking; co-constructing and collaborating, and teacher creativity' (p. 325). Compared to the features identified by Sawyer (2006), several parallels emerge. For example, Sawyer (2006) emphasised the need for co-constructing and collaboration, the capability of problem solving and encouraging learners' autonomy, as well as generating and exploring ideas while teaching creatively. As indicated by Sawyer (2006), creative education must be 'improvisational' (p. 44), which means that the teaching and learning context must be varied and flexible. Thus, it indicates that teacher-centred and examination-focused educational environments in the Chinese context might not support the characteristics of improvisational creative teaching described by Sawyer.

However, one-to-one music teaching might be a context which provides an opportunity for teachers to be a little more experimental and creative. According to Bai (2021), the piano has opened up new avenues for life happiness and achievement in China, and as a result, piano learning has grown in popularity, and has led to the pursuit of piano-related degrees in higher education. However, research on fostering students' creativity and strengthening creative teaching practices in music education, particularly within piano pedagogy is limited and elementary (Zheng & Leung, 2021a). Thus, studies concerned with creative teaching in piano pedagogy are required for teachers and students in China. However, in order to develop a framework for creative pedagogy in the context of higher music education, it is also required to comprehend creativity from social and environmental perspectives to provide a more precise description of creativity.

1.4 Social-environmental influences on creativity

Creativity appears intertwined with social and environmental factors. Given the wealth of studies on the relationship between human creativity and environmental factors, the environment is frequently viewed as an external agent influencing individual creativity. Amabile (1998) suggests that three components of 'expertise, creative thinking skills and intrinsic motivation' (p. 78) all interact to produce creativity; intrinsic motivation is most directly affected by the environment. Niu and Sternberg (2001) noted from Amabile's model in educational contexts that the teaching and learning environment that the teacher creates and the accessible resources in the classroom all have positive or negative influences on one's creativity.

Csikszentmihalyi (2015), in a larger sense, demonstrates a systematic view of creativity that constitutes society, culture and person; he argues that creativity cannot be understood by separating individuals and their creative behaviours from the historical and social environment:

> This is because what we call creative is never the result of individual action alone; it is the product of three main shaping forces: a set of social institutions, or field, that selects from the variations produced by individuals those that are worth preserving; a stable cultural domain that will preserve and transmit the selected new ideas or forms to the following generations; and finally the

> individual, who brings about some change in the domain, a change that the field, will consider to be creative (p. 47).

Consequently, as Niu and Sternberg (2001) note, the nature of creativity from Csikszentmihalyi's model is 'context-dependent', and 'the interaction among the three factors … is important in driving a culture's evolution' (p. 227). Given that the Chinese have a collective orientation, whereas Westerners are more individualistic (Bush & Haiyan, 2000; Phuong-Mai, Terlouw & Pilot; 2005; Zha et al., 2006), it seems useful to consider social aspects in relation to creativity. As Hofstede defined (as cited in Zha et al., 2006):

> Individualism pertains to societies in which the ties between individuals are loose: everyone is expected to look after himself or herself and his or her immediate family. Collectivism, as its opposite, pertains to societies in which people from birth onward are integrated into strong, cohesive in-groups, which throughout people's lifetimes continue to protect them in exchange for unquestioning loyalty (p. 356).

Zha et al. (2006) indicate that the fundamental difference between individualistic and collectivistic cultures is that people in different cultures place a greater emphasis on different goals; individual aims are prioritised in an individualistic culture, whereas community goals are emphasised in a collectivist society. China is a society influenced by collectivist culture and interdependent orientation (Rao, 2006). Yet what are the characteristics of such a society? According to Rao (2006) the Chinese view their personal achievement as a result of socialisation. For example, success affects not only the individual, but also a family or a group; secondly, Chinese culture places an emphasis on interpersonal relationships; people in lower positions, such as students, are expected to obey those who are in a high position, such as teachers.

However, it appears as if a collectivistic society has an effect on creativity as well. This is in line with Sternberg's (2006a) cross-cultural research carried out in Hong Kong, China. Mullen (2017) also confirms that China attributes creativity to the societal impact on people's creativity, but Westerners attach creativity to individuals. Recent studies have focused on the effect of society and culture on an individual's creativity (Glăveanu, 2010, 2013, 2015). Glăveanu proposed a five-A model which is comprised of actor, action, artefact, audience,

and affordances. This model was developed from a social and cultural approach. The author argues that creativity is socially and culturally constructed; indeed, what creativity is defined as is context dependent. However, when looking at creative experiences in the Chinese context, it seems that many problems are hindering the development of creativity in the Chinese educational system, thus it is necessary to review the historical aspects, and in particular, focus on Confucianism.

1.5 Creativity in the Chinese context

Niu and Sternberg (2006) indicate that Chinese tend to regard creativity as having 'social and moral values' (p. 18); this phenomenon might be closely linked to collectivism in society and culture. According to Niu and Sternberg (2006), in a collectivist culture, a person's value is determined by group members. As a result, doing something creative and unusual might require someone to face the risk of alienating others from that group, and thus a society with a collective culture might be detrimental to the growth of creativity. The literal meaning of creativity in the Chinese language is the 'ability and force to create new things' [*chuang zao li 创造力*] (Niu & Sternberg, 2006, p. 25). However, the most significant distinction between Chinese creativity and Western creativity is that Chinese creativity is not always associated with novelty, while Western creativity is usually associated with novelty, since creativity might be 'making a connection between the new and the old' (Niu & Sternberg, 2006, p. 18); Chinese tend to appreciate creativity within constraints, such as reworking a traditional concept' (Niu & Kaufman, 2013, p. 78).While the current Chinese conceptions of creativity share essential characteristics with their Western counterparts, which are individualism and novelty, creativity places a greater emphasises on moral virtue and service to society in both ancient and modern Chinese contexts (Niu & Sternberg, 2006).

Looking back to the reason for creativity in Chinese context being like this, Lau, Hui and Ng (2004) explain that Confucius is inherently anti-creative, since obtaining moral virtues was the main priority for Confucius. Moreover, Confucius respected tradition and his students were taught that a great scholar might evolve via tradition. This is supported by Fung (2017), who discusses the relationship between creativity and Confucian theory in music education. As stated by Fung (2017), Confucius believed that examining the known is necessary for discovering new perspectives [*wengu er zhixin, 温故而知新*], implying that creativity is

founded on past knowledge and experience, thus 'an established frame of reference' (p. 148) is needed for creativity.

Confucianism was established from the philosophical concepts of Kong Fuzi (551-479 BC), a philosopher and scholar. His ideas have been incorporated into the policies of numerous Chinese emperors and empires throughout the centuries (Yao & Yao, 2000). For about two thousand years, Confucian thought has been the dominant philosophical theory in China; Confucian culture emphasises social roles and collectivistic rather than individual development (Lau, Hui & Ng, 2004; Niu & Sternberg, 2006), and has a tendency for 'uncertainty avoidance' (Staats, 2011, p. 48). The Chinese, inspired by Confucius, might perceive creativity as a lengthy 'self-cultivation' process (Niu & Sternberg, 2006, p. 34) that is difficult to accomplish, which might have strong implications for the development of creativity in China. Confucius also believed in the importance of education, and emphasised social harmony, order and obedience (Tzu, 1966). Staats (2011) also acknowledges that the concept of saving face may also influence creativity, in that standing out from others may not be an acceptable social trait; this could restrict creativity.

According to Staats (2011), the philosophical concept of Confucianism relates to education in the following ways: 'it promotes rote memory, competition, a clear division between work and play, a diminishing of play' (p. 47); and would be affected by hierarchical relationships: 'it requires a lack of equality in relationships, rigid social structures, expectations of gender roles, and authoritarian teacher-student relationships' (p. 47). People in this culture are more concerned about maintaining harmony with others than emphasising individual development and being critical of others (Niu, 2012). This is line with Rudowicz (2003), who reveals that people in collectivistic societies emphasise 'obedience, duty, cooperation, compromise and sacrifice for the in-group and will be concerned with social harmony rather than with expression of their own feelings, opinions or desires' (p. 283); people in this type of society will pay more attention to the group interests rather than to those of individuals and will encourage self-control.

These cultural constraints and collectivism culture have negatively affected the development of creativity in China (Staats, 2011). This is consistent with Rudowicz (2003), who notes that this kind of cultural foundation seems to discourage creativity. This is also recognised by Lockette (2012), who proposes that while Chinese educational reform has emphasised

creativity for over a decade, creative industries such as arts are still viewed as imitative. The primary obstacle concerning the creativity of Chinese students might be their educational culture, which is founded on the Confucian principle of not encouraging students to act independently or challenging authority. Since undergoing socio-political and economic reforms, the PRC has embraced the global free market economy, which has resulted in a greater diversity and evolution of music education, as well as efforts to adapt to these changes (Ho, 2021). However, in a 2014 talk, President Xi began a moral education campaign emphasising Confucius' principles, notably obedience and order (Ho, 2021). This might mean that Confucian culture might be viewed as both a cultural tendency and a political decision since President Xi has endorsed Confucius' significance. Consequently, there seems to be no doubt that Confucianism will continue to be a symbol of Chinese culture in the future, a culture that prioritises moral education, obedience, as well as order, and this will continue to have a significant influence on the Chinese educational system, despite the previously mentioned encouragement of creativity in relation to the development of China (section 1.2).

In a more recent book chapter, Tan and Lu (2022) discuss a Confucian perspective with insights for music education through an in-depth dialectical study of the *Analects* and consider the relationship between traditions and creativities. Confucius was not an opponent of creativity, although he emphasised the necessity of knowledge retention and transmission in learning. Confucius emphasised the need for retaining the useful and altering the negative, which lays the foundation for creativity. Tan and Lu (2022) also elaborated on the motivations of music educators, indicating that creativity is cumulative in nature, which implies that both the new and the old coexist; thus, music educators should introduce a wide variety of creative options, and teach students how to select those parts to keep and those modify as necessary (Tan & Lu, 2022). Therefore, this seems to indicate a close connection between creativity and tradition, and since there is tradition in creativity, likewise there is creativity in tradition.

1.5.1 The role of creativity in education in the Chinese context

As noted previously, a Western sense of creativity appears to be undervalued by Confucian culture in the Chinese context (Lau, 2000); also, empirical evidence indicates that knowledge and experience are more closely associated to creativity (Zheng & Leung, 2021b). This appears to be clear from the two primary characteristics of Chinese education discussed in Rudowicz's (2003) study. Firstly, 'teachers are expected to guide and control their students as well as

transmit knowledge. Students in return are obliged to be respectful, obedient and look for guidance' (p. 284). Staats (2011) states that:

> The educational foundations of China need to be shaken and shifted if it is to become a society that generates creativity. The current educational philosophy is a millennia-old product of Confucianism. This system still requires rote memory and absolute submission to ruling authorities, teachers, and administrators (p. 50).

Another characteristic of Chinese education is skill-oriented and emphasises basic knowledge (Gardner, 2006). In Chinese culture, creativity might arise when abilities and knowledge are mastered (Lau et al., 2004). More recently, Ho's (2021) empirical research demonstrates the political influence on creativity in the Chinese school music curriculum. Ho (2021) found that schools and educators are still subjected to a continuous political correctness effort aimed at preserving the accurate political awareness as a fundamental component of school music education. While China is increasingly embracing creativity, schools struggle with nurturing students' creativity within the limitations of Chinese political culture. Consequently, creativity development in the Chinese music education setting might be impacted by three perspectives: social, cultural and political, particularly social and cultural influences. However, are there social and cultural impacts on the instrumental teaching in higher education, particularly for piano pedagogy? Are societal and cultural forces inhibiting students' creativity? If this is the case, how is it impacted?

In Zheng and Leung's (2021b) empirical study (involving interviews with 13 participants involved in piano performance and pedagogy in China), knowledge and experience emerged as two major characteristics associated with creativity. It might be seen that the Chinese perspective continues to view creativity as intrinsically tied to the acquisition of knowledge and experience. As Fung (2017) explains, without a frame of reference, a piece of music cannot be composed, and instructors will fail to implement a new teaching approach without the theory as a reference. Knowledge and experience can be then referred to as expertise (Amabile, 1998); however, it appears as though the other two components of creativity discussed by Amabile, motivation and creative thinking skills, receive little attention in China. In a more recent research article, Wan (2023) also illustrates the importance of developing creative thinking in the preparation of music education professionals in higher education,

from the perspective of engaging up-to-date technology by teachers and students who are required to have a computer to access online platforms, and headphones to watch videos or listen to audio recordings. This strategy emphasises the importance of using technology to develop students' creative thinking.

Yan (2014) believes that creativity promotes students' individual growth, and that creative teaching is a vital component of music education that should be encouraged. However, as previously stated, the Chinese educational system is deeply influenced by examination-oriented education (Mullen, 2017). The traditional style of teaching music in China is teacher-centred: teachers deliver knowledge to their students, and students imitate their teachers; this appears to apply not only in school classes, but also in one-to-one instrumental tuition in China (Guo & Xu, 2015). However, this teaching method does not emphasise learners' emotions in music (Burwell, 2016), and it provides little room for developing students' creativity (Guo & Xu, 2015). In recent years, China has started recognising the significance of cultivating a culture that prioritises creativity, and has been actively promoting the integration of creativity across various disciplines. Thus, the next section will examine the relevant policies pertaining to creative education in mainland China.

1.6 Creative teaching in the Chinese context: Policies

At the start of the twenty-first century there was an increase in interest in creativity in education and creative pedagogies, as well as an increase in worldwide educational research in this field (Shaheen, 2010; Robinson, 2011; Bloom & Dole, 2018; Cremin & Chappell, 2021). Li (2011) states that 'China is moving towards a creative society, which is more specific indicator of cultural progress' (p. 4). In this context, Li (2011) further indicates that 'diversification is one of the prominent features … towards individual creativity' (p. 55); unlocking human potential and achieving human-centred value are emphasised in such a creative society. Studies have incorporated both conceptual (noted in Jeffrey & Craft, 2004) and empirical research (such as Kurtzberg, 2005); studies have been conducted on teachers' and students' perceptions on creativity and creative teaching (de Souza Fleith, 2000) and creativity in music education and higher education (Burnard & Haddon, 2015; Haddon & Burnard, 2016; MacDonald, Byrne & Carlton, 2006). In parallel to the increasing interest in creativity in Chinese society, the Chinese government has announced new educational initiatives aimed at fostering creativity. For example, according to the Outline of the 13th Five-

Year Plan for the National Economic and Social Development of the People's Republic of China (Chinese Government, 2016), cultivating creative talents is the primary goal of Chinese education, especially within higher education institutions. Along with the development of a context in which capable people become an important component of the comprehensive national strength, the cultivation of creative talents has significant influence on the international competitiveness and international status of China (Duan & Cheng, 2018). Moreover, creativity and the process of generating knowledge are supported across the world, within the transition 'from an industrial economy to a knowledge economy' (Sawyer, 2006, p. 41).

The People's Republic of China (PRC) was established in 1949 as a communist state, governed by the single-party system of the Communist Party (Ho, 2021). More recently, President Xi Jinping's ideals for China, expressed in broad terms, convey a sense of transforming into a creative nation in the global era (Mullen, 2017). This is confirmed by the 19th National People's Congress of the People's Republic of China (Chinese Government, 2016), who state that creative ability is the driving force of social development and support the use of creativity to build a modern economic system. In Chinese educational contexts, Duan and Cheng (2018) note that creative practice is the most important component of student development, which reflects the new perspective on talent training within the economic and social development in the twenty-first century in China. Along with this trend towards creativity in education, academics in Hong Kong (Cheung, 2012, 2013, 2016) and Taiwan (Horng et al., 2005; Lin, 2009, 2011) have also conducted research on the characteristics of creative instructors and creative teaching practices. Scholars in mainland China have begun to realise the importance of cultivating students' creativity (Yi, Plucker & Guo, 2015), examining how Confucian ideology influences creativity (Niu, 2012) and conducting comparative studies on creativity (Niu & Kaufman, 2013).

In terms of higher education contexts, Chan and Ngok (2011) found that development of higher education has been considered as a vital stage toward internationalisation of its domestic market. According to research on the higher education industry, cultivating students' creativity is a primary objective of higher education institutions in China (Gu, Zhang & Liu, 2014). Pang and Plucker (2012) note that such a 'top-down approach to policymaking' (p. 248), 'national strategies can dramatically affect national and local educational policies, which in

turn determine the practices of teaching creativity' (p. 248). Therefore, it seems necessary to consider policies regarding to creativity. Guo (2013) indicates that China is a centralised government, with the Ministry of Education (MoE) exercising administrative authority on education, including arts education. Therefore, the next section will discuss how the Ministry of Education's policies reflect this creative propensity in the context of Chinese higher education.

1.6.1 Ministry of Education policies and creativity

According to the Ministry of Education (MoE), the Law of the PRC indicates the following:

> The task of higher education is to train people to become senior specialists imbued with the spirit of creativeness and the ability of practice, to develop science, technology and culture and to promote the socialist modernisation drive. In light of the needs of the socialist modernisation drive and of development of a socialist market economy, the State, on the basis of the different types and levels of the existing higher education institutions, advances the restructuring of higher education and the reform of teaching in higher education institutions, and optimises the structure of higher education and the distribution of resources, in order to improve the quality and increase the efficiency of higher education (Article 5 & Article 7, Ministry of Education, 2009).

This suggests that China is aware of the value of creativity and committed to increasing the quality and efficiency of teaching and learning. Pang and Plucker (2012) conducted a critical analysis of recent policy changes aimed at boosting innovation and creativity in the Chinese setting. They discovered that over the last two decades, national strategies have shifted from fostering technical and scientific innovation to nurturing creative capabilities. Pang and Plucker (2012) discovered that collaborative creativity among higher education included teaching strategies such as discovery and experimental learning, and strengthening creativity in curriculum development and assessment in order to promote creative education. Du (2014), former Vice-Minister of the MoE of the People's Republic of China, stated that the concept of cultivating creative talents should be the premise and core of higher education, which requires higher education institutions to move away from the sole use of examination-centred assessment in a favour of a student-centred and student-evaluation-oriented

concept of developing diverse talents. Along with these changes, updating teaching material, supporting the reform of teaching methods and models, and further curriculum reform all need teachers to be creative in order to meet students' educational requirements (Du, 2014).

In the policy from the MoE referring to music education in higher art education contexts, cultivating creative talents is emphasised, and students' all-round ability is encouraged under this creative-oriented education (MoE, 2021). This confirms that fostering creative talent continues to be adhered to in the arts education policy in higher education in China, and the policy also addresses students' all-around ability relating to their future employment. Law and Ho (2009) state that promoting creativity through a well-rounded education that enriches musical culture and incorporates musical styles around the world has been emphasised by the MoE, since formal recognition of the value of music education provides a way of preparing Chinese students for the challenges of the global market; however, patriotism and revolutionary ideas appear to be more emphasised in practice in school music education. According to Ross and Lou (2005), Chinese higher education also recognised the globalisation trend by strengthening students' capacity for 'creativity, flexibility, independent thinking and innovation' (p. 227). However, there does not appear to be much policy concerning institutions of higher education, particularly relating to music education.

Mullen (2017) recently observed that the educational systems in Beijing and Shanghai have been transformed through a shift away from prescribed sequences of rote learning towards dynamic learning that fosters students' creativity, confidence, diversity and critical thinking. Mullen found that creativity could be observed through pedagogy and student engagement at various levels of institutions, including primary, secondary, and higher education. However, Mullen emphasises that in the process of transitioning from rote learning to dynamic learning, which demands teachers to be flexible and creative, teachers are encouraged not to continually follow rules. This is in line with Law and Ho (2009), who state that the difficulty in cultivating creativity in music education is convincing music educators that they are capable of delivering various musical cultures through thinking and teaching creatively.

Despite these intentions, Guo and Xu (2015) claim that traditional teaching practices, such as teacher-centred and rote-based learning, are still prevalent in Chinese higher music education institutions. Yan (2014) observes that teaching in the field of music in China is more concerned with transferring knowledge rather than students' development. Thus, strengthening creative teaching in conservatories and university music departments is needed, since this teaching culture might not encourage students' intrinsic motivation (Guo & Xu, 2015; Zheng & Leung, 2021a; Zheng & Leung, 2021b), and this motivation is tied closely to creativity (Amabile, 1998). Specific challenges also concern the examination culture in China, particularly the college entrance examination, namely the '*Gaokao*' *[高考]*, which requires school students to follow a teacher-centred model, and to enhance their memory abilities in order to achieve high marks and enrol in top universities (Mullen, 2017). Additionally, large classroom sizes might also force teachers and students to adopt the teacher-centred model (Chen, 2015), and thus students' independence and creativity might be limited. These challenges may require educators to look at different teaching models of piano pedagogy and how they affect students' creativity and influence creative instruction.

1.7 Teaching models for piano pedagogy

According to Luo (2018), piano teaching in Chinese higher education has traditionally operated using didactic methods. Carey et al. (2013) defined didactic as transfer pedagogy, in which the teacher provides instruction and content; primarily focusing on technique and repertoire. Transfer pedagogy is 'characterised by instruction, scaffolding that promotes mimicry, less flexibility, orientation towards assessment and decontextualised learning' (Carey et al., 2013, p. 362), and primarily utilises a master-apprentice model (Jørgensen, 2000).

As Guo and Xu (2015) note, developing creative teaching in the Chinese context may need the development of a new teaching model; in relation to piano pedagogy, transfer pedagogy would be likely to limit creativity. Thus, it is vital to understand teaching models that exist in one-to-one piano pedagogy in higher education, and to consider the implications of the existing models in relation to creativity. One-to-one tuition has had a significant role in much instrumental pedagogy both historically and into the present day. This operates in multiple contexts, such as within the private sector and within institutions, and at multiple levels (beginner to advanced), where the most of instrumental lessons occur in a one-to-one teaching format (Burwell, 2005). During individual lessons, Harrison and Grant (2015) indicate

that a student normally plays a piece that the teacher has prescribed in a previous lesson; the teacher then points out mistakes in the playing of the piece and makes suggestions about technique and musical interpretation. Following this, the student will attempt to correct the mistakes and follow the teacher's advice when performing for the second time, and the teacher might provide more feedback afterwards; this cycle of teaching and learning is the pattern for the lesson format.

Lebler, Burt-Perkins and Carey (2009) suggest that the master-apprentice model has been widely used in one-to-one instrumental teaching; it is also prevalent within both university music departments and conservatories (Burwell, 2013). In the context of Chinese instrumental teaching, this type of teacher-student interaction emphasises students' rote learning and minimises their talking (Benson & Fung, 2005; Li & Timmers, 2021). This model has been defined as operating with a dominant teacher and a receptive student, with the main mode of acquiring musical skills being imitation or adoption (Jørgensen, 2000). Harrison and Grant (2015) further illustrate that the master-apprentice model is described as the transfer of knowledge or skills from an experienced or knowledgeable individual to another who has less experience or knowledge and who passively receives that knowledge, with the less experienced or knowledgeable individual having 'little control over the content, pace and direction of learning' (p. 558). Both the teacher's example and the student's imitation are critical components of this model (Blackwell, 2021).

1.7.1 The role of the master and the apprentice

A master is a professional who is an expertise in a certain discipline; according to Slawsky (2011), the master is the model who illustrates, leads, gives feedback and motivates the student during the lesson. Researchers rarely observe instrumental studio teaching, thus there is a shortage of literature showing what effective teaching looks like in one-to-one context (Kennell, 2002). Hyry-Beihammer (2011) researched the expert practice of a Finnish piano teacher and his students within the one-to-one setting. The author describes the teacher as follows:

> He listens carefully to the student's playing and is present actively during lessons, as is visible in the expression of concentration on his face or when conducting a student's playing with his hands like a conductor. When giving

> feedback to a student he verbalizes the feedback using specific musical terms and professional vocabulary, creating verbally colourful and evocative expressions. When solving technical problems, his speech changes to the language of analysis. During or after that verbal analysis, he can test his suggestions with his own instrument through modelling (p. 166).

Due to the one-to-one lesson acting as a private consultation, potentially based on the individual concerns of students, the master-teacher can provide demonstrations and chooses whatever material they feel is the most appropriate for the individual student (Burwell, Carey, & Bennett, 2019). As Jørgensen (2000) reveals, the master is a role model, thus the one-to-one lesson provides students with a great chance to observe their professional playing and to access professional knowledge. However, being a master-teacher does not only indicate the relationship with the apprentice, but also includes responsibilities for education and coaching, and presenting the highest level of expertise in the field, and the master can have an effect on students' personalities and lives as a whole (Manturzewska, 1990). Similarly, Burwell (2016) states that the master's influences on students can be extended to areas such as career, cultural awareness, and probably most crucially, identity. This is in line with Zhou, Lapointe and Zhou (2019), who demonstrate that apprentices should not only learn the knowledge from their master, but also laws and principles of human behaviour in the Chinese context.

Bruner (1996) states that the role of the student is to emulate the master's demonstration, which is the fundamental skill for students. This is confirmed by Jørgensen (2000), who notes that 'the dominant mode of student learning is imitation' (p. 68) in this master-apprentice model. However, Nielsen (2006) argues that imitation is 'a mechanical activity with an idea of "taking over" knowledge unproblematic from one person to another' (p. 7); this would suggest that creativity is limited from the perspective of the student, as they are expected to replicate the playing of the master. Burwell (2013) states that 'imitation would be indispensable in the teaching and learning of music as an aural art and a non-verbal skill' (p. 280), and the author further clarified what is to be imitated: 'accuracy in rhythm and notation, tonal quality and certain aspects of technique … even aspects of interpretation' (p. 280); this suggests little room for creativity for the student. Burwell (2013) argues that undergraduates might not be able to manage a balance between imitation and the incorporation of creativity

and personality even at the tertiary level, where individuality and creativity in music performance are highly appreciated in the UK context.

Gaunt (2010) found that UK conservatoire students lacked skills in evaluating and planning their work and held passive attitudes in their one-to-one tuition. Gaunt further explained that this is partly because self-replicating patterns occur in one-to-one teaching and the teachers frequently lack training to teach students. Furthermore, Daniel (2005) also indicates that although many students adapt to the model of master-apprentice teaching and learning context and greatly value one-to-one lessons, this model could potentially have long-term negative influences for the student as learner, perhaps impeding skill development. For example, a negative influence might be a limited development of students' own interpretive skills (Burwell, 2006). Burwell (2006) concluded that even the most talented students seemed not to progress to the stage where they improved their own musical interpretation skills and ability to solve technical issues. Furthermore, the students are not taught to transfer the skills learned to contexts other than performance, such as teaching (Mills, 2002). Therefore, Burwell (2016) emphasised that concerns have been raised about the increase of student independence in higher education, where instrumental teaching largely exists in a one-to-one format. All of these factors could have a negative influence on the inclusion of creativity within the one-to-one instrumental lesson.

There appears to be insufficient research on piano teaching in higher education in mainland China to examine the contemporary piano pedagogy, teaching model and student-teacher relationship in one-to-one lessons; however, Li and Timmers's (2021) empirical study examines how piano timbre is taught and learned in a Chinese university. Although they acknowledged that the master-apprentice model was dominant in the lessons they observed, this was not the focus of their study, and they also did not discuss how this approach affects students' independence and creativity. Other studies come from Zheng and Leung (2021a), who examined how students' creativity can be fostered in one-to-one lessons in another Chinese university in mainland China. Zheng and Leung (2021a) examined how students' creativity could be developed in one-to-one piano lessons; however, the researcher might be biased in their findings considering that they were also the teacher of the participating students. The study data shows that the teacher was in a leading position using a didactic method in transfer pedagogy, though the teacher did attempt to facilitate the students'

creativity (discussed further in section 1.7.2); thus, their research demonstrates a strong master-apprentice model. Consequently, it seems that the authors neglected to examine the teaching model and student-relationship in this context, as well as how this perhaps influences students' creativity.

1.7.2 The master-apprentice relationship

As the master-apprentice model is generally practiced in one-to-one tuition (Burwell, 2005; Burwell, 2013; Harrison & Grant, 2015), and appears most relevant to the Chinese context, it is vital to take a closer look at the one-to-one relationship between student and teacher. The research of West and Rostvall (2013) reveals that teachers can exercise extensive control within individual lessons, they may pay little attention to or show much interest in the student's perspectives during the lesson, and teachers often ignore the student's opinions. Moreover, teachers show little patience with their students, which indicates an intense atmosphere between teacher and student.

Interestingly, Gaunt (2010) suggested students create the harmonious relationship between student and teacher, through adapting to their teachers. A smooth learning environment can be facilitated by the positive interaction between the student and the teacher, but in contrast, an inharmonious relationship might hamper a student's learning, with students reluctant to take risks. Thus, the relationship between student and teacher plays a significant role in determining the quality of the one-to-one lesson from a student's perspective. Gaunt's findings show that students were attempting to be as similar to their teachers as possible in order to avoid overt criticism. However, this situation might restrict their musical interpretation, creativity, and development. Gaunt's (2011) research also shows that the student might remain in a too comfortable and rather passive position, being unwilling to take advantage of new opportunities or to challenge already familiar methods. Due to the dynamics of power between students and teachers, students might have difficulty expressing their learning needs and challenges (Gaunt, 2011). They can be over-reliant on what teachers say, and they believe that what teachers suggest is the best way for them to develop their professional knowledge and skills, becoming passive in this process (Gaunt, 2011).

The relationship between teacher and student may therefore have a negative impact on students' learning. Persson (1994) described a dominating clarinet teacher, observing that teacher and student verbal interaction was minimal throughout the lesson, and students had limited opportunities to voice their own thoughts. The student's independent learning appeared to be a goal of the teaching, but each lesson demonstrated that the mode of teaching was to suggest how to do things better rather than encourage autonomous learning. The author concluded that the student's learning autonomy and self-responsibility for learning could not be developed in this context.

Jørgensen (2000) also confirms that student's independent learning and their learning autonomy seems not to be developed well in the master-apprentice mode. The author similarly argues that teachers appear to ignore or overlook the importance of independent learning from students. Gaunt (2008) found that while detailed knowledge can be shared between teacher and students in the one-to-one situation, the self-responsibility of students and their individual artistic voice might not be developed well by this relationship. The teacher's perceptions even assume that the student's autonomy would be developed by the student rather than learned from teachers. In order to gain an understanding from the student's perspective, Gaunt (2010) investigated the perceptions of twenty conservatoire students. Students who participated in the research appeared not to take responsibility for their own learning and were engaged in replicating learning by imitation rather than thinking for themselves. Moreover, the nature of one-to-one tuition is described as 'highlight[ing] hierarchy and authority' (Horng et al., 2005, p. 357) which determines the role of students as relatively passive, waiting for the teacher's instructions rather than using their own initiative to explore and take responsibility for their own ideas.

1.7.3 The master-apprentice relationship in the Chinese context

Hu (2002) states that the Chinese teaching and learning culture refers to a comprehensive collection of expectation, such as perceptions, attitudes, values, and actions associated with learning and teaching in Chinese context. Hu (2002) indicates that Confucius, who placed education in a supreme position, largely influenced the Chinese culture of learning, as discussed previously. Confucius believed that education is meaningful to everyone, and that moral qualities can be cultivated by education, as expressed in an old Chinese saying:

'Everything is low, but education is high' [*wanban jie xiapin, weiyou dushu gao*万般皆下品, 惟有读书高] (p. 97). As affected by this thinking, education is treated seriously in Chinese society, and particularly within the teacher-student relationship. In Chinese culture, the student-teacher relationship is hierarchical, as reflected in another old Chinese saying, 'being a teacher for only one day entitles one to lifelong respect from the student that befits his father' [*yiri weishi zhongshen weifu,* 一日为师终身为父] (Hu, 2002, p. 98). Thus, students are not allowed to challenge the teacher's authority, and teacher-dominated learning can be seen in most school classes and higher education lectures and individual lessons in China.

Hu (2002) suggests that many responsibilities and meanings are vested in teachers in China; for instance, a high degree of responsibility is the basic requirement for a teacher. However, the relationship between student and teacher is formal and hierarchical (Dineen & Niu, 2008) and thus this relationship seems not to promote the students to be mature in their learning, or to stimulate their awareness of independent learning. Additionally, since the education system in China is examination-focused, a teacher who can support students in achieving better marks would be rewarded, rather than encouraged to take risks and go beyond the curriculum, and thus teaching for creativity and creative teaching seem not to be developed under this educational system (Li, 1997).

In a one-to-one context, do piano teachers help their students by asking open-ended questions and encouraging self-expression, and therefore enhance their creativity in contemporary Chinese piano pedagogy? Although Sha (2019) acknowledges the need of cultivating students' creativity, the author expresses this as a personal viewpoint, without any research or indicating exactly how to foster creativity. This demonstrates again the importance of investigating contemporary piano pedagogy in the Chinese context, as well as the teaching approach and methods applied by the teacher, how students' creativity is developed, and the role of creativity and creative teaching in contemporary piano pedagogy.

1.7.4 Different teaching styles might promote creativity

The teaching model in one-to-one lessons has implications, as Lehmann et al. (2007) note, identifying two models for the teacher–student relationship: 'the master-apprentice model and the mentor-friend model' (p. 187). Lehmann et al. indicate that the mentor-friend model encourages more communication between teachers and students; teaching means 'guiding

the augmentation of students' own musical experiences' (p. 187), this may in turn stimulate student's autonomy and further increase their learning motivation, independence and creativity. This is confirmed by Cheung (2012), who believes that supporting students' self-expression, asking open-ended questions and promoting students' creative thinking are vital in encouraging students' creativity. Odena (2023) also indicates that a positive and encouraging environment is necessary for developing students' creativity. Students need to feel that their ideas are respected and that they are able to take risks. Furthermore, the use of questioning is essential for developing students' critical thinking and enabling them to open up to new ideas and creative tendencies.

According to Brown (2008), student-centred teaching is a type of active learning in which students are engaged and participating in their own education rather than being passive knowledge receivers. Brown suggests the importance of teachers considering students' ability and needs all of the time, and students learn more through experience and activity than through observation in this teaching style. Thus, student-centred teaching requires teachers to ask students questions more frequently, and to facilitate the process of guiding students in locating answers rather than simply providing answers for them (Brown, 2008). Student-centred instruction may assist students in developing into 'self-sufficient, creative thinkers and people who appreciate and value the subject being taught' (Brown, 2008, p. 33), and therefore in growing into independent and creative learners. Thus, one may argue that the benefits of a student-centred model outweigh the drawbacks of master-apprentice style, which limits students' autonomy, independent thinking and creative ability. Horng et al. (2005) reinforce this by identifying student-centred teaching as a critical component for supporting creative teaching.

Gaunt et al. (2012) also suggest that mentoring has a value when considered in relation to instrumental teaching, as:

> It focuses on the individual's long- as well as short-term development and takes into account the whole person rather than just focusing narrowly on transmitting a specific professional skill needed to meet an immediate challenge. Mentoring considers the individual in a broad context and

> recognises the interdependence of personal and professional development (p. 28).

Gaunt et al. (2012) suggest there are various benefits of employing a mentoring approach, such as students taking more responsibility and actively engaging in their own learning, interacting with their creativity. Gaunt et al. (2012) demonstrate further that teachers may need to gain a thorough understanding of the mentoring approach and incorporate it into their teaching through asking more exploratory questions and encouraging students to reflect critically on their professional and personal growth. Weimer (2002) suggests changing five perspectives that foster learner-centred teaching in higher education institutions: 'the balance of power, the function of content, the role of the teacher, the responsibility of learning and the purpose and processes of evaluation' (p. 23). Wright (2011) demonstrates how by implementing these five aspects mentioned above, a student-centred approach can be achieved, with positive outcomes such as students learning more effectively and taking greater responsibility for their learning, while teachers not only accomplish teaching aims, but also facilitate a more student-engaged classroom.

McWilliam (2009) provides a further concept of 'Meddler-in-the-Middle' as an effective teaching approach that can help students to build up their creative capability. This can be described as a 're-positioning of teacher and students as co-directors and co-editors of their social world' (p. 288). McWilliam also provides a framework for framing this approach in terms of pedagogy by emphasising students' active engagement, problem-solving ability, independence, critical thinking and creativity in learning, while allowing students to experience risks and not rushing to rescue them from states of uncertainty. 'Meddling' instructors who are active, supportive and creative in the classroom may challenge their students to think critically, which could have positive implications for their independent work, and autonomy.

While talking about effective one-to-one teaching in higher education, Carey et al.'s (2013) research shows two different types of teaching: transfer and transformative approaches. In transfer pedagogy (Carey et al., 2013), 'teachers approach their students' learning in a didactic way, providing content and instruction' (p. 364), which may hinder students' independence and ability to take responsibility for their own learning. Transformative

pedagogy ‘places emphasis on a depth of student understanding and ownership’ (p. 361). Coutts (2019) believes that transformative teaching emphasises process more than content itself and develops students’ reflective capabilities. Moreover, instructors that employ a transformative approach improve students’ learning experiences by emphasising both process and results, this also raises the possibility that one-to-one tuition will be used to support a student-centred teaching style (Carey et al., 2013).

In another one-to-one context, academic supervision in the Chinese higher education context, Gu, He and Liu (2017) found that supervisory styles can be defined as supportive and directive styles. The directive style requires students to follow instructions and directives, focusing on outcomes only, and shows less considerations for students’ independence and creativity, and thus appears to be counterproductive to promoting students’ creativity, whereas the supportive style fosters creative-self-efficacy and intrinsic motivation by convincing students that they are creative and utilises numerous teacher encouragements, thereby enhancing students’ creativity (Gu, He & Liu, 2017). Therefore, it implies that the prescriptive teaching approach has little effect on the development of students’ creativity in Chinese higher education context. Is this conclusion, however, appropriate to the Chinese setting of higher music education?

In addition to the models mentioned above, a combination of group and one-to-one tuition appears to be an effective method of instrumental teaching. Bjøntegaard (2015) suggests that a professional musician could be developed by a combination of teaching methods such as individual and group lessons, as well as master-class contexts. According to Bjøntegaard (2015), students take on more responsibility during group sessions since they are required to provide appropriate feedback to their peers and learn from their peers, and they also acquire a greater variety of playing and interpretation techniques than they do during one-to-one lessons. Li (2001) suggests that promoting a balance of group and individual instruction is needed in higher music education in the Chinese context, as while individual teaching focuses on playing skills, other types of knowledge, such as theory, might be developed in a group environment through peer feedback. Thus, for conservatoires and university music departments, combining group and individual teaching might be a beneficial alternative to solely one-to-one tuition.

Daniel's (2006) research also reveals that the teacher-centred one-to-one context limits interaction, exchange or contribution from students. In contrast, there is a shared environment and teachers and students can pay more attention to providing feedback and discussion in the group context. As a result, it appears as though solely one-to-one tuition is not the ideal teaching mode for students in higher music education; teaching can be balanced across several instructional situations. This is also identified by Haddon (2011): 'students are seeking alternatives to one-to-one teaching, and those in charge of organising instrumental tuition could question whether different learning contexts should be formally provided or even compulsory for students' (p. 82). These perspectives imply a concern that a variety of teaching styles and contexts could promote more varied and potentially creative pedagogy in instrumental teaching. This does not imply that this is the single approach to teaching in both contexts; other methods may exist in other places. It is important to note that comparing the two teaching styles is not intended to imply that one teaching style is superior to the other. There are likely historical or other reasons for the existence of the different teaching styles, and Chapter 2 of this study will elaborate on these historical reasons.

1.7.5 Creative teaching strategies

Horng, Hong, ChanLin, Chang and Chu (2005) indicate that teachers' motivation, teachers' views in education, and their commitment to education all contribute to the effectiveness of creative education. In order to achieve high performance in creative teaching in their study, the activities were student-centred, with a link between actual life and teaching material; the teachers were skilled in classroom management, asked open-ended questions, and encouraged creative thinking and use of multimedia. Therefore, it might be seen that the classroom environment seems to be vital to encourage creative teaching. This is confirmed by de Souza Fleith (2000), who explored factors that develop or restrict creativity in the classroom environment based on the students and teachers' perceptions. This author found that a classroom environment that promotes and explores students' diverse ideas, emphasises students' motivation and autonomy, and builds students' confidence increases students' creativity. In contrast, a classroom setting that disregards students' ideas, is teacher-centred, and places a priority on lesson structure that inhibits students' creativity.

Since the Chinese innovative economy now necessitates that education places a premium on students acquiring deep knowledge instead of learning a fundamental skill (Duan & Cheng, 2018), how could teachers be enabled to teach creatively? What classroom environments help to learn creatively? Sawyer (2006) indicated that 'improvisational and collaborative teaching methods must be incorporated' (p. 46), since this leads to constructivist learning for in-depth comprehension. Constructivist learning means 'collaborative knowledge building' (Sawyer, 2006, p. 47), which is a group phenomenon. Therefore, institutions and teachers should provide students with ongoing opportunities for this, and it is important for curriculum to build in flexibility in order to provide platforms for creative group activities. The most effective teacher can apply a wide range of lesson structures, adjusting flexibly in response to the students' particular demands. Finally, to build a creative classroom, teachers have to allow the students to be creative as a group, which is stressful for many teachers, particularly for novice teachers due to issues of control, learning how to lead open discussion and how to break out of the structured lesson format.

Students' creativity might be developed through teachers' strategies. Kupers and Dijk (2020) found that discover that using a variety of teaching methods is critical for fostering students' creativity. For example, asking open-ended questions, encouraging students to generate and explore their ideas, giving room and allowing for options. Moreover, their study found that students' creativity might occur after the teacher exhibits creative behaviour, indicating that the teachers' own creativity is vital for enhancing students' creativity. Gaut (2003) also illustrates the relationship between students' creativity and imagination: creativity originates in the imagination, and there are actual connections between imagination and creativity. First of all, imagination is an important way in which creative process and result are displayed to the individual. Secondly, imagination is the vehicle of active creativity (Gaut, 2003). This is confirmed by Zheng and Leung (2021a), who found that fostering students' imaginative activity by piano teachers might be useful to enhance students' creativity. According to their study, the piano teacher used his own imagination as a starting point and then provided visual imagery to encourage the student to think, such as by asking the student to imagine how the sun's brightness varies throughout the day; additionally, the students were asked to imagine a variety of physical environments while playing the piece; it seems that the students' creativity was developed productively since their sound varied to a greater extent on the

piano than prior to the creative activities. Therefore, divergent teaching strategies employed by teachers, particularly those which emphasise the students' imagination, seem to be beneficial in developing their creativity.

Hutchinson and Howell (2016) indicate the significant importance of making connections between musical analysis and performance or composition, concluding that musical analysis is a creative action that can help students think critically: 'it is important to encourage students to think about how the things they are learning might affect their own performance, listening or composition' (p. 19). Indeed, this skill can help students to find different way of performing or composition while encouraging their intrinsic motivation and thus increasing creativity. However, it appears that these connections are not evident in the research literature relating to the Chinese context. Literature on piano pedagogy in the Chinese higher education context is not always academic or high quality; authors discuss piano teaching in very general way and there are often statements made with no empirical research to support them. As Zheng and Leung (2021a) state, 'Chinese research is limited to a somewhat elementary, definitional understanding of creativity, viewing it firmly from the perspective of traditional instrumental performance while simultaneously aiming to draw the attention of the wider public to its significance' (p. 1). This is why I am conducting this research, as empirical studies on piano creative pedagogy and cultivating students' creativity are limited in the Chinese context.

1.7.6 The characteristics of creative teachers

Whitlock and DuCette (1989) state that teachers who demonstrate openness, creativity and imagination, commitment to their students, and excitement are the most successful in developing students' creativity. According to Dacey (1989), one of the most critical traits of creative teachers is their attitude towards creativity, their openness and adaptability in their interactions with students. Students' creativity is also promoted when teachers help students become open-minded, autonomous, confident and independent (Balchin, 2006; Cowan, 2006). This is also confirmed by Duan and Cheng (2018), who note that students inspired by instructors who are open-minded, autonomous, independent, and confident are more likely to be creative. Thus, supporting creative teaching may need a teacher to possess a set of features, the most essential of which is their open attitude. According to Horng et al. (2005), creative teaching promotes students to think independently, engage actively, and express

themselves freely in compared to traditional teaching. Thus, the capacity to foster equitable communication and friendly relationships with students is the most critical characteristic of creative teaching, since the teaching and learning environment is critical to successful creative teaching (Horng et al., 2005).

According to Esquivel (1995), teachers who focus on their own creative capabilities and include particular creative approaches and strategies into their own teaching are more effective at developing students' creative talents than teachers who rely on more conventional approaches. However, how teachers are supported in developing their creative competencies in China remains unclear. Additionally, teachers that have the capacity to facilitate creativity in teaching; prioritise a positive atmosphere in the classroom and emphasise open communication with their students seem to be critical for promoting creative teaching (Halpin, 1973). This is confirmed by Esquivel (1995), who states that teachers who are capable of fostering students' creativity tend to pay more attention to students' individual needs and their different growth patterns; conversely, the teachers who are incapable of fostering the students' creativity tend to control students more. Consequently, the capability of teachers to foster students' creativity seems to be significant to promote creative teaching in practice. Horng et al. (2005) mention two suggestions about how to develop teachers' own creativity:

> First, creative instructions should begin with teacher training programs in colleges. Student teachers should be equipped with the knowledge and strategies of creative instructions, while stirring their motivations. Needless to say, teachers of training programs should also have profound knowledge of creative instructions, and the programs must provide an environment for the development of creativity. Second, schools and bureaus of education should hold workshops of creative instructions, inviting experienced creative instructors, professionals, etc., to share their experiences, ways of developing creativity, and improving their teaching strategies (p. 357).

As a result, it can be demonstrated that teacher training has a substantial impact on growing teachers' capacity to nurture students' creativity and develop creative teaching strategies; moreover, older teachers might benefit from professional development to improve their teaching practices. The above review of literature suggest that there is scope to develop these aspects, both in Western instrumental teaching and in the Chinese context.

As discussed above, the Chinese educational system, which pays attention to basic skill training with teachers setting clear expectations and goals, may reduce the development of creativity, as it rarely gives room for students to explore it (Niu, 2012). This is in line with Gardner (2006), who notes that strict training in order to improve skills is detrimental to creative development. Therefore, could creative teaching be facilitated in the Chinese context? Can Chinese students be creative? Dineen and Niu (2008) conducted a study to determine the efficacy of a creative pedagogical model and discovered that creative approaches created in the United Kingdom have the potential to increase Chinese students' creativity. Specifically, the authors examined two groups of art and design college students in China: one that used a model from the UK; the other one used a more conventional approach.

Dineen and Niu (2008) assert that the creative model places a premium on the physical surroundings, planning and scheduling, teaching approach, instructional techniques, the type of project, as well as feedback and evaluation. For example, the teaching style and approach showed significant differences: the UK creative group approach encouraged teachers to be enthusiastic at all times, the teacher-student relationship was non-hierarchical, the teacher being a facilitator rather than an authority, and communication between teacher and students was encouraged through all sessions. Conversely, the Chinese traditional group had a hierarchical teacher-student relationship; the teacher was represented as the respected authority and could not be challenged. The physical environment provided to the students in the UK creative model involved constantly changing students' work displayed on the wall, and the arrangement of desks was varied for both independent study and collaboration work. In contrast, the walls for the traditional Chinese model were bare, individual desks were not rearranged to suit a group format. In the UK creative group, the teaching methods were various, including group discussion; students were requested to be active through all the sessions and they were encouraged to determine the session content and pace. In comparison, in the Chinese group using a traditional approach, lectures were the primary

method; group work was seldom encouraged, and students were required to wait for teacher responses to questions and not to share their own ideas with peers. The creative teaching orientation was 'heuristic, designed to be complex and challenging, with a focus on experimentation and the creative process rather than on the finished outcome' (Dineen & Niu, 2008, p. 44), while the tasks and projects used in the conventional group were lacking challenge and skill, and the teacher using traditional pedagogical modes of delivery emphasised results rather than process. In conclusion, the pedagogical creative approach developed in the UK was effective for supporting Chinese students' creativity, which could positively increase students' confidence and intrinsic motivation. This was measured by reviewing students' attendance, their effort and academic achievements. Therefore, addressing aspects such as teaching methods, teaching approaches, assessment and feedback, tasks and projects, scheduling and timetable and classroom setting are appropriate for developing students' creativity.

Similarly, Cheung (2013) examined the experiences of preschool teachers in developing children's creativity in their classrooms using a pedagogical framework for creativity. Five components comprise the pedagogical framework: motivation; divergent thinking; idea selection; practice and evaluation. The results show that this framework is beneficial for developing teachers' skill and knowledge, incorporating creativity into practice, and shifting teaching approaches from teacher-centred to student-centred. Three years later, Cheung (2016) reports how the teacher participants in the 2013 study respond to a Western-developed pedagogical approach targeted at helping creativity-promoting pedagogy. Teachers' perceptions and pedagogical practice changed as a result of the framework, emphasising the reality that instructors' educational practices are not fixed and unchanging, but instead are subject to change and progress. Consequently, creative pedagogy developed in Western countries can be adapted to the Chinese context. Cheung's research (2013; 2016) reinforced the value of teaching in a student-centred style that fosters students' creativity; moreover, students' intrinsic motivation and creative thinking could be addressed in connection to creative teaching.

This study, like that of Dineen and Liu (2008) is based on Western-dominated theory applied to the development of creativity in the Chinese context and is not oriented towards piano pedagogy. As can be seen, implementing creative teaching entails a variety of perspectives that should be considered for it to be effective. Consequently, encouraging creative teaching in piano pedagogy in the Chinese higher education context may also imply emphasising student-centred approaches, developing teaching methods that positively influence students' confidence and intrinsic motivation, and considering additional perspectives such as assessment and feedback, scheduling and timetables and the classroom setting, supported by teacher training, are also appropriate for developing students' creativity in piano pedagogy in Chinese context.

1.8 Conclusion

This chapter has reviewed relevant literature on the significance of promoting creative teaching in Chinese context, theories regarding social, cultural and political influences on creativity, the meaning of creativity in Western and Chinese contexts, teaching models for piano pedagogy, the role of master, the master-apprentice relationship in Western and Chinese contexts, and some implications regarding how the teacher-student relationship affects students' creativity and creative teaching have been discussed. Creative teaching strategies, the characteristics of creative teachers, and Western-dominated theory applied to the development of creativity in the Chinese environment have been reviewed. Consequently, considering teaching models and teaching strategies, the characteristics of creative teachers might contribute to develop creative teaching in piano pedagogy. As noted previously, the Chinese government and higher education institutions are currently making efforts to move from the traditional education culture to a creative education system. In order for the reform to succeed, it is necessary to explore effective creative teaching strategies. These strategies may be valuable in instrumental as well as school education; within a significantly increasing population learning music instruments in China, piano learners make up a considerable proportion; moreover, a huge number of students in Chinese higher music education institutions learn piano performance and also study piano within music education degree courses (China News, 2013; Shanghai Conservatory of Music, 2016).

The current study is unique in numerous ways compared to earlier studies. This research focuses on contemporary piano pedagogy in the one-to-one tuition in higher music education institutions in mainland China. The research explores the student-teacher relationship in the one-to-one lesson; teaching methods, materials and pedagogical philosophies; the role and application of creativity and creative teaching in contemporary piano pedagogy, and institutional influences on pedagogy. The findings of this research will help extend contemporary research literature on one-to-one piano pedagogy in general, providing insights to probe and promoting creative teaching in particular in higher music education institutions in the Chinese context. Second, this research contributes to a more comprehensive understanding of the role of social and environmental factors on contemporary piano pedagogy and their influences on creative instruction. Finally, the research examines not only the independent impacts of diverse sources but also their interactions on the development of creative teaching, supplementing past research on creativity in higher music education that focused primarily on teaching style (Zheng & Leung, 2021a & b). Therefore, the present research investigates modern Chinese higher education creative piano pedagogy from the perspective of the student-teacher relationship, thus my research questions are as follows:

1. What form does the student-teacher relationship take in the one-to-one piano lesson in the context of Chinese higher music education settings?
2. What are the teaching methods applied in the one-to-one piano lesson in higher music education in China? What are the teaching materials and teaching focus adopted in this context?
3. What teaching and learning philosophy emerges?
4. What is the role of creativity and creative teaching in contemporary piano pedagogy in higher music education institutions and how it is applied?
5. How is the current pedagogy related to and influencing creativity and creative teaching?

The implications of this research will contribute to contemporary research literature on one-to-one piano teaching in higher music education institutions in the Chinese context, as well as provide a framework for developing creative piano pedagogy and contributing to curriculum development in Chinese higher music education. The next chapter contextualises

the research on piano education in China by outlining the history of piano teaching in China, its evolution and recognised pedagogical philosophies. Additionally, it provides context for the contemporary state of higher education institutions by concentrating on the Conservatory, Normal University and University settings, which are also the focus of the current research.

CHAPTER 2: CONTEXTUALISING THE RESEARCH: PIANO TEACHING IN CHINA

2.1 Introduction

The chapter examines the background of piano teaching and piano education relating to higher education institutions in China. It focuses on undergraduate teaching in higher education institutions and examines teaching aims, curriculum design and teaching methods among three different types of institutions: Conservatory, Normal university, and University. The chapter begins by describing the history of piano teaching in China, focusing on the establishment of the Shanghai National Conservatory and the work of the Russian pianist Zakharoff to illustrate the evolution of piano education in the higher education context (section 2.2 to section 2.2.3). The chapter will then illustrate the renowned pedagogical theories of Guangren Zhou, Zhaoyi Dan and Shizhen Ying (section 2.2.4 to section 2.2.4.3). Following this, it then explains the current situation of higher education institutions by focusing on the Central Conservatory of Music, Capital Normal University and Hebei University (section 2.3 to section 2.4).

2.2 The introduction of piano education in China

After the first Opium War (1840-1842), the piano, as an accompaniment instrument for hymns in the church, started to come into the lives of Chinese people (Li, 2017). From 1850, many missionaries who arrived in China were not only playing the role of spreading religious beliefs, but also acting as piano teachers (Kang, 2009). However, because missionaries had no professional piano training background, they could generally only teach simple pieces, but this teaching in church formed the earliest piano education in China (Zhao, 2013).

2.2.1 Piano teaching from 'church' to 'school'

According to Kang (2009), with the establishment of church schools in Shanghai and other cities such as Hu-zhou and Su-zhou, the piano rapidly gained a lot of attention. In 1883 the McTyeire School for Girls was founded in Shanghai; this promoted a qualitative leap in piano teaching and learning (Zhou, 2010). The unique and advanced schooling philosophy that paid attention to English, music and dance was highly approved by southern China by middle- and upper-class families. The students at McTyeire School who studied piano occupied a third to

half of the overall student body, and the repertoire they played was Western classical music; they were also taught music theory, music history, and composition alongside piano (Feng, 2007). Performances were varied and included fortnightly concerts in the class; medium-size concerts within the school once a month; biannual concerts for the parents, and personal public graduation recitals (Sun, 2000). All of these curricula, teaching content and performing forms laid a foundation for piano education in southern China (Feng, 2007).

According to Zhou (2010), following the unsuccessful 'Reform Movement' at the end of the nineteenth century, the majority of Chinese people increasingly realised the national backwardness and the importance of making progress; many Chinese progressive intellectuals advocated learning Western culture, science and technology and building up the new education (Zhou, 2010). Youmei Xiao (1884-1940) was a vital pioneer in the history of music education during the early twentieth century; additionally, he is credited with establishing current Chinese music education, having founded both the first Chinese music education institute in 1922, the *Yinyue Chunxinsuo* [*音乐传习所*] and then the Shanghai National Conservatory in 1927 (Huang, 2021). Youmei Xiao was motivated by Confucianism, which believes that music education may serve as a means of nurturing virtue, and thus Youmei Xiao thought that the purpose of music is to positively affect people's behaviour (Huang, 2021).

Other Chinese intellectuals also believed that music plays a significant role within enlightening education. If providing music lessons in public schools and the establishment of music schools could be actively promoted, then spreading new ideas and arousing the ambition of the younger generation for the national development of China could be accomplished through the development of music education (Zhao, 2013; Li, 2017). Therefore, music in school became another factor that fuelled enthusiasm for the piano, since it was the primary accompanying instrument in a variety of musical school activities (Zhai, 2016; Li, 2017). In the early twentieth century, the piano therefore gained initial acceptance and recognition, and piano education was developed in other established music institutions in Shanghai and Beijing (Zhang, 2021).

2.2.2 Shanghai National Conservatory

The Shanghai National Conservatory was founded in 1927 by Youmei Xiao and Yuanpei Cai (1868-1940), a Chinese philosopher and politician (Huang, 2021). The establishment of the Shanghai National Conservatory was a milestone in higher professional music institutional development (Huang, 2021; Zhang, 2021). Yuanpei Cai was also inspired by Confucius, according to Huang (2021), and the fundamental goal of music instruction, Cai argued, should be the cultivation of moral character. As indicated previously, Youmei Xiao was also affected by Confucius (Huang, 2021), thus the teaching philosophy of Shanghai National Conservatory might be influenced by Confucius' theory of moral and ethical development, via music. However, as a result of Xiao's early experience studying overseas, the piano teaching system was adapted from European countries and included Western teaching models, materials and methods (Zhang, 2021). It can be observed that in the early years of professional music education in China, the Chinese teaching philosophy of Confucianism and the Western teaching system were integrated. The establishment of the Shanghai National Conservatory not only marks the first piano department in Chinese higher education, but also represents a starting point of cultivating pianists and the development of professional piano education (Liu, 2014). According to Wang (2010), the dominant cultural direction during this era was to 'imitate and spread' (p. 93) European music culture; building on this, Russian piano school methods were adopted in the institution.

2.2.2.1 Zakharoff

The establishment of the piano department at the Shanghai National Conservatory is attributed to the Russian pianist Zakharoff (1887-1943) (Feng, 2007; Wang, 2013; Liu, 2014; Li, 2017). As a successful inheritor of the Russian piano school, Zakharoff helped to progress the early stage of Chinese piano higher education (Feng, 2007), taking the role of Head of the Piano department at the Shanghai National Conservatory; thus, the influence of the Russian piano school began in China (Li, 2017). Zakharoff improved the level of professional piano education; the first generation of Chinese pianists were born under his teaching; he adopted the positive aspects of Russian piano school teaching within a comprehensive and professional teaching practice (Wang, 2013).

According to Feng (2007), the characteristics of the Russian piano school are that it attaches great importance to traditional Russian music; the influences of folk music are emphasised. Zhou (2018) defines the Russian approach as 'mechanical with an extreme emphasis on highly-honed technique over musicianship' (p. 9), emphasising powerful sound and playing, with a focus on to how to use the arms (Zhou, 2018). Wang (2013) states that as students' technical levels were relatively weak at that time, Zakharoff paid attention to improving their technique and his teaching style was very strict. For example, he advocated a strict finger training that supported the independence of individual fingers, strong contrast of dynamics and stable rhythms. According to Xu (2009), Leyi Wu, a student of Zakharoff's recalled: 'Zakharoff's teaching style was very strict and he was very serious while teaching, we had two piano lessons every week. If we played well, he would encourage us, but if not, he would scold us' (p. 39).

Furthermore, Zakharoff emphasised the importance of developing students' imagination, but he also required deep understanding of the work by knowing the composer's background, the compositional context, the musical style, the structure of the piece, harmony and melody. Zakharoff aimed to expand students' awareness of repertoire by including piano works from Bach, Beethoven, Mozart, Chopin, Liszt, Debussy, and Grieg as well as Rachmaninov and Ravel in his teaching. According to Wei (1982), Shande Ding, another student of Zakharoff's recalled:

> Just [in] two to three years, I listened to a lot of piano works that I had never listened [to] before. This is not only broadening the students' horizons, but also creates the conditions for composition in China. In addition to teaching classical music, he also taught us some works in folk music style. For example, when teaching Chopin's Mazurka, he said that the Polish dance beats were not the first but the last two, and then he stood up and demonstrated the dance (p. 63).

Additionally, Zakharoff believed that it is not possible to apply the same method to every student, so he emphasised the significance of educating each person according to their natural ability, considering their finger dexterity and personality, and thus he made different teaching plans for every student (Feng, 2007). Zakharoff also developed various opportunities for his students. Zakharoff was an active performer, and he encouraged his students to participate in all kinds of musical activities inside and outside of the conservatory (Li, 2017).

Under his guidance, students achieved a relatively high level of piano performance and eventually became the first generation of Chinese pianists, which included Shande Ding, Jisen Fan, Cuizhen Li, Kaiji Yi, Bigang Chen and Leyi Wu (Wang, 2013). Many of his students continued his teaching style and methods, contributing to the development of piano education through holding positions as piano professors or heads of piano departments in Shanghai Conservatory of Music or Central Conservatory of Music, Beijing. Many of his teaching concepts are still employed, particularly within technique (Li, 2017). Therefore, it is acknowledged that piano teaching in higher education institutions developed from the Russian piano school and Zakharoff held a strong and lasting influence.

2.2.3 After the founding of the People's Republic of China

When the People's Republic of China was officially founded in 1949, the development of piano education in higher institutions entered a new stage. The publicity department of the Communist Party of China (CPC) central committee decided to combine several higher education institutions into the Central Conservatory of Music in June 1950 (Feng, 2007). The piano department at the Central Conservatory of Music in Beijing had the highest level of piano teachers and they aimed to cultivate the highest level of pianists in Northern China. Shanghai National Conservatory was renamed as Shanghai Conservatory of Music at the same year; this created a situation in which the professional piano education in China developed simultaneously in the north and the south (Li, 2017). The Central Conservatory of Music and Shanghai Conservatory of Music employed the most outstanding piano teachers in China and trained many students, thus creating new contexts for the development of professional piano education in China (Zhou, 2010).

After this time, it became common for the Chinese government to send students to study abroad in Western countries such as Germany, France and the United States to receive Western musical training, thus an increasing number of Chinese music scholars believed that introducing Western music could benefit and develop Chinese musical composition as well as piano skills (Ho, 2003). Although many of the piano teachers were trained in Western countries, the Russian influence was still of importance. A 'Sino-Soviet Treaty of Friendship, Alliance and Mutual Assistance' was signed between China and Russia in 1950 (Zhao, 2010). According to Zhao (2010), this contract was of great significance to the economy and culture of the two countries, and it laid a good foundation for cultural exchange: the Soviet Union

distributed many piano professors to China. In general, the arrival of these experts brought new piano teaching methods and materials, and a standardised syllabus of piano teaching (Liu, 2014). These developments included children's music schools, piano teaching materials for music colleges and a higher level of teaching materials for conservatoire piano departments (Yang, 2015). All of these measures greatly addressed the deficiency of Chinese piano teaching materials at that time, developing repertoire knowledge and comprehensive and systematic playing skills (Feng, 2007).

In particular, the Soviet government sent piano educators to the Central Conservatory of Music and Shanghai Conservatory of Music. Technical and expressive skills were much improved under their guidance, and some of the pianists started to perform on the international stage (Zhou, 2010). From 1951-64 Guangren Zhou, Zhihong Guo, Shihun Liu, Shengying Gu, Chengzong Yin and Huiqiao Bao were prize-winners at international piano competitions, and they were taught by the Soviet experts (Conservatory of Music, 2022); thus these professionals not only established a Soviet piano teaching system and enhanced the quality of piano education but also cultivated a number of Chinese pianists, many of whom are currently working in the piano education industry and are referred to as ‘masters’ (Feng, 2007). Therefore, the Soviet Union piano pedagogy has had a profound impact on the development of piano pedagogy in China.

2.2.4 Theoretical studies on professional piano education in China

The previous sections have detailed the development of piano teaching in China. However, the development of theoretical perspectives was slower to take place; for example, there was almost no theory of piano teaching in the decades before the founding of the People’s Republic of China in 1949 (Li, 2017). Based on Li’s (2017) research, the 1950s and 1960s were the exploration stage of the development of theories on piano education. Following the establishment of the north-south conservatories and Chinese pianists studying abroad, the establishment and improvement of more institutions, a stronger teaching structure and increasing publication of piano books that include tutor books and books on piano teaching, theoretical development moved to a new stage (Zhao, 2013). According to Li (2017), piano teaching theories from Guangren Zhou, Zhaoyi Dan and Shizhen Ying are widely applied in China. These teachers are leading authorities and are still active in the field of piano teaching;

some of their teaching theories and approaches have been widely used by other piano teachers, and some of their published books have been listed as the teaching materials of the conservatories and universities; therefore, their influences in the field of piano teaching are significant in China (Li, 2017). In order to examine the legacy of the approaches of these teachers, I now discuss each of these active and renowned teachers in turn, highlighting their pedagogical priorities.

2.2.4.1 Guangren Zhou

Guangren Zhou (1928 - 2022), piano virtuoso, educator and tenured professor of the Central Conservatory of Music, has been praised as 'The Soul of Piano Education' and 'The Piano Godmother' in China (Xu & Meng, 2017). According to Wang (2011), she won the first prize of the 3rd World Youth Festival Piano Competition in 1951, making her the first Chinese winner of an international piano competition; she also won the first Robert Schumann International Competition for Pianists and Singers in 1956, and these two awards established her status within the first generation of Chinese pianists. Moreover, she is the first person to organise an international piano competition in China, and also served as the chair the competition (Wang, 2011). The influence of the Russian school on Guangren Zhou is profound: she learned piano from Shande Ding, a student of Zakharoff, and studied with one of the Russian piano professors sent by the Russian government after the 'Sino-Soviet Treaty of Friendship, Alliance and Mutual Assistance' between China and Russia and China (Xu & Meng, 2017).

According to Chen (2011), Guangren Zhou believed that teachers should cherish their love for music, piano education and students, and that students' love for music can be aroused when teachers devote themselves to music and education. Guangren Zhou's teaching philosophies emphasise two perspectives: teaching students in accordance with their aptitudes, and teaching others is teaching yourself (Liu, 2014b); this demands that teachers must learn throughout their own lives, and thus teachers' own character, virtue and learning attitude will be subtly transferred to students (Chen, 2011). The teacher should set up the correct ideology for the students: Guangren Zhou believes that some students cannot play well, not because of their insufficient talent, but because of their incorrect learning attitude, and lack of consistent application; therefore, it is significant to set up the correct ideology for the students at the outset (Li, 2017). Based on this, Guangren Zhou believes that finger independence training and technical control are the most important areas of foundational work (Jin, 2014;

Li, 2017). Guangren Zhou also believes that taking part in various kinds of musical activities and competitions can help students to achieve comprehensive capacity: half of the time should be spent in the lessons and individual practice, the remaining time should involve musical activities or competition (Liu, 2014b).

2.2.4.2 Zhaoyi Dan

Zhaoyi Dan (1940 -) is another famous piano educator. He founded the Zhaoyi Dan Piano Art Centre in Shenzhen, and he is also employed by Sichuan Conservatory of Music as the President of the Piano Art Research Institute (Baidu, 2020). According to Baidu (2020), he made his name in piano education by producing a younger generation of pianists, including Yundi Li, Sa Chen and Haochen Zhang. Among them, Yundi Li was 2000 winner of the Chopin International Piano Competition and Haochen Zhang won first prize in the Van Cliburn Piano Competition in 2009 (Baidu, 2020). Zhaoyi Dan's teaching theory has been included in the teaching materials of the Central Conservatory of Music (Yang & Guan, 2012).

Humanistic music education is the most important component within Zhaoyi Dan's pedagogical theory (Yang & Guan, 2012). According to Yang and Guan (2012), several perspectives could be addressed under this concept. Firstly, Zhaoyi Dan believes that appreciating students and investment of time, energy and money in order to cultivate good students are the essential qualities of a piano teacher. Furthermore, students' own characteristics should be emphasised; this also aligns with Guangren Zhou's theory. Zhaoyi Dan believes that natural ability, interests and personalities are all different for every student, thus cultivating students according to the same methods would not work; instead, tailoring for each student is of particular significance (Wu, 2017). Zhaoyi Dan confirms that the desire to learn piano is the best teacher; therefore, if student's desire could be continually developed in the teaching process, the results can be doubled with half the effort (Wu, 2017).

Yang (2014) further illustrates Zhaoyi Dan's teaching philosophy: piano performance is not isolated but connected with broader cultural issues. Therefore, Zhaoyi Dan believes that it is important to understand the cultural context of the composer, to undertake a detailed analysis of each work and to encourage students to acquire cultural knowledge (Yang, 2014). Zhaoyi Dan (2011) explained that Yundi Li, as one of his best students, played Chopin's work since his childhood; however, Zhaoyi Dan guided him to approach Chopin's work from a historical perspective, to understand the history of Poland and Chopin's patriotism, thus

creating a more informed performance. Zhaoyi Dan's teaching theory shows awareness of the importance of cultivating students' interest, as well as developing a solid technical foundation.

2.2.4.3 Shizhen Ying

Shizhen Ying (1937 -) is an outstanding piano educator and a former professor of the Central Conservatory of Music (Wang, 2018). According to Wang (2018), during her tenure as the deputy director of the first piano examination committee of the Chinese Musician Association she formulated the Chinese piano examination system, edited the first piano exam repertoire in China and implemented it, which created a new stage in the field of piano education. Her publications include 'Piano Teaching Method' and 'Teaching and Playing Guidance of Czerny Etude Works 599, 849, 299 and 740' (Li, 2017), and the 'Piano Teaching Method' was the first book that covered the piano teaching method in China (Wang, 2018). According to Li (2017), in the initial development history of piano teaching theory during that time, this book not only systematically elaborates her piano teaching method and but also plays a crucial role in improving the teaching ability and teaching level of Chinese piano teachers.

Shizhen Ying's teaching theory is based on her experiences of studying in Moscow during the 1970s and 80s. She was deeply influenced by the piano teachers at the Moscow Conservatory of Music, particularly how they cultivated student's creativity within the teaching process by asking them various kinds of questions (Ying, 1981). According to Shizhen Ying (1981a) it might be difficult for Chinese students to understand such teaching methods, as they may think teaching in this way is different and have no idea what to do or how to do it; it is a challenge for them to understand that this is a way to cultivate their creativity. Chinese teachers have been known for being serious and responsible, but the methods of teaching step by step and cramming might destroy students' creativity (Ying, 1981).

Shizhen Ying believes that successful teaching should develop students' creativity (Ying, 1981b). Firstly, students should develop musicianship at a very young age by starting to feel the music, instead of only following the teacher's lead to complete requirements and tasks. Over time, the students will integrate their musical experiences into a personal expression, and then can expand their creativity. Shizhen Ying explained the importance of improving students' aural ability: students should be required to be able to hear the connection between the sounds of the music they are playing, and more importantly, the difference between tones. For example, applying aural ability to distinguish soprano, mezzo-soprano, tenor and bass

while listening to a fugue would be like the visual feeling when they look at a three-dimensional painting and then enter the three-dimensional space while using their ears (Ying, 1989). While Shizhen Ying believes that teaching should cultivate students' creativity from a very young age, focusing on aural ability and musicianship examinations, specific processes of how to apply creative teaching approaches are not mentioned in her book.

2.2.4.4 Emerging issues

The journal 'Piano Artistry' began publication in 1996 (Wang, 2010), indicating interest in theoretical research into piano performance and education in China. However, the issue of creativity and how to foster students' creativity appears to be largely ignored in the well-known books by the above piano teachers, and in Chinese journals on piano education. However, in recent years, several articles concerning creativity on piano pedagogy have been published online. For example, a short article 'Piano education and the cultivation of college students' creativity' (Chen, 2019) emphasises the significance of promoting students' creativity and imagination through a range of teaching content, cultivating creative thinking, emotional engagement and developing interest in learning as well as promoting composition. The article 'Analysis of different teaching formats in piano teaching in higher music education institutions' (China Academic Journal Network, n.a., 2021) focuses on the one-to-one lesson, group lessons on piano performance and improvisation, and demonstrates the benefits of different components and how these could be combined as a creative teaching strategy in higher music education institution.

However, creativity in music and musical performance is not precisely defined or discussed in the preceding articles. As Clarke (2011) suggested, expression is closely related to creativity in music performance, and it can be attained through variations in 'timing, dynamic, and articulatory features of the performances express the performers' understanding of the metrical structure' (p. 20). Students who perform and reproduce music from the score may therefore demonstrate creative performance through these personalised variations. Moreover, performativity in musical performance could also involve the inclusion of performance gestures as part of enhancing creativity (Davidson, 2014). Therefore, developing students' creative performance involves teachers considering students' musical expression and performativity in addition to technique-related aspects. These perspectives are not found in Chinese journals on piano education. In addition, creativity can be connected to student-

teacher relationship as a strong and positive relationship not only develop students' creative performance, but also stimulates students' creativity in general (de Bruin, 2022). The concept of encouraging positive student-teacher relationships being beneficial to students' creative performance is not mentioned in the Chinese literature above.

Additionally, 'Effective application of creative teaching in piano pedagogy in higher music education institutions' (Peng, 2021) focuses on curriculum development, students' teaching ability, and teacher research capacity in order to foster creative teaching in piano pedagogy in higher music education institutions. However, the publications on creative teaching described above are not empirical research; they lack data and evidence and are not published in peer-reviewed journals. As stated by Wang (2010), the theory on piano pedagogy in China is mostly based on the experiences and thoughts from influential piano professors and teachers, rarely employing empirical methods. Consequently, Wang (2010) confirms that research on piano pedagogy is sparse in the Chinese context; thus, there is a need to develop academic research on piano pedagogy in order to gain a new, valuable and reliable orientation, framework and suggestions to support piano education development in China.

2.3 Professional piano education in Chinese institutions

Professional institutional piano education in China mainly operates within secondary education, higher education and social education. Secondary education is mainly composed of vocational technical institutions and high schools attached to conservatories of music. These institutions are mainly for developing students who will study in conservatories or become music teachers for primary or secondary schools in local areas (Guo, 2014). Higher education plays the most significant role, consisting of undergraduate and postgraduate levels within conservatories, normal universities and universities (Wei, 2019). Social education includes private institutions, which offer short-term or long-term one-to-one lessons, master classes, summer and winter camps. However, this study focuses on undergraduate teaching in higher education institutions, thus the following sections will analyse teaching aims, curriculum design and teaching methods among three different types of institutions: Conservatory, Normal university and University. Conservatories focus exclusively on teaching high-level performers, whereas normal university training emphasises the development of high-quality music teachers, and university training develops all-around

musicians. The Central Conservatory of Music, Capital Normal University and Hebei University will be taken as examples and introduced in the following sections**.**

2.3.1 Teaching aims

The teaching aim is an ideal of students' development through education, the embodiment of educational purpose and teaching purpose, and plays a fundamental role in leading all aspects of educational practice (Shi, 2012). The following sections introduce the different types of institution and their teaching aims.

2.3.1.1 Conservatory of Music: Central Conservatory of Music

Conservatories are institutions established by the Ministry of Education, specialising in the development of professional talents and music research. These institutions represent the highest level of higher music education institutions and research and develop the topmost level of musical talent (Guo, 2014). The Central Conservatory of Music, located in Beijing, has changed its teaching system and curriculum reform according to the different periods of national education policy, the social requirements for music and professional music education; each reform has had influences on professional music education and other higher education institutions in China (Tang, 2010).

As noted by Tang (2010), the Ministry of Culture promoted a variety of musical styles and schools, as well as academic conferences (Tang, 2010). In the Central Conservatory of Music (CCM), performance is a core component, developed through one-to-one lessons to improve students' solo performance ability and create outstanding performers. CCM also offers collective classes, such as choir, chamber music and music practical work in order to help students to adapt to employment after graduation. Therefore, CCM not only emphasises solo performance ability, but also stresses capability of playing in chamber music, ensemble and piano accompaniment (Central Conservatory of Music, 2020).

2.3.1.2 Normal University: Capital Normal University

Capital Normal University is located in Beijing, where the best resources of teachers and students in China are gathered, and is one of the 'Double First-Class' initiative universities (Xinhua, 2019). The 'Double First-Class initiative' is another national strategy adopted by the Central Committee of Communist Party of China (CPC) and the State Council after their '211' and '985' projects, which aim to build world-class universities and disciplines (China

Government Net, 2015). As a 'Double First-Class initiative' university, the department of Music in Capital Normal University is representative, and it is gradually taking the lead of the development of music education in China (China Government Net, 2015). The goal of Capital Normal University is to create high quality, capable music educators with a solid foundation, high sense of responsibility and career ambition, who understand modern concepts of education, educational technology, with classroom teaching skills, systematic music knowledge and performance skills, who can adapt to the requirements of music education teaching (Office of Registrar, 2020). Capital Normal University requires students to master music theory, to have the ability to analyse Chinese and foreign music works, to know the essence of music education, history of Chinese and foreign music, Chinese and foreign folk music, and music aesthetics. Furthermore, the university requires students to master knowledge of searching for and understanding literature, music appreciation, and to have the ability for lifelong learning and improvement. In addition, students will master at least one foreign language, understand the relevant knowledge of social sciences to conduct music education research and have strong ability to organise music teaching and extracurricular musical activities (Office of Registrar, 2020).

2.3.1.3 University: Hebei University

Hebei University is a first-class university in Xiong'an New District (XND). According to Kuang, Yang and Yan (2018), XND, like the previously constructed Shanghai Pudong New District and Shenzhen Special Economic Zone, has been designated as a national historic site. The development of XND has been recognised as a significant national strategy by President Xi Jinping and the CPC Central Committee, it is critical for the growth of Beijing-Tianjin-Hebei (BTH) and alleviating Beijing's non-capital responsibilities (Kuang, Yang & Yan, 2018). The teaching objective of Hebei University is to create students who master the basic music theories and performance skills, and can engage with music research, composition and performance careers (Hebei University, 2020). Hebei University aims for students to graduate with a foundation in music theory, good aural, sight-singing and music analysis skills, understanding the works of foreign and Chinese composers, able to engage in music teaching, research and performance. Students are expected to develop performance skills, learning at least one instrument. Furthermore, graduates should demonstrate professional quality as teachers, be familiar with the teaching laws and regulations, and have mastered the basic

knowledge of music pedagogy and formed a preliminary practical ability to engage in music teaching in secondary and high schools and musical activities (Hebei University, 2020).

Regarding the three higher education institutions, it can be summarised that the Conservatory of Music cultivates the topmost performers with global vision. At the same time, they are required to not only have superb solo performance ability, but also to be capable of collaborative work, as in chamber music. The teaching aim of the Normal University is to produce music educators with basic music theory knowledge, pedagogy knowledge and a certain level of performance skills. More importantly, these students should have knowledge of relevant social sciences and be capable music education researchers. The teaching objective of the University is to develop multi-functional music workers who should be able to perform, compose and do research after graduating; they could also be music educators, because they should have the ability to teach and organise musical activities in middle and high schools. In summary, conservatories cultivate the topmost performers, normal universities cultivate educators with performance and research abilities, and universities cultivate multifunctional music workers and educators.

2.3.2. Curriculum design

Curriculum indicates the educational philosophy of different institutions (Crawford, 2000). Crawford also states that curriculum has a much broader concept nowadays, including all the learning experiences available at the institution. Wei (2019) illustrates that curriculum design, teaching content and teaching implementation should be closely constructed with teaching aims, thus it can be seen how different kinds of institutions relate to their teaching objectives. Therefore, how the institutions present their educational philosophies can be seen through examining their curriculum priorities.

2.3.2.1 Central Conservatory of Music

Taking the Central Conservatory of Music as an example, the teaching plan is mainly divided into elective courses and compulsory courses; compulsory undergraduate courses include general basic courses, professional basic courses and professional courses (Tang, 2010). Tang explains that the general basic courses are common compulsory courses for all students, and the teaching content and credit requirements are basically the same, as seen in Figure 2.1.

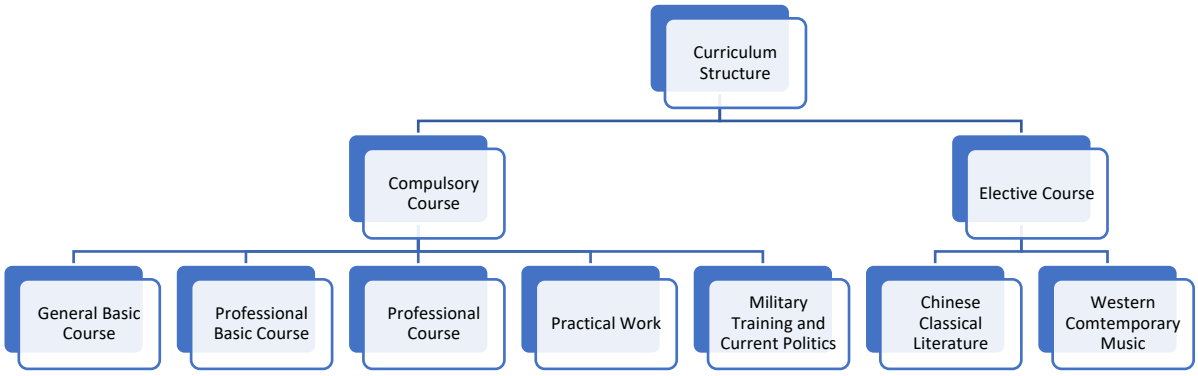

Figure 2.1 The curriculum structure of Central Conservatory of Music

From the official website of the Central Conservatory of Music, professional courses of the piano department include individual piano lessons, piano group lessons, piano chamber music, piano history, piano improvisation accompaniment, piano accompaniment practice, piano performance style analysis and piano pedagogy. However, the frequency of these lessons and classes might not be equivalent; there might be more individual piano lesson than other components, such as piano pedagogy. According to Tang (2010), one-to-one instrumental and vocal lessons are given priority among all the courses, which confirms that Central Conservatory of Music addresses enhancing students' solo performance skills, creating conditions to cultivate outstanding performers.

2.3.2.2 Capital Normal University

According to the website of CNU and its programme for the development of undergraduates, the curriculum structure is separated into four parts: general education curriculum, professional curriculum, practical work and student teacher education. Each student will study all four parts, and each curriculum comprises multiple modules or courses, as indicated in Figure 2.2. Considering the professional curriculum as an example, it is divided into three modules: basic courses, core courses and skills. This encompasses a variety of subjects, including basic music theory, sight-singing and ear training, form and analysis of music, harmony and the instrument or voice (depending on the instrument or voice studied). In Figure 2.2, the piano curriculum is used as an example.

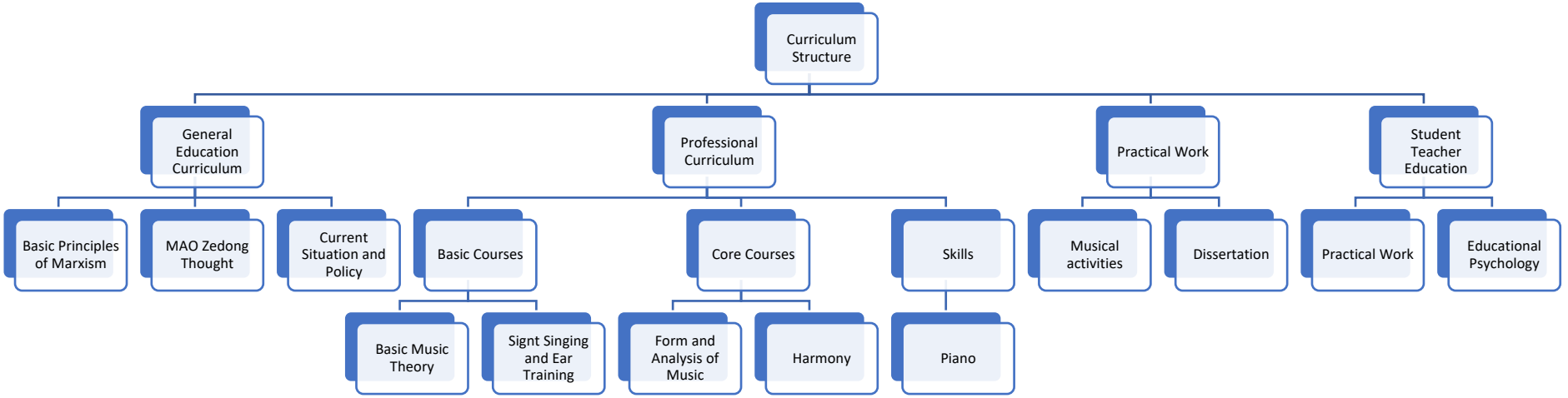

Figure 2.2 The curriculum structure of Capital Normal University

The Capital Normal University (CNU) Music curriculum shows the importance of general education, and credits for this take a larger proportion of the credit system. According to the official website of CNU, there are 164 credits in total, and general education courses account for 48 credits, thus showing the significance of general education in CNU. Due to the limited space of Figure 2.2, the courses under the general education module are not all listed; these also include Chinese history, physical education and English, among other courses. The professional curriculum module takes up 87 credits in total, of which the basic courses take up 16 credits, the core courses take up 26 credits and the skills (piano) course takes up 45 credits, thus the skill (piano) remains the most significant component. The 'practical work' as seen in Figure 2.2, takes 25 credits in total, and from the official website it can be seen that musical activities include participating in competitions, giving a recital or taking part in various kinds of concerts; thus, the practical curriculum can be seen as a part of performance practical work. The last module is student teacher education, this also includes practical work; however, this is slightly different from the previous practical work. Students are required to work in primary and secondary schools for six weeks teaching and completing several teaching tasks. Students are also required to observe 40 school teaching classes given by other teachers. However, this practical work is only worth six credits and it starts in the final year.

2.3.2.3 Hebei University

According to the official website of Hebei University, the undergraduate curriculum is divided into a general education module, compulsory courses, and elective courses. Although the curriculum at Hebei University is not the same as at CNU, there are some similarities. For example, the general education module takes a certain proportion in the two different types of universities. Moreover, it can be found that the curriculum design of Hebei University is not diversified, and there are some overlaps in teaching content between University and Normal University.

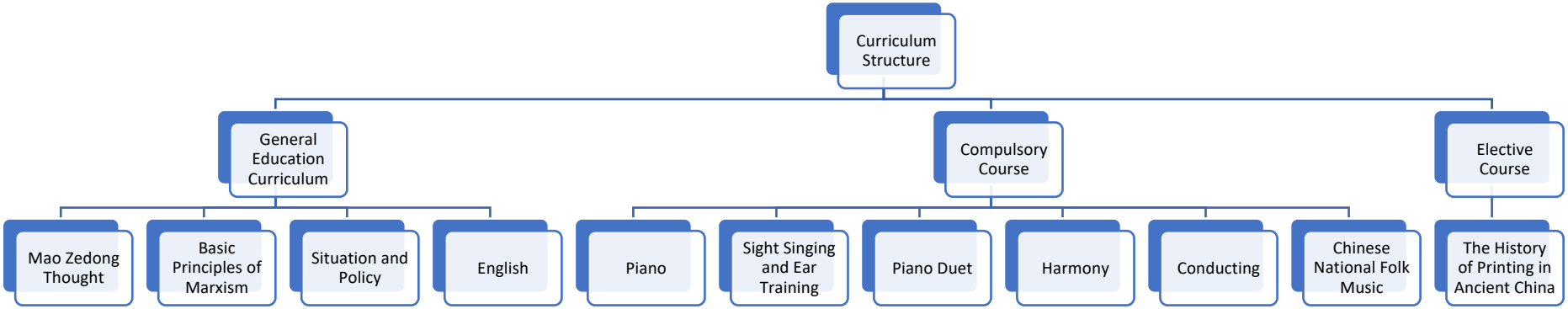

Figure 2.3 The curriculum structure of Hebei University

However, there are less details on the University context than for the other two institutions, since the researcher has not been able to obtain more information from the University website or elsewhere. According to Wei (2019), despite the fact that a large number of students choose to study music at University, any national seminar and conferences on institutional development are mostly focused on Conservatory and Normal University institutions, with University institutions receiving less attention. Wei states the reasons for this are that the music departments in the Universities are too young; therefore, there is a significant gap between these and Conservatories and Normal Universities. Additionally, it appears that Universities do not develop their own distinct identities among higher music education system, and this leads to their curriculum design mostly following the two other types of higher education institutions (Guo, 2014). Finally, for the universities which cultivate multi-functional students, is their purpose to cultivate performers, teachers or combined talents? The aims appear to be somewhat open-ended.

2.3.3 The 'Blue-Blue Project' and Innovation teams for higher education teachers

The 'Blue-Blue Project' (BBP) was first initiated by Jiangsu Province in order to help novice teachers and further strengthen the teaching force (Baidu, 2022). According to Baidu (2022), this project entails the employment of experienced instructors to serve as mentors; these experienced teachers undertake passing on, helping, leading, hands-on guidance to novice teachers. Typically, this project is conducted on a one-to-one basis between a master and an apprentice, with the master offering thorough advice on lesson preparation, teaching content, teaching methods, and this appears to have been implemented in school and higher education settings (Jiangsu Education Department, 2020).

Since 2004, the MoE has advocated for the establishment of innovation teams for teachers and launched the 'Innovation Team Development Program' (ITDP), which is research oriented (Wang, 2016). According to Wang (2016), the objective of this programme is thereby to strengthen higher education innovation ability, research ability, competitiveness, and foster the formation of high-level institutions and construction of key disciplines. Wang (2016) argues that while innovation teams are currently confined to work on science and engineering disciplines, it is expected that building innovation teams might be a primary focus of in many higher education institutions.

Consequently, while China advocates for the development of innovation, significant efforts have been made in practice, for example, through the implementation of the BBP, which aims to accelerate the inheritance of teaching skills from the experienced teachers to novice teachers; simultaneously, through the establishment of University innovation teams that are research-oriented, encouraging the development of teachers' research capabilities in order to foster creative and innovation teaching in practice, as well as enhancing competitiveness of institutions.

However, it looks as though there is a conflict between these two programmes. On the one hand, the BBP appears to be more concerned with the transmission of teaching skills between experienced and novice teachers; on the other hand, the ITDP seems to be more concerned with enhancing teachers' creativity and innovation through research. However, the ITDP appears to have a limited impact on the higher music education sector: Wang (2016) indicates that innovation teams are limited to those in scientific and engineering disciplines; however, it is possible to conceive of a future transformation of higher music education that supports creative and innovative teaching through increasing teachers' own research skills.

2.4 Emerging issues

Based on the comparison of these three curriculum structures, it can be found that there are differences concerning the concept of general education curriculum among the three kinds of institutions. Guo (2014) states that the general education curriculum should mainly include courses related to human development and social needs in the fields of nature, society, and the humanities; however, the general education curriculum in Chinese higher education institutions is replaced by political courses such as the basic principles of Marxism and the thought of Mao Zedong, as well as the political situation and policies in China. Hence, there are two problems with this. Firstly, due to a large number of political courses, students have little time and energy to choose other elective courses they might be interested in, which will affect their motivation of learning; this might also affect students' enriching of knowledge in the professional field, which could decrease students' creativity and innovation (Liu, 2014).

According to Guo (2014), music theory knowledge such as harmony and music analysis are quite basic and receive little attention in the Chinese higher music education context. The percentage of skill courses within the curriculum in many Chinese higher music education institutions is as high as 50%, and the percentage of other professional curriculum is therefore

compressed (Guo, 2014). Taking Capital Normal University as an example, the total length of skill lessons, such as piano, have reached 1504 hours; in contrast, there are 352 hours for other courses within the professional curriculum. Therefore, there is an imbalance in the proportion, as excessive emphasis is placed on the cultivation of professional skills while neglecting the improvement of students' musicianship.

Secondly, since the conservatories of music were the first to carry out professional music education in China, and the teaching aim of such institutions is to cultivate advanced performers, the students' training involves a large amount of performance lessons in order to transform rapidly into professional talents. Therefore, other institutions are bound to follow such a tradition and teaching philosophy, resulting in a lack of value for music theory (Guo, 2014). Lyu (2019) also confirms that higher music education in Chinese university contexts generally lack accurate understanding of music theory; the general level of music theory is not advanced. More important, music theory and performance are not linked, and teaching content and resources are rarely shared and communicated between them (Lyu, 2019).

Another common issue in the curriculum settings is the disparity between the status of compulsory courses and elective courses. According to Wei (2019), the purpose of elective courses is to develop students' individual needs in the learning process, to help students to broaden their horizons and to enhance their creativity. Therefore, limited elective courses and their unvalued status might result in restricting students' creativity and narrowing their knowledge. Additionally, due to the difference in teaching level and teachers' backgrounds, the quality of elective courses is uneven. For example, there are wider ranges of elective curricula in the Central Conservatory of Music, such as Chinese music analysis, Chinese Contemporary Music, American Music, Western Contemporary Music, Asian Music, and Music Analysis Methods in the 20th Century (Tang, 2010). The elective courses in Capital Normal University include Application of Music Software, Opera Appreciation, Symphony Appreciation and practical elective courses such as piano chamber music (Capital Normal University, 2020); however, the elective classes in Hebei University are limited. Hence, it might be seen that Central Conservatory of Music and Capital Normal University have relevant and broader resources of elective curriculum in music fields, but the elective resources in Hebei University seem to be irrelevant to music and limited in variety.

Finally, non-performance practical work seems to be undervalued. Taking Capital Normal University as an example, the teaching aim of this institution is to cultivate music educators. However, in the student teacher education module, the practical work starts in the last year and lasts six weeks, and only takes six credits. Students might think the practical work is not important, because of such low credits. Moreover, intensive practical teaching in a short time may reduce the process of students' finding problems and re-learning opportunity, which is not conductive to the improvement of students' teaching ability, reflection and problem-solving ability (Guo, 2014). Furthermore, the practical work seems not to be relevant with what the students had been taught in the university; for example, according to the official website of Capital Normal University, students are required to complete four different type of class teaching tasks, such as integrated (singing and dancing), appreciation (understanding the history of foreign and national musical works), innovation (which might include some creative teaching approaches in settings such as choir rehearsal), and special classes (those with local characteristics such as Peking Opera).

Based on the detail on the teaching aims and curriculum designs among the three different types of institutions, the curricula are very similar, pursuing specialism and lacking cultivation of students' all-round and adaptive ability, and therefore it seems they may not accurately meet social needs. Creativity and creative skills have been increasingly seen as significant characteristics for higher education music students, especially beneficial for their future employment (Burnard & Haddon, 2016). However, the institutions discussed in this chapter do not precisely characterise creativity in music and music performance. Developing students' creative performance involves teachers considering students' musical expression and performativity in addition to technique-related aspects, fostering a strong and positive student-teacher relationship with the students. Furthermore, 'student and institutions are co-dependent' (Burnard & Haddon, 2016, p. 49), hence it requires music institutions to position creative teaching and learning prominently (Haddon & Burnard, 2016). In China, the Central Committee of CPC and the State Council have recognised the importance of promoting creativity in all disciplines, thus educational policies have developed to guide higher education institutions to develop students' creativity as a goal (Pang & Plucker, 2012). However, creativity and creative teaching seem not to be mentioned either in the websites of the above institutions: Central Conservatory of Music, Capital Normal University and Hebei University.

Therefore, relevant research and guidance about creativity and creative teaching for music institutions and teachers are needed.

2.5 Conclusion

This chapter has presented the history of piano education in the Chinese context, with an emphasis on historical piano education, its development and recognised pedagogical philosophies. Following that, it discussed the current state of higher music education institutions by focusing on Conservatory, Normal University and University contexts and discussing the various curricula. The next chapter will discuss the methodology and research methods employed in this PhD research, including the detailed research context, data collection and data analysis.

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH DESIGN

3.1 Introduction

The study concentrates on contemporary piano pedagogy and creative teaching in one-to-one lessons in mainland Chinese institutions of higher music education. In Chapter 1, literature review discussed what constitutes creative performance in music, noted that educators should be aware of developing students' creative performance, which requires teachers to consider musical expression (Clarke, 2011; Odena, 2019) and performativity (Graham, 1998; Davidson, 2014). Developing students' creativity, according to Salvador and Knapp (2022), requires educators to become 'improvisational artists' (p. 94) and to be able to teach in a reflective manner, in which they 'plan, teach, and reflect on teaching' (p. 94) while nurturing a strong and positive student-teacher relationship (de Bruin, 2022). Nonetheless, by analysing theoretical studies on professional piano education in China and the teaching objectives and curriculum designs at three institutions, the Central Conservatory of Music, Capital Normal University, and Hebei University, it appears that the institutions do not comprehensively characterise creativity in musical performance or what could be done to improve students' creative performance (see Chapter 2). Despite mention of curriculum development, students' teaching ability, and teacher research capacity (Peng, 2021) in order to promote creative pedagogy in higher education, these institutions provide no additional information for staff and students.

This chapter describes the theoretical framework, detailing social constructivism, interpretivism, the methodology and methods of data collection, ethical considerations and trustworthiness, reliability, validity and generalisability in order to investigate which approaches might be applied by teachers to improve students' creative performance; the perceptions of students, teachers and heads of departments; the challenges and benefits; conditions and how the one-to-one relationship affects students' creative performance.

3.2 Theoretical framework

Two research paradigms are frequently applied in the field of social science research: the positivist paradigm, and the interpretive paradigm. A paradigm is defined as 'a whole system of thinking' (Neuman, 2007, p. 96). The positivist paradigm is widely used in natural science; the primary goal is to discover a set of causal laws to predict activity by using quantitative data, through 'experiments, surveys, and statistics' (Neuman, 2007, p. 97). Neuman (2007) stated that positivist researchers believe that scientific research is distinctive and non-related to religious values, political and individual perceptions.

Positivism seeks to complete the conceptions of external laws of the world in order to extend the knowledge of phenomena (Comte, 2015). Thomas (2013) states that in the positivist paradigm, facts can be stated objectively, and information can be studied and measured scientifically: 'the world-view underpinning all of this is sometimes called realism, namely the view that the world we perceive is straightforwardly the one that is out there' (p. 108). Positivist research focuses on observable facts and can be completely independent from personal thoughts and ideas; furthermore, data collection frequently involves the use of special instruments; for example, telescopes and microscopes (Neuman, 2007). Positivist research seeks to measure, and to create universally applicable truths; however, this is at variance with the potential for variation that exists within educational settings.

The interpretivism paradigm is associated with *Verstehen*, which can be understood as empathetic understanding (Neuman, 2007). Neuman (2007) indicated that interpretivism occupies the opposite position to positivism, emphasising what human beings perceive and experience the social reality to be. Unlike positivism, interpretivism adopts a 'more nominalist ontology' (Neuman, 2007, p. 104) which suggests that social reality is created by peoples' purposeful action and social interactions which assign meaning to their lives. Thomas (2013) illustrates three characteristics of interpretivism: firstly, every individual constructs their own understanding of meaning; secondly, this could be viewed differently by each of us; and thirdly, it is not the case that 'meaning' exists for the researcher to obtain objectively. Researchers cannot measure this understanding; therefore, appropriate methods are needed to investigate and compare individual views.

Enhancing awareness of social elements of existence and to learn how individuals generate meaning in social life were seen as the purpose of interpretative research; people do things for their own reasons and individual motivations, and researchers need to understand the reasons and motivations for their action (Neuman, 2007). The interpretive paradigm plays a significant role in social science research, which aims to discover the views of others and achieve empathic understandings of social reality (Neuman, 2007); this research is therefore aligned with this paradigm.

3.3 Interpretivism

Interpretivism emphasises that knowledge is constructed through people's experiences and perceptions (Thanh & Thanh, 2015). This illustrates that unlike the positivist paradigm, the interpretivist paradigm tends to be inclusive, and thus implies the potential of numerous realities instead of a single reality. Consistent with Thanh and Thanh's view, Saini and Shlonsky (2012) claim that social phenomena are researched within the interpretivist paradigm in order to explore the 'internal reality of participants' (p. 178). The researcher has to go into the actual research context, talking to people in depth and observing their behaviours within the research context, in order to seek understandings of the social world.

According to Willis (2007), the central belief is that reality is socially produced and often concerned with interpreting a given situation. Following this view, Swain (2017) believes that an interpretive researcher needs to understand the culture of participants and the world around them. Thus, for interpretivists, Willis (2007) demonstrates that understanding what the world shows to the individual or group being researched is vital for doing effective social science research. Mackenzie and Knipe (2006) note that for interpretivists, qualitative approaches such as case studies, interviews and observation are recommended, since these methods might contribute to understand how people engage with their social reality. As the present research aims to understand a social phenomenon, my research is situated within a qualitative interpretive paradigm. Additionally, epistemological and ontological positions need to be engaged in any form of research, since different positions on epistemology and ontology may influence research methods regarding the same phenomenon (Scotland, 2012). Thus, in order to examine the appropriateness of the research approaches in the present study, these will be discussed from epistemological and ontological perspectives.

Epistemology concerns the relationship between the investigator and participants (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). From the point of view of epistemological assumption, interpretivism has no hypothesis prior to collecting data (Cohen et al. 2002). Guba and Lincoln (1994) state that the knowledge or realities are created by the investigation process between the researcher and the participants. Within an interpretivist framework, when researching a social phenomenon, the researcher gathers and analyses facts prior to expanding on thoughts and theories following the analysis of the data revealing individual behaviours or perceptions (Cohen et al., 2002). In this research, the context of creative teaching within instrumental teaching is an emerging area of focus in the social world. Moreover, the perceptions of relevant individuals such as teachers, students and head of departments relating to creative instrumental teaching have seldom been discussed in previous studies, especially in the Chinese context. Hence, the interpretive paradigm is appropriate to understand and interpret this social phenomenon and then reveal new concepts or theory.

Ontology refers to 'what we are looking at' (Thomas, 2013, p. 119); this question is clear for scientists; however, in the social sciences, ontology becomes increasingly significant as ontology concerns various kind of existence around human beings, how those existences should be perceived and investigated (Thomas, 2013). Scotland (2012) states that 'the ontological position of interpretivism is relativism' (p.11); however, relativism concerning reality is subjective (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). This means that reality is constructed by individuals and involves multiple mental constructions, 'through the interaction between language and aspects of an independent world' (Scotland, 2012, p. 11). This study holds the view that individual head of departments or principals, teachers and students may have different perceptions of creativity and creative teaching strategies in piano pedagogy in the Chinese context, and their personal views will be fundamentally important in researching this topic. Thus, interpretivism is adopted in this research, as it is appropriate to fulfil the aims of the current study. More specifically, it allows the researcher to go into the research context to understand the views and experiences of teachers and students about creative pedagogy.

3.4 Social constructivism

Social constructivism is concerned with the historical, cultural, and contextual relevance of the environments in which individuals work and live in understanding what happens in society and constructing knowledge through this knowledge (Creswell, 2009). In other words, what individuals perceive and experience in the social environment is created socially. Creswell (2009) indicated that social constructivists suggest that 'individuals seek understanding of the world in which they live and work, and individuals develop subjective meanings of their experiences' (Creswell, 2009, p. 8). Furthermore, there is a 'complexity of views rather than narrowing meanings into a few categories or ideas' (Creswell, 2009, p. 8); therefore, all of the views or beliefs from participants are seen as valid by the researcher.

Within the interpretivist paradigm, researchers deploy qualitative research methods, seeking to explore the research questions through the perspective of individuals. Crotty (1998) identified several assumptions associated with qualitative research. Firstly, qualitative researchers prefer to use more open-ended questions in order to gain participants' views in depth in the social constructivism framework. Secondly, gathering data personally from participants and, more importantly, visiting their setting for the purpose of understanding that how specific context influences participants' perceptions is valuable. Moreover, creating the meaning from the collected data largely depends on inductive analysis within this framework. In this context, researchers are seeking to gain deep understanding of participants' perceptions in order to study aspects of the world, instead of predicting or measuring events or trying to alter these aspects through forms of experimentation. As stated above, my orientation is to explore people's experiences of creative pedagogy within the specific context of Chinese higher music education institutions, under the historical and cultural background, which situates the present study within the philosophical position of social constructivism.

3.5 The role of the researcher

In presenting interpretative research, the person conducting the research plays a crucial role in the interpretation (Thomas, 2013), as well as in data collection (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015). The researcher therefore has an undeniable position, which may influence the interpretation they make (Anderson, 2010; Thomas, 2013), as the researcher's experiences and knowledge

will have an impact on it. Thus, the researcher's 'biography – including class, gender, ethnicity, ideas and commitments – needs to be made explicit' (Thomas, 2013, p. 144).

As a Chinese international student, I first came to the UK nine years ago to study English language courses at Cambridge. I then went to the University of York to do a one-year MA in Piano Studies; after that I did a second MA in Music Education: Instrumental and Vocal Teaching, and then started a PhD in music education, both at the University of York. My previous knowledge and experiences led to a particular interest in piano pedagogy in one-to-one teaching, and creative teaching strategies. As a pianist, I have been learning piano for over 20 years; therefore, I have a certain understanding of piano education in China, which provides a relevant background to undertake the present study. Secondly, I did music education during my undergraduate study in China and completed a one-year MA in music education in the UK, and this experience provided me with relevant knowledge to collect data and to conduct an objective and comprehensive research study. However, I acknowledge that I need to take care to ensure that my experience does not bias my interpretation of the findings; this can be supported through using interview transcript member checks and peer debriefing as part of the research process.

3.6 Case study

For the purpose of investigating these research questions within the philosophical position of social constructivism and the interpretivist paradigm, the research strategy of case study is chosen as the most appropriate for the present study. Case study research is defined as 'an in-depth examination of an extensive amount of information about very few units or cases for one period or across multiple periods of time' (Neuman, 2007, p. 42); Thomas (2013) states that 'a case study involves in-depth research into one case or a small set of cases' (p. 150). The term 'case study' refers to an empirical investigation that employs a variety of research methods to examine a current event in its real-world setting, such as participant observation, interviews and documentary analysis (Bryman, 2015), as the more aspects the researcher examines, the more complete the research. A case study is employed in the present research since the characteristics align with the research through the following concerns.

To begin, a case study is an examination of a current circumstance, event, or phenomena, and it cannot be understood without its real-life context. Additionally, a human cannot understand an event until they comprehend the context in which it happens, therefore consideration of context is significant in such research (Merriam, 1988; Yin, 2003). Wieviorka (1992) states that case study is not telling a superficial story, it needs to be illustrating some theoretical knowledge:

> For a 'case' to exist, we must be able to identify a characteristic unit, whose unit is given (at least initially) in concrete historical experiences. This unit must be observed, but it has no meaning in itself. It is significant only if an observer … can refer it to an analytical category or theory. It does not suffice to observe a social phenomenon, historical event, or set of behaviours in order to declare them to be 'cases'. If you want to talk about a 'case', you also need the means of interpreting it or placing it in a context (p. 160).

Therefore, theory, real contexts and interpretation need to be linked together. In the present study, seven Chinese higher music education institutions were selected in order to gain a rich and detailed understanding. Within these, the contemporary phenomenon is that the master-apprentice piano teaching approach (Burwell, 2005; Lebler et al., 2009; Burwell, 2013; Harrison & Grant, 2015) is widely employed and some creative strategies might be applied in China. A case study might outline some of the issues encountered and provide solutions posed by teachers, as well as highlighting students' perspectives and responses, and those of heads of departments or principals. Second, through detailed qualitative data and extensive analysis, a rich description of abundant data might be presented building on case study research (Bryman, 2015). As this study was exploratory, case study research can facilitate an in-depth understanding of teachers', students' and head of departments' perspectives in their social and cultural context. Therefore, this approach is suitable for the present study.

3.7 Research questions and research context

3.7.1 Research questions

Previous research on the master-apprentice teaching model in one-to-one instrumental teaching has addressed some advantages and disadvantages as well as difficulties that teachers and students may encounter (Burwell, 2005; Lebler et al., 2009; Burwell, 2013; Harrison & Grant, 2015). Moreover, what creative teaching means and how creative teaching strategies are used in higher music education in Western countries have been emphasised in previous studies (Burnard, 2012; Haddon & Burnard, 2016; Hutchinson, 2016). However, not many studies have considered the master-apprentice teaching model in Chinese higher music education contexts, the perceptions of teachers and students on this teaching framework and how this relationship influences creative teaching, which creative teaching approaches might be employed under this teaching model, and the benefits and challenges of including creative teaching in instrumental teaching in higher music education. Therefore, identifying gaps in current knowledge regarding creative teaching in one-to-one piano pedagogy in the Chinese higher music education context, and generating knowledge may benefit piano teachers and students in Chinese higher music education, as well as creative teaching research, music education and institutional strategies and policy. Thus, the present study aimed to answer the following research questions:

1. What form does the student-teacher relationship take in the one-to-one piano lesson in the context of Chinese higher music education settings?
2. What are the teaching methods applied in the one-to-one piano lesson in higher music education in China? What are the teaching materials and teaching focus adopted in this context?
3. What teaching and learning philosophy emerges?
4. What is the role of creativity and creative teaching in contemporary piano pedagogy in higher music education institutions and how it is applied?
5. How is the current pedagogy related to and influencing creativity and creative teaching?

3.7.2 Research contexts

Within a significantly increasing population learning musical instruments in China, piano learners make up a considerable proportion (Bai, 2021; Shanghai Conservatory of Music, 2016). More than 30 million children study piano, and more than 200,000 students enrol in professional higher music education institutions to learn piano performance or music education (specialising in piano) every year (China News, 2013a). There are now 11 conservatories in China and more than 400 universities or colleges with music departments including a piano performance pathway or music education with a piano major (Li, 2018). In addition, emphasising international cooperation of higher music education, the Shanghai Conservatory of Music-Royal College of Music Joint Institution (SHCM-RCM Joint Inst.), was set up in 2017 (Xinhua News, 2017b). As a result of rapid development of music education in higher education, the Chinese government has attached importance to promoting creative teaching (Guo & Xu, 2015; Duan & Cheng, 2018) to increase the creative ability of students to meet expectations of social development (Sawyer, 2006; Yan, 2014). This suggests that the research is timely and appropriate.

The selected research contexts are located in Beijing, Tianjin and Hebei (BTH), which have become a Coordinated Development Region (China News, 2016b). As the capital of China, Beijing is where the best educational resources are gathered. This study selected four higher music education institutions in Beijing as the highest-level target group: Central Conservatory of Music, China Conservatory of Music, Beijing Normal University, and Capital Normal University. The researcher also targeted Tianjin Conservatory of Music, as well as Hebei University and Baoding University, both in Xiong'an New District (XND), which is situated in Hebei province, having been formally established by the Communist Party of China (CPC) in 2017 (Kuang, Yang & Yan, 2018), as part of China's development strategy which aims to relocate all non-essential functions from Beijing to neighbouring locations. XND is also a national model to promote high-quality development and a high level socialist modern district, which represents quality educational resources. The institutions located in this area for the research are Hebei University and Baoding University. Therefore, seven higher music education institutions were selected as the research target. However, it should be clarified that while interviews were conducted with representatives from seven institutions, videoed lessons were taken from three institutions: Tianjin Conservatory of Music; Capital Normal

University and Baoding University. The sample was carefully selected by requesting permission from participating teacher interviewees to participate in a videoed lesson. Three of the ten interviewed teachers indicated their willingness to be actively involved in the recording of the lesson. The remaining seven teachers expressed reluctance to participate in the video recording; several teachers indicated that they were not available due to busy schedules; some teachers expressed unwillingness to use their lesson for analysis and others felt that recording a lesson might have an impact on the teaching quality and on students and thus they preferred not to be filmed.

The Central Conservatory of Music and Beijing Normal University are members of the '211 Project', which was established by the Ministry of Education (MoE) with the goal of reviving the nation via research and education (Choi, 2010). According to Choi, universities participating in the '211 Project' receive targeted support from the Chinese government and 70% research funding in China. Moreover, the three conservatories selected in this study are ranked top domestically, representing the best musical education resources in China, especially the piano departments in Central Conservatory of Music (Lin, 2001) and China Conservatory of Music, which are the highest level within China. The piano departments in these two conservatories assemble a series of world-famous pianists and piano educators such as Qifang Li and Guangren Zhou; as mentioned in Chapter 2, the latter is honored as the soul of Chinese piano education (Lin, 2001). As Beijing has gathered the best resources of both teachers and students, piano learners in China are keen to study in Beijing; however, the teaching resources of these conservatories cannot accommodate all piano students. Therefore, the music departments in both Capital Normal University and Beijing Normal University are gradually taking the lead of the development of musical education, possessing abundant faculty as well as rich teaching research results, training musical talent from all over the country (Cai, 2010).

Hebei University and Baoding University are located in Hebei Province; due to Hebei's location neighbouring the capital Beijing, as well as the policy of Coordinated Development for the Beijing-Tianjin-Hebei Region (BTH) and the establishment of Xiong'an New District (XND), universities in this area have developed rapidly in recent years. Additionally, in comparison to Normal Universities and Conservatories, University music departments are inclusive, their inclusion in this research allows the researcher to acquire a broader perspective on teaching

approaches and methods in piano pedagogy in the Chinese context. Consequently, the researcher chose these three kinds of institutions in order to obtain valuable information such as how the teacher-student relationship acts in the one-to-one teaching in those settings, and the opportunity to discover a range of teaching approaches which may include creative teaching strategies. Data relating to these was obtained through face-to-face interviews and lesson observations. This range of institutions enables understanding of creative pedagogy in piano teaching in higher music education. Doing observations and in-depth interviews helps gain a deeper understanding of the teaching models in those universities: the commonalities, as well as the specific characteristics, emerge through the study.

3.8 Methods

3.8.1 Document analysis

The research methods in the present study include document analysis, lesson observation and individual semi-structured interviews. Document analysis refers to 'a systematic procedure for reviewing or evaluating documents both printed and electronic material' (Bowen, 2009, p. 27). Document analysis is particularly useful in qualitative case study; such intensive analysis can produce a thick description of organisation (Stake, 1995), which is suitable for the current study; within this, the researcher interprets and examines documents in order to gain deeper understanding and generate knowledge (Ahmed, 2010).

Document analysis involves several advantages, such as high efficiency, it necessitates data selection above data gathering. Moreover, document analysis seems to have advantage of being accessible, since a large number of documents are available online; additionally, document analysis is economical (Bowen, 2009). As explained by Bowen (2009), document analysis includes three steps, skimming, reading and interpretation; this procedure refers to content analysis, which is the process of organising data into categories that are relevant to the study aims (Thomas, 2013).

In the present study, the documentation of creative teaching and policies related to creative teaching could be acquired from online resources, and from website information of Chinese higher music education institutions. Yin (2017) stated that document analysis could be employed in addition to the methods of interview and observation in order to supplement and corroborate evidence through the combination of various data sources. Bowen (2009)

notes that combining different research methods could 'minimise bias and establish credibility' (p. 38), and document analysis might be used in conjunction with other data sources to support in theory development and triangulation.

3.8.2 Videoed lesson observation

Thomas (2013) indicates that observation is a significant method for gathering data in social science. The term 'observation' and video recording were initially associated with social anthropological research, in which the researcher obtains access to a group, watches and listens to what those in the group, such as teachers and students, say and do. In the present study, the researcher used video to aid the observation process. Video is considered as a significant means for recording human interaction, as it allows the researcher to gain detailed understanding of the context and to carry out analysis in detail (Roschelle & Goldman, 1991; Suchman & Trigg, 1992). Pirie (1996) also states that video recording is being used increasingly in educational research. The advantage of using video recording is that it can 'capture a social scene far more quickly than taking field notes' (Thomas, 2013, p. 224). For example, Pirie (1996) reveals,

> If, as researchers and readers of research, we wish to understand the work of others, to evaluate the psychological implications that are claimed, to explore the relevance to our own environment, of research done in other contexts and cultures, then it is vital that we know precisely on what data studies are based (p. 3).

This is also confirmed by Roschelle and Goldman (1991), who illustrate that the researcher can gather various perspectives of an activity through video recording - for example, complex behavioural data. In the present study, the researcher analyses the videoed lesson recordings from several perspectives, such as 'interactions between teachers and students, teaching strategies, teaching roles, learning opportunities presented to students and learning experiences provided for students' (Daniel, 2006, p. 192). These aspects can help the researcher to understand how the teacher-student relationship operates in one-to-one teaching in Chinese higher music education context, what creative teaching strategies may apply and how the relationship might affect creative pedagogy. Taking field notes may not provide sufficient detail to fully understand the situation; however, using video recording as

data enables the researcher to examine the interaction and communication between teachers and students repeatedly, and even their body language (Roschelle & Goldman, 1991).

In the current study, a piano lesson was observed and video recording made in three institutions: Tianjin Conservatory of Music, Capital Normal University and Baoding University. However, analysing video recording can be problematic; for example, it is difficult to add notes on the video recording; secondly, particular frames and segments of video cannot be located and retrieved quickly (Roschelle & Goldman, 1991). The researcher has noticed the problems as mentioned above; therefore, applying Jian Ying[1][simplified Chinese剪映] can help solve those problems. Additionally, the captions were translated by the researcher into English. Annotations, codes and transcripts can be linked easily with the recording, and particular segments of video data can be retrieved and located easily.

3.8.3 Face-to-face individual interviews

To collect data, in-depth one-to-one semi-structured interviews were conducted in this study. Opdenakker (2006) states that the characteristics and advantages of face-to-face interview are synchronous, explaining that 'Social cues, such as voice, intonation, body language etc. of the interviewee can give the interviewer a lot of extra information that can be added to the verbal answer of the interviewee on the question' (p. 3); social cues become more important when the interviewer wants to know the attitudes of the interviewee. In the present study, the perception and attitude of the participants about the student-teacher relationship and creative pedagogy are significant, thus social cues are important to the researcher. Another characteristic of the face-to-face interview is that the answers from the interview are more natural and direct than, for example, those achieved through a survey (Opdenakker, 2006). However, any researcher needs to have 'double attention' (Wengraf, 2001, p. 194) in this synchronous communication, for example:

> You must be both listening to the informant's responses to understand what he or she is trying to get at and, at the same time, you must be bearing in mind your needs to ensure that all your questions are liable to get answered within

[1] Jian Ying (simplified Chinese 剪映) is a video editing tool; it is the Chinese counterpart to Capcut App and official Chinese Tik Tok (simplified Chinese 抖音) video editor.

> the fixed time at the level of depth and detail that you need (Wengraf, 2001, p. 194).

In addition, the interviews can be recorded. Applying audio recording is more accurate than writing notes (Opdenakker, 2006), especially for a novice researcher. However, using an audio or video recorder and taking notes can be combined, in case of checking that all the questions have been asked and in the event of a recorder failing to work. In the present study, the researcher used a digital voice recorder and iPhone at the same time, in case of malfunctioning of one of the devices, and combined this with writing some notes.

Three categories of interviewees were involved in the present study, which connected to the triangulation strategy: interviews with teachers, with students, and with principals/heads of department participants. For all the participants, the interviews were face-to-face, took place at a location of their choice such as their office, practice room, or coffee shop, and were audio-recorded. Each interview lasted approximately between half-an-hour to an hour.

In an effort to maximise the effectiveness of the interviews the researcher re-considered and re-ordered the questions many times prior to the data collection. Prior to interviews, the researcher gave all of the participants a written summary of the project within an information sheet and each participant was asked to sign a consent form. Risks and benefits of being involved in the research were discussed before the interview started; ethical clearance had already been granted by the Arts and Humanities Ethics Committee at the University of York for the project, and the Chinese institutions had given their approval for the study to be carried out.

Teachers and students were asked relevant questions about their perceptions of the student-teacher relationship in one-to-one lessons and creative teaching strategies. Interviews might be classified into three types based on their degree of structuring: structured interviews, unstructured interviews and semi-structured interviews (Zhang & Wildemuth, 2009). Zhang and Wildemuth described a structured interview as one in which a prepared set of questions is asked in the same sequence to all interviewees; this is similar to a questionnaire. By contrast, an unstructured interview requires the researcher to arrive at the interview without pre-set questions; rather, the respondents' reactions and verbal interactions generate the questions (Zhang & Wildemuth, 2009). However, in a semi-structured interview, all participants are

asked the same questions within a flexible approach, questions are prepared in advance and include both open and closed questions; the researcher has some flexibility in modifying the order of the questions; and participants are encouraged to share their experiences via open - ended questions, which means that additional questions can be added depending on the participants' responses (Dearnley, 2005; Zhang & Wildemuth, 2009). Therefore, semi-structured interviews are shown to provide more flexibility for both interviewer and interviewee, and thus were adopted for this research. In the interview, teachers were invited to respond at length to open-ended questions, aiming to enable deeper understanding of the subject, and the questions in the interview were designed in relation to the literature review.

In the interview, I asked 'what kind of teacher-student relationship do you have in your one-to-one teaching?', 'Can you explain the advantages and disadvantages of this?', and 'What do you think the term 'creativity' means?' In the present study, I was mindful of the possibility for varied perspectives of creativity. The relevant term in Mandarin is [*chuang zao li, 创造力*], which can be understood as novel and unique ideas in a broad sense. I avoided defining creativity before obtaining the participants' responses in order not to bias their answers; however, it might potentially lead to ambiguity, as individuals might have varying interpretations of the word. The interviewees were also asked: do you 'include "creativity" in your teaching? If yes, can you give me some examples?' 'How do your students respond to creativity in your piano lessons?' 'Do you think that creativity has an influence on the relationship between teacher and student? If so, how? (See Appendix 1 for the interview schedule).

In a related vein, students were invited to respond to similar questions; for example, 'what kind of teacher-student relationship do you have in your one-to-one teaching?' 'Can you explain the advantages and disadvantages of this?' 'What do you think the term 'creativity' means?' 'Do you receive creativity in your piano lesson? If yes, can you give me some examples?' 'Are you expecting creativity in your piano lesson? If so, why? If not, why not?' 'What kind of creative teaching are you expecting? For example, are the materials creative? Is the teacher's attitude more creative or are the teaching room and environment more creative?' 'Do you think that creativity has an influence on the relationship between teacher and student? If so, how?' (See Appendix 2 for the interview schedule for students).

Principals and heads of department were invited to answer fewer questions than the other two groups; they were mainly invited to respond to creative teaching related questions and questions including political and institutional issues. For example, 'is creativity mentioned in any policy documents from your institution? If so, how is it described?' 'Is creativity mentioned in any teaching instructions within your institution? If so, how is it described?' 'Is creativity defined as part of music education within Chinese education policy? If so, what does the policy say?' (See Appendix 3 for the teachers' interview schedule). Since three of the five participants within this group are not only head of departments but also active piano teachers in their departments, their questions also combined those for teachers and those for principals/heads of departments. The procedures mentioned above promoted respondents to provide extensive responses. The researcher also employed verbal encouragement and non-verbal encouragement. Verbal encouragement included such as, 'could you please explain more about this' or 'can you give a more detailed example'? Non-verbal encouragement included smiling and nodding to show the participants that they could continue to say more.

Individual semi-structured interviews were used, rather than a focus group. Individual interviews are used to investigate a topic and offer a clear picture of a teacher's and student's perception with minimal impact from others, since personal perception can be influenced by others in a group (Merriam, 1988). Additionally, after an interview, an individual participant's behaviour should not to be influenced by the opinions of other participants. Finally, some participants may have some personal feelings or private issues that may not want to share with others (Yin, 2003).

All of the participants in this thesis are referred to with code-numbers rather than names or pseudonyms: the head of departments and the principals are named as H1, H2, H3 and P1 etc. within the head of department and principal participants group; T1, T2, T3 refer to different teacher participants; S1, S2 and S3 represent the student-participants. Collected observation and interview records are shown in the following tables: Table 3.1, Table 3.2 and Table 3.3. The codes representing the institutions are as follows: BDU=Baoding University; TCM=Tianjin Conservatory of Music; BNU=Beijing Normal University; CNU=Capital Normal University; CCM1=Central Conservatory of Music; CCM2=China Conservatory of Music; HBU=Hebei University.

Table 3.1 Collected interview records of the head of department or principal participants

Code	Institution	Status	Interview
H1	BDU	The Head of Music Department	Y
H2	TCM	The Head of Piano Department	Y
H3	BNU	The Head of Music Department	Y
H4	CNU	The Head of Piano Department	Y
P1	TCM	Principal	Y

Table 3.2 Collected interview and observation records of the teacher participants

Code	Institution	Status	Observation/video recording	Interview
T1	BDU	Piano Teacher	Y (Lesson C)	Y
T2	CCM2	Piano Teacher		Y
T3	CCM2	Piano Teacher		Y
T4	TCM	Piano Teacher		Y
T5	TCM	Piano Teacher	Y (Lesson A)	Y
T6	HBU	Piano Teacher		Y
T7	CNU	Piano Teacher		Y
T8	BDU	Piano Teacher		Y
T9	CNU	Piano Teacher	Y (Lesson B)	Y
T10	CCM1	Piano Teacher		Y

Table 3.3 Collected interview and observation records of the student participants

Code	Institution	Status	Observation/video recording	Interview
S1	CNU	Piano Student (Year 4)		Y
S2	CCM2	Piano Student (Year 3)		Y

S3	CNU	Piano Student (Year 3)		Y
S4	CCM1	Piano Student (Year 1)		Y
S5	BDU	Piano Student (Year 3)	Y (Lesson C)	Y
S6	HBU	Piano Student (Year 1)		Y
S7	CNU	Piano Student (Year 1)	Y (Lesson B)	Y
S8	TCM	Piano Student (Year 3)		Y
S9	TCM	Piano Student (Year 3)	Y (Lesson A)	Y
S10	BNU	Piano Student (Year 4)		Y
S11	BNU	Piano Student (Year 2)		Y

3.8.4 Participants

Participants (n=26) were full-time conservatory or university music department head of departments, principals, teachers, and students across seven higher institutions selected for this research. It was hoped that the heads of departments or principals in different institutions might have broad perceptions; as the teachers come from various conservatoires or universities they might exhibit potentially different environmental factors, and thus reflect different teaching strategies in practice.

In this PhD study, participants were recruited using purposive sampling procedures. Participants must meet all of the researcher's conditions, which is beneficial for ensuring the quality of samples of purposive sampling (Etikan, Musa & Alkassim, 2016). In the present study, the following criteria were established:

1. The participants had to be from the selected seven higher music education institutions.

2. The head of department had to be working in a piano department or in a university music department and familiar with institutional policy and strategies, piano teachers and piano students in the piano department or studying piano as their main study.

3. The piano teachers had to be giving one-to-one tuition.

4. The students had to be studying piano as their main instrument in one of the three institutions.

5. The participants confirmed their interest and availability to take part in the research.

All individuals in this study satisfied the aforementioned criteria and consented to participate. This research also employed snowball sampling and convenience sampling. Convenience sampling means that participants are willing to take part and that they are accessible for the researcher (Etikan, Musa & Alkassim, 2016). The snowball sampling strategy is a method that recruits participants based on other participants' recommendation (Robinson, 2014). In the present study, participants could reply to the recruitment email/message and recommend others to also participate. If an individual met all the requirements and showed willingness to take part in the study, they were eligible to be involved in the present study.

3.8.5 Data analysis

Due to the research context being within China, the original data were obtained in Chinese. Interview transcripts were made by the researcher and were returned to participants for approval and for them to add detail or amend after the transcripts were completed. This process of member checking is important to ensure accuracy and reliability of the research (Birt et al., 2016). According to Birt et al. (2016), member checking should be seen as an effective tool that might improve the credibility of findings rather than a simple step. Furthermore, the researcher sought a professional translation service and a signed confidentiality agreement in order to achieve the most precise translation possible. Additionally, the researcher examined each transcript and compared it to the Chinese version to ensure that everything was correct and made sense. Moreover, each transcript was given

to the supervisor for review to ensure that everything was understandable to a native English speaker.

According to Hsieh and Shannon (2005), conventional content analysis is one of the content analysis methods. The conventional technique is particularly advantageous when there is little previous theory or research literature on a phenomena and data are acquired mostly through open-ended interviews (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005). According to the authors, the advantage of this approach is that it elicits direct information from research participants without imposition of preconceived theoretical perspectives. At the first stage, the data analysis of the interviews in this PhD research started with reading all of the data repeatedly, highlighting content that appeared to describe the research questions, and writing notes in the margin and then generating descriptive codes (Oliveira et al., 2013). The codes were then classified into groups based on their relationship and connection to one another.

At the second stage, MAXQDA software was employed in the data analysis. According to Oliveira et al. (2013), MAXQDA is helpful for content analysis in qualitative research. The researcher controls the development of codes in MAXQDA; codes can be deleted or reclassified without affecting any previously reviewed material. The reason for using MAXQDA in the second stage of analysis is that it enables the researcher to re-examine the codes generated in the first stage and connect all the codes among the 26 interviews systematically, as the codes can be presented in a 'hierarchical, tree-like structure' (Oliveira et al., 2013, p. 206). Consequently, MAXQDA can assist the researcher in effectively managing codes and presenting data in a structured and logical way.

Video analysis has gained increasing recognition among scholars as an effective tool for clarifying the teaching and learning process and as a valid method for teacher development; for example, as Tripp and Rich (2012) indicate, video recordings can assist in focusing on the analysis and allowing for a fresh angle emerging on teaching. Specifically, video recordings might reflect three levels of analysis: descriptive, thematic and analytical levels in assisting understanding of students' and teachers' behaviour during lessons (Rostvall & West, 2003; 2005). Daniel (2006) also asserts that in instrumental teaching and learning, detailed analysis of student-teacher interaction and diverse teaching strategies might be accomplished via videoed analysis.

This research adopted the software Jian Ying [*剪映*] to analyse the videoed lessons. The videoed lessons were initially uploaded to Jian Ying; captions were manually added to the videos in both Chinese and English. After creating captions in both Chinese and English for each lesson, the supervisor reviewed them to ensure that the captions were understandable to a native English speaker; moreover, the captions were also transferred to Word documents as transcripts to calculate word counts for analysis of teaching approaches in the lessons. The researcher re-watched each lesson to analyse the teacher's teaching approach, teaching method and focus. Additionally, MAXQDA was employed to produce codes for teaching methods and teaching focuses by uploading lesson transcripts in order to quantify the number of times the teacher concentrated on technique, or reproducing elements of the music score, expression, or other areas of focus.

3.9 Ethical considerations

Swain (2016) indicates that six key principles should be given ethical considerations: 'explanations about the research, informed consent, voluntary participation, right to privacy, avoidance of harm, data stewardship and security' (p. 80). The researcher had submitted a standard submission form to Arts and Humanities Ethics Committee (AHEC) at the University of York for ethical approval before any data collection action started, along with the participant consent form and information sheet (Appendix 4). Each form clearly stated the aims and objectives of the research to the participants, methods of data collection, the issue of anonymity, how the data would be stored, how the data would be used, the risks or benefits of taking part in the research. As the research contexts are in China, the participant information sheet and consent form were translated into Chinese (Appendix 5).

After the initial submission to AHEC, a further form for personal and special category data was required as the methods of data collection include video recording. This form informs the researcher to be aware of the importance of data, especially as the data are under the personal and special category, and all the data needs to be processed under the General Data Protection Regulation. The researcher's supervisor provided a recommendation letter requesting access to the Chinese institutions for the researcher to be able to collect data, explaining the aims of purpose of the research, what kind of participants were needed and what kind of participation was sought.

All submitted forms were approved by AHEC in November 2019, and the data collection started later that month. Seven higher education institutions in China were regarded as possible research settings. Entry to the research settings was facilitated by head of departments, principals or academic staffs in the different institutions. The research in each context was undertaken after permission was obtained from each institution. Permission to utilise data and to observe, video record, and interview each participant was acquired after conversation with each participant at the time of each case.

Each participant was instructed about the objectives of this PhD research and purpose, the data collecting procedures, and the potential uses of the data, and a consent form was signed by each participant. This stated clearly that involvement would have no detrimental consequences and potential benefits, or drawback associated with participation or not. Moreover, participants were told that they might withdraw at any moment throughout the research if they wanted to.

Contributions from participants would not be shared beyond this research, and their identities would remain anonymous if they were used as quotations within this thesis or other research output. They were also given the option to verify the data; for example, by receiving copies of their interview transcripts, in accordance with the member-check, and by being told that they would obtain drafts of the final chapters upon request. All participants were notified that their input will be included in the final thesis. Additionally, I adhered to the Data Protection Act's storage requirements. All electronic data would be protected and saved on a password-protected laptop in accordance with the University of York ethics requirements.

Finally, I made a concerted effort to minimise disruptions to teaching and learning inside this PhD research settings. There were no artificial research settings being created by the researcher; the observations did occur in an existing educational context. To ensure the reliability of the video recording, the participants were informed that they would be video recorded; however, the researcher did not start the recording at the very beginning of each lesson when the student entered the room. The stand was silently set up and the video recording began when the participants had got used to the presence of the researcher.

3.9.1 Trustworthiness

The trustworthiness of qualitative research is generally emphasised by researchers (Shenton, 2004). In order to pursue trustworthy research in the present study, the researcher will address four criteria constructed by Guba (1981): conformability, transferability, dependability, credibility. The following sections explain how these criteria were ensured in the present research.

Trochim (2006) notes that the term confirmability refers to the level to which the findings of this PhD research can be replicated. There are a number of ways that the researcher could ensure confirmability. For example, Bryman (2016) suggests that confirmability requires the researcher to be reflective and sensitive with the findings of the research and data. Thus, checking and rechecking the data throughout the research could enhance conformability (Trochim, 2006). Moreover, conformability also requires that the data could be checked to its original source, and logical analysis of data would be needed (Trochim, 2006). In this PhD research, all the participants felt relaxed with sharing their perceptions and experiences at a location convenient to them, and all were willing to take part, which ensured naturalistic data. Moreover, the member check technique would also enhance confirmability in the current study.

The term transferability refers to the ability of qualitative research findings to be used in other situations and contexts (Bryman, 2016). In the present study, the researcher has provided a detailed description of data collecting procedure, methods, and data analysis processes in order to enable readers to make a judgment and discuss the results. Dependability refers to whether the results of the current research could be gained if the study were repeated by following the same research procedure (Shenton, 2004). This could be enabled through the detailed description of methods used.

Credibility necessitates that the researcher uses suitable approaches when addressing issues (Shenton, 2004), and thus this PhD research established the data's trustworthiness in a variety of methods (Shenton, 2004). To begin, credibility demands that the researcher maintain an adequate level of separation from the phenomena (Bryman, 2016). In this PhD research, the researcher has been a resident of the United Kingdom for nine years, and the research context is China. The researcher did not have a close contact with the participants. This distanced the

researcher from the participants, ensuring that the researcher did not influence the credibility of the data.

Additionally, triangulation was another technique for ensuring the credibility of data. Thomas (2013) reveals that triangulation means investigating from different perspectives and applying different methods. Norman (1978) refers to triangulation as methodological triangulation, which means using more than one method to collect data. In this study, the researcher was looking at creative pedagogy through three perspectives: head of departments, teachers and students, and collected data from three kinds of higher music education institutions: a conservatoire, a Normal university music department and a University music department. The observations were compared with interview data in order to form and provide understanding of creative pedagogy in Chinese higher music education. Thirdly, the researcher used member-checking, as noted earlier, and peer debriefing techniques with her academic supervisor to support the data analysis.

3.9.2 Generalisability

Generalisability is a common objective in quantitative research; however, it is frequently absent in qualitative research (Silverman, 2010). Mason (2017) reveals that qualitative researchers should not generate explanations that are biased towards their own perspectives. Social science usually involves people, who have their interests and enthusiasms; Thomas (2013) states that the 'vagaries and idiosyncrasies of people actually influence the finding of social research' (p. 143), which means that making accurate generalisations in social science is difficult. However, for the research findings of this study to be generalisable to the relevant population is not my aim. By contrast, my primary objectives are to gain an awareness of the student-teacher relationship and creative teaching from the perspectives of piano students, piano teachers, and heads of departments within the setting of the research, as well as to develop better understanding of how piano education occurs and develops in one-to-one tuition.

3.10 Conclusion

This chapter reviewed the philosophical positions of interpretivism and social constructivism that serve as the framework for this PhD research, described and supported the case study methodology and qualitative data gathering approach, which includes interviews, video recordings and document analysis. Additionally, this chapter discussed the data analysis process used in this PhD research. Moreover, the issues of ethical approval, trustworthiness, generalisation and ethical considerations are addressed in this chapter. The next chapter will present the data obtained from the interviews in this PhD research, exploring creativity in Chinese higher music education according to the views of heads of piano departments, a principal, teachers and students.

CHAPTER 4: CREATIVITY IN CHINESE HIGHER MUSIC EDUCATION: VIEWS OF HEADS OF PIANO DEPARTMENTS, PRINCIPAL, TEACHERS AND STUDENTS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter explores the views of a sample of head of departments, principals, teachers and students, working and studying in higher music education institutions in China that include Conservatory, Normal University and University music departments. The participants comprised one Principal, four Heads of Piano Departments, ten piano teachers and eleven piano students. The chapter begins with a reminder of the conceptual framework established in Chapter 1, and then presents participants' interview data defining creativity. It subsequently considers how teachers and students understand creative teaching within piano pedagogy, and how they view difficulties and challenges for creative teaching. This chapter also illustrates the creative teaching approaches that these teachers apply and discusses how creative policy influences creative teaching. Where participants are quoted below, H refers to a Head of a piano department, P refers to a Principal, T refers to a teacher and S refers to a student.

As discussed in Chapter 1, multiple perspectives exist concerning creativity. According to Niu and Sternberg (2003) the majority of people believe that the universe creates, but human beings also have creative ability. Niu and Kaufman (2013) regard creativity as a continuous self-development or evolved ability that every individual can participate in. Although creativity can be applied in various ways, any new changes must come from the existing traditions; this can be seen as the most significant foundational element of creativity from the Chinese traditional perspective (Niu & Kaufman, 2013). When comparing similarities and differences and similarities in identifying creativity between Chinese and Americans, Niu and Kaufman (2013) 'Americans tend to value novelty and more groundbreaking types of creativity, whereas Chinese tend to appreciate creativity within constraints, such as reworking a traditional concept' (p. 78). Tan and Lu (2022) also discuss a Confucian perspective on creativity: Confucius emphasised the need for retaining the useful and altering the negative, which lays a foundation for creativity. In addition, creativity shows a cumulative characteristic,

in which both novel and established ideas coexist (Tan & Lu, 2022). This further illustrates the reinterpretation of a traditional concept as a fundamental aspect of creativity from a Chinese perspective.

Csikszentmihalyi (2015) suggests that creativity can be defined as 'an idea or product that is original, valued, and implemented' (p. 162). According to Simonton and Damian (2013), there are two more requirements for an idea to be considered creative: in addition to being novel and beneficial, creative ideas must also be unexpected; moreover, the idea must be functional and effective. From the Chinese perspective, Niu and Kaufman (2013) stated that creativity does not need the creation of new knowledge, but rather the use of novel methods to access existing knowledge. As a result, different cultural contexts may influence the definition and evaluation of creativity (Niu & Kaufman, 2013).

In relation to creativity in music, which is frequently associated with composition and improvisation (Ashley, 2014; Müller, 2023; Wendzich & Andrews, 2022), there is also a creative element present when students perform and reproduce music from the score (Clarke, 2011). Diverse and flexible expression has been considered to be creative performance in music, despite the importance of originality in determining whether an expression is creative. However, this does not imply that the performance should be over-expressed in relation to the marks on the score, and it must still adhere to appropriate stylistic boundaries (Clarke, 2011; Bishop, 2018). Furthermore, it has been argued by Davidson (2014) that the enhancement of performativity might potentially provide advantageous outcomes for creative music performance. In addition, improvisational and compositional activities contribute to the development of creativity in music performance and creativity in general (Riveire, 2006; Wendzich & Andrews, 2022). In their teaching, teachers must be improvisational and reflective to foster student creativity (Salvador & Knapp, 2022), and build conversational interaction with students (Salvador & Knapp, 2022), as a strong and friendly student-teacher connection improves students' creativity and creative performance (de Bruin, 2022). Teachers must encourage musical expression as well as skills to improve students' creative performance in music (Graham, 1998).

In the present study, the researcher was mindful of these perspectives of creativity. The relevant term in Mandarin is [*chuang zao li, 创造力*], which can be understood as novel and unique ideas in a broad sense. Therefore, creativity in music may be expressed within creative performance, which might be achieved through a variety of methods achieved within the one-to-one lesson. The next sections will present the views of the participants on defining creativity, including educational perspectives on creativity, creativity in musical performance and expertise and creativity.

4.2 Defining creativity

In creativity in science and technology, one invention will progress development, leading to obsolescence of previous invention; however, creativity in music could be many things co-existing: 'As a performer, I know well not only the Russian style [music], but also the British style [music], as well as the Chinese aesthetics, this development which naturally leads to creativity' [P1]. Therefore, for this participant, creativity in music is knowledge and use of different styles. However, co-existing and diversified development needs to have a basis point: 'As a Chinese performer, we must have [a] foothold for national culture' [P1]. Therefore, it seems that creativity must relate to tradition; P1 also stated: 'Including our current intangible cultural heritage, what does intangible cultural heritage mean? It means that we don't change it, just pass it on to the next generation'. This view echoes this participant's idea that 'when learning Western music and instruments, a Chinese cultural basis is important to Chinese learners, which is the root that helps learners to study effectively, and it is necessary to integrate the culture into learning process' [P1].

Comparing creativity between Chinese and Western views, T10 described that:

> Chinese's creativity is changing form and pattern. While the Westerners' creativity is to understand the material itself deeply … Westerners' creativity is essentially subversive, 'from scratch', and it is irreplaceable or very low substitutability, but Chinese creativity can be imitated [T10].

T10 concluded: 'an old Chinese saying '*Huan Tang Bu Huan Yao*' [*换汤不换药*] refers to this point'. Literally, the shape has changed but the actual content remains the same, it can be understood as 'old wine in a new bottle'. As a result, this reflects viewpoints from the literature review, as suggested by Niu and Kaufman (2013) and Tan and Lu (2022), a tendency

of valuing creativity within limitations, by preserving advantageous aspects while making changes to fix undesirable elements; both novel and traditional ideas coexist.

Many studies have suggested that collectivism is the most typical cultural characteristic in China; therefore, creativity may also be influenced by this dimension (Wang & Huang, 2003; Lan & Kaufman, 2012). Under the effects of collectivism, people are socially connected and look after each other's feelings in order to achieve interrelated harmony (Hsieh & Scammon, 1993). People greatly emphasise 'face' [*mianzi*, 面子] and seek agreement from others (Lan & Kaufman, 2012); thus, indirect and ambiguous language in the communication style are commonly applied and appreciated in this culture. When I asked the question 'what do you think the term creativity is?' to my participants, they did not seem to like discussing creativity in general; rather, they hoped that I could specify it. It seemed that they did not have a clear definition of creativity in mind, and that they did not want to attempt a definition. Despite this, they were willing to share their views about creativity on teaching and music, and the following sections illustrate educational perspectives on creativity from my participants.

In line with the literature mentioned above, T2 stated that: 'creativity comes from tradition and basics. Creativity is that what you experience, that is what you see and hear should be rich enough'. H1 also confirmed that creativity is experience-related:

> If you are a great scholar, and then study the things of the Baroque period, well, you may be able to find new things. If you are a student, it will be difficult for you to find something new about it [H1].

T6 mentioned that 'creativity must build on the foundation; otherwise, creativity is not valuable'. T4 had a similar view of the relationship between foundation and creativity: 'foundation needed before creativity'. In this regard, T1 also suggested the conditions for creativity: 'solid performance and theoretical foundation'. T2 also felt that creativity is a process of constant learning and discovery:

> Creativity is research, you should dig as much information as possible. Because there are too many details in one piece of work, [so] it's difficult for us to cover all aspects at one time, this is the creativity I think [T2].

Therefore, while creativity could be an aspect of learning, it is also challenging. H1 believed that creativity is a process of combination:

> If I move something from the West completely, it may be hard to make our own students to fully understand it … It is a bit like the original foreign book, the foreign film that wants to come to China for translation. In fact, the foreign language is different from the Chinese dubbing actor in the way of speaking … creativity, that is, a kind of combination [H1].

This view aligns with P1, who suggested that 'the innovation and creativity in art is that you are black colour and he is white colour, and then I combine them into grey colour' [P1]. This participant also referred to an example of Chinese national singing: 'Chinese national singing method is not the purely new singing method, which combined *Bel Canto* and Original Ecological Singing method into the National singing method' [P1]. Meanwhile, 'creativity is breaking some limitations of traditional thinking and habits' [T2]. 'Creativity is the ability to think problem, but in multiple ways' [T5]. These last views might be seen as a shift towards a more diversified tendency in defining creativity. For instance, they demonstrate that creativity is a process of integrating and linking disparate elements, and thus is a kind of combination. Additionally, Chinese perspectives appear to emphasise the importance of creativity in terms of expanding one's knowledge and experiences; creativity can also be defined as creative thinking; moreover, it appears that the characteristic of usefulness is critical in creativity, as it must solve a problem. This is again reflecting the combining nature of creativity as suggested in the conceptual framework presented in Chapter 1.

4.2.1 Educational perspectives on creativity

Different types of institution were seen as connecting to different types of creativity. For instance, T10 illustrated that 'If a student [who specialises in piano] wants to enter a Normal university, he is requested to be able to sing as well. There are also vocal and dance lessons in their university, curriculum design is totally different from us'. Therefore, 'Conservatory of Music belong to the only one [piano], [Normal University] can do anything. From the perspective of education, they are a kind of extension of us, they are a kind of creativity compare with us' [T10]. Specifically, the programme at the Conservatoire with a primary focus on developing piano playing skills may differ in scope from that of a broader curriculum at a

Normal university. ‘Creativity in teaching can be divided into two aspects, practical creativity in teaching and the other is creativity in theoretical research’ [H2]. This suggests that views on creativity may differ according to the purpose of an institution, and in relation to the specific aspects of the subject of study.

One of the head of department participants stated that China attaches great importance to creativity and innovation, and promoting that in every field; however, creativity is rare in music education:

> It should be said that creativity is being mentioned in the whole country, from Central Committee of the Communist Party of China (CPC) to the Ministry of Education and to all kinds of industries. Perhaps the concept of creativity may be mentioned more in the science and technology industry, or maybe it is mentioned more in the economic industry. Of course, now teaching is also beginning to pay attention to creativity … but there is really no more such exploration or more such rules or courses in this kind of policy, which still relatively new. However, of course we often talk about creativity, and we also require teachers to be creative in teaching. Therefore, it can be seen that both the country and universities realise the significance of creativity, but there are [a] lack of exploration, guidance and method[s] in this area [H1].

This is confirmed by T5, who stated there is gap between some policies that promote creativity and the implementation:

> There are some so-called scientific research projects, but to tell you the truth, these in China are all for dealing with things, and nothing really valuable and feasible has been written. There are so-called education reform projects, the policy is encouraging! If you [teacher] are willing to write, but in fact it is of no practical use [T5].

H1's statements might reveal that compared with other subjects, music may be viewed as not as advanced in using creativity. P1 confirmed this: 'there is not the specific creativity by performers yet'. Furthermore, this Head recognised interest in creativity in higher music education, but felt that the understanding of creativity may not be representative of actual creativity:

> Leaders will propose meetings and even invite some experts or some universities that do a better job of creative education to talk about creativity, but what we hear is mostly talk about the inventions, creations or creative entrepreneurship, for example, inventing music score machine, it is not the same concept as creativity [H1].

The same Head of Department stated that 'Our music department also invite some music experts, but they rarely talk about how to teach creatively in music. Therefore, we do need creative pedagogy and research activities' [H1]. From the statements made by these participants, while there was an interest in creative teaching, there was no clear direction and guidance for them in the field of music education in China. While the importance of promoting creativity in all disciplines have recognised, and developing students' creativity emerges as a goal, relevant research and guidance for music institutions and teachers are still needed as suggested in Chapter 2.

4.2.2 Creativity in musical performance

'Creativity is a second creation, individually in performance … the difference is reflected in that subtle difference and exists in detail' [P1]. For example, 'while Chinese musical instrumentalists are dealing with Western works, such as playing the piano, they may have a more 'elastic' rhythm than others … the rhythm of Chinese works is the rhythm of "rubber band"' [P1]. P1 also reflected:

> So creativity may be reflected in the subtle difference between 'same' and 'different'. Our so-called creativity is also reflected in this. In fact, even if you play according to the teacher's play and the teacher teaches you to play like this, you can't be exactly the same as the teacher, because you have added your own technical characteristics and limitations in the process, which are all possible [P1].

Creativity seems to embrace variety; this flexibility element is regarded as creativity operating within performance. P1 recognised the interpretative creativity and stated:

> Therefore, it is still necessary to add a subtle intervention of personal emotion under the premise of complete accuracy in the framework of music score and rhythm. In fact, sometimes this kind of intervention is meaningful, sometimes you never think of it, it will be different [P1].

P1 also thought that 'creativity reflected in performance might be influenced by one's own culture and background, and this cultural characteristic is also a kind of creativity' [P1]. Therefore, on the one hand, creativity might be a playing style, involving a sense of rhythm; on the other hand, a different understanding of the work brought by the performer's own cultural background is also a creativity. However, 'the biggest creativity of Chinese performer is Chinese aesthetic perspective' [P1]. For example, P1 considered, 'Why did Fu Cong's performance of Chopin's work sound like a Tang poem? But only Fu Cong, who was influenced by Fu Lei's *Family Letters*, can have such profound Chinese tradition, and he can represent such a cultural voice' [P1]. Fu Lei was the father of Fu Cong, and this book (Lei, 1981) contains mainly over a hundred letters written by Fu Lei to his son. The book was widely circulated in China in the 1980s, and in this book Fu Lei discussed art, Chinese classical culture and inspiring young people. Therefore, creativity can link to 'cultural voice', as when a performer becomes well-known, creativity can form a manifestation of culture.

Creativity seems, though, to have a hierarchical quality, since creative judgement is deemed to be the privilege of those at a high level: a 'famous performer's creativity seems more acceptable, because they are famous and high level' [P1]; for example, 'when people watch Lang Lang's playing', this bit shorter and that bit longer, people can understand and think that is reasonable, because he is Lang Lang' [P1]. However, H2 seems to be conveying the idea that only the creativity of a high-level performer is valid:

> A French pianist played Beethoven's sonata, and we had watched that concert, but I told my students you should not play like him afterwards. Of course, he can play whatever he wants because he is the famous pianist, but you can't play like that. It's an experience for him to play like that, but if you play like that, it's an exaggeration, even a kind of show off, no one like it [H2].

The previous points might indicate the cultural context as a factor influencing acceptance of creativity, since creativity can be seen as acceptable, or a recognised trait for those performers who are at a high level, and thus creativity seems to have a hierarchical character; it could even be representative of a culture. This might suggest that the contexts of teaching and learning in higher music education might not necessarily foster creativity. The findings suggest a connection between creativity and social and environmental influences, as seen by the hierarchical nature of China, which is also mirrored in its creative performance.

4.2.3 Expertise and creativity

Creativity appears to be viewed differently according to student levels: 'Creativity is something that needs to be controlled in the undergraduate teaching, but when it comes to the postgraduate level, it actually allows students to explore more about creativity' [H2]. T5 hold a similar view for the first two years of undergraduates: 'they still have to be more technical and are in the stage of standardisation'. This view is similar with 'thinking of the relationship between "inheritance" and "creativity"' [P1]. The participant gave an analogy of calligraphy; for example, 'you can't write cursive when you start to write, you must write regular script in a proper way at first, that is to say, you have to be in a standard first, that is inheritance first and then creativity' [P1]. According to Niu (2012), Niu and Kaufman (2013), creativity can be attainable for everyone, even in later life, from the Chinese viewpoint; however, the most important aspect is to train the basic skills by working hard and practice to achieve creativity (Niu & Kaufman, 2013). This might explain why the participant thinks creativity is not suitable to explore much during the undergraduate study, as this is the stage of laying the foundation, and this view of P1 illustrated the relationship between inheritance and creativity.

H2 further illustrates that creativity is problematic, as creativity requires aesthetic sense as well as audience consideration:

> If you are very creative, like today's composer, you go from harmonious romanticism to discordant Bartok to Stravinsky. When it comes to Schoenberg's atonal 12-tone sequence, I don't think music can be creative for the sake of creativity … we should have a higher sense of aesthetics in order to cater to the audience [H2].

Another perspective is that creativity still comes from the teacher giving new information to the student, and this connects to master-apprentice teaching, in which the student's creativity could be led by the teacher. For instance, 'creative inspiration, imagining the picture or historical period – using language to inspire, teacher give students new ideas' [H3]. Another example shows differences in how creative ideas might be received: 'some students do not understand even if you have been talking for a long time, and some students understand that they are excited, so they inspire teachers to talk more and teachers to think more' [H3]. Therefore, some of the participants believe that students' creativity is still led by the teacher and thus reflects teacher-centred teaching, and it is only suitable for advanced students, and only those who are aesthetically aware audience members could be receptive to it. The results indicate again a relationship between creativity and the impact of social and environmental factors, as seen by the hierarchical structure in China, that not everyone can be creative; this belongs to advanced students and performers.

4.3 Comparing the teacher and student views of creative teaching

According to Moreira and Carvalho (2010), creative teaching activities can not only help in transferring pedagogical styles within a teacher-centred model but can also be used to approach activities such as musical exploration and improvisation which can effectively improve students' technical and musical development. Moreover, creative teaching is beneficial to the relationship between students and teachers, as these activities can create a relaxed atmosphere for teaching and learning, thus promoting the motivation of students' learning (Moreira & Carvalho, 2010). In this section, teachers' and students' perceptions of creative teaching will be compared.

4.3.1 Developing pedagogy

4.3.1.1 Developing pedagogy on teaching style

T1 stated that 'creativity [in teaching] is cultivation of comprehensive ability; the essence of education; the most important direction of education'. This comment aligns with the idea of the importance of creativity presented in the previous section. Specifically, 'creativity [in teaching] may sometimes [be] a cultivation of student's creative ability' [H1], and can be seen as learner independence, as T1 indicated: 'creativity is the ability of students to learn on their own, to learn, to appreciate, to criticise and then to be creative'. This suggests a clear route

and order of the perceived elements involved. Creativity in teaching requires teachers to be open-minded, 'respecting the students and the development of their personality' [H2].

There is a student perspective that echoes the teacher participants' views. S1 reflected on their learning experiences with several piano teachers, and felt that they preferred one of their past teachers, because of his teaching style:

> He respected my opinion very much from the selection of repertoire, edition until the whole learning process … I can discuss and communicate with the teacher freely and equally. Compared with a traditional and teacher-dominated teaching, I'm looking forward [to] a student-centred teaching where I can be independent, I play the pieces that I choose by myself, I play what I like for the details on the scores, and I can discuss and communicate what I think and my ideas to the teacher [S1].

It seems that creative teaching may be viewed by teachers as developing students' creativity as well as their independent thinking and learning skills, and thus to be student-centred approach. According to Gibson (2010), the transition from teacher-centred to student-centred teaching and learning could be a prerequisite for creative teaching, as creativity will not be developed if the teacher does not create an equal, open-minded, flexible environment for the students and values their input. This indicates a different form of teaching from that of master-apprentice teaching.

4.3.1.2 Developing pedagogy on technique

Creativity in teaching is 'changing the rules' [P1]. To be specific, H1 explained in relation to piano teaching: 'break some of the previous concepts, break the concept of relaxation, break the concept of hand shape, break the concept of what muscle training, and break the original piano training system' [H1]. H1 further explained that creative teaching is developing pedagogy:

> It was tantamount to us teaching all aspects of music with the Soviet teaching system, and the early old-fashioned Soviet teaching system [in China]. It was obvious that those teaching methods … demanded that the wrist should not move, put coins or even candles on the wrist and light candles on it, so that the wrist should be stable. At that time, the teaching requirements of Soviet

> teachers on the hand shape were very strict … But later … when teachers learned new teaching methods and new teaching system, this was a kind of creativity … Therefore, creative teaching is not completely understood as the creativity that has not been done before, but constantly change or enrich the existing teaching methods [H1].

H1 also mentioned:

> Our Chinese students learn to play piano, the teacher might ask them to play some Chinese pieces, right? Well, Chinese work, Western etudes and training system may not be good at solving the problem of Chinese pieces. Therefore, teachers have to find ways to solve the technical problems that the students encounter when playing Chinese pieces. This is also where teachers need to be creative [H1].

These views seem in line with the idea that creativity in teaching might be an evolutionary, innovative and disruptive act since it breaks established patterns (Florida, 2002). They also suggest that Western pedagogy may need new approaches to support the learning of Chinese material, thereby the need of developing pedagogy in creative teaching is emphasised.

4.3.1.3 Developing repertoire

Since Western classical repertoire is usually the focus of teaching, 'combining Chinese culture, Chinese personality, and Chinese style of thinking [with Western repertoire], which I believe is a creativity' could be a creative pedagogical approach [H1]. H1 further mentioned: 'Students love pop music, while our teachers may prefer to teach classical music. However, pop music may be truly inspiring students to learn'. This head considered the repertoire carefully:

> I was wondering if music education had to hold us in the past, even though we had so many classical masterpieces in the past, whether we had to hold those things forever. It is necessary to absorb more new things of the era and the things that students love [H1].

This was recognised by H2 and H4: 'various repertoire is the foundation of creativity, and the source of creativity' [H2]. 'It is advocated to play as many Chinese works as possible, contemporary works, to enrich the teaching content … Integrating more instruments in the concert, for example, drum, electric bass, percussion, they can all accompany piano in the concert' [H4] when playing pre-composed popular music pieces. As a consequence, the above views may suggest that, regardless of whether the repertoire is fully understood by Chinese musicians, the use of a range of diverse repertoire is viewed as part of creative teaching, though the data does not show the extent to which teachers do include diverse repertoire.

From the students' perspective, they indicated that that they would also love to study more diverse music. For example:

> Let's explore the works of different periods. For example, the works of modern or contemporary composers can also involve some jazz music. Because we are piano majors, [it goes] without saying that we have to play classical music, so I hope we can broaden our scope. What we play over and over is the works of Rachmaninov and Lao Chai [Tchaikovsky]. I think we know too little about Russian music. In fact, many art songs like Russian [ones] are very pleasant to listen to, but we know too little [S1].

It might be seen that this student had little knowledge of even the pieces of the Russian school with which they were supposed to be familiar and knew little about other Russian music. S3 felt that 'My current teacher arranged a jazz work for a freshman, which made the work diversified which I think is good. Because we usually only play classical or romantic works, and only focused on that certain number of pieces' [S3]. Other students wanted to learn more about Chinese repertoire. For instance: 'I hope to explore more Chinese works' [S2]. S6 also suggested:

> The *Colourful Cloud Chasing the Moon* that the teacher asked me to play is quite new to me, because I have never been exposed to Chinese works before. When I was young, I learned to play the electric keyboard and then transferred to the piano. After I transferred to the piano, I was taught by a Russian teacher. The Russian teacher generally asked me play works that are based on their

> culture. The Russian fighting nations have more explosive works, for example: Rachmaninov, so Chinese works are really new to me [S6].

Other students thought that any pieces they had not heard of were worth playing, as they did not want to play a piece that was well known. For instance:

> In fact, I would like my teacher to assign me some works that I have never heard of, that I do not know about, not the kind of Beethoven sonatas that everyone knows about, and I would particularly like my teacher to leave me some works that are not very common. I'd love to practice that kind of pieces [S11].

The remaining three students did not specify the type of repertoire they were expecting, but they were concerned that creative teaching should be rich in varied repertoire. For example, 'The repertoire can be played in a wider range of styles [S4]'; 'enriching repertoire [S5]'; 'I think the repertoire need to be innovative and creative' [S9].

It might be therefore the case that a relatively narrow range of repertoire was used in lessons, with many students learning the same repertoire as their peers. This situation could arise due to the constraints of the syllabus and requirement to pass performance examinations. At the same time, these comments also suggest that teachers were perhaps mainly using their own preferences and the pieces they are familiar with when assigning student repertoire. However, students showed a more positive attitude than the teachers about expansion of repertoire styles, such as contemporary, jazz and Chinese music, and hope to be able to learn these styles of music, as well as play more repertoire unique to each individual.

4.3.1.4 Inclusiveness and equality of approach

Creativity in teaching may also reflect the teacher's inclusiveness towards the students. For example, H1 stated:

> Chinese students seldom ask questions or voice different opinions, such as 'is it acceptable if I play this way?' 'Is it all right if I do this?' However, I believe that teachers should be inclusive when dealing with students who raise questions or express different views [H1].

T1 pointed out that 'more capable students can be creative'. That perhaps means that teachers may think that less capable students cannot be creative or that creativity is not an ability that everyone possesses. However, T2 stated: 'creativity can be trained, but it takes time and patience'. Therefore, it might be seen that creativity is viewed as a comprehensive ability including the ability of critical thinking; creativity can perhaps, therefore, be trained, but perhaps there is a hierarchical attitude towards it, discussed further in the next section.

4.3.2 Diversification of learning context

H2 explained that 'Learning is diversified, for example, attending master classes and participating in competitions, these are all sources of learning'. H2 also shared: 'listen to other teachers' classes, and then go to those high-level master classes abroad to broaden your horizons, listen to more concerts'. H2 refers to an old Chinese saying from Confucius to further explain why learning is diversified:

> As an old Chinese saying from Confucius states, '*Sanren Xing Biyou Woshi' [三人行必有我师]*, which means among any three people, one can find something to learn from other two for sure, therefore there are many ways of learning, you can learn from your classmates [H2].

Therefore, this participant seems open to students learning from other contexts and from their peers. H2 also felt that 'the piano curriculum mainly focuses on one-to-one lessons, but we must not … take students as teachers' own private property, because teachers have limitations, and those limitations might restrict students' development' [H2]. Thus, H2 suggested that taking students to different concerts is necessary. This might indicate that students should be encouraged to participate in additional activities rather than relying on the one-to-one piano lesson as the main source of knowledge; it also suggests this teacher's openness to new perspectives.

T5 believed creative teaching is inspiration that develops through teaching, practice and hard work; therefore, diversified learning could arise for students from them acting as teachers:

> Students can carry out a certain amount of teaching, because through the teaching process, students can solve some of the problems encountered in piano practice. Because some students do not know how to use their brains when practicing the piano … but after he has taught [students], he knows that

> he needs to use his brain to think about a lot of things. Teaching makes students to think … and also piano practice and hard work are significant [T5].

The form of group teaching was also presented in addition to one-to-one teaching in all three institutional contexts as diversifying learning context. From a Conservatory perspective, H2 stated:

> By observing other students, he [the student] may wake up on his own. Students are mainly focusing on one-to-one teaching, and it may also be a little numb and aesthetically tired, but it will be helpful for them to have a group teaching [H2].

H4, a teacher from a Normal University also suggested, 'if there are three students [who] practice the same piece, then I will arrange these three students together for a group lesson … I will explain to them in detail how to play'. T8 from a University illustrated this further:

> Our university is in the process of transformation to 'teaching applied university', we are not aiming at cultivating musicians or pianists, we are not able to achieve that. So how can students adapt to the future teaching work is our goal. Creativity reflected in the teaching process of our university is 'teaching and learning at the same time'. For example, during [the] teaching process, if there are three students in the morning, then all three students should come. When he [the student] plays his own work, I'll let them to bring all the teaching related materials, such as Beyer and [Czerny op.] 599 and the first level examination repertoire. These repertoires are very simple, but many problems will still be exposed, such as reflecting their poor foundation or there are some problems that they know how to do but don't know why. So when they observe and learn from each other, a situation where they can both play and teach is formed. I think this new model is pretty good [T8].

Group teaching was also identified as creative teaching by students. S8 stated that: 'the students from a same teacher can have a group lesson, communicate, or have a concert together or giving presentations about what you have achieved recently'. Students could see the value of this approach, though while S1 stated benefits they did not associate this context with creativity:

> When I have the piano lesson, there are other students watching my playing, in particular some of them are playing the same piece with me. Because every time before my concert, the teacher will ask other students to come to my lesson, which is a kind of exercise for me to play in front of others and having other opinions; I am going to give a concert soon, which is also an encouragement for them [S1].

S4 also showed value of group lessons and observation of peers: 'We will have a studio class in a week, the teacher will organise the whole class together, and we will have a chance to show and perform. I think it's good to listen to each other and share your ideas and suggestions'. In addition to the group lesson, the master class format was also considered to be creative teaching by S11:

> I look forward to the master class. Because if we only receive the one-to-one teaching from one teacher, and the teacher was just a traditional teaching model without new blood, the progress of students will be very slow. Sometimes master classes might help us to understand what was being taught in one-to-one lessons, and it might help me to better work with my teacher [S11].

According to Simon and Hicks (2006), teachers should encourage students to participate in a variety of activities, as students might develop their own creativity through this process. Moreover, Bjøntegaard (2015) also indicates that combined teaching and learning contexts such as one-to-one, group and master class lessons in each week can help students develop into independent, professional and reflective musicians, since students play different roles in such varied contexts, and thus these contexts encourage students' creativity. Consequently, creative teaching appears to be seen by these students and teachers as diversified teaching and learning environments.

4.3.3 Teaching methods

4.3.3.1 Technology

Based on the interview data, creative teaching and learning were facilitated by technology in two ways: in and out of the teaching studio. For example, teachers could demonstrate to students by asking them to access video and audio material on the internet. As H1 stated: 'Teacher's demonstration is limited sometimes … now with mobile phones, you can easily access a lot of expert audio and video, students can learn through these videos, this is a creative teaching method' [H1]. This was recognised by H4:

> If the student plays a Tango-style work, watching tango dance, some videos are showing the dance and the music, it is not necessary to just focus on the piano, helping students to find other video materials to help him to find Tango feeling [H4].

H4 concluded: 'the best creative input is to search more information, audio or video materials related to the work'. Therefore, the range of information could contribute to the student's creativity of interpretation and performance. S10 also confirmed the role of technology in creative teaching:

> In fact, I think in lessons, it is not necessarily the teacher 'hand in hand' *[shou ba shou 手把手]* to teach, sometimes the teacher will directly in the lesson [share] some video or audio let us enjoy, [it is] more intuitive to see the performance of others; or the same piece, but with a variety of different playing styles, combined with audio and video to make us feel. I'm more enjoying this way. Because sometimes teachers have limitations, and sometimes [if we] just listen to the teacher [we] may not be able to understand but combined with video and audio we know what the teacher wants us to do [S10].

Likewise, staff believed that technology plays a vital role in the students' practice and communication with the teacher after the lesson. For instance:

> Currently, this kind of communication, information and network is developing very rapidly. Well, in the past, after the lesson, students had to digest [ideas] themselves until the next lesson. But now, with mobile phone in hand,

> students can ask questions at any time, students can even send the teacher a video to show their questions while practicing [H1].

Additionally, T7 believed playing along with recording is also a kind of creativity: 'Let the students watch some videos, but the sound of the video is very loud. Let the students touch the keyboard gently, that is, try to simulate those [Masters] playing the piano'. Thus, there are several ways that teachers and students constitute creative teaching as linked to technology.

4.3.3.2 Metaphor and imaginative strategies

From the teachers' point of view, experiences of using metaphor and imagery teaching contributed to their understanding of creative teaching. For example, H2:

> There are creativities in designing of language, inspirational language … Making something 'holy' into 'common'. For example, Schumann's sketches, if you say, 'sketches' to students they do not understand and cannot remember, but you say Schumann's work is fragmentation, they will understand and remember it [H2].

Another strategy would be to invite the use of imagination. H3 gave an example: 'if the piece they play comes from [the] eighteenth century, I asked him if you had ever seen an eighteenth century movie or novel. Can you imagine what that period was like?' [H3].

Likewise, some students reflected this type of teaching in their learning experiences. S2 indicated that demonstration should not be the primary method in piano pedagogy: 'Although the demonstration can be more direct, but it's not conducive to student's understanding. Because the teacher can play well, that doesn't mean the student can play well [S2]. S4 believed: 'Imagination and creativity alone are useless. If you want to be a particularly expressive student, you must have strong technical support'. Therefore, it seems that technical foundation seems to be important for developing students' imagination and creativity. However, S3 gave an example of imagery teaching that the teacher applied:

> My teacher now tells stories when the students cannot play well. Chopin's *Fantasie Impromptu*, for example, my playing was a bit strong and fast. He said that he came to the university that day, on the way, see the fallen leaves are yellow, autumn, very romantic, he will guide me to imagine, imagine a

> romantic scene. He would give the students a situation setting and ask them to play in an imaginary state to grasp the overall style of the work [S3].

S9 also shared his teaching experiences of younger students using an imaginative strategy: 'when I was teaching a child, it was gradually increasing from treble to bass. I inspired him to say that it felt like a train coming from a distance, and then the effect of popping up was good'.

S5 shared the imagery teaching she had with her teacher, and felt that it had improved her interpretation of that specific piece and her musical expression:

> When I play *Water Grass Dance*, the introduction part has a special feeling of fluidity, the teacher asked me to imagine the scene of water grass swinging and dancing in the water, and then the sound will not be so straight and rigid, there will be subtle changes [S5].

Consequently, the application of metaphor and imagery teaching not only presents a variety of teaching methods in creative teaching, but also helped students with their interpretation and musical expression.

4.3.3.3 Discussion and reflection in lessons

Creative teaching can be developed through discussion and reflection in each lesson: 'It can't be just the teacher saying and the student listening, students have to have their own ideas and interact with teachers. This is actually to encourage students' creative thinking ability' [P1]. Because 'as teachers, they must give students a little space, in this way students can continuously train their creative thinking ability and have the possibility of change, teaching cannot just be cramming' [P1]. According to Simon and Hicks (2006), a teaching environment in which the teacher encourages creativity would help students develop their creativity. Additionally, Grainger, Barnes and Scoffham (2004) emphasise that creative teaching requires the need to provide space for students to develop their thinking and reflection on their own learning in the field of music. This could be achieved through discussion and reflection. However, there are no student comments from the data collected which indicate that their lessons included discussion and reflection.

4.3.4 Varied areas of focus in teaching: transferring from technique to musicality and cultural aspects

The findings of this PhD research reveal that in the analysed one-to-one piano lessons at three Chinese higher education institutions, a strong emphasis appears to be placed on technique and finger-based activity (see Chapter 5 and Chapter 6). This aligns with Huang and Thibodeaux (2016), who discovered that piano students in Chinese higher education regarded piano solely as skill-acquisition solely. Their analysis of the situation was concerning:

> Perhaps the general focus on competing to display technical virtuosity reinforces a 'wild horse galloping' attitude that overrides thoughtful engagement with the music. After assiduous inculcation of muscle memory, the additional effort to convey detailed emotional content may seem irrelevant and burdensome. Fingers can take over the brain's main capacity to process; these digits may run ahead of mental directive in chaotic disorder (p. 30).

As Ma and Wang (2016) point out, piano is also a cultural subject. The findings of this PhD research also indicate that learning piano should be accompanied by knowledge of history, theory, and the period characteristics of the repertoire performed [T5]. Consequently, the implication here is that piano teachers should consider the balance of technique, musical expression and cultural related knowledge.

H2 indicated the use of analysis as a creative teaching approach: 'ask students to analyse and compare the works' [H2]. This was confirmed by H4: 'It is necessary to study its background, era and style characteristics'. Building on this, when pieces are connected with different cultural contexts, H4 stated:

> When I studied *Sunset Xiaogu* my teacher asked me 'do you know this is an ancient music?' This ancient music originally comes from folk music ensemble, the piano work may have to imitate many folk music instruments, such as zither, pipa, xiao and so on, and then I found the feeling. Therefore, when I teach some Russian style music to students, the younger generation may not be very familiar with Russia, but the older generation are. How can I make my

> students feel the Russian style? I will show some videos, or even find some Russian style film to watch. Let's sit together, feel together [H4].

Some students believed that teaching content should not be technique-oriented, and an extension of teaching content means that teaching would not only be focusing on technique. As S2 stated:

> The teacher can teach more about the musical expression, that is, understanding the works. Because for technique problems, students can solve by themselves after lessons. It will be a bit of a waste of time in lessons if the teacher talks about the technique problems [S2].

S9 believed that music form and harmony analysis should be included: music form analysis and harmony analysis enable students to understand the harmony of the work and the entire body structure, we cannot only limit on the score' [S9]. S9 also compared his current piano teacher and former teacher in this respect:

> The current teacher will tell me know about the background of various composers, how this piece was created, and help me to do harmony analysis, he will also ask me to listen more CD or video and recommends me some recordings, not just playing … The previous teacher just told this place should be stronger, and this place would have to be *staccato*. Just told me very simple instructions based on the score, that is it. There was nothing about music itself [S9].

S10 also suggested:

> I hope we cannot always talk about performance in class but discuss some academic issues … For example, if I'm playing the romantic genre and I'm playing Liszt, if I don't know the romantic genre or the background of the characters, I might not be able to play the romantic genre. If I had known the country, the context, the style and the people, I might have different feelings when I play [S10].

As stated above, teaching content includes not only on technique, but also interpretation, musical form and harmonic analysis, understanding of the period and context of the work, all of which are expected of students and are regarded to be creative teaching. These comments indicate that students are open to, and hoping for, diverse approaches to their piano lessons from their teachers which could deepen their understanding and performance.

4.3.5 Developing students' creative thinking

One student believed that creative teaching should be focused on developing students' creative thinking. As S9 stated:

> Creativity means thinking more, don't think that this place is written *forte*, and then that is *forte*, there are many kinds of *forte*, we need to be as close as possible to the composer's ideas, what he thought at the time. Today's students are a bit dead-headed in practicing the piano. The teacher said that you should play *forte* and then you play *forte*, but you don't think why it is *forte* here, the different level of *forte* will definitely make different sound effects [S9].

For this kind of practicing style, S9 considered the reasons:

> Because I think why many students are dead-headed because he can only read things on the score, very one-sided. But if you understand the real content of these pieces, you have to consider it from many aspects, for example, the music might imitate some other musical instruments or bands, and you definitely can't get it from the score. So I very much hope that the teacher can tell me more about the piece in a comprehensive and three-dimensional way, so that when I play it, I 'live' instead of being dead [S9].

Thus, it might be seen that the student paid attention to the development of creative thinking, but they felt that their teachers did not encourage this as much as the student would have liked. However, creative thinking ability might help students' development in many ways.

4.3.6 Improvisation

One student felt that improvisation should play a significant role in piano teaching; however, improvisation is rarely mentioned in practice by students, teachers and literature on piano teaching in the Chinese context. S1 observed that: 'There are some students who major in piano, improvisation is weakness for them. In fact, it is very important, as improvisation is used frequently in my part-time job in school music lesson[s], when my students play games, I need to improvise some music for them'. The significance of improvisation was also confirmed by T7, as T7 believed that improvisation might benefit students' creative thinking:

> My students, they are playing a piece by Czerny, for example, it's a very simple piece in C major, so there's a lot of harmonic progressions in the left hand. If it was a block chord, I would ask them to break down the chords; if there was a break down chords, then I would ask them to play block chord to improvise with this harmonic progression. Or sometimes I will say to the student that you sing the melody and I play the accompaniment part for you. In this way, the student can better understand what the musical direction of the melody is, and then the student can also listen to the harmonical part that I play, you know horizontally and vertically, and how the composer composed this piece in a creative thinking. I think this is creativity. And also, transposing the piece to another tonal or improvise it to a jazz style, you can change the dynamic of the piece, in fact it can be changed in many ways. In addition, for example, two people playing together a polyphonic piece, how do two people play the different part, so there are various ways to improvise [T7].

In terms of teaching content, it is evident that what these teachers consider to be creative teaching is concentrated on repertoire development, though the value of improvisation is described by one teacher and related to employment by one student. Creativity in piano pedagogy could also consider diversification of repertoire, relating to different eras, contemporary and Chinese repertoire. Moreover, students appeared to be more open to various ways of learning and seemed to desire more creativity.

4.3.7 Teaching facilities

Some students believed that better teaching facilities and equipment could support creative teaching, such as when teaching takes place in a large classroom and uses various video resources. S4 stated: 'I really look forward to having a big classroom one day so that the teachers can have space to move around, and I can feel comfortable'. This view was confirmed by S10, who explained some variation in this respect:

> I hope the university can provide us with a bigger classroom or in a concert hall, which I think is better. Although we also have a large concert hall, we don't usually get to play there. I hope to take lessons in such a place in the future. Because you have to go to the big stage and the concert hall to feel the atmosphere, because if you always play in a small room, you may forget the feeling of the real stage [S10].

Building on this, S9 was concerned not only about the teaching environment, but also recognised the limitation of the teaching and learning resources. S9 indicated:

> What I imagine is to take a lesson in a large room. There is a projector. The projector stores audio data of various masters. It is a valuable resource. Resources are too limited in China, you know. In the case of Beethoven's sonatas, you can only find Barenboim's version on Youku[2], and you can't find other than that. I think this resource is too scarce [S9].

Therefore, students recognised scope for development of space and resources which could support creativity in piano pedagogy. The views in sub-sections 4.3.1 to 4.3.7 show that many of the students were more excited in talking about the creative teaching they hoped for and showed positive attitudes toward it compared with teachers and heads of piano departments. Furthermore, students provided valuable information from various perspectives concerning creative teaching, such as the student-teacher relationship, improvisation and developing students' creative thinking. This connects to the framework sets out in the literature review, a positive student-teacher relationship can promote students' creative performance and creativity in general, and also improvisational activities that contribute to the development

[2] Youku (simplified Chinese *优酷*) is a Beijing-based video hosting service that is one of China's most popular online video and streaming service platforms.

of creativity in music performance and creativity in general (Riveire, 2006; Wendzich & Andrews, 2022).

4.4 The benefits of creative teaching

The benefits of creative teaching were mentioned by both students and teachers. In this section, a comparative analysis will be presented from both students' and teachers' perspectives.

4.4.1 Promoting the student-teacher relationship

These students showed positive attitudes towards creative teaching and how it might influence the student-teacher relationship and students' personal development. In regard to the student-teacher relationship, ten students showed positive beliefs connecting creative teaching and student-teacher relationship. For example, 'creative teaching will promote the communication between teachers and students [in lessons] [S1]', 'it [creative teaching] would be improving our relationship between teachers and students [S6]'. As S6 stated: 'students are too afraid of teachers, and they have little contact and communication with teachers. I think creative teaching should enable both teachers and students to fully understand ideas from each other, which is a great promotion for teaching'. This was recognised by S10: 'I think it is difficult to spark friction when the teacher is active, and the student is passive [in the lesson]. However, 'it is appropriate that teacher and students should gradually have more resonance in teaching [through creative teaching]' [S10]. S9 confirmed: 'I think that creative teaching should enable both teachers and students to fully understand each other's ideas'.

The Heads of Departments and teachers also generally agree that creative teaching might foster positive relationships between teachers and students. H3 also stated that: 'creative teaching will certainly promote the relationship between students and teachers. H4 believed: 'creative teaching has good impacts on students' development, such as shaping of personality'. P1 confirmed creative teaching will also increase teachers' tolerance:

> Due to teacher's creative thinking, he or she may allow students to have creative thinking, and the teacher will be more tolerant of students' creativity and innovation. In this way, students' autonomy in learning is promoted and communication between students and teachers is increased [P1].

Additionally, T2 mentioned that the impact of creative teaching and teachers on students is profound:

> Sometimes we inadvertently come up with some ideas such as interaction, communication and even getting along with students. As a teacher, it may be normal. But for students, he will never forget in his whole life because [it is] extremely impressive [T2].

Therefore, teachers and students recognised that creative teaching strengthens the relationship between students and teachers, a view particularly noted by student participants. This aligns with the literature review, which found about creative teaching considers positive teaching and learning environment that could benefit student-teacher relationship (Burnard, 2012a).

4.4.2 Motivation

Creative teaching can not only keep both teacher and student interested, but also stimulate students' attention. In the short term, it could support students' intrinsic motivation, and then promote and enable them to participate in multiple roles in the long term, such as composer, performer and teacher (Brinkman, 2010). One Head mentioned '*Shushan youlu qin weijing, xuehai wuya ku zuozhou*' [*书山有路勤为径, 学海无涯苦作舟*] [H2]. This sentence comes from a poem by the writer Yu Han, from the Tang and Song dynasty, and this saying has been around for thousands of years and has exerted a significant impact on the Chinese. Literally, it means diligence is the road to the hill of knowledge, and perseverance is the ship to the never-ending sea of knowledge, the word 'painful' [*Ku, 苦*] in the saying demonstrates that learning is a painful process rather than enjoyable. However, these words aim to encourage people not to be afraid of 'diligence' and 'hard-working', as these two elements can be indispensable to help people to be successful in the process of learning. H2 suggested that:

> Under this influence of '*Shushan youlu qin weijing, xuehai wuya ku zuozhou*' [书山有路勤为径, 学海无涯苦作舟], students always believe that the learning process is painful and boring, because learning is just a process of keep reading and practicing; however, creative teaching is diversified, diversified perhaps makes learning become 'happy' and 'interesting' instead of 'painful'

> and 'boring', the way of learning may also improve students' intrinsic motivation [H2].

In the long term, creative teaching might inspire students to love music from the heart:

> After leaving the teacher and the institution, they will 'dynamo'. When they began to 'run on their own', music for them is a kind of emotion, which cannot be given up. Therefore, this is the real benefits and meaning of creative teaching [H2].

This last point suggests that the instructional learning experience is seen as foundational to a learner subsequently being self-reliant, and creativity might be explored more easily by the learner after finishing their studies, rather than in the institution. Furthermore, two student respondents stated that creative teaching might benefit students' motivation and personal development. For example, S2 believed that 'students' interests might be stimulated through creative teaching'. Moreover, S7 indicated:

> It [creative teaching] would be broadening my knowledge and improve my enthusiasm [in learning], aligned with good for my teaching in the future. Because I will also have my piano students in the future, creative teaching can bring some ideas to my future teaching [S7].

Enhancing students' motivation and enthusiasm for music might be recognised as a benefit of creative teaching by both teachers and students. Additionally, the students recognised the value of creative teaching for their personal development and future employment. This connects to observations in the literature review which noted that creative teaching can cultivate students' creative thinking and in turn stimulate their autonomous learning and therefore move them from passive learning to active learning (Duan & Cheng, 2018).

4.4.3 Promoting effective learning and personal development

One teacher believes that creative teaching can promote effective learning: 'Creative teaching is a way for you to better help students achieve their goals or better understanding of the knowledge' [T7]. T7 also stated that:

> I think it's a little sad if a student likes you because you [the teacher] are innovative. I think the most important thing is whether the student can learn

> from the teacher … [creative teaching] changes a student's perspective on the starting point of things. If you only teach him how to learn, he [the student] may treat learning as a single mode of thinking [T7].

T9 also believed that creative teaching might help students to become active and creative learners: 'If you learn one method, you can draw inferences from others or apply it to other aspects … So I think the creative teaching is to expand our way of thinking which is significant'.

This viewpoint appeared to be reflected by S8, who indicated:

> The most intuitive thing is that if the teaching I receive is more creative and diverse, then I can also use it in my teaching … It will improve my ability to think independently, including the ability to face some challenges independently [S8].

Therefore, one might argue that one of the possible benefits of creative education is to help students in learning more effectively and thinking more creatively, and thus promoting students' personal development such as their own teaching. This aligns with literature discussed in Chapter 1 which indicates that creative teaching contributes to professional development, work competence and problem-solving skills (Wang, 2017). However, the data indicate that there are certain barriers to encouraging creative teaching in the Chinese higher education context; hence, the next section will discuss these challenges.

4.5 Challenges for creative teaching

This research aimed to understand participants' views concerning challenges associated with creative teaching in higher education institutions in China. Participating teachers, heads of department and a principal explained that creative teaching was affected by societal and cultural barriers in Chinese institutions, including cultural influence, the impact of the education system and parental influence.

4.5.1 Cultural influence

The research found that Chinese culture might have an impact on creative teaching. T2 stated that:

> Chinese culture is '*Qiang da chutou niao*' [*枪打出头鸟*] right? '*Mu xiuyu lin, feng bi cuizhi*' [*木秀于林, 风必摧之*] this is our culture. I remember that an interview with Seiji Ozawa, Japanese culture is very unfavourable to the

> education and development of art. In fact, Japan is much more creative and innovative than us in science and technology. Right? So I think China has the same situation. That is culture has in some ways influenced creativity and influenced the development of the arts [T2].

The literal meaning of '*Qiang da chutou niao*' [*枪打出头鸟*], is 'shooting the bird which takes the lead', and this suggests to not be the bird that leads the way, as the leading bird will be shot. However, it reflects the meaning of '*Zhongyong zhidao' [中庸之道],* which comes from Confucianism: 'zhong' illustrates moderation; 'yong' means common. This represents a Chinese way of dealing with the world, doing things within a common and ordinary status. The second phrase '*Mu xiuyu lin, feng bi cuizhi*' [*木秀于林, 风必摧之*] means 'wind will destroy the flourishing tree in the forest'. Similarly, it also reflects the meaning of *'Zhongyong zhidao' [中庸之道].*

Additionally, 'we are always used to resign ourselves to adversity and digest it by ourselves *[Ni lai shun shou, 逆来顺受]*. This is Chinese culture. I think it is very harmful for music education, which limits students' autonomy, spontaneity, and creativity in learning' [T2]. Therefore, cultural influences might act as a possible barrier to the development of students' creativity.

4.5.2 The impact of the education system and parental influence

This research also discovered several difficulties that influenced creative teaching. As T2 stated:

> Our country always says that we have a large population and fierce competition, so the one-size fits all means is the only way used for assessment. Therefore, it's increasingly lack of time and patience for children to grow naturally in our current education system and family education, and there are no chances for them to make trial and error [T2].

Consequently, T2 believed that: 'Without changing the root of the education system, everything else can easily become surface work in the end. Creativity for the sake of it. In fact, creativity comes naturally rather than being forced'. T2 also realised the available teaching time and exam/competition deadlines also have an impact on creativity: 'Creativity can be

trained, but it takes time and patience. We are always eager to push students to competitions, but the time of a learning cycle is limited, right?' Moreover, T2 also found difficulty in voicing the teachers' suggestions to the institution:

> Now, teachers are often not given this time and opportunity. So now we sometimes face such a contradiction, to fight for the right to speak, because only when you have the right to speak, can you possibly affect the syllabus and teaching plan. It has always been a constant confrontation between the two sides [leaders and teachers] [T2].

In addition to this, parental influence can also be a barrier to developing creative teaching. T2 stated:

> Parents are increasingly imposing their ideas on children, and make decisions directly for children, such an education does not give children the opportunity to realise their ideas, which leads to passivity and indifference as a social being. This situation of parents and grandparents doing everything for their children is very serious that it leads to a habit of following and accepting, so the result is that they don't think at all. Can puppets be creative? [T2].

This point may also be valid in a higher education context if students have been conditioned by previous experience to learn in a certain way, within a strict framework of master-apprentice pedagogy. In summary, it might be seen that a one-size fits all system, lack of time and patience from both teachers and parents, imposition of ideas and little opportunity for students to explore and make mistakes, are factors which come from the education system and parents, all of which create difficulties for creative teaching.

4.5.3 Teachers: conservative teaching philosophy and under pressure

According to P1,

> The teaching philosophies and attitudes of teachers are traditional and conservative, unwilling to bring in 'fresh blood' into teaching; this is being afraid of trouble. There might be two perspectives of 'afraid of trouble': on the one hand, following the traditional teaching of other teachers perhaps is an easy way to teach. On the other hand, if creative teaching brings some

> situations that teachers could not handle, this might slow down the teaching process and therefore they might fail to complete the teaching task, which could have serious consequences for both teachers and students in an exam-focused culture [P1].

P1 also stated that 'the biggest difficulty is I will teach my students how the teacher taught me. That's the easiest way to teach. To be honest, teachers are unwilling to add new things to their teaching' [P1]. This indicates that teachers can be strongly influenced by traditional teaching which might affect the development of creative teaching in one-to-one piano pedagogy; however, this teacher did recognise the issues that this may cause.

T2 also confirmed the pressures teachers are under: 'many teachers in China are eager to compete for results, too eager to be successful, and eager to let students to compete'. If students could obtain prizes while participating in a competition, the teacher would also receive both acclaim. Additionally, a student felt that: 'I think there is no creativity in China, teachers kill students' creativity' [S3]. This might be due to the teachers taking the leading position in the teaching studio, as T9 stated: 'traditional teaching like '*Yi Yan Tang*' [one person alone has the say] which is not scientific. I think teaching should be according to the aptitude [S9]. Therefore, creativity seems to be limited in the Chinese context.

Additionally, under the influences of collectivism in China (Lan & Kaufman, 2012; Niu, 2012), teachers might care about what other teachers think and thus they are reluctant to do something unique or special, especially in the teaching, they perhaps prefer to teach within constraints which result in similar outcomes. While creative teaching is advocated China, teachers might still be influenced by collectivism thought and by other teachers; therefore, as P1 indicated teachers are 'afraid of trouble'.

H4 suggested that there are several piano-related apps in the Chinese market, some of which are endorsed by famous pianists, such as Lang Lang:

> When you go home to practise, the master of error correction will open it and correct the wrong rhythm for you. If you play wrong, the app will tell you where you play wrong. Now there are many of them, especially intelligent and mechanical [H4].

However, H4 also thought about the attitude of teachers towards the used of these apps in music:

> Music is a very emotional thing. What do you think of such a mechanical system … I'm not very optimistic about these things. Because after you use it once or twice, you will find that it's only for making money and profit. Now there are too many of them … But you will find that it's all cheating. These things are just mechanical error correction, but it can't help with music [H4].

In summary, the word 'cheating' suggests a strong sense of the expected ways of learning from H4. While the comments from this one Head of Piano department suggests a negative view of the use of these types of apps in piano learning, there is scope for further research in this area; the use of these apps might connect to the pressure that both teachers and learners could experience in the Chinese educational context.

4.5.4 Lack of resources and teacher training

The data showed that participants believe there to be a lack of creative resources in China, as T2 stated they cannot watch YouTube and other related websites in China: 'we can't go to YouTube, Facebook and Instagram, so we can't watch some pianists' performance and their comments' [T2]. Building on this, P1 stated that:

> Understanding the relationship between creative teaching and traditional teaching is significant! Otherwise, there will be problems in both students' performance and teaching. It is important to know what the creative teaching is in piano pedagogy? What motivates us to be creative and what causes us to succeed in creative teaching? This is the essential part! [P1].

It seems that P1 had some curiosity about creative teaching, but according to participants, there is almost no teacher training in this aspect. During the data collection, the participants generally stated that teacher training seems a kind of dispensable thing for Chinese piano teachers, and whether to receive training depends on teachers' own commitment. Piano teachers are not strictly required to attend teacher training. T7 stated:

> Teachers who can be admitted to the top level of higher education institutions like our university are selected through several interviews, so I think teachers

> like us are high level, capable, equipping self-learning ability, there are no needs for us to have teacher training [T7].

Despite this, there was a teacher who aware of the importance of teacher training. T2 observed:

> Now I'm devoting more time and effort to teacher education. Because of China's imbalanced growth, the condition of certain students from places with poor music education has not changed in decades and remains unchanged. As a result, I believed that teacher training is crucial, even more than teaching a competition winner [T2].

Consequently, policies of 'creative education' in higher education might be like a slogan, at least for piano education, as there are no substantive measures from the government to guide and implement 'creative education' in higher education music institutions. It appears that teacher training for creative education is still at a preliminary stage; this needs to be noticed by policymakers and the universities, and therefore relevant policies and guidance to promote creative teaching could be developed.

4.5.5 Passive students

As mentioned above, factors including the education system and parental influence lead to students being used to being passive in the learning and expecting to be given answers. This was recognised by H2, who believed that students are in a state where they do not use their brains in learning: 'waiting, relying on and taking' [H2] can be described as students' learning states. H2 further gave an example:

> In this year's exam [the student] will play three pieces, what do I play [for] the other two pieces? In fact, it's all on the syllabus, so he just waits for you [waiting for the teacher to assign the repertoire], and then 'leans on you', as if [learning] is entirely your responsibility [H2].

T5 also confirmed that 'some students do not know how to use their brains when practising, and they do not know how to use their brains in learning' [T5]. T5 also felt that some students are uninformed and passive: 'some students really do not have any ideas'. T9 confirmed:

‘most of them [students] still learn passively. They are ambiguous about the learning content, don't know the direction, and don't know what is suitable for them’. T1 also stated:

> If the student gets a new piece, just look at the notes above, don't look up the musical terms, don't look up the composer's biography, he can't understand the work very well. There are some music terms. Some students don't know what they mean even after playing for a long time [T1].

Therefore, T1 believed active learners might be able to be creative: ‘He [the student] doesn't think, which means that he doesn't have creativity, which is a one-to-one link’. Not only the teacher participants, but also a student also recognised this relationship between passive/active status and creativity: ‘passive acceptance is not able to improve students' ability of active thinking’ [S10]. Taken together, dependent students who show a lack of independent thinking and reluctance to take responsibility for their learning seem to be potentially constrained in developing creative capacities.

4.6 Conclusion

The chapter has presented the findings relating to the views of Heads of Department, a Principal, teachers and students regarding creativity, creative teaching, and challenges in developing creative teaching in the context of higher education institutions in China, and connections were made to the conceptual framework set out in Chapter 1. The findings showed that due to global influences that link creativity to technological innovation and economic conditions, there was generally a positive attitude regarding creativity and creative teaching in the field of music. The students demonstrated a positive attitude towards becoming creative-oriented rather than technique-oriented in piano playing. Despite this seemingly positive motivation, culture, society and lack of support by the government and institutions appear to have a negative impact on creativity and creative teaching.

In terms of defining creativity, creativity cannot be divorced from tradition, and this appears to be a significant characteristic according to the interview data, thus creativity may be regarded as a combination of numerous concepts. Moreover, Chinese people who have been influenced by collectivism may not want to be unique, thus creativity is still constrained in some ways by societal expectations; moreover, creativity does not seem to be available to everybody, since it appears to be accessible only by people at a higher level, implying that creativity shows a hierarchal quality. The findings also conveyed those perspectives on

creativity may vary depending on an institution's purpose and the specific characteristics of the subject of study.

Additionally, the teachers' perception of creative teaching and the students' view were compared in this study. The teachers' perceptions of creative teaching were primarily concerned with teaching philosophy, method, content and format. Students' opinions reveal that there was not much of a difference between their views and the teachers' perspectives, although they seemed open to different modes of learning and seemed to be interested in possibilities of creativity and saw the relevance of improvisational creativity to their subsequent employment. However, transferring teaching style from master-apprentice to student-centred teaching, musical exploration rather than technique-oriented teaching was not mentioned by the teachers.

Teachers and students recognised the value of creative teaching in fostering the student-teacher relationship, as well as in assisting students in becoming more active learners, taking responsibility for their learning, inspiring students to love music in the long term, and having a positive impact on their future learning. The views of teachers on piano pedagogy are discussed in further detail in the following chapter, which considers contemporary piano pedagogy including teaching and examination syllabuses, piano pedagogy in one-to-one lessons, the teaching model, teaching focus, teaching material, and the associated teaching learning philosophy.

CHAPTER 5: TEACHERS' PERSPECTIVES ON PIANO PEDAGOGY

5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents a thematic analysis of data from one-to-one interviews with fourteen piano teachers. These include four heads of department who act as piano teachers in two Normal universities, in one of the Conservatoires and in one University. The chapter demonstrates the views of the fourteen teachers (referred to as T1-T10 and H1-H4) and differs from the preceding chapter in that it focuses on the teaching perspectives of teachers in relation to wider contextual factors that may influence creativity. It examines the teachers' expectations of the current one-to-one piano teaching, revealing the prevalence of master-apprentice teaching in the specific undergraduate music programmes in China. The teachers' perceptions are categorised based on the major themes which emerged: characteristics of their one-to-one teaching; master-apprentice teaching; features identified within master-apprentice teaching; how they believe their students learn; and what the master-apprentice relationship means in the Chinese culture.

5.2 One-to-one lesson and lesson length

The study found that the one-to-one lesson takes the leading role for students whose first study instrument [major] is piano among Conservatory, Normal University and University music departments. T1 stated: 'In the university, we have two styles: one is one-to-one, the other is one-to-three. One-to-three is for minor students and one-to-one is for the major students'. Therefore, only students who study piano as their main focus within the degree programme receive individual lessons. H2 stated that:

> There is mainly one-to-one teaching [contexts] in the conservatory. Of course, we also have two pianos course, which is one-to-two. Next, we may also have some chamber music courses. For example, my postgraduate students have some new explorations in this area, such as cooperation with violins and vocal music. After all, the most important thing is one-to-one piano teaching [H2].

Talking about this issue, H4 who works at a Normal university said: 'currently, the way of the piano lesson in our Normal university is a one-to-one lesson'. Taken together, these comments suggest that although there are several lesson forms organised by institutions for piano students, one-to-one lessons still play a significant role for students who major in piano in the Chinese higher education sector. However, a small number of those interviewed suggest that group lessons are also used, for example:

> I would organise a group lesson for the Year 1 students, I want to adjust their technical issues, talk about basic piano playing methods, and form a good habit of piano playing. What should be included in the daily piano practice. I want to tell you how to practice! [H4].

H4, working at a Normal university also said that 'if there are three students [who] play the same piece, then I will arrange these three students together for a group lesson'. H4 also used group lessons for another purpose: 'Sometimes my students signed up for a competition, I organised all of my students to listen to the pieces they would play in the real competition … after their playing, we discussed and gave some suggestions' [H4].

In terms of lesson frequency and length, one interviewee from a university stated: 'Once a week, 45 minutes for each lesson; when moving to Year 3 and 4, two lessons a week and still 45 minutes for each lesson' [T9]. Another interviewee, from a conservatory, when asked about lesson length, stated: 'when I was a student in the conservatory, there were two lessons per week that equalled 90 minutes … but now, because there are too many students, and the resource of teacher are limited, so only 45 minutes per week' [T5]. Within the course structure, the Year 3 students from Normal universities are treated differently, they have a more complex repertoire to learn from Year 3 to Year 4. However, students who are in Year 4 are normally busy with finding jobs or taking postgraduate entrance examinations, hence Year 4 students lack time to have lessons. H3 said: 'we have two lessons for the Year 3 students [90 minutes], a lesson per week for Year 1, 2 and 4 students'. Overall, these results indicate that piano students on average have between 45 to 90 minutes of lesson time per week. Specifically, Year 3 students in university and Normal university music departments have two lessons each week that equal 90 minutes; other students, no matter which institution they study at, can have at least 45 minutes of piano lesson per week.

5.3 Teaching syllabus

The interview data showed that the syllabus plays a vital role in teaching and examination. Each institution follows a teaching syllabus and an examination syllabus, and teachers are obliged to use these. However, some teaching syllabi are regarded by these teachers as showing a lack of creativity and innovation. As T4 stated: 'the syllabus is not innovative, it's more traditional … All conservatories follow the Central Conservatory of Music including us'. This could be through Central Conservatory of Music having a relatively high status among all of the conservatories in China; this is not only due to its location in Beijing, the Capital of China, but also it serves as the highest level of music education in China (Lin, 2002). T3 stated that the teaching syllabus encourages 'teachers to expand teaching methods and enrich teaching content'. Although the syllabus needs to be followed by the teachers, in order to make sure that students can play at the level required for the piano performance exams, they still have a certain level of freedom to expand teaching methods within boundaries. Another function of the syllabus is to regulate teachers to complete teaching tasks; for example, T3 stated: 'the conservatory will only supervise the teacher to complete a minimum teaching task according to the syllabus … a bottom line for us to teach students, that is, you should at least meet the requirements of the syllabus'. This is also confirmed by H3:

> Because the students come in at different levels, maybe in the first year, all teachers tend to set some classical works for their students, such as Bach or some Haydn or Mozart sonatas, including etudes, which are not very difficult. The teachers all know that. But if the students are at a quite advanced level, Haydn, Mozart has been played a lot and they can go to the next level, then we will not let him play these again. However, teachers make adjustments according to the level of the students [H3].

When asked about whether the emphasis between conservatories and non-conservatories in teaching piano in one-to-one tuition is different, H3 stated that:

> There are not many differences, they are all the same. Maybe some differences in the level of students. Because most of the students here come from an ordinary high school. If they can play Chopin and Liszt well, they will be very good and high-level students. However, conservatories may be

> more demanding. It is also the difference in the difficulty requirements of the repertoire, the students there might play harder pieces [H3].

This was recognised by T9:

> Whether conservatoires or non-conservatoires, it seems that they still follow the goal of cultivating musicians and pianist. In fact, it's like piano performance and music education, there are not many differences between them. In fact, they are almost the same [T9].

Overall, the views of these teachers may indicate a possibly limited extent of innovation and creativity in piano syllabi within conservatories and non-conservatories. The syllabus plays a significant role in regulating teachers in practice, but although teachers are responsible to follow the teaching syllabus, they can expand their teaching methods and have a certain degree of freedom to deliver the lesson content according to individual needs, as discussed in section 5.3.1. Using the teaching syllabus as a baseline, teachers are able to teach beyond it, though some constraints, imposed by the examination system, are present, and discussed in the next section.

5.3.1 Examination system and the examination syllabus

The data also indicates teachers' views on the examination syllabus and related examination system. T3 pointed out that the 'Examination syllabus has requirements for style, such as sonatas, etudes, polyphony, and the period of works'. T7 stated that: 'In the first half of Year 1, the exam syllabus requires students to play Bach, that is, to play polyphony. In the next term, they need to play classical music, such as sonata … but the syllabus does not ask students to play a specific composer's pieces. In a similar view, T5 stated that examination syllabus requires:

> The period of works, for example, Year 1 students, they are required to play Chopin etudes and then a [work by] Bach; Year 2 students, they are required to play romantic works, and then the third-year students, impressionist pieces; and the last-year students, they can play whatever style they like or contemporary work [T5].

These results suggest that syllabuses for the exam do give freedom to teachers, as a result of there being a lack of prescription of pieces or composers in the syllabus. However, some syllabi seem to be more specific than others. For example, T9 stated:

> For Year 1 students, the difficulty is controlled in [Op.]299 [Czerny] etudes, or Mozart Sonata and Clementi sonata; Year 2 students, the difficulty is controlled in [Op.]740 [Czerny] and Moszkowski; Year 3 students, they can play Chopin's pieces if they are capable [T9].

When asked whether teachers need to follow the syllabus or if they can create an individual syllabus by themselves, the study found that the teachers largely stated that they need to strictly follow the syllabus. One interviewee felt that deviating from this may have limitations: 'If setting up the individual syllabus, I'm afraid it will be incomplete and not comprehensive' [T3]. This might indicate that a teacher lacks confidence in ability to provide an alternative syllabus that still allows students to meet assessment requirements. Most were in agreement with T5: 'We have to follow the syllabus because there are exam restrictions'. However, there is a certain degree of freedom in the exam syllabus; therefore, 'The specific repertoire can be adjusted by teachers, but as a whole, we have to follow the syllabus' [T5]. T6 also confirmed this: 'I have my own systematic arrangements within the framework of the syllabus'.

Piano examinations at Conservatory, Normal University and University music departments are generally conducted twice per term. There are two terms each academic year: the first begins in September and finishes in January; the second begins in February and ends in June. The examination committees are made up of all of the piano teachers in the institution; the number of people in each examination committee depends on how many piano teachers there are. Students are assessed by the examination committee in a live performance either in a concert hall or a large classroom, depending on the facilities of each institution. Syllabi in different institutions generally include a teaching syllabus and an examination syllabus; the teaching syllabus represents a minimum baseline of teaching tasks that teachers should complete, although some seem to be encouraged to expand teaching methods and enrich teaching content. The examination syllabus prescribes the style and period of repertoire that the students need to be tested on; this gives teachers flexibility to arrange repertoire concerning individual student needs aligned with the preferences and mastery of the teachers,

though the syllabus does not seem to support creativity beyond the performance of repertoire.

5.4 Technique-oriented teaching and learning

The study found that piano teaching at higher education level is mainly technique-oriented and teaching tends to be very detailed; however, the teachers were broadly satisfied with this approach, believing that piano teaching should be like this, and that it is appropriate for the development of students. T1 stated: 'During the teaching process, the teacher should select some pieces that can improve student's technical ability'. For technical training, T8's teaching attitude was: 'act in strict accordance with rules', suggesting that the institution had certain expectations. T1 also reflected that 'it is mainly to improve students' technique, and then try to choose something they are interested in'. Therefore, it might be seen that improving students' technique is the primary goal; students' interests do not seem to be important. According to T10, piano teaching in China is a kind of finger training, as 'based on the fingers, while Westerners think piano teaching has always been a matter of aural training'. T10 also reflected that this kind of finger-based training has been popular in China for decades: 'from my own learning experiences, piano teaching has been the matter of fingers'. H3 stated the characteristics of piano teaching:

> I don't think there are any other ways [of teaching], because it has to be teaching like this, teaching by holding the student's hands [*shou ba shou, 手把手*] phrase by phrase. In addition to the understanding of music, the nature of music, listening to different sound levels, including harmony, to pull apart and to break into pieces; one hand and two hands, listen to this part, listen to that part, and then listen to what it sounds like together. I have to be teaching in this way [H3].

In light of H3's views about holding the students' hand, teaching was informative and detailed, and the teaching method used was demonstration. Moreover, these teachers appear to share the view that technique-oriented teaching is the main emphasis among higher education institutions in China: whether in conservatories or non-conservatories, improving the technique is likely to be the main direction of one-to-one teaching. As discussed in Chapter 2, this may be due to Guangren Zhou's influence on piano teaching in China: as a former

chairperson of the piano department at the Central Conservatory of Music, she has made a considerable contribution to piano pedagogy (Lin, 2002). Zhou prioritises technical training by asking students to play technique drills that usually take nearly half of each lesson; moreover, Zhou composed a set of finger exercises that include 'scales, double notes, arpeggios, octaves and chords' (Lin, 2002, p. 38), as the ability to solve technical problems will be beneficial to playing pieces (Lin, 2002). The influence of this approach may be one reason why these teachers appear to advocate a technique-focused approach.

5.4.1 Classical repertoire focused

The research found that some teachers seem to believe that piano teaching is the teaching of classical music, and therefore, classical music is the primary teaching material. T2 explained, 'Why classical music has more connotation than pop music is that it has a large amount of information. I now increasingly feel that classical music is like a treasure, like a mine'. T2 also stated that:

> What we do for classical music is to do the maintenance and display of the museum … every time you play it, you may habitually show one aspect of its beauty, just as a cultural relic to others … it is hard for you to let the audience to see all aspects of its beauty just once [T2].

However, in relation to awareness of students' love for popular music, H1 sighed: 'I was wondering if music education had to hold us in the past, even though we had so many classical masterpieces in the past, whether we had to hold those things forever'. This reflects considerations of the irreplaceable position of classical music in piano teaching alongside an awareness of other musical genres which may be of greater interest to students.

When considering students' selection of repertoire, although students are encouraged to choose the pieces they are interested in, teachers should pay attention to 'nutrition matching' [T8]. 'Because the style of music can influence students' level, however, this nutritional collocation is inseparable from classical music' [T8]. T8 also stated that:

> If this student is particularly inclined to pop music, his classical foundation may be weak. Even in some modern music, many elements such as the tension of music and the change of harmony are actually from classical music, just a distillation of classical music [T8].

This may be a strong reason why teachers prioritise classical repertoire. Building on this, T8 suggested that 'We rarely play contemporary works, [we are] not good at that, but classical music, romanticism or impressionism, we are good at'. T9 connected their preference for teaching classical repertoire to their own learning experiences: 'Because I received traditional teaching since I was a child, my teaching philosophy is relatively traditional and mainly based on classical works'. T9 also stated that: 'teaching is transforming and developing in many universities, improvised accompaniment or art director has been added in the curriculum, not just only focusing on classical music. However, classical music still plays a significant role'.

These views show that teachers are aware of potential divergence between their preferences and those of their students, but they still believe that classical music should retain an important position in their teaching. This is confirmed by Wang (2018), who believes that Western classical music has dominated in piano education in higher education level in China, and this might be because piano teachers are educated by Western piano systems, whether studying in China or abroad.

5.5 Teaching model

According to the interviews with the ten teacher participants and four heads of department, six (46%) of the thirteen interviewees only used a master-apprentice approach, while the remaining seven (54%) state that they are more aware of or use a combination system of master-apprentice model and a student-centred model of teaching. Interestingly, among the six interviewees from conservatories, four of them said they used a combination system, while two participants only used master-apprentice teaching. In contrast, among the seven teachers from Normal universities and universities, four of them were mainly focused on a master-apprentice approach and three use a combination of approaches. As stated in section 1.5 of Chapter 1 in this thesis, the master-apprentice model might be characterised as a student and teacher pair comprised of a dominating teacher and passive student (Jørgensen, 2000), and while the teacher imparts information and skills to the student, the student has little influence over the content, speed, and direction (Harrison & Grant, 2015); moreover, this model is dependent on the teacher's instruction and demonstration, and the student's imitation (Blackwell, 2021). On this basis, Hu (2002) indicates that the master-apprentice model in the Chinese context resembles a hierarchical and parental relationship. The

following features will now be discussed: the teacher as authority, the teacher's control, teachers' attitudes, making clones, and a teacher-defined curriculum.

5.5.1 The teacher as authority

In this context, the teacher has the leading role in the student-teacher relationship. H4 described the teacher's position as:

> I am the leading role. Students have to admit that I am his teacher … he has to respect me, he has to think I am very authoritative, he thinks what I say is not a holy order, but it is almost like that [H4].

H4 also emphasised that:

> I am extremely strict with my students, but they can also feel my love for them … I feel no guilt for my strictness because I would treat all the students equally. For some students, with a weak foundation, or who do not study at all, I would also strictly require them [to follow my instructions] from the beginning to end. That is my teaching style, it is out of responsibility and obligation of a teacher, I am a competent teacher [H4].

For the extreme strict teaching style, H4 also provided an example of another teacher, one of the most famous and respected piano teachers: 'Music scores fly from this teacher's windows every day because the student cannot play well; the teacher even pinches the students' thighs for punishment if the student cannot play well'. H4 commented: 'the students will know that only such teachers are really good for him, such teachers are anxious for him, and he will recognise [this]'.

The power of the teacher was recognised by T8, who stated that 'teachers need to drive students to study … some students have good foundation have their ideas. In this case, we must encourage them often … However, it should be in the correct frame'. 'Drive' indicates that the teacher is in charge of direction and speed of progress. Meanwhile, 'right frame' suggests that the teacher controls what the student should be learning. In terms of memorising the music score, H4 also shows the teacher is fully expecting students to do exactly what the teacher has done:

> I often ask students, can you write the score without looking at it? Can you play your left hand without looking at the score? Can you play the music 10 times slower? The students laughed and thought it was all impossible. I told the students it is all possible, and it must be done. Because this is what I experienced, and it is feasible [H4].

In a similar view, T6 suggested it is important to establish a 'correct view of technique and music' for student's development. T6 felt that 'if the student has not yet developed a correct view of technique and music, [the] teacher would lead more'. These comments suggest that there is a 'correct view' or 'correct frame' which is known and controlled by teachers, and they expect students to work hard to gain this knowledge.

T6 explained why the teacher takes the leading position:

> Because students have not set up their views, teachers must be to lead and guide. Especially the students in lower grades, such as Year 1 and 2, it must be teacher centred, but for the senior students, maybe there are some discussions [T6].

Therefore, as students' progress, there may be some flexibility in the teacher's approach, with it becoming a little more discursive rather than one-directional instruction. These interviewees also suggest that some teachers are consciously acting as a role model for students. For example, H4 stated:

> I act as an example. I often have concerts … I usually have many lessons during the day, and I don't have time to practise in the daytime, I can only practise at night in the practice room … so let us compare who works harder then? Students are very touched, they see the teacher still works so hard to practise, it is a kind of motivation for them [H4].

This suggests that teachers are aware of their role, being an 'example', but this comment relating to comparative effort suggests that perhaps it is not easy for teachers to retain their status within this educational environment, as the demands of their work are significant.

T7's teaching philosophy talks about wanting to make students love music:

> I think it is like my teaching philosophy is to make students feel love, love of music, so when I need him to do something according to my requirements, I will tell him the reasons and why I should take such a method [T7].

Despite this seemingly positive motivation, the teacher's authority emerges through the words 'need' and 'according to my requirements'. T7 also mentioned the consequences for students having a different attitude to the teacher, such as not respecting and obeying the teacher's requirements that may affect the progress of the student:

> I think if a student wants to learn from a teacher, the most important thing is that the student should recognise the teacher first, and he [the student] should regard the teacher as an idol. If the student does not recognise the teacher or has a too casual attitude towards the teacher, I feel that it has a little impact on the student's self-improvement [T7].

As the teachers appear to take a dominating position, playing a strict role and showing full control, there are clearly unequal relationships between the teachers and their students.

5.5.2 Teacher's control

Many aspects show teacher control within the teaching process, for example, student progress, approaches used and choice of repertoire. Within this, the teachers control how to work in detail within the pieces, such as pedal usage. H4 stated that:

> When I talk about a pedal application, I will let students try many different ways to use the pedal and then I choose which way is more suitable for you. So, the teacher is not completely taking a dominant position, choices are provided, you know [H4].

It can be seen that although the student could experiment, the choices were provided by the teacher, and the teacher was still in charge of the final decision.

5.5.3 Teaching attitude

The teachers' comments showed that they fully expect students to do what the teachers want. H4 used a Chinese idiom to express the teaching attitude as 'to wish iron could turn into steel at once' [*hentie bucheng gang, 恨铁不成钢*]. This means that the teacher sets a high demand for students in the hope that the students will improve immediately. Therefore, when students cannot promptly progress, teachers will become angry with them. H4 described their feeling: 'I will be very anxious … I will scold them … I really can't control when I yell at them … When I'm furious, my heart will jump out'. H4 also reflected that 'I'm absolutely in accordance with the requirements, I will never move down my requirements, even for the students who have weak foundation'. Therefore, such a teaching attitude might promote students' pressure, and seems not to enable individuality in teaching, as H4 stated: 'never move down my requirements'.

5.5.4 Making clones through demonstration

T2 stated that 'some teachers have publicly stated that they want their students to play the piano like themselves, so others will know who the students are [taught by]. Even the body language must be implemented by the students according to the teacher's ideas'. However, how do piano teachers create clones? According to H1, 'teachers teach piano by demonstration; demonstration is critical in teaching methods' [H1]. This is confirmed by H3, who indicated that the teaching method the teacher applied was demonstration, as referred 'holding the student's hands' [*shou ba shou, 手把手*] [H3]. T9 also commented: 'the [piano] teaching in higher education level is too conservative. It's just oral teaching, and students learn as much as the teacher plays.' As mentioned above, demonstration appeared to be the primary teaching method in piano pedagogy. This aligns with Sha's observation that many teachers are employing 'demonstration, leaving little room for students to explore and discover' (Sha, 2019, p. 929). Not only in the performance, but even within the memorising of the music, the teacher also expects students to exactly comply with the teacher's method and to achieve the same results in an identical way to the teacher. H4 indicated the demonstration serves as a model for students. H4 stated: 'I have tried it myself, so I can do it. Why cannot you? You can memorise it this way too! It's all about setting an example!'. Therefore, lack of opportunities for students to develop themselves and cultivate their independence in learning, the possibility of students becoming clones of their teachers; and

clones are also achieved through teachers' continuous demonstration, setting an example or serving as a role model for students.

5.5.5 Teacher-defined curriculum

The data shows that the teacher participants are generally selecting repertoire for their students; therefore, the dominant role of teachers is not only reflected in their teaching, but also in choosing pieces. According to these teachers, if students had no idea about selecting pieces, the teacher would set the repertoire directly for the student rather than guiding students to find the pieces they are interested in. As indicated by T4 below, while some students may express a preference for repertoire, the teacher cares more about whether the work is suitable for students. Therefore, whether the difficulty of the work is suitable for students seems to be the primary principle, rather than students' interests when some of the teacher participants select repertoire. As T4 stated: 'If the students have no idea, then the teacher chooses pieces; if the students have ideas, the teacher needs to see if pieces are suitable for the students'. H3 explained this as follows:

> Usually, when choosing pieces, I will give students two choices. First of all, he puts forward his interest, and the pieces he is interested in telling me, and I will judge whether it is suitable for him or not. If he does not have any choice, then I will arrange the repertoire for him according to my judgment, as well as the examination requirements of the university [H3].

Some teachers just gave a simple and direct answer to the question of repertoire selection. For example, 'teacher chooses repertoire, as the teacher has a systematic arrangement, what repertoires should be learned at this level and what repertoires should be learned for the next, students cannot choose the pieces based on their preferences' [T6]. It seems to be a normal and natural thing for this teacher to decide which pieces can improve students' technique, aligned with what they are capable to complete under the exam requirements.

T9 describes that the students do not know how to choose the pieces, which is the main reason for teachers helping them to select: 'If you let him choose himself, but they don't know what to choose, this is the key issue'. Furthermore, T9 also felt that: 'If you tell them you must choose, they will choose what is pleasant to hear and easy to play. He doesn't care about anything else'. Anything else might refers to whether the chosen repertoire improves the

student's technique. Therefore, it might be seen that basic and non-technical pieces will not be accepted by the teacher. What the teacher accepts is whether the work has a certain level of difficulty, whether a student's technique could be improved and whether the teacher considers that the pieces are worth playing. Moreover, it can also reflect the teacher's personal preference. For example, T9 stated that: 'I don't like Bach's works very much. I prefer romantic works, such as Chopin's and Liszt's or Tchaikovsky's works and Rachmaninov's works. So, I prefer to let them play the works I like'. T9 concluded that a 'teacher will definitely teach what the teacher is good at and will avoid teaching what the teacher is not good at'.

The data also shows that some of the teacher participants tend to teach to address perceived shortcomings of students. For example, as H4 stated:

> I think these pieces are suitable for you … to make up for some of your technical issues, and your shortcomings need to be practised … For example, when a Year 1 student is cultivating his musicality, then play a Chopin's Nocturne. I will also ask this student to play 'Songs without Words' from Mendelssohn [H4].

H2: 'In fact, the teacher has to find out the characteristics of the students and then it is necessary to promote the weaknesses and avoid the strengths, but when they take part in some competitions and concerts, then they will be 'presenting strengths and avoid weaknesses' [*yang chang bi duan, 扬长避短*]. This is a Chinese maxim which indicates making best use of the advantages and bypassing the disadvantages. Hence, this again suggests a teacher-directed approach, and teaching that emphasised students' weakness. However, although several teachers proposed using a 'combination model' of master-apprentice and mentor friend (see section 5.5), the data obtained did not support this; rather, their comments seem to indicate that the master-apprentice relationship dominates.

5.6 Why might teachers apply the master-apprentice mode of teaching?

Data presented in the above sections indicates aspects which suggest a master-apprentice model of teaching is operating. The following aspects will be discussed to answer why teachers may apply the master-apprentice mode of teaching. From the teachers' perspective, students often possess technical foundations, lack of repertoire and limited independent

thinking and learning ability. Teachers believe that they are responsible to guide the students in a 'correct way' [H2].

5.6.1 Lack of repertoire

Due to the fact that the University Entrance Examination *[Gaokao, 高考]* (UEE) has become significantly more difficult (Bai, 2021), obtaining a satisfactory score on examination has grown increasingly difficult for Chinese students (Muthanna & Sang, 2015). As indicated by Bai (2021), the University Arts Entrance Examination *[Yikao, 艺考]* (AEE) contains a performing component on piano. The relationship between these two examinations is that the AEE is normally held prior to the UEE each year, and piano candidates seeking admission to a bachelor's degree must first pass the AEE and then take the UEE (Bai, 2021). Piano-related higher education institutions generally demand a lower UEE score.

Given the competitive nature of the UEE, many amateur pianists in China start thinking about converting their hobby into professional studies during their high school period (Bai, 2021). Bai (2021) referred to these kinds of students as 'transfer pianists' (p. 520), those who believe they cannot get into higher ranking institutions and thus utilise the piano to secure a bachelor's degree. Such students are normally return to their piano study in their third year of high school with a clear goal of practising pieces for the AEE, such as an etude and sonatas. As a consequence, transfer pianists might not have learned sufficient repertoire. T9 stated that:

> Year 1 and 2 students need to be taught in a systematic and reasonable system. Because the freshmen in the university are normally 'pulled up' in the high school, they are only familiar with the pieces that they have [been] tested [on], while the provincial art [music] exam does not request the type of works, only require the number of works, so this means the students have a relatively weak foundation [T9].

This process has implications for teaching piano in higher education. H2 explained:

> At the undergraduate level, it is mainly teacher dominated. Because now, take the Tianjin Conservatory of Music as an example, it has something to do with the source of students and the object of teaching. Because the current enrolment of students is relatively uneven. Some [conservatory of music]

> attached high school students are of relatively high quality, but many are ordinary high school students [H2].

H2 felt that 'This kind of student has less knowledge of music, particularly they know less about piano literature, so after they enter the university, they are still dominated by teachers, and the independent thinking of students is poor'. These comments suggest that the intense competitive pressure of the college entrance examination may have implications for the students' motivation, which might be extrinsic rather than intrinsic, and for their knowledge of repertoire, and also for the teacher-student relationship in instrumental music lessons.

5.6.2 Weak technical foundation

The limited repertoire and/or lack of etudes that a student has played might result in weakness of the student's technique. In the view of some of these teachers, students with weak skills need master-apprentice teaching to help them step by step reach the technical level required at undergraduate level. Once the technique has reached a certain level, the students might then be able to improve their tone and develop improved musical expression. T9 considers that 'It is important to help the freshmen to improve technique in a systematic training [quite basic training]. However, for the student who has a relatively good foundation, the teacher would ask him to play Chopin, although [they are] in Year 1'.

For students with a weak foundation, teachers believe that the master-apprentice mode of teaching can be very useful for students. While making rapid progress and having high efficiency, it saves time and avoids trouble for students. H2 stated that:

> For students with a weak foundation, teacher-dominated teaching is really helpful; there is a lot of progress, because it saves a lot of time for them to know more pieces, right? Save a lot of troublesome things. However, it is not entirely teacher-led, and there will also be some adjustments in the choice of repertoire, including teaching methods. Students have to adapt to these adjustments [H2].

This suggests that the teachers believe that the master-apprentice mode of teaching can be useful for students who have a weak foundation and students who are in the first year, though teachers will consider the relevance of material and methods for each student.

5.6.3 Lack of independent learning and thinking ability

Some of these teachers believe that another reason for the master-apprentice teaching style is that students generally lack the ability to think and learn independently. The learning style of students is perceived by these teachers as a kind of dependent learning that means students rely on the teacher for many things. Taking the selection of repertoire, for example, the exam syllabus clearly requests what style of pieces need to be played in a specific, and how many works, but the students would wait for the teacher to tell them rather than check by themselves. H2 stated that the students 'waiting, relying and taking'. For example, as stated in Chapter 4, H2 observed the following:

> In this year's exam [the student] will play three pieces, what do I play [for] the other two pieces? In fact, it's all on the syllabus, so he just waits for you [waiting for the teacher to assign the repertoire], and then 'leans on you', as if [learning] is entirely your responsibility [H2].

H3 believes that students lack learning ability, which means that they cannot make their own choices, and they depend on the teacher for everything, and therefore what happens is that the teacher has to give step-by-step instructions on what to do and how to do it. H3 explained some variation in student ability in this respect:

> Some students have a good understanding, and their acceptability is also very strong. For this kind of student, you need to give him more choices and let him choose what suits him best. There are some students in the learning process, the foundation is not very good, very often he cannot make his own choice, of course, it is up to me to guide him, so the situation of each student is different. Or there are some students I have to ask him, what do you have to do, you have to complete this step, and then ask for it step by step, because this kind of student does not have the ability to understand very well, does not have good autonomy or does not have a good foundation, then I will use this way [teacher-centred relationship]. Some students are more positive and good at thinking, then I will give him multiple choices and let him make the best choice [H3].

Building on the point from H3, teachers do have some sensitivity to the ability of the students and some of them might tailor their approach accordingly. Therefore, the teaching approach is flexible, which could be adjusted according to different individuals. However, it would seem that most teachers expect to make the decisions for their students, and regard them as passive in this process, which would indicate that the master-apprentice relationship would dominate over any other relationship styles such as mentor-friend.

5.6.4 It is necessary to guide the students to a 'correct way'

One of the teacher participants believes that, as a result of the diversity and complexity of society, many students have travelled to another city to study while leaving their parents and hometown. Therefore, this participant thinks teachers have the duty and responsibility to help students establish correct values, which are not only limited to music but also extend to their life in general. T2 stated:

> I think that under the circumstances that information is so developed, society is too diversified, external temptations are so hard to resist, and there are more and more bad kids and bad people, if students are still in a situation where they have not formed a correct view of [these] three outlooks and art outlook, it is necessary to form a master-apprentice relationship with the teacher [T2].

Therefore, some conditions and characteristics of students, such as a weak technical foundation and a relatively narrow range of repertoire connect to the use of a master-apprentice teaching style. Teachers think that students generally lack independent thinking and learning ability, and furthermore, for a number of students, this is the first time they have left their parents and home to study in an entirely new city and environment. Therefore, teachers think they have an obligation not only to guide students in their piano learning but also act as a role model to help students to have appropriate values. This will be discussed in more detail in section 5.8. As a result, teachers feel that the use of the master-apprentice model is necessary and important, not only in one-to-one piano teaching, but they regard it as also beneficial for students' personal development. The advantages include increased efficiency and saving time, with teacher control meaning that teachers only teach elements that they are masters of, and that they can link teaching closely to the examination requirements.

5.6.5 What are the disadvantages of the master-apprentice relationship?

The collected data also show that the teachers recognise some disadvantages of the master-apprentice mode of teaching. This model might result in an overly dependent learner; they seem to lack independence, possibly thinking like a school student, or are overly reliant on their teacher, and hence appear to be unable of taking responsibility for their own learning. For example, H2 stated that:

> Some students seem to be taking the 'middle school curriculum', they are like the age of middle school students, [this is] their way of thinking. If the students could open it in consciousness, they will be aware of this problem and will be interested in it, and then they will make great progress in the future, I think. Therefore, the disadvantage is that students do not have the ability to think actively, which has cultivated a kind of inertia in music learning [H2].

If the teacher is particularly strong in retaining a master-apprentice approach and does not give the students any space and freedom, the student is likely to be influenced by this teacher for a long time. Two teachers did suggest that this approach has some limitations. T7 felt that 'it can be bad for students if they are forced to imitate the teacher and enter the music world with views and concepts that the student does not agree with'. T9 felt that it would limit student's future flexibility and receptiveness to new ideas: 'the disadvantage is that this student can only receive the education of this teacher for a few years, can only accept knowledge of this teacher, and can only follow the influence of this teacher's performance style; he cannot accept the teaching ideas of other teachers'.

T9 reflected another disadvantage, which is that teachers' knowledge is limited, and they might focus on what they are good at in the teaching: 'Even Lang Lang or Li Yundi, the world's top pianists, they will also have the works that they are good at or not, so they might also [have] preferences in their teaching' [T9]. However, T3 stated: 'it depends on whether teachers have the vision to adjust themselves, and also consciously let students attract other aspects of nutrition, nutrition is multifaceted and balanced, not limited to a person's knowledge'. Therefore, master-apprentice teaching might lead students to depend on their teachers due to little room for students to develop, and it could also limit students' variety in receiving knowledge. It could also be influenced by teachers' own development.

5.7 Teacher's perspectives on the student-centred mode of teaching

Analysis of the teachers' views has presented both positive and negative aspects linked to the student-centred mode of teaching. Moreover, it seems that some interviewees lack knowledge of different modes of teaching, such as student-centred teaching. When considering whether they are aware of other types of teaching or student-teacher relationships, H3 stated: 'What other types? … master-apprentice is the only way that I can teach in the one-to-one lessons, right? Any other ways can I teach?' H3 continued:

> For example, when it comes to selecting a piece of music, I will not only give one piece of music, instead, I will leave several pieces for students to choose by themselves. I think these pieces are suitable for you, or maybe this piece is not for you to be used in the exam, but to make up for some of your technical issues, and your shortcomings need to be practised, so the choices I provide to the students after my considerations [H3].

H3 appears to believe that student-centred means choices are provided. Likewise, H4 said: 'What do you mean by "centred"?' To what extent is student-centred?' Hence, it seems possible that these results are due to some of the teacher participants being unaware of different types of teaching or student-teacher relationship types. By contrast, T1 explained some variation in this respect:

> I think there are many kinds of relationship between teachers and students … It's hard to describe what kind of relationship it is, in a word, our relationship is very harmonious … we have mutual willingness to teach and learn and communication between us is vital [T1].

However, some teachers believe that a student-centred mode of teaching is a positive and more advanced teaching style compared with a master-apprentice style. For example,

> They are all advocating this [student-centred mode] now, of course, it must also be advocated in Western countries, right? It's all 'student-oriented', right? The development of society is 'people-oriented', and teaching is 'student-oriented'. I think this is still very positive, and based on 'student-oriented', it also urges teachers to make continuous improvement and progress. Because you cannot teach all the students with the set of things you

> [teacher] are used to, because everyone's understanding of music, including the possible style of playing, maybe different, his [student] sense of music, including the muscle energy of his hands, including what is usually observed in his [student] personality are all different [H2].

When considering whether the student-centred teaching is suitable for all students, H2 stated: 'It can also be said that it applies to every student. Because you want to start from the student's personality, you will develop a set [applicable to him], even if he does not have a personality, you have to explore his personality'. Similarly, T5 stated:

> Student-centred style is a positive way of teaching which is encouraged, and it should be connected with piano teaching. This is not only because the teaching is helpful for teachers to enhance their teaching methods, but also everyone has a different understanding of music and playing style [T5].

However, T7 mentioned that student-centred teaching might be suitable for children rather than adults. T7 commented: 'If it is for beginners, five or six-year-old children, or parents who have clear goals and knowledge and want students to develop music hobbies, then I think student-centred or other types of relationships may exist'. While T6 suggested student-centred teaching is suitable for capable students they also felt that: 'it depends on different students; for example, [for] the students who have their own personal style and are capable to identify [their needs], student-centred is applicable'; therefore, it could be seen to be relevant in higher music education institutions.

Despite these seemingly positive comments on the student-centred mode of teaching, some alternative perceptions emerged. For example, 'I don't think student-centred style is absolute good, we have to combine' [T3]. T3 explained: 'If the teaching style changes to student-centred mode, students are not as good as teachers in terms of knowledge and experience, so I think the teacher must take the leading role in terms of transferring knowledge and control the teaching'. However, T3 was also aware of the significance of developing structures to support student learning:

> Building on this, the teacher should give the student a certain amount of space, give him space to think independently, cultivate [in] him the ability to think independently and accomplish things independently. The teacher should

> control this well, but I think the dominant position is definitely for the teacher [T3].

T5 believed that 'student-centred teaching is not suitable for the students who have weak foundation'. Likewise, T6 stated: 'for the students who don't have a correct view of technique and music, then it must be teacher-dominated teaching'. These interviewees frequently suggest there is a 'correct' way and an incorrect way and that teachers expect the student to conform and work to gain this knowledge. While some teachers recognised student-centred teaching as another teaching approach, when compared with the master-apprentice approach it may be more difficult to use in higher education contexts; this may therefore limit creativity in pedagogical approaches.

5.8 What does master-apprentice mean from a Chinese perspective?

The master-apprentice system has a long history in China, viewed as a teaching mode of passing on knowledge from father to son and master to apprentice (Pengpai News, 2016). Master in Chinese is '*Shifu' [师父]*, which is a combination of two characters*, 'Shi' [师]* and *'Fu' [父]; 'Shi' [师]* represents teacher, '*Fu*' *[父]* means father. Accordingly, a master had an expectation to act both roles of a teacher and a father in a master-apprentice relationship (Zhou, Lapointe & Zhou, 2019). Currently, for some female teachers, they appeared to also play a role as 'mother' in a master-apprentice relationship. For example, T3 stated that 'I'm more like their mum because some students want to tell me what they don't want to say to their parents'. H3 stated: 'my students call me mum'. T1 also indicated her various roles in the student-teacher relationship that also include the role of mother: 'I feel that sometimes I am like their [students] sister, sometimes I am like their mother, and sometimes I am their friend'. Chinese parents embrace and encourage the teacher's combined function as teacher and 'father or mother', and the students' parents might also be involved, even at the higher education level (Liu, 2016). For example, H4 stated: 'I scolded a student one day. Later, this student's parents told me that as a teacher, you should be strict. We strongly support you!' However, T2 argues there is a wrong perception held by Chinese parents that involves shirking their responsibilities to the institution and teacher. T2 said:

> Many parents have a wrong idea that I [parent] hope my children can develop patience by learning piano. Sorry, stop! Impossible! You [parent] shouldn't ask for this. It's unrealistic. What's the daily training for students? Look, you [students] meet the teacher once a week. It takes half an hour short or 90 minutes long. How much do you think can they change in such a short time? Parents always have held the wrong view that the child will be handed over to the teacher. No, this is the biggest misunderstanding of the parent-child relationship and family education in China. So, then parents put the responsibility on the school and teacher. What do the parents do? [T2].

In China, the master-apprentice mode as a typical way of teaching is widely applied within the fields of technical inheritance, such as handcrafts, art, sports, and traditional Chinese medicine education (Pengpai News, 2016). Respect and obedience from a student are likely to be a prerequisite for effective learning in this master-apprentice relationship, which can also be seen from the collected data in this thesis. According to H4, a significant condition or foundation for the master-apprentice is authority, as stated in section 5.5.1: 'First of all, the student has to respect me … think that I'm very authoritative … What I say is not a holy order, but it's almost like that' [H4]. From the student-teacher relationship, the teacher takes a leading position and plays an authoritative role in the teaching, while the student not only has to respect but also obey the teacher. In the previous quotation, 'first of all' illustrates the importance of this student-teacher relationship for effective teaching based on the teacher's perception. In addition to the father-son positioning, the social situation places masters in a dominating position, and apprentices in a subordinate position. The master and apprentice can be described as father-son and master-servant; however, the master's status is far above that of the apprentice. In the meantime, a family-like (Zhou, Lapointe & Zhou, 2019) social network based on the master and apprentice are built up. In this family-like social network, the master's other apprentices become brothers [*Shixiong* and *Shidi, 师兄和师弟*] and sisters [*Shijie* and *Shimei, 师姐和师妹*], the master's wife becomes a mother [*Shimu, 师母*], and the master's master becomes a grandfather [*Shiye, 师爷*]. This is recognised by Leung (2015), who states that 'quasi-parental relationship' (p. 133) was constructed between the master and apprentice, indeed the apprentice was treated if he or she were a family member.

Confucius proposed teaching students by their aptitude, which combines teaching with the characteristics of apprentices and aligns with human development. However, in the traditional Chinese master-apprentice system, there is a high demand for those masters who can achieve this relationship; therefore, apprentices intend to seek to learn with a high-level master (Leung, 2015). This is because the master's level may directly determine the level of an apprentice. As an old Chinese saying indicates: '*Mingshi chu gaotu*' [*名师出高徒*] meaning that famous teachers create excellent apprentices. Additionally, there is another teaching principle, '*Yanchuan shenjiao*' [*言传身教*] which means to teach by the master's personal example as well as verbal instruction. Therefore, the ability to teach is not only based on the master's oral teaching, but also through one's personal example, which aligns with comments made about the importance of connecting the master role to life beyond musical pedagogy. Moreover, apprentices should not only learn all the professional knowledge from their master but also learn the rules and principles of human behaviour from their masters, as noted in section 5.6.4.

It is because the apprentices will have such great future responsibilities that the masters are highly selective when choosing them, placing great emphasis on their inner qualities. In the process of inheritance, masters adhere to the principle of passing on the knowledge to a trusted person and put quality before quantity. This is not only showing their responsibility for the next generation but also relates to the honour of the whole family-like group. Therefore, how can the master not hold an attitude of 'expect son to become dragon' *[wang zi cheng long, 望子成龙]* and 'wish iron could turn into steel at once' [*hentie bucheng gang, 恨铁不成钢*]? Once the relationship of mutual trust is established, the master will '*Qingnang xiangshou' [qing nang xiang shou, 倾囊相授]*: this means that somebody will empty his/her purse for another person, i.e. the master will teach the apprentice all the knowledge that the master knows. Many masters regard their apprentices as inheritors of their skills accumulated over years, hoping that the apprentices can take over the master's status in the professional field and that their achievements can be carried forward in due course (Pengpai News, 2016).

This aligns with the position of the teachers in this research who prioritise the master-apprentice relationship in their higher music education piano teaching. Furthermore, the apprentice who is influenced by the idea of 'a teacher for a day is a father for life' [*yiri weishi*

zhongshen weifu, 一日为师终身为父] and the student will have unconditional trust and will even keep a long-lasting relationship with their master (Zhou, Lapointe & Zhou, 2019). This is also confirmed from the collected data, as H4 stated:

> Although some students have graduated for many years and have been married and have children, they still send me some gifts again and again, there are also some students who come to see me during the Chinese New Year, I believe they do it from the heart [H4].

Taking this discussion and findings together, these results suggest that teachers' perspectives in piano pedagogy are still influenced by a traditional view of education.

5.9 Conclusion

This chapter has presented the findings relating to the views of teacher participants, four heads of department who act as piano teachers, regarding piano teaching and the student-teacher relationship in one-to-one lessons in higher education institutions in China. The findings show that the one-to-one lesson plays a significant role for piano students to gain knowledge. The teaching is technique-oriented, focuses on specific work in detail, prioritises classical repertoire and appears to concern the weaker aspects of students' performance. The master-apprentice approach dominates and is seen by these teachers as being widely applied in one-to-one pedagogy. Within this, the teachers act as an authority and play a strictly leading role. Teaching and learning process are controlled by the teachers, and the curriculum is defined by them. This creates an unequal teacher-student relationship in the one-to-one lessons and gives little freedom for students. The students' interests are not the primary consideration in the teaching and learning process; teaching is instructive, which may result in passive learning and limited two-way communication between the teacher and student. Therefore, there are limited examples of creative teaching provided by teachers, heads and the principal in this chapter.

It was also found that this teaching mode was deeply influenced by Confucian culture (Zhou, Lapointe & Zhou, 2019), in which the teacher may not only have the role of 'teacher' but also contain elements of 'father' or 'mother', depending on the gender of the teacher: teachers not only have the responsibility of imparting knowledge to students but also shoulder the role of influencing the students' personal development. In this context, respect and obedience from a student appear to be a prerequisite for learning.

Overall, this chapter has defined the teachers' views in relation to one-to-one piano pedagogy in higher education institutions in China. The research further looked at three videoed piano lessons at Chinese higher music education institutions, including Conservatory, Normal University, and University music departments which are discussed in the next chapter. These three lessons will be explored from three different angles: teaching style, teaching method, and teaching content, in order to probe aspects that creative teaching might involve in actual one-to-one lessons.

CHAPTER 6: ANALYSIS OF VIDEOED PIANO LESSONS

6.1 Introduction

This chapter analyses three videoed piano lessons that took place at Conservatory, Normal University and University music departments. These lessons (referred to as Lessons A, B and C) are explored from three perspectives: teaching approach, teaching content, and teaching strategy. The teachers and students who took part in the lessons were interviewed in this research, and therefore they will be referred to using the teacher/student numbering in line with how they were presented in previous chapters: Lesson A took place with T5 and S9; Lesson B with T9 and S7, and Lesson C with T1 and S5. The main goal of the study was to analyse the process of teaching and learning in order to improve understanding of how one-to-one teaching is delivered in higher education institutions in China.

To avoid the possibility of disrupting teacher-student interaction, the researcher was invited to sit in the corner of the teaching room by each of the three teachers and to operate the recording equipment (the researcher's iPad). After each lesson, the researcher asked the teacher and the student to again confirm whether they were happy for the researcher to use the recording. Each person indicated their willingness to allow the researcher to use and analyse the video and confirmed that the lesson had followed their normal routine. While the students and teachers stated that the lessons were not affected by filming, it is possible that their actions during the lessons could have been influenced by the presence of the video camera and the researcher. Another lesson was filmed in one of the Conservatories, however due to the teacher's multiple verbal interactions with the researcher during the lesson to clarify the lesson content and student progress, the recording was unusable for this research. While it would have been preferable to record more than one lesson in each context, this was not feasible. T5 had just one lesson on the day when the lesson was recorded; T9 and T1 refused to allow the researcher to record more than one lesson, saying that they employed a similar teaching approach, method, and student-teacher relationship with other students.

Consequently, a limitation of the study is the potential influence of the researcher and only being able to record one lesson per each teacher-student pair. The sample was carefully chosen by asking the participating teacher interviewees if they wished to take part in a recorded lesson. Among the ten teachers interviewed, three indicated their willingness to be actively involved in the recording of the lesson. Fortunately, the three teachers came from three different institutions that covered all types of institutions in this research: one from a Conservatory of Music (T5), one from a Normal University (T9) and the other from a University (T1). The remaining seven teachers expressed reluctance to participate in the video recording; several teachers indicated that they were not available due to busy schedules; some teachers expressed unwillingness to use their lesson for analysis and others felt that recording a lesson might have an impact on the teaching quality and on students, thus they preferred not to be filmed.

In this chapter, each of the three lessons will be examined separately; then discussed together in section 6.5. Within each lesson, three areas are evaluated: teaching approach, teaching content and teaching strategy. First of all, these perspectives are related to my research questions; secondly, the teacher-student relationship could have an impact on whether students have control and responsibility for their learning (Jørgensen, 2000); this is related to creative teaching, as looking at teaching strategy will help the researcher to understand the role of creative teaching and how it is presented in the actual lessons. Additionally, analysing teaching content will also help the researcher to understand whether the actual lessons are technique-oriented or creative-oriented. This will enable comparison of the findings from the interviews, which show that piano lesson is technique-oriented in higher music education in Chinese context (see Chapter 5).

6.2 Lesson A

Lesson A took place a practice room in a Music Conservatory in China. There was a grand piano in the middle of the room, and no other piano. S9 was studying piano performance. At the time of research, he was a Year 3 student and preparing for his first term final piano exam. T5 was the piano teacher in this lesson. T5 is a piano teacher in the Department of Piano in the Conservatory and has many years of teaching experience. From her interview it is clear that she is a teacher with a background of studying in Russia and England. Throughout Lesson A, they focused on Chopin's Nocturne No. 20 in C-sharp minor, Op. posth. in detail.

The entire lesson lasted nearly 40 minutes; however, the video captured 33 minutes of the lesson. This is due to the fact that before the recording began, the teacher indicated that the lesson would focus on Chopin's Nocturne and subsequently allowed a few minutes for the student to practice a sonata. The teacher requested ending the video recording when work on the Chopin piece was finished. After the recording ended the student played the sonata from beginning to end; the teacher told the student they would focus on an Etude in the next lesson, and then the student took their scores and left the room.

6.2.1 Teaching approach

The lesson began with S9's performance of the work that had been practised and the teacher providing feedback on various elements. Comments were frequently made in response to errors in S9's performance. The focus of the lesson was on reproducing the Chopin Nocturne from the written score, and most of the time was devoted to technique. The proportion of student's talk and teacher's talk, as well as the quantity and type of questions that the teacher asked, could be a significant indication of teaching approach (Young, Burwell & Pickup, 2003). The teacher in Lesson A accounted for 3263 words, or 94 percent, of the total word count based on the transcription of the verbal behaviour, while the student accounted for 221 words, or 6 percent of the entire word count. This seems indicative of a highly master-apprentice approach.

The duration of the recorded part of the lesson was approximately 33 minutes, which can be divided into three sections. In the first section, T5 stood at the side of S9 while teaching, and behind S9 while the student was playing. For the first four minutes, S9 played the Nocturne. T5 did not attempt to provide comments after S9's performance and instead asked a few questions in terms of the structure of the piece (4:08):

> Teacher: When you practise on your own, what did you think about?
> Student: Just thought to choose how to express his (the composer's) emotion.
> Teacher: Thought about this more.
> Student: It was about having my own ideas.
> Teacher: Um… and then you, every note to feel or each phrase or every section to feel?
> Student: I think every phrase, because every phrase is different.
> Teacher: Um… then…
> Student: It should be starting with each note, and then link each note to a phrase and then to a section.
> Teacher: Um, this is the way you think. Then tell me about the structure of this piece.
> Student: I don't think I've done it yet. Here are the two separate ones.
> Teacher: What's this?
> Student: This is… how to say?

Teacher: Yeah, what is it? The section at the beginning. Is it the theme?
Student: I don't think this is the theme.
Teacher: Yes, then what is it?
Student: It is an introduction section.
Teacher: Introduction, right?
Student: Yes. Then from here on into the theme, then start with this theme here and then slow to the end of the theme, then start moving up, introducing some changes, then push here after introducing changes, finally back to the theme.
Teacher: In fact, mostly an ABA structure, isn't it?

T5 started the dialogue with an exploratory question, 'when you practise on your own, what did you think about?' and then followed through with probing and guided questions to elicit understanding. On the whole, in this section T5 used these questions to guide S9 to think and to promote their active participation in the learning process, and S9 seems inclined to communicate with T5. However, T5 neither explored S9's 'it was about having my own ideas' nor helped S9 to achieve this throughout Lesson A. The focus seemed to be more about ensuring that S9 understood the structure of the music.

While this opening suggests a mentor-friend rather than master-apprentice relationship, it was discovered that T5 later asked numerous rhetorical questions, as shown in Table 6.1, which implies that T5 did not require a response from S9, whereas previous research has advocated that the use of exploratory questions from the teacher seems the best way to stimulate students' active participation (Burwell, 2005). Despite the inclusion of two exploratory questions, at 6:55 and 8:11, these were both self-answered by T5. Moreover, from 5:29 to 08:27, a significant proportion of rhetorical questions were asked by T5. Burwell (2005) argues that rhetorical questions might not appear to seek a response from the student, but rather serve as a model for the learner. In this case, the frequent use of 'isn't it' from the teacher at the end of their statements seems to require the learner to agree rather than disagree.

Table 6.1 Type of questions asked by Teacher 5 in Lesson A

Time code	Teacher's question	Type of question	Activity
5:29	In fact, (it's) mostly an ABA structure, isn't it?	Rhetorical question	
5:41	The developing section (in this piece), which is like the section in sonata, isn't it?	Rhetorical question	
6:36	I told you before that you need to pedal first, didn't I?	Rhetorical question	
6:48	This is where you can immerse yourself in (this piece), isn't it?	Rhetorical question	
6:55	How to do this?	Exploratory question	T5 asked S9 to play a more beautiful tone. T5 raised a question but then followed up with the answer.
8:09	It's starting to get rather sad here, isn't it?	Rhetorical question	
8:11	What is it?	Exploratory question	T5 demonstrated the harmonies and asked this question. However, the question was self-answering.
8:20	It's like looking for a little bit of hope, isn't it?	Rhetorical question	
8:27	Don't you think this is the desire?	Rhetorical question	

Therefore, although both exploratory and rhetorical questions were used in this section, the balance of these towards the rhetorical emphasises the authority of the master.

The second section (5:27-28:00) focused on T5's instruction and S9's correction of mistakes based on T5's comments. Technical aspects occupied the majority of the time, followed by reproducing the musical score and musical expression, as shown in Table 6.2, which gives a summary of recurrent themes in the teaching and an example of each. Technique-oriented

issues appeared 55 times. The most frequent aspects were dynamic issues (17 times) and speed issues (11 times), followed by pedalling, articulation, phrasing, and rhythm. Moreover, although T5 was very strict in requiring S9 to play according to the marks on the score, musical expression was not the main focus of Lesson A, with only five instances of expressive focus as seen in Table 6.2. The specific teaching strategies that were applied during this period will be discussed in the next section.

Table 6.2 Summary of recurrent teaching themes in Lesson A

Theme	Definition	Frequency (rank)	Brief examples from transcript
Technique	Focuses on technical problems of the performance (e.g. dynamics, speed, pedal, phrasing, articulation)	55	'Play harder'; 'More power on your right hand'; '1234 1234 don't rush your left hand'
Reproducing the music score	Play exactly according to the marks	7	'I always tell you that if I don't read the score, you have to let me know that what the score says'; 'The composer wrote for you … what should do and how, it's all very well thought'
Expression	Focuses on expressive aspects of the performance (e.g. emotions, interpretation)	5	'It's starting to get rather sad here, isn't it?'; 'I told you that go out, more hope there, more sunshine'; 'The right hand should be singing, don't be mechanical'

Two-way communication between T5 and S9 re-emerged in the last section. In this third section, S9 was confused about the mark of *ppp* on the score and believed that this was not how it should be played. T5 asked S9 to play two different attempts, one each for the *forte* and *piano* performances:

> Teacher: Then you actually need to add soft pedal here on this section, right?
> Student: This part should be more … Is here supposed to be a step up? If add soft pedal, does that mean the opposite?
> Teacher: It was as he had just arrived at another (place), as I told you that go out and looking for, looking for, looking for a paradise. Don't you think?
> Student: He found it shouldn't just not … it shouldn't have anything to do with previous … [he didn't finish his sentence before the teacher interrupted].
> Teacher: Yeah yeah. It's less depressing and more comfortable, enjoy the sunshine.
> Student: Suddenly here add the soft pedal? Isn't it not depressing anymore?
> Teacher: When you're not overwhelmed, you start running happily? Running and jumping? You can try. Let's put aside the fact that Chopin had written *ppp.* Let's put this aside for a moment, but don't you try to play *forte* here?

After two different attempts made by S9, T5 asked, 'which one do you prefer?' (27:55) and after two rounds of trials, S9 answered that he preferred the one has been written on the score. Without asking why, T5 responded that 'although it may still be roughly done … Not quite there yet. There are lot of details that are not enough. But in this way, it seems as if all the comparisons have actually been considered [by the composer]' (28:02). Thus, it seems to be the case that it is expected that students play according to what is indicated on the score and it is confirmed by the teacher that the markings on the score were well-considered by the composer. Furthermore, T5 emphasised the importance of selecting an authoritative edition, and playing in accordance with it (28:48). It might be seen that from both points that S9 should play strictly following the marks of the score, preferably without his own ideas. Building on this, another point from T5 illustrated that the teaching was strictly related to the score: 'I always tell you that if I don't read the score, you have to let me know that what the score says, you have to be able to do this, ok?' (6:24).

In the third section (28:00-33:03), T5 continued to teach the structure of the piece and musical interpretation along with some demonstration on the piano conveying T5's understanding to S9. As discussed above, the student's contribution was minimal, and the teacher's questions were largely rhetorical questions. The student learned through the teacher's instructions and comments. Consequently, the teaching approach in this lesson was consistent with the master-apprentice format, where the teacher is viewed as a model of imitation and source of knowledge, and the student learns through the teacher's instruction, as described in previous research (Jørgensen, 2000).

6.2.2 Teaching strategies

Several strategies are shown in Lesson A, such as imagery, metaphor, demonstration, and directive teaching. Body contact is also seen as a teaching strategy, to support the student's understanding of metaphor. The lesson includes student-teacher collaboration, the teacher setting an example and helping to summarise key points for the student.

6.2.2.1 Teaching through imagery

T5 illustrated the musical expression about a specific section using imagery. For example, T5 stated: 'it seems like the door will open, I must go out and to find something that I long for, so this [harmonic] tendency, [it] needs to be expressed' (8:28). By contrast, T5 described S9's playing as if the door was closed: 'But you don't, every note played here seems like the door closed. Your feeling here, stay inside with the door closed, right? If you play like this, you won't be able to bring up the rest' (8:39). T5 applied the imagery to describe two different musical expressions, thus creating a contrast to guide S9. There were two more instances where T5 helped S9 to imagine, for example, 'here is the outdoor, this is on the street … imagine, imagine, imagine' (11:56), 'I told you that go out, more hope there, more sunshine' (15:54). Overall, this verbal inspiration appeared to be effective on S9's performance, as tone quality and emotional expression were improved.

6.2.2.2 Metaphor

During Lesson A, T5 used a metaphor strategy frequently to support musical expression. For example, the teacher's metaphor for a section was mournful: 'it's starting to get rather sad here, isn't it?' (8:09); 'could be more helplessness' (12:09). In some sections where T5 hoped that S9 would express a feeling of longing, T5 said: 'It's like looking for a little bit of hope' (8:20). T5 also used this to indicate that the student's playing was without layers: 'your performance is like flat' (7:39).

Metaphors were used by T5 several times for dynamics. For instance, when *forte* and *piano* were found in a passage, T5 said: 'It's like male, female, male, female' (31:10). Furthermore, body contact was used to enhance the understanding of the metaphor when showing the student dynamics. T5 placed and pressed her right hand on the student's right shoulder, and T5 said: 'You're just like that needle that didn't go in … You may not have had a shot for a long time … The needle needs to be stuck in a bit. All the sounds have to go in this way' (13:53). In contrast, some of T5's metaphors demonstrated humour; for example, 'There's no need to

catch the bus, make yourself comfortable' to remind S9 to play at a steady speed (11:05); 'Oops. I thought a giant had come out, but just a kid' (21:42); when S9 played too loud, T5 said: 'Come out with a knife, you' (21:34). Hence, these metaphors not only demonstrated T5's sense of humour, but also served to make the instruction more interesting according to S9's reactions. In the meantime, these metaphors also had positive effects in developing S9's performance. While they both smiled and relaxed at the moment, T5 seemed more excited than S9 as they discussed these ideas. In general, S9 exhibited a relatively relaxed state throughout the lesson, with natural and relaxed facial expression, but S9 did show some shyness when speaking with T5 or when the teacher made physical contact with S9; however, S9's expressions were generally relaxed, and did not display an excited or frustrated expression.

6.2.2.3 Demonstration

It was found that T5's demonstration was not separate from explanation. Sometimes explanation was followed by demonstration; at other times, demonstration was followed by explanation. This demonstration could be divided into two types: demonstration on the piano and through body language.

6.2.2.3.1 DEMONSTRATION ON THE PIANO

Demonstration on the piano was given by T5 to illustrate harmonic progression. T5 believed that: 'Especially after the Romantics, it's not just about the melody, harmony is important too. Harmony is the foundation of Western music' (9:55). There were also two demonstrations of harmony: the harmonic progression was played separately to illustrate colour variations (15:35); the harmonic progression was played again (18:21) which might show the significance that T5 attached to harmony.

Interestingly, T5 played two different examples, one presenting T5's ideas of appropriate playing and the other in which she imitated S9's playing, as a way of demonstrating the two different types of performance. From 11:08 onwards, T5 demonstrated dynamic changes. T5 demonstrated the richness of the musical expression for the left hand and imitated how the student performed and said: 'You can't be untouched; the composer has written you differently' (19:18). T5 also described in words and demonstrated on the piano how the student could deliver the power (13:09):

> Play harder. It is the palm of this hand that must be relied upon as a whole, together with your fingers. You are now tense and straight … Sending out a little stick like that, pestle it right? Sound not thick enough. The sound needs to be full [T5].

Consequently, demonstration on the piano could involve many aspects, such as harmony, dynamic, musical expression, and the teacher's expectations of the appropriate way of playing, which could also include replicating the student's own playing in order to show how this could be enhanced.

6.2.2.3.2 DEMONSTRATION BY BODY LANGUAGE

T5 believed that S9's phrasing was inadequate, thus she illustrated by her hand to show the student how to breathe in playing, and metaphorically highlighted the breathing movements, as in 'It's like dancing on the stage' (12:28). In connecting this more specifically to playing, T5 explained that 'You need to practise coherence. Your shoulder, breath and move down, right up to this finger and the key. The key here has to be the part of your body, the extended part', and as an extension of this point, T5 demonstrated body language to keep the shoulder, arm, wrist, hand, and fingers all in line (14:16). Additionally, T5 used a hand movement to imitate the waves and said: 'just like that wave in the ocean pushed into that "mi" and "ti" and come back. This is the circle' (20:13). Furthermore, T5 showed her flexible wrist on the top of the piano rather than on the keys and said: 'The left hand actually needs to carry a bit of the wrist' (20:58). Therefore, body modelling was employed to demonstrate relevant body movements in the performance and address two issues of phrasing and technique.

6.2.2.3.3 DEMONSTRATION ON THE PIANO WITH BODY LANGUAGE

At one-point T5 gave a demonstration on the piano and playing and body language were combined. At 10:15, T5 thought there was a problem with the way that the student touched the keys, and they first explained: 'It's possible to play from the bottom to the front' and the demonstration followed. After modelling, T5 used her right hand to show what she believed was the appropriate way to touch the keys, by modelling playing on her left hand in order to reinforce her point.

6.2.2.4 Directive teaching

The teacher's directive teaching was identified at multiple points in the video, where T5 gave simple and short instructions and the student followed what the teacher indicated. While directives were issued by T5, S9's responses were playing according to T5's directives rather than verbal reactions. With the exception of ambiguous directions, where S9 might seek clarification from T5 by asking questions, otherwise, S9 responded by playing according to T5's instructions.

Table 6.3 Summary of directive teaching in Lesson A

Time code	Directives	Aims
10:04	Press the pedal first	Reminder: pedal
13:09	Play harder	Reminder: dynamic
14:11	(Power) a little more	Reminder: dynamic
14:37	One more time. One more time. Pedal first	Reminder: pedal
14:43	One more time. Don't be afraid to be loud, the sound is too low	Reminder: tone
18:02	More (power) on your right hand	Reminder: dynamic
18:05	1,2,3,4,1,2,3,4	Reminder: speed
18:14	Deeper	Reminder: dynamic
18:51	The right hand should be singing, don't be mechanical	Reminder: musical expression
18:53	Play the trill well	Reminder: the trill
19:05	More (power) on mi	Reminder: dynamic
21:06	The deepest note, the deepest note	Reminder: dynamic
21:10	Hurry up	Reminder: speed
22:23	More on do and then more on sharp ti	Reminder: dynamic
22:38	Your hand must be lifted, because of the rest	Reminder of the rest

6.2.2.5 Body contact

In Lesson A, there were approximately fifteen instances of body contact between the teacher and the student. Therefore, some physical contact might be seen as one of the teaching strategies. For example, T5 pressed the student's hand towards the keys and said: 'close to keys' (10:36); the teacher forced the student's body to be straight as the student was leaning forward while playing, and said: 'No, no. Don't move forward' (14:15). At 12:30 T5 placed both of her hands on the student's right arm and reminded the student: 'take it easy here. You haven't started to play, it's too tight here already'.

T5 again placed her hands on the right shoulder of S9 to prompt S9 to breathe, demonstrated a breathing movement on S9's right shoulder and said: 'breathe a little naturally, take with breath, like this' (13:37). Building on this, T5's hand demonstrated playing the action on S9's right shoulder and T5 said: 'Look. It's like the feeling of playing on you' (14:05). While it can be seen that S9's body leaned a little to the left and there was some reluctant expression on his face, this physical contact had an immediate effect that the phrasing was better than before. In general, it seems that this kind of body contact strategy was not unusual for S9; while T5 applied this method, they both appeared calm, unless T5 placed a lot of strength on S9 as mentioned above; otherwise, they seem to have been used to this strategy.

6.2.2.6 Praise and feedback

The evaluation of student performance is an important aspect of instrumental music teaching, and it is linked to effective teaching (Mills & Smith, 2003; Zhukov, 2012). Positive feedback and negative feedback can be both divided into general and specific feedback. For example, 'Yes', 'Right', and 'Much better' can be viewed as general positive feedback; if it is followed by a specific reason or explanation, it is therefore specific positive feedback (Zhukov, 2012). In Lesson A, positive comments from T5 seemed to be general positive feedback, for example: 'it's not bad' (5:43); 'it was good just now' (15:30); 'Yes, good, good, good' (17:08); however, this type of feedback was not followed by detailed feedback stating what exactly was good. In some cases, though, it appeared that T5 was giving general positive feedback such as 'good'; however, it was followed by negative comments. Thus, 'good' might be used to soften the following negative comments or used by T5 to interrupt S9's performance. For example, 'Good, but still a little more control' (19:29); 'Right! You're always away from this "do'' (20:45); 'Good, go around a bit, the left hand actually needs to carry a bit of the wrist' (20:55).

Therefore, there was lack of specific praise in Lesson A, though as seen in previous sections, critical feedback was given.

6.2.2.7 Student-teacher collaborative playing

A direct moment of student-teacher collaboration happened once during the lesson (16:58), where T5 tried to help S9 to listen to the accuracy of rhythm in the left hand. Thus, T5 said: 'I play the left-hand part for you, you play your right hand yourself, ok?' After playing, T5 asked S9 an evaluative question: 'Do you think there are any differences?' S9 responded: 'The left hand can be heard clearer, then it doesn't feel disconnected'. Consequently, the student-teacher collaboration could be seen as one of the teaching methods to reach T5's aim, and S9 could be able to understand T5 intention by playing together in this way and T5 asking if S9 could hear the difference. In this case, T5 did provide a chance for S9 to express their observation of the collaboration. After the collaboration, T5 gave a second chance for S9 to play both hands by himself to practice accuracy of rhythm in the left hand, and S9 performed better than previously in terms of rhythmic precision.

6.2.2.8 Summarising the lesson and setting an example

From 23:09 to 25:00, T5 briefly summarised the issues raised by S9. The student was not invited to be actively involved in this summarising, but rather T5 pointed out the problems one by one that S9 needed to pay attention to. While there were many aspects that S9 could have benefited from by being actively engaged in this summary; for example, showing their understanding of the lesson and taking ownership of the information, S9 participated in this process passively. Moreover, T5 tried to help S9 to set an example as she recommended Lang Lang's videos in the final part of the lesson and asked S9 to be inspired by listening to these: 'I think Lang Lang's playing is the most distinctive one, even for those who do not know music, they would love to listen it right? Because *forte*, he's just popping out the powerful feeling, and then *piano*, it's like male, female, male, female … In fact, I particularly hope you will watch Lang Lang's performance as many [times] as possible. Don't think his playing is exaggerated, his performance is particularly inspiring' (30:55). Therefore, it might be seen that T5 asked S9 to listen to Lang Lang's video in order to get him inspired rather than as a model for him to imitate.

6.2.3 Student behaviour

S9 played with confidence from the start of Lesson A; he smiled and made plenty of body movements while playing, indicating that he appeared quite relaxed. S9 looked at the score at times, and performed at the start with fluency, proficiency and musicality (00:00-1:30). From 1:30, T5 helped S9 in turning the page and circled an area of the score, presumably as a reminder for T5 to return to after S9 had completed the performance. The action of score annotation might have created some pressure for S9, as S9's facial expression appeared to grow anxious, and his body tensed somewhat within thirty seconds (2:30). However, his performance relaxed gradually in the next two minutes. After his performance (4:00), he turned his head and smiled, perhaps a bit shyly and uncomfortably at the teacher as he had made a minor mistake at the end of the piece. S9's facial expression might suggest that T5 has high expectations for him, as even a minor error might cause S9 to feel embarrassed or possibly guilty; or it might have been because the camera was there, and S9 desired to deliver a perfect performance.

From 4:09, the first communication between teacher and student began. T5 asked 'when you practice on your own, what did you think about?' S9 responded positively, saying that he was thinking about how to express the composer's emotions; he turned his head to look at the T5's face, and said that he wished he had his own ideas. S9 answered the question while looking at T5 and waving his hand unconsciously (4:33). Based on his facial expression and body language, it appeared that S9 enjoyed talking and was eager to express himself. From 5:28, T5 continued to talk for almost three minutes, during which time S9 appeared to be listening carefully and occasionally nodding his head as if to express agreement with T5. During T5's talking, S9 was mostly looking at the score and listening to T5; sometimes he turned his head to look at T5 for a short moment before returning his attention to the score. T5 began a demonstration at 8:04, at which point S9's focus turned from the score to T5's hands. S9 observed and listened to T5's demonstration, nodded his head in agreement, and imitated T5's playing. Moreover, S9 learned by singing along with T5, receiving verbal directives, and having a hand placed on his shoulder to indicate that he should play with more finger action (11:46). Throughout the learning process, S9 appeared to be listening to T5, observing the demonstrations, and nodding his head in agreement. S9 did not take notes or appear not to make annotations on the score to help his learning; the only notes were the

score markings made by T5. Furthermore, it might be seen that from the beginning of the conversation S9 was actively responding to T5; however, T5 did not provide S9 with more opportunities to interact verbally during the rest of the lesson. S9 did not interrupt T5 to ask questions or express his thoughts and ideas. At 23:00, T5 began to summarise, emphasising some of S9's weaknesses and advising him to practise more, without allowing S9 to participate by inviting him to summarise or giving him a chance to ask questions. S9 continued to listen, looked at the score and nodded his head but made no verbal communication in the summary section.

Overall, S9's behaviour showed several characteristics, with a primary emphasis on positively engaging through playing trials throughout the lesson, as well as listening to T5's speaking and playing. In addition, often nodding to indicate agreement with T5, making eye contact with T5, looking at T5's hand when she demonstrates, sometimes looking at the score and asking questions or responding to T5's questions. The pace of the lesson seems to be moderate; while T5 spoke quickly, T5 gave S9 the opportunity to reflect, answer, and ask questions. In addition, T5 asked S9 to play differently depending on S9's own thoughts about a particular section; this was a student-centred strategy that gave S9 room to expand his ideas, and thus fostered the development of his independent thought and creativity. Moreover, T5 attempted to include a large amount of information for S9 and various perspectives in the lesson, such as technical, musical expression, the structure of the piece, harmony in a specific section, and how to develop a louder sound and more professional stage performance. Furthermore, T5 taught using imagery, asking T9 to imagine various things (8:28; 8:39; 11:56; 15:54), with the imagery technique relating more to musical expression than technical aspects. Overall, this verbal motivation seemed to have a positive influence on S9's performance, as he displayed more rubato, and his tone quality and musical expression were enhanced. This might indicate that some creative performance has been generated in the Lesson A.

6.3 Lesson B

Lesson B was conducted in a practice room of a Normal University. There was only one upright piano in this room. At the time of the research, S7 was a first-year student, and the lesson was for the preparation of the first term final exam. T9 is a young piano teacher, who has been teaching at this Normal university for several years. During the interview, T9 stated that they had studied in Russia for several years to specialise in piano performance and had

obtained a master's degree. The three pieces played by S7 in the lesson include a contemporary Chinese piece, '*Colourful clouds chasing the moon*' *[Caiyun zhui yue, 彩云追月]* by Jianzhong Wang, a Chopin Ballade and a Haydn Sonata in F-major. However, the instruction focused on the Chinese repertoire and the Haydn sonata, covering fingering, pedal, phrasing, dynamics and musical expression. The section on the Chinese repertoire is from the beginning to 12:17; and the work on the Haydn is from 15:30 to 27:40. The total duration of Lesson B is 27 minutes and 40 seconds.

6.3.1 Teaching approach

There were five times during this lesson when S7 asked a clarification question to T9, as the student was not very clear about T9's instructions, as shown in Table 6.4. Moreover, T9 did not ask questions to inspire S7 to think and help S7 be responsible for her learning; T9 did not act as a guide on the side. The entire lesson seemed as if T9 was used to being in a leading position to teach and S7 was used to receiving knowledge passively. Additionally, the teacher accounted for 1330 words, or 98 percent, of the overall word count based on the transcription of the verbal behaviour in Lesson B, while the student accounted for 31 words, just 2 per cent of the entire word count. This seems to be suggestive of a strong master-apprentice approach. Moreover, master-apprentice teaching was recognised by T9 in the interview, whether referring to his previous experiences as learner or to current practice and is seen in this lesson.

Table 6.4 Student-teacher dialogue in Lesson B

Time code	Teacher's talk	Student's question	Activity
1:43	Don't rush, still a little bit earlier to be out.		T9 asked S7 to play the left and right hands together.
	Right! The first note of the right hand and the first note of the left hand go together.	The right hand?	
8:48	Not to pause for the sake of pause, it's because to allow you to change fingerings in this place. A short pause.		T9 taught S7 to change fingering.
		How it changed to the fifth finger?	

10:15	Go on from here. Remember to change your fingering after the lesson.	From here?	T9 had finished explaining and asked S7 to play, but S7 did not know where to start, thus checked with T9.
19:44	From here.	Where to start? Here?	T9 had demonstrated on the piano, but S7 did not know where to start playing again when she was back to the piano.
23:26	*Non-legato* will be fine, this is neither *staccato* nor *legato*.		S7 wanted to check that she understood the expectations for articulation.
	Don't do *legato*.	Not *legato*?	

6.3.2 Teaching strategy

Directive teaching style was frequently employed and followed by modelling in Lesson B. The metaphor strategy was less used than by T5 in Lesson A. According to Table 6.5, frequent topics in instruction in Lesson B included those relating to technique, which occurred 64 times, and those relating to notation and expression, which occurred nine and three times, respectively. Therefore, it might be seen that the teaching content is strongly technique related.

Table 6.5 Summary of recurrent themes in teaching in Lesson B

Theme	Definition	Frequency (rank)	Brief examples from transcript
Technique	Focuses on technical problems of performance (e.g. dynamics, speed, pedal, phrasing, articulation)	64	'*Crescendo. Forte, forte, forte, forte';* 'A little bit faster'; 'Before here, what about giving it a breath, slightly deeper breath?'

Notation	Correcting wrong notes from student's performance	9	'There are some wrong notes in the middle, several wrong notes'
Expression	Focuses on expressive aspects of the performance (e.g. emotions, interpretation)	3	'What's the name of the piece, right? '*Colourful clouds chasing the moon'*, flowing like water'; 'Be excited'; 'Be singing'

6.3.2.1 Directive teaching

'Side coaching' occurs when the teacher aids the performance while it is taking place and conveys instructions by gestures such as directing or clapping (Parkes & Wexler, 2012, p. 53). As can be seen from the time codes in Table 6.6, T9's side coaching was consistent, consisting of delivering verbal directives, shushing to encourage a quieter dynamic, and finger clicking to emphasise pulse/speed, all used to develop S7's performance according to T9's understanding of the music.

T9 used singing while S7 was playing to indicate aspects such as speed, dynamics and musical expression. This could be due to the style of the pieces, in particular, the first piece is melodic; or because there was only one piano in the room, thus it was convenient to demonstrate by singing. T9 demonstrated by singing nine times during the lesson. For example, the teacher asked the student to do a *crescendo* in a trill, thus he sang to make this effect and said: 'this trill start with *piano* to *forte*' (5:40); T9 asked the student to play with more passion, thus he sang in a loud way and said: 'be excited' (22:18).

Table 6.6 Summary of side coaching in Lesson B

Time code	Directives	Aims
1:58	Hands to breath, the foot to release. Release!	
2:18	Take a breath	Phrasing
2:51	Try to close to the keys, close to the keys	
3:05	A little bit faster, (it comes in) one go	Speed

3:09	Don't be strong with your fifth finger	Dynamic
3:20	Gentle, gentle	Dynamic
3:23	A little bit faster	Speed
3:50	Slightly deeper breath	Breathing
4:30	A little bit control, a little bit control	Dynamic
5:07	Don't make the sound like smashing	
6:34	Listen to your left hand	
7:17	Control control control control…	Dynamic
7:22	Be careful, a little control	Dynamic
7:39	Take a breath	Breathing
9:31	*Crescendo. Forte forte forte forte*. Push it out	Dynamic
9:46	The left hand a little faster	Speed
10:51	Slower, a little bit slower	Speed
11:12	No rush here, don't move the second finger	Speed
11:31	Pedal fully released	Pedal
11:38	Work on this area a little faster after the lesson	Speed
11:43	Start from slow, speed up	Speed
12:04	Slow down	
12:07	Do something on this phrase	Musical expression
16:39	Don't do *diminuendo*, smooth and calm down	Speed
20:20	Shushing	Dynamic
20:30	Don't be slow (while clicking)	Speed
21:01	Clicking	Speed
21:42	Shushing	Dynamic
21:46	Clicking	Speed
21:51	Clicking	Speed
22:08	Clicking	Speed

23:44	Listen to your left hand	
24:10	Solid (sound)	Dynamic
24:14	Shushing	Dynamic
24:26	Clicking	Speed

6.3.2.2 Demonstration

T9 showed the fingering technique on the piano three times (8:13; 8:58; 27:08), and also demonstrated on the piano for dynamics (16:49). In addition, he demonstrated with both hands on the piano that the performance should be more passionate and said: 'Get a little riled up' (18:30). However, T9 was playing at a fast tempo, at a speed that S7could not reach at this point in time, thus while this demonstration may have been intended to be motivating, it could have also been a moment to show off his skills. Consequently, the demonstration seemed to have had little influence on S7's performance during the lesson.

6.3.2.3 Metaphor

T9 first applied metaphor at 2:33, as he believed this Chinese piece '*Colourful clouds chasing the moon*' should be flowing, thus he asked S7 to play 'flowing like water'. T9 used a similar metaphor later: 'Run gradually and be flow, just flow it up like a cloud' (7:48). There were other two metaphors used; one was describing the tone: 'clear, clear (sound), [don't play] sloppy' (17:12); and the other metaphor was used for dynamics: 'Ah throw it straight away' (25:06) to encourage S7 to play louder. Metaphor appears to have positive effect on S7's performance, since the tone quality improved immediately following the metaphor usage, and T9 seemed satisfied.

6.3.2.4 Body contact

In Lesson B, body contact happened five times. The first was in relation to the playing of a trill. T9 placed his left hand on S7's right arm and said: 'Too much, too much' (8:36). Later, T9 got up and pushed the student off the bench, in order to give a demonstration on the piano (18:26). Furthermore, while S7 was playing, the teacher's right hand lifted S7's right hand quite suddenly as T9 said: 'This is going to break off, it's got a rest in it' (21:21). Similarly, at times the body contact was a signal to S7 to stop because T9 was about to start instruction (16:31; 24:56). These body contact instances could have been replaced by language; however,

they may have been used for efficiency purposes to enable T9 to explain his ideas quickly. To the researcher, some body contacts appeared to be harsh, which might suggest a rather unequal teacher-student relationship, almost as if T9 was disrespectful to S7. Therefore, this again seems indicative of a highly master-apprentice approach. However, due to the small size of the room, the camera was positioned behind T9 and S7, and thus T9 and S7's facial expressions were difficult to capture.

6.3.2.5 Praise and feedback

There were a few brief instances of praise from T9, but they did not seem to be precise. For instance, T9 did not state what was good and how it was good when the student had finished playing; he said: 'Overall much better than the last lesson. Good, good, let's start from the beginning' (14:58). After S7 finished her first performance, T9 said: 'Ok good. Let's start with these. Let's start again from the beginning' (1:12). Thus, T9's compliments seemed to be only general, perhaps motivational, but not full praise. In other situations, as also seen in Lesson A, general positive feedback from T9 was followed by criticism rather than a positive comment. For example, 'Good. There are some wrong notes in the middle, several wrong notes' (14:51). Interestingly, T9 did not say which notes were incorrect at this time. Therefore, T9's praise tends to be general instead of specific, and not very extensive in Lesson B.

By comparing Lessons, A and B in terms of the percentage of students' and teachers' talk, as well as the quantity and type of teachers' questions, it is possible to conclude that Lessons A and B are dominated by the master-apprentice teaching style. Additionally, the content analysis revealed that the teaching content was more technique-oriented in both lessons. In terms of teaching strategy, it was found that Lesson A employed a somewhat more varied teaching method than Lesson B. For example, collaboration between the student and the teacher occurred in Lesson A, as did teacher-led summaries and other methods such as imagery; however, they appear not to have occurred in Lesson B. During Lesson B, side coaching appears to have occurred regularly, and directive teaching and demonstration appear to have dominated the teaching methods. Moreover, while Lesson A appears to have more positive feedback than Lesson B, comments seem general rather than specific.

6.3.3 Student behaviour

Lesson B started with S7 playing, though she seemed somewhat unconfident as her body seemed stiff and she did not make many body movements. At 1:40, T9 began the teaching, and when T9 pointed out a mistake, S7 glanced at T9, listening to T9's comments. At 2:37 S7 glanced again at T9 who was pointing out a mistake. At 2:46 S7 turned her head to look at T9 and nodded, probably in agreement with T9's instruction. At 3:10 S7 turned her head to look at T9 again as T9 was talking; S7's facial expression seemed slightly embarrassed and less relaxed. This might be due to a little nervousness of S7, or it could be due to T9's strong tone and volume of voice, causing S7 to be little unrelaxed. From the beginning of the lesson until this portion, S7 played while listening to T9's humming and verbal directives as she was playing. At 8:14, T9 touched S7's arm to indicate she should rise from the seat and that T9's demonstration on the piano was about to begin. During the demonstration, S7 stood behind T9, observing, and listening to T9's playing.

At 9:30, S7 played the climax of the piece, probably the most challenging part of the piece; S7 did not appear to be very proficient in this part, as she played some wrong notes and made some pauses. However, T9 asked S7 to play faster with her left hand, but S7 could not achieve that and continued to play wrong notes while maintaining the same speed. T9 did not give S7 more time to practice at a slower speed or help S7 to correct her fingering. Instead, T9 asked S7 to do it after the lesson and correct the fingering by herself. Therefore, the pace of lesson seemed fast. At 10: 24, S7 appeared to be playing continually incorrect notes, and her movements appeared somewhat tense and rushed. This might be because S7 was aware that she was playing incorrect notes, or she was not yet able to play at the faster speed as T9 requested previously.

At 12:27, T9 provided an overview of how S7 had played the piece, but only gave very general feedback on her work. It was evident from S7's performance that she was not yet fluent in the entire piece, and T9 also mentioned that S7 had been playing this piece for only two weeks. Therefore, it appeared that the lesson pace was rather fast given S7's limited familiarity with the piece. At 14:55, after S7 had performed the second piece, T9 said there were a few wrong notes, and S7 just nodded, but did not ask exactly what the wrong notes were; she did not engage verbally with T9 in this section. This might indicate that S7 was used to listening passively during the lesson and not interrupting T9, and she might be expected to find the

answer by herself rather than asking T9 during the lesson. From 16:16-16:55, S7 learned through T9's humming, clicking, and verbal directives while she was playing, and she appeared engaged in playing. T9 performed a longer section from 18:34 to 19:40 in an effort to demonstrate how to play with a bit more passion. However, S7's playing did not appear to improve much afterwards; rather, it became more rushed and still lacked the passion that T9 was looking for. Perhaps S7 lacked the confidence to show that emotion at that stage or could not achieve this at the faster speed expected by T9 at that point.

Overall, S7 played actively and positively participated in playing throughout the lesson. The majority of the lesson was spent on playing and trials, which occurred 53 times, lasted 1115 seconds, and accounted for 67% of the whole lesson. Likewise, S7 listened to T9's talk, directives and demonstration throughout the lesson. In addition to nodding, establishing eye contact with T9, and being prepared to move off the piano stool when T9 was going to play the piano, S7 demonstrated awareness of the situation and readiness to take action, demonstrating that she was actively engaged with Lesson B. The general pace of Lesson B was rapid; T9 spoke immediately after S7 made errors and expected S7 to correct the errors after the lesson on her own if she was unable to do so during the lesson. In addition, T9's demonstrations were conducted at a speed that S7 was unable to achieve, and this demonstrated the rapid pace of the lesson, as T9 seemed to finish the demonstrations very quickly, and also spoke at a rapid pace. Lesson B seemed effective as a result of T9's efforts to provide as much information as possible for S7, to offer quick response to S7's errors, and to provide side coaching to enhance S7's playing.

6.4 Lesson C

Lesson C took place in a teacher's practice room in a University with T1 and S5, and there were two upright pianos in this room. At the time of research, S5 was a Year 3 student and studying piano as her main instrument; she had prepared two pieces for the first term final exam. However, she only played Op. 299, no. 5 by Czerny in the lesson, a piece which was set for the exam. T1 has many years of piano teaching experience and has been a visiting scholar in the USA. The total duration of Lesson C is 19 minutes and 43 seconds.

6.4.1 Teaching approach

In Lesson C, T1's speech accounted for 1861 words, or 99.8 percent, of the total word count based on the transcription of the verbal behaviour, whereas the student accounted for just 4 words, or 0.2 percent of the entire word count. This seems to be evidence of a highly dominant master-apprentice relationship. This teacher did not ask any questions throughout Lesson C. T1 only used questions in Lesson C to confirm whether the student understood or not, thus T1 asked several times 'understand?' or 'do you understand'? It can be seen from Table 6.7 that there was constant interaction between T1 and S5. However, T1 generally went straight on to the following point rather than waiting for the student's responses after making statements or asking questions. Hence, this might indicate that T1 did not care whether the student understood or not, or that they have become used to silence from the student. Therefore, there was no dialogue; S5 and T1 were clearly differentiated in status.

Table 6.7 Examples of the student-teacher interaction in Lesson C

Time code	Teacher's talk	Student's talk	Activity
1:09	It just sounds like you have endless motivation, do you understand?		T1 demonstrated how to do a *crescendo* on the piano.
		……	
1:17	So you have to pay attention to this bass melody, did you hear that?		T1 asked S5 to focus on her left hand, so T1demonstrated only the left-hand part on the piano.
		……	
5:08	Do you understand? Have a try		T1 demonstrated how to practise the piece with dotted rhythm.
		……	
5:47	And use these methods to help you, your fingers will become more flexible, understand?		After introducing the different ways of practising, T1 asked S5 if she understood.
		……	

6:10	Well, it's just that don't get your head too low when you play, understand?	……	T1 asked S5 not to be stiff and not lower her head while playing.

As indicated in Table 6.7, the expression of 'understand' seems to be corresponding to T5's use of 'isn't it?' in Lesson A, where it appeared to be a rhetorical question. As suggested earlier, this style of question might not elicit a response from the student but could provide a model for the student. Thus, T1's frequent use of the word 'understand' seems to imply that the student must agree rather than disagree.

6.4.2 Teaching strategy

Teaching content in Lesson C tended to be technique oriented. Technique-related themes featured 16 times in Lesson C, whereas practice-related themes appeared eight times, as indicated in Table 6.8. Moreover, the focus of technique and practice teaching strategies in Lesson C are shown in Table 6.8.

Table 6.8 Examples of recurrent teaching strategies in Lesson C

Theme	Definition	Frequency (rank)	Brief examples from transcript
Technique	Focuses on technical problems of performance (e.g. dynamics, speed, pedal, phrasing, articulation)	16	'There are eight groups, so you have to do a *crescendo* in those eight groups. If you play *forte* at the beginning, then you don't have room to do *crescendo*'; 'You played too loud, I can only hear your left hand'
Practice issue	Various methods to practise are recommended by T1	8	'You need to have a specific method of practice, which is play it with dotted rhythm'; 'This pattern is particularly helpful for the fourth and fifth fingers, you need to practise more here'; 'You can also play this piece with triplet rhythm'

6.4.2.1 Demonstration

In Lesson C, T1's most common teaching strategy was modelling. The reason might be that she has a piano of her own, thus it was convenient for her to demonstrate on the piano, or this might be as a result of T1 believing that modelling was the most efficient way for S5 to learn. Table 6.9 showed that T1 demonstrated 20 times in this 20-minute lesson.

Table 6.9 Demonstration in Lesson C

Time code	Modelling	Aim
1:02	Dynamic	Demonstrated how to play *crescendo*
1:18	Left hand part	Demonstrated how to play left hand clearly
4:51	Dotted rhythm	Demonstrated how to practice with dotted rhythm
5:23	Dotted rhythm	Demonstrated how to practice with dotted rhythm
5:32	Triplet	Demonstrated how to practice with triplet rhythm
5:41	*Staccato*	Demonstrated how to practice with *staccato*
6:13	Body relaxation	Demonstrated how to play with a relaxed body
7:04	Switching attention	Demonstrated how to switch attention while playing
7:41	Broken chord	Demonstrated how to play the broken chords
9:11	Right hand part	Demonstrated how to play the right-hand part with two hands
9:51	Right hand part	Demonstrated how to play the right-hand part with two hands
11:00	Hand shape	Demonstrated a hand shape
11:58	Skin play	Demonstrated skin play[3]
12:08	Skin play	Demonstrated skin play

[3] 'Skin play' was shown in the video as a method of playing with the palm of the hand against the keys, without raising the fingers high or playing loudly.

12:33	Speed	Demonstrated fast playing while the knuckle was active
12:59	Play deep	Demonstrated how to play deeply
16:25	*Staccato*	Demonstrated how to play *staccato* properly
18:25	Collaborative playing	T1 played with S5 together
18:54	Octave technique	Demonstrated a technique to play octaves
19:31	Octave technique	Demonstrated a technique to play octaves

6.4.2.2 Student-teacher collaboration

T1 tried to help S5 to do some structural analysis (6:22) and helped S5 to practice hands separately, in particular the right-hand part. However, this process was just telling S5 the relevant information. There were five instances of student-teacher collaboration (7:18; 7:52; 13:45; 17:00; 18:28). This collaboration consisted of S5 and T1 playing together on separate pianos rather S5 playing one hand and T1 playing the other part.

6.4.2.3 Directive teaching

Lesson C included directive teaching at several points, as shown in Table 6.10. There were three times when S5 was reminded about dynamics, one time when she was reminded about phrasing, and one time when she was reminded to transfer her focus from her right hand to her left hand.

Table 6.10 Summary of directive teaching in Lesson C

Time code	Directives	Aims
8:05	Listen to your left hand	Reminder: shifting attention from right hand to left hand
17:10	Take a breath	Reminder: phrasing
17:14	Push! *Crescendo*	Reminder: dynamics
17:19	*Crescendo*! Forte	Reminder: dynamics
17:34	Gentle gentle gentle gentle gentle gentle first	Reminder: dynamics

6.4.2.4 Metaphor

In Lesson C, the teacher employed the metaphor method three times. For instance, 'Here is a part, you can see it as banging along like a drum' (10:26). At 11:40, T1 believed the music in the left hand should be as gentle and unobtrusive, thus she said: 'on the left hand is a background' (11:41). The metaphor method appeared again at 12:01, where the teacher introduced a way of playing that demanded that the student did not play hard on the keys and the sound should not be loud, thus the teacher said: 'It's bit like mumbling'.

6.4.2.5 Praise and feedback

In Lesson C, T1's praise involved more specific positive feedback, and there were more compliments than in the previous two lessons. For example, 'Um good. The completeness is good' (3:52); 'That's what I just told you about doing *crescendo*, you did well' (4:35); 'Sounds better now' (5:29). However, a positive comment was followed by critical feedback in some cases. For example, 'I think you did well in some places just now, but you also need to improve. At first … this kind of piece is rather boring, so how can you play this beautifully?' (4:21). Overall, T1 seemed relatively positive and encouraging in her evaluation of S5's performance in Lesson C. Unfortunately, the camera was positioned behind S5, making it impossible to see the student's facial expression in response to T1's praise and comments, and S5 did not answer orally. However, S5's body seemed calm throughout Lesson C.

6.4.3 Student behaviour

At the beginning of the lesson, which used two pianos, T1 explained the lesson focus and pointed out the need for *crescendos* and *decrescendos* in certain bars and gave a demonstration. At 1:32, T1 did another demonstration, which S5 attempted to imitate on her own piano by imitating T1's movements rather than through actual playing and making sound. The purpose of the silent imitation might be to imitate T1 but to avoid interrupting T1's explanation and demonstration. At 1: 40, T1 invited S5 to try the piece. Throughout this playing, S5 appeared relaxed and playing appeared to be comfortable. From 3: 00 onwards, T1 began giving verbal directives, and although S5 was in the middle of playing, she made adjustments accordingly. At 4:40, T1 began to talk and demonstrate, providing several different ways of practicing. S5's behaviours involved watching T1's demonstration, imitating on the piano. At 6:30, T1's explanation appeared to accelerate. At that point, S5 appeared to give up imitating and instead made notes on the score.

However, in order to keep up with T1's pace of teaching, S5 did not appear to write down detailed notes, but instead marked the places mentioned by T1. At 7:50, T1 and S5 played together; nevertheless, T1's playing dominated. This might suggest that S5 tried to hear T1 clearly by playing more quietly; it could also be an indicator of an unequal relationship between S5 and T1. From 8:20 to 9:20, S5 did not know where T1 was talking about, but instead of interrupting T1 and asking, S5 flipped back and forth through the score to find where T1 was talking about. It was only when T1 asked S5 to play that S5 had no choice but to ask T1 where she should start playing from. It looks as though even if S5 had a question during the lesson, she was unwilling to ask T1, instead trying to solve it herself. From 10:20 to 14:13, S5 made notes several times on the score. Unless T1 signalled S5 to play on the piano, even subtlety through glancing at the keyboard, S5 would listen and observe. When T1 talked quickly and did not indicate S5 to play, S5 took notes, listened and watched. It was likely, however, that the notes were not very detailed, but rather simple outlining of points.

Overall, S5's playing had 35 trials totalling 370 seconds, accounting for 31% of the whole lesson. S5 demonstrated attentive listening to T1's speaking and playing by establishing eye contact and looking at T1's hands. In addition, marking something on the score and silently imitating T1's playing occurred several times. The overall lesson tempo was moderate, as was T1's speaking speed, and T1 enabled S5 to attempt individual sections more than once and to play at a slower level where she felt comfortable. S5 participated in Lesson C, not only playing but also listening attentively, paying close attention to T1's speaking and demonstration. In terms of generating creative performance, T1 developed several types of exercises to play the same piece in different rhythms, which not only might have made the exercises more enjoyable but also engaged S5's attention to listen and imitate.

6.5 Comparison of teacher and student behaviours

The data collected from the three lessons has been compared and presented in two tables: Table 6.11 Teacher behaviour shown as percentage of components of teacher and student interaction within the three lessons and Table 6.12 Student behaviour shown as percentage of components of teacher and student interaction within the three lessons. Table 6.11 includes teacher talk, teaching themes, use of imagery and metaphor, use of demonstration, directives, praise and feedback as well as types of teacher questions. The table presents data in the form of percentages, with the average percentage for each theme over the three

lessons displayed at the end of the columns. This facilitates understanding of the comparison between three lessons. Table 6.11, in the column marked 'Average', T means technique, O means other perspectives, and E means expression.

Table 6.11 Teacher behaviour shown as percentages of components of teacher and student interaction within the three lessons

TEACHER BEHAVIOURS	LESSON A	LESSON B	LESSON C	AVERAGE
Teacher talk	94%	98%	99.8%	97.3%
Teaching themes	Technique 82% Reproducing the music score 10% Expression 7%	Technique 84% Notation 12% Expression 4%	Technique 67% Practice issue33%	T 77.7% O 18.3% E 3.7%
Use of imagery/metaphor	27%	9%	10%	15.3%
Use of demonstration (Demonstration on the piano/demonstration by body language/ demonstration on the piano with body language)	25%	11%	60%	32%
Directives	34%	74%	17%	42%
Praise and feedback (specific/nonspecific)	14%	6%	13%	11%
Types of teacher questions	Rhetorical question 78% Exploratory question 22%	N/A	N/A	N/A

Table 6.11 shows that the three teachers' talk accounts for a significant amount of the overall verbal communication in the three lessons, presented as 94%, 98% and 99.8% of the total student-teacher talk during each lesson; this averages at 97.3% across the three lessons. This indicates that in the context of verbal communication, teachers are reported to provide a greater proportion of words spoken compared to students. A significant proportion of the verbal themes covered were connected to techniques, with percentages of 82%, 84% and 67%, and averaging 77.3% across the three lessons. It is worth noting that the teaching themes pertaining to enhancing students' creative performance, specifically in terms of expression, were found to be present in just a minimal percentage in Lessons A and B,

accounting for 7% and 4% respectively. Particularly, Lesson C did not exhibit any teaching themes connected to this aspect. Thus, the average is 3.7%.

Other components, such as reproducing the music score, the issue of notation, and the issue of practise, collectively account for an average of 18.7% over all the teaching themes. Consequently, this finding may serve as an indication that the cultivation of students' creative performance is not prioritised in these lessons, with an emphasis instead placed on the development of technical skills as the fundamental component of pedagogy. While the use of imagery and metaphor has the potential to effectively enhance students' creative performance; the collected information illustrates that lessons A, B, and C exhibit percentages of 27%, 9%, and 10% respectively concerning imagery and metaphor, resulting in an average of 15.3% across all three lessons. Demonstrations and directives average 32% and 42%. Lesson A included exploratory questions, which made up 22% of the total questions asked throughout Lesson A. However, this sort of question was not included in Lessons B and C.

Table 6.12 Student behaviour shown as percentages of components of teacher and student interaction within the three lessons

STUDENT BEHAVIOURS	LESSON A	LESSON B	LESSON C	AVERAGE
Student talk	6%	2%	0.2%	2.7%
Student playing	65%	67%	31%	54%
Non-verbal gestures (Listening/ nodding/ smiling/ eye contact)	27%	31%	60.8%	39.6%
Marking score/looking for place in score	2%	N/A	8%	N/A

Table 6.12 summarises the student behaviour which includes student talk, student playing, non-verbal gestures and marking the score or finding a place on the score. Table 6.12 shows that students' playing present the most significant feature of the student behaviour in Lessons A and B, at 65% and 67% respectively. The 60% given for the student's non-verbal gestures, such as listening, nodding, smiling, and making eye contact with their teacher in Lesson C, indicates that the student paid attention to the explanations provided by the teacher. Despite the lower figure for playing in Lesson C, it is evident that playing averaged 54% across the

three lessons. Additionally, non-verbal indications, such as listening, accounted for an average of 39.6% of the behaviour across the three lessons. These findings suggest that the students may be somewhat passive in their acquisition of knowledge. As a result of the restricted or non-existent direct verbal engagement with their teachers during the learning process, student talk averaged 2.7% in relation to the proportion of words said by the students.

6.6 Discussion of Lessons A, B and C

The analysis of these three piano lessons explored teaching approach, teaching strategy, and teaching content. The first finding emerging from this data is that the master-apprentice teaching approach was demonstrated in all lessons, which were teacher-directed, showing unequal relationship status between teacher and student, and minimal dialogue involving the students' own ideas. Additionally, there were few differences between those lessons across the three institutions; this was confirmed by H3 and T9 in Chapter 5 (section 5.3), where they noted that there seemed to be little distinctions between conservatories and non-conservatories in one-to-one piano teaching [H3], as they all appeared to be cultivating pianists [T9]. However, it can be seen that the teacher in Lesson A (conservatory) used slightly more varied teaching strategies than in the other lessons and there appears to be more verbal communication between T5 and S9; this might be due to the longer duration of this lesson. Moreover, it appears that none of the teachers began the lesson by asking their students how they were, whether they were well or had any questions coming from their practice. As indicated by Luo (2018), piano education at the higher education level in China is mostly didactic in style. Carey et al. (2013) defines this didactic method as transfer pedagogy, and since teachers place a focus on the outcome rather than the process, this type of teaching might not encourage students to take responsibility for their own learning, leaving them reliant on their teacher. Except for a few teacher-student interactions in Lesson A, there was very little verbal communication between students and teachers in Lessons B and C, and the teachers did not seem to offer students the opportunity to speak.

The students in these lessons appeared to be in a relatively passive position, learning through imitation and instruction. Dialogue between the teachers and the students was infrequent. Besides, some body contact appeared to be harsh which also makes it seem to the observer as if at times teachers were disrespectful to the student. This might be due to the cultural impact, since the teacher in China is used to being in a position of authority in which they

always have the knowledge, and students are expected to learn this knowledge. As indicated by Hu (2002), teachers are seen as symbols of knowledge, and the small quantity of information they impart to their students is merely a portion of what they know. Despite the fact that all three teachers have studied overseas, their backgrounds might be oriented towards piano performance rather than pedagogy, and they might not have experienced any other modes of student-teacher relationship or any teacher training.

In addition, a common feature demonstrated by all three lessons was that the instruction provided by the teachers appeared to use a main strategy of pointing out immediately where the students had made mistakes. This is in line with findings of previous research; Yeh (2018) indicated that piano teachers mostly focused on analysing students' playing mistakes in one-to-one lessons. Furthermore, there seemed to be a lack of development between lessons, based on the filmed lessons and the researcher's observation. For example, the teachers did not begin the lessons with issues that emerged from their work with the students in the previous lessons, or from asking specifically about their individual practice. Neither was a particular plan for practice or for the next lesson made at the end of the lesson. The three teachers in this study appeared not to be using notebooks to keep track of relevant issues for the students; the three students were seldom taking notes by themselves, and the teachers did not remind them to do this at any point.

The data has shown the use of a variety of teaching methods, including imagery, metaphor, demonstration, directive teaching, and student-teacher cooperation. However, where there were two pianos in their classroom, the teacher in Lesson C appeared to choose modelling as her primary teaching strategy. On the other hand, constant side coaching was also seen, as used particularly by the teacher in Lesson B. According to Zhukov (2012), modelling, directives and praise are frequently used for teaching instrumental music in higher education. This is contradicted with this research, as the predominance of teaching strategies in this research were demonstration and directives. This also suggests that the teachers tend to focus on accurate performance of the features of the music score in the teaching in this research. However, Hultberg (2002) indicates that a reproductive approach to the printed score might not adequately promote students' independence in learning. Besides, the lack of encouragement and praise from the teachers to the students in all three lessons, particularly in Lessons A and B, might also not have been promoting the students' motivation.

While the students are learning through imitation and obeying directives, this approach perhaps deprives the student of the ability to play according to their own preferences. Laukka (2004) interviewed teachers from UK and Swedish conservatoires and found that they emphasised the tendency of verbal inspiration while developing students' independence. The teachers argue that if the primary learning strategy for students is imitation, they might not be able to have their own ideas and really learn to express the music. Thus, this might undermine their development of independence in learning.

Furthermore, questioning techniques seem to be overlooked by the teachers in all three lessons, although in Lesson A, T5 asked the student a few questions. However, these inquiries tended to be closed questions, and the dialogue did not appear to be an equal discussion that respected S9's ideas since T5 interrupted their replies. Allsup and Baxter (2004) emphasise the significance of asking more open questions and the role of dialogue in music lessons, since students can gain additional musical knowledge. Additionally, Kassner (1998) believes that skilled questioning can stimulate students' higher level of thinking while teachers facilitate creative teaching without imposing their thoughts; this promotes students' intrinsic motivation, resulting in a more interesting, stimulating classroom environment.

When comparing the most significant aspects of creative teaching revealed from Cremin and Chappell's (2021) comprehensive study of the literature linked to creative teaching (idea generation and exploration; co-construction and collaboration; supporting autonomy and agency and problem solving) with these piano lessons, none of these features appear to be evident in the three videoed lessons in this PhD research. Moreover, the process of learning does not appear to encourage students' creative tendencies and engagement. Therefore, it might be concluded that the role of creative teaching seems not to be a primary focus in these filmed lessons. The interview data from teachers presented in Chapter 4 found that some of the participants believe that creative teaching is still a teacher-centred approach, and thus creative teaching might be seen as an enhanced version of master-apprentice teaching (see Chapter 4, section 4.2.4). The students in those lessons might not therefore reflect how students can be taught creatively. However, it may be the case that if more lessons had been available to the researcher, some creative elements would have been seen; however, none were present in these lessons.

Additionally, students learned repertoire that includes at least one, if not two, pieces of classical and Western music. As indicated by Wang (2018), Western piano music has dominated in piano education in higher education level in China, this might because piano teachers are educated by Western piano systems. Despite the fact that Lesson B included a contemporary Chinese piece, it is a somewhat dated work. The piece '*Colourful clouds chasing the moon*' [*Caiyun zhui yue, 彩云追月]* was first composed in 1935 for orchestra and later arranged for piano by Jianzhong Wang in 1975. The three lessons were found to have a tendency toward detailed and informative teaching, mainly focused on the technique-related contents; the issues related to emotion and expression appeared to be infrequently mentioned in the teaching and dealt with implicitly. However, this might be due to the student's level of learning in relation to each piece, as well as their years of study. The student in Lessons B was in their first year, and there might have been more extensive and informative teaching related to technique while the piano lessons were filmed. The students in Lesson A and C were in Year 3 at the time of filming. While Lesson A appeared to contain slightly more discussion and reflection on musical expression compared with other two piano lessons, it seems as though that student was still not given much freedom to develop their own independence and creativity.

6.7 Conclusion

The teaching style and teaching strategies employed in these one-to-one lessons were consistent across the three lessons in all three types of institutions. Teachers seemed to have complete control over one-to-one teaching and learning, and this hierarchical relationship may not appear to help students to become independent learners. Furthermore, technique-oriented teaching, demonstration and directives as predominant teaching strategies, lack of encouragement, and limited repertoire might not sufficiently encourage students' motivation and thus take responsibility of their own learning. These filmed lessons also seem to be devoid of creativity and creative teaching in one-to-one piano pedagogy in higher education settings. Therefore, a framework of how to improve student-teacher relationship and creative teaching will be discussed in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 7: DISCUSSION

7.1 Introduction

This chapter focuses on the findings relating to students and teachers from this study, critically discussing the existing one-to-one piano pedagogic practices within Chinese higher education settings through exploring pedagogical approaches and creative teaching. In addition, the findings from the literature review and data analysis are revisited for comparative analysis.

Initially, this study recognises that one-to-one pedagogy plays an important role in piano teaching and learning in higher education institutions; it appears to be the primary mode of delivery of tuition. Furthermore, literature indicates that the master-apprentice teaching style is frequently employed in one-to-one lessons in the Chinese context, as seen in this study. The meaning of creativity and creative teaching in both Western and Chinese contexts, and the significance of creative teaching have been discussed, as well as creative teaching in relation to different sociocultural elements in the literature review. Thus, how creative teaching relates to master-apprentice teaching and student-teacher relationships, as well as how creative teaching can be implemented in one-to-one piano pedagogy in Chinese higher education contexts, will be discussed in this chapter.

In Chapters 2 and 5, background information on piano pedagogical practices in higher educations in China, including the format and characteristics of one-to-one lessons in Chinese higher education institutions, and master-apprentice relationships, were presented in relation to one-to-one teaching. In Chapter 4, the students and teachers' perspectives on creativity and creative teaching in one-to-one lessons were shown and compared, defining the benefits and challenges regarding creative teaching. Three videoed lessons were filmed during the data collection from the three different types of institution, and were analysed in Chapter 6, from the perspectives of teaching approach, teaching strategy and teaching content. Consequently, the study aimed to answer the five research questions which were detailed in Chapter 1 and 3, and are presented with discussion below in sections 7.2-7.6.

7.2 What form does the student-teacher relationship take in the one-to-one piano lesson in the context of Chinese higher music education settings?

The current PhD research supports the visibility of master-apprentice instruction as the dominant mode and model of teaching in the observed higher music education institutions in the Chinese context, and the teaching style appeared to be rather strict at times, lacking encouragement and praise for the students. The student-teacher relationship is hierarchical, formal and the teachers can act as parents, influenced by Chinese traditional culture, which suggests that 'a teacher for a day is a father for life' [*yiri weishi, zhongshen weifu,一日为师终身为父*] (see Chapter 5, section 5.8).

This produces an unequal student-teacher relationship in one-to-one lessons and appears to limit students' independence and creativity. The teacher's superior position and the student's passive and dependent attitude to learning are evidenced by the interviews (see Chapter 5) and video recordings (see Chapter 6) in this PhD study. The teachers appear to act as representatives of knowledge, authority, source of knowledge and are in a position of leadership over the student. The teacher is responsible for the direction, learning details such as pedal application and steering the progress of the students' learning and sometimes serving as an idol for the students to imitate if necessary (see Chapter 5, sections 5.5.1 and 5.5.2).

The teachers leave little room for the students to develop their thinking and creativity, and to explore and experiment during the lesson, as examined in Chapter 6 in this PhD research. Building on this, scolding might be employed when a student did not meet the teacher's expectation, which is recognised and accepted by both traditional Chinese culture and the student's parents. Due to the power of teachers, the teachers' attitude is demonstrated as 'wish iron could turn into steel at once' [*hentie bucheng gang, 恨铁不成钢*] (see Chapter 5, section 5.5.3). This expression reflects the teachers' eagerness to see their students improve instantly, which seems to dismiss respecting students' views and fostering their independent thinking, and creativity.

In terms of the students' performance in the interviews and filmed lessons, the students seemed to display a lack of confidence, as well as timidity and compliance. For example, when answering questions during the interview, a few students seemed unsure of themselves, repeatedly confirming the questions with the researcher and at times showing a lack of confidence in their answers. Moreover, the students appeared compliant and timid during the videoed lessons, making little effort in asking questions, just carrying out the teacher's instructions. Additionally, they demonstrated a lack of confidence and shyness by asking questions in quiet, low voices. However, although the students did not talk very much in the filmed lessons, they engaged positively through playing trials throughout the lessons (students' behaviour was analysed in each lesson in sections 6.2.3, 6.3.3 and 6.4.3 in Chapter 6). While S9 showed confidence in his playing, smiling and appearing relaxed while playing, and positively engaging in playing trials during Lesson A, nodding to indicate agreement with T5, making eye contact and asking questions, the students in Lessons B and C seemed less confident. Nevertheless, their lessons seemed effective as they played actively and positively participated in playing throughout the lesson, and the teachers made efforts to provide as much information as possible for the students, offering quick responses to the student's errors and to provide side coaching to enhance the students' playing. Further aspects concerning students' behaviour in a Chinese context will be discussed in greater detail through the lens of cultural expectations in section 7.7 and particularly section 7.7.4, exploring the role of the student in society.

Overall, the teachers exhibited a very strong power; the students seemed to have dependency on the teachers; there was a lack of dialogical communication between the students and teachers, and thus an unequal student-teacher relationship was shown in the filmed lessons.

7.3 What are the teaching methods applied in the one-to-one piano lesson in higher music education in China? What are the teaching materials and teaching focus adopted in this context?

The data analysis has shown the use of a number of teaching methods, including imagery, metaphor, demonstration, directive teaching, and student-teacher cooperation; however, the predominant teaching methods in this research were demonstration and directives. In this PhD study, the teaching content in three videoed lessons was centred on the repertoire

that students prepared for examinations; however, it is feasible to practice three pieces and then choose two for the exam, as demonstrated in Lesson C (see Chapter 6).While this might have been impacted by the fact that the videos were filmed around the time of the exams, it demonstrated a correlation between content and exams.

It was also found that the repertoire was mostly chosen by the teachers, tended to be based on the teachers' preferences, as they determined which type of work was appropriate for the students: challenging, enhancing students' technical abilities and worth playing (see Chapter 5, section 5.5.5). Moreover, classical music appears to have a privileged position in repertoire selection, even though some teacher participants were aware of other musical genres which may be of greater interest to the students in this study (see Chapter 5, section 5.4.1). Therefore, this PhD research has shown that one-to-one piano teaching is technique-focused and concentrate on challenging repertoire in order to improve students' technique in this study (see Chapter 5, section 5.4). The teaching materials appear to be oriented toward Western classical music, with an emphasis on technique and a detailed teaching of individual works, as well as concerned with the negative aspects of what students were not good at.

7.4 What teaching and learning philosophy emerges?

This research demonstrates that this master-apprentice model was profoundly influenced by Confucian culture, in which the teacher may not only fulfil the role of teacher, but also of father or mother; teachers not only bear responsibility for imparting knowledge to students, but also for influencing their personal development, this can be seen in Chapter 5, section 5.5. Given that Confucianism heritage culture promotes consideration of harmonious relationships in a collectivist culture (see Chapter 4, section 4.2), the three students may be trying to maintain a harmonious environment by not challenging their teachers (see Chapter 6).

Moreover, memorising the teachers' instructions and directives, as well as imitating the teachers' demonstrations can be found in the findings of this PhD research (see Chapter 6). Students listened silently and carefully, as well as without interruption to the teacher's instructions and demonstrations in the filmed lessons, and these approaches seemed to be used in order to obtain the most efficient transmission of the teacher's knowledge to the student. This approach shows limited verbal communication between teachers and students,

as the piano teachers do not incorporate interactive communication sessions into their lessons.

7.5 What is the role of creativity and creative teaching in contemporary piano pedagogy in higher music education institutions and how it is applied?

The current study examines perceptions of creativity and creative teaching from the perspectives of the head of departments, teachers, and students. When I asked the question 'what do you think the term creativity is', participants did not seem to like discussing creativity in general; rather they hoped that I could specify it. It seemed that they did not have a clear definition of creativity in mind, and that they did not want to attempt a definition. Therefore, I was mindful of different perspectives of creativity and the challenges in articulating them. The relevant term in Mandarin is [*chuang zao li, 创造力*], which can be understood as novel and unique ideas in a broad sense. I avoided defining creativity before obtaining the participants' responses in order not to bias their answers. However, it might potentially lead to ambiguity, as individuals might have varying interpretations of the word. Chinese views of creativity could be characterised as knowledge and experience, contextualised by the Chinese cultural foundation and tradition, as well as the process of learning, as their views emphasised extensive knowledge co-existing, which they felt could lead to creativity. As indicated by P1 in this PhD research: 'I know well not only the Russian style [music], but also the British style [music], as well as the Chinese aesthetics, this development which naturally leads to creativity'. P1 provided a further example: 'Chinese national singing method is not purely new singing method, which combine *Bel Canto* and Original Ecological Singing method'.

Additionally, this research also found that creativity is the product of a continuous process of self-development, as T2 indicated that 'creativity is research, you should dig as much information as possible'. Consequently, Chinese perspectives on creativity might be characterised as knowledge, experiences, contextualised by the Chinese cultural foundation and tradition, as well as the process of constant learning. However, creativity appears to have a hierarchical dimension, as creative judgement is regarded as a privilege of those at the higher levels. Their creative performance is acceptable not due to the performance itself, but due to who they are. Even if undergraduates imitate the creative performances of their teachers or other advanced players, this could be discouraged by their teachers, as H2 believed creativity is something that must be controlled in undergraduate education.

Creative teaching can be defined as a learner-focused approach, integrating creative teaching strategies into instruction that can lead to creative performance. Nonetheless, as demonstrated in Section 4.3 of Chapter 4, a number of student participants showed more positive attitudes towards creative teaching in comparison to their teachers; they seemed enthusiastic about this topic and answered questions thoughtfully and positively. In the interview, they expressed and developed their ideas by providing examples of their thoughts to facilitate creative teaching on different teaching styles, considering diverse repertoire, varied teaching focus, and developing communication and discussion to promote their creative thinking.

In addition, students were more optimistic than their teachers regarding the expansion of repertoire styles, such as contemporary, jazz, and Chinese music, and hoped to be able to acquire knowledge of these styles of music as well as to play more repertoire that is unique to each individual. Moreover, students exhibited favourable attitudes towards diverse learning contexts, such as group teaching and master classes, because students could perform various roles in such contexts, and therefore these contexts might foster students' creativity. The significance of improvisation activity in developing creativity and creative performance were also recognised by one of the student participants. Several student participants believe that the teaching content should not only emphasise technique, but also interpretation, musical form and harmonic analysis, and an understanding of the period and context of the work, all of which are expected by students and considered to develop their creative performance. Furthermore, only the student participants brought up the possibility of a teaching facility with improved equipment and a variety of video resources. These remarks suggest that students are receptive to and hopeful of diverse approaches to piano lessons from their teachers, which could enhance their understanding and performance. Participating students also acknowledged the benefits of creative teaching, including the promotion of student-teacher relationships, the development of their motivation, and effective learning and personal growth.

Creative teaching can be defined as a learner-focused approach and integrating creative teaching strategies into instruction and that lead to creative performance. Furthermore, the findings indicate limited application of creativity and creative teaching in the filmed lessons in this study. However, the teacher participants’ perspectives differed from their actual

practice as observed in these videoed lessons. For instance, T1 stated belief in the importance of creativity:

> I think improving students' creativity has always been the most important aspect in teaching. No matter the teachers or students, we must improve our own ability and creativity. Of course, to improve creativity, it must be based on a very solid foundation, such as piano playing ability and theoretical ability [T1].

This teacher's lesson showed a lack of creative teaching; however, it is possible that not every lesson will display creative teaching, particularly when considering the timing of the lesson in relation to exam deadlines. Additionally, there is another case that demonstrates the inconsistency between beliefs and practice. For example, T5 stated that creative teaching is to: 'shape whole professional ability of undergraduates' and [creative teaching is] 'diversified teaching' [T5]. However, this teacher's lesson did not demonstrate how to develop comprehensive professional competence and diverse teaching. In the actual lesson, the emphasis was on developing the student's technical ability rather than overall professional ability; the repertoire was classical music; and the teaching strategies were primarily based on the teacher's instruction and demonstration. However, this was only one of the numerous lessons that this teacher would deliver; it may be possible that creative teaching would have arisen with other students, or at a different point in the academic year.

In T9's interview, it was found that the teacher was aware of the significance of creative teaching:

> A professor from the Shanghai Conservatory of Music was invited to give a lecture as a result of his attendance at the Chopin International Piano Competition. According to this expert, after observing the competition, he discovered that the Chinese pianists lacked independent thought. He stated that foreign teachers provide their students with more choices and encourage them to consider alternative ways of playing, rather than teaching them how to play this like this and how to play like that. What happened during the competition was that, despite the fact that the piece was the same, each pianist performed it differently; nevertheless, when it came to Chinese pianists,

> everyone performed it the same, demonstrating some problems of teaching philosophy. Additionally, the professor expressed his wish that piano education might be more creative, offering students more choices and encouraging them to explore and experiment [T9].

However, there was a significant emphasis on master-apprentice teaching and side-coaching throughout T9's lesson (see Chapter 6, section 6.3), leaving little room for the student to explore and develop their ideas, therefore potentially limiting the student developing into an independent and creative musician.

This PhD research shows that creativity seems to be intentionally compartmentalised, since it is desired, for example, during choir rehearsals rather than during the lesson or class itself (see Chapter 2, section 2.4), and this might be the reason why there was a lack of creative teaching in these filmed lessons. However, seemingly positive attitudes toward creativity and creative teaching in the field of music were presented in some of the teacher interviews. Moreover, the student participants exhibited a more favourable attitude toward developing a creative approach to piano teaching than the teacher participants. However, the teaching tradition and culture seems to have formed this style of teaching, which in turn has limited creative content.

7.6 How is the current pedagogy related to and influencing creativity and creative teaching?

The findings show several challenges to developing both the students' creativity and techniques of creative teaching as mentioned in relation to the previous research questions, including strong master-apprentice teaching approaches and limited teaching methods. In addition, the Chinese cultural heritage which created the notion of skill improvement as the foundation of instrumental education, the influence of the institutional exam syllabus, cultural and societal influences, and a lack of resources and inadequate teacher training will be illustrated in this section.

Based on the interview data, some teachers exhibited unfavourable attitudes or a lack of concern for creative teaching. For example, T4 stated: 'I don't know [about creative teaching] and never thought about it'. T4 further illustrated: 'we learn to play the piano, not to compose music. There might be some creative teaching in composition, but I do not think we have creative teaching in piano pedagogy'. It might be seen that T4 distinguished between piano

playing and composition and perceived a solid border between these two domains; therefore, it is possible that creative teaching occurred in composition rather than piano performance, and that creativity might be seen as possible in composition, but not in piano pedagogy.

Lyu (2019) states that there is little correlation between courses and teachers rarely share and communicate their teaching resources to each other in Chinese higher music institutions (see Chapter 2). The isolation of knowledge rather than relation between courses was reflected by T5:

> We [teachers] teach our own [courses]. The teacher of harmony only teaches the part of harmony; the teacher of musical form only teaches the part of musical form; the history of Chinese and Western only teach the part of themselves and piano teachers only teach piano part. No connections are made between courses [T5].

Research has shown that there is correlation between composition and creativity, and there is a higher correlation between creativity and composition in a group setting (MacDonald, Byrne & Carlton, 2006). Therefore, the implication here might be towards building connections between composition and piano performance to encourage musical creativity. For instance, do composers create pieces for pianists? Would they discuss the creative process and how their music could be performed with pianists? If they can collaborate to explore the creative process between pianists and composers, teachers might subsequently be able to foster independence and creativity for themselves and their students.

Furthermore, some teachers who took part in this research believe that their own piano education was traditional, and thus their own teaching is somewhat conventional, but using a slightly expanded repertoire might be seen as a creative strategy. T9 suggested:

> I still received traditional teaching since I was a child, and my teaching philosophy is relatively traditional, mainly based on classical work … Whether university or conservatory of music, it seems that they still follow the goal of cultivating musicians and pianist … The [piano] teaching in higher education level is too conservative. It's just oral teaching, and students learn as much as the teacher plays. If there is anything new and to be added for creative, it's the relative expansion of the repertoire [T9].

As can be observed, some participants have a disinterested attitude toward creative teaching. Combined with an educational tradition that may result in limited openness to change, this raises the idea that the educational tradition could be seen to be unchallengeable, and that it is beyond criticism.

7.6.1 Heavy teaching requirements

As seen from the interview data, the syllabus plays a critical role in both teaching and examination. Each institution has a teaching and examination curriculum which teachers are required to follow. The data also shows that the syllabus generally follows the syllabus of the Central Conservatory of Music (see Chapter 5, section 5.3). According to this syllabus, undergraduates must complete the required annual amount of repertoire, such as three polyphonic works, five etudes, two full sonatas or a complete sonata plus a concerto, and six other medium-sized pieces; pass all required examinations each year and be able to perform at least at Level 4 repertoire requirements of the syllabus, which in turn requires teachers to complete a demanding annual amount of teaching tasks. In particular, five different repertoire requirements are established by the syllabus, which include specific types of pieces (Central Conservatory of Music, 2020). For instance, 'Chopin's Etude Op. 10 No.2; Liszt's Transcendental Etude Nos. 4 and 5; selected pieces from Bach's The Well-Tempered Clavier; Beethoven's Sonata Op. 57, Op. 101, Op. 109; Chopin's Barcarolle' are all set for Level 4 (Central Conservatory of Music, 2020, p. 7). This means that students must be able to perform the works mentioned at Level 4 or above, otherwise they might not be able to graduate. The quantity of teaching tasks might therefore prevent teachers from ensuring sufficient time for students to grow and develop their independence and creativity.

7.6.2 Technique-oriented teaching syllabus

Additionally, the syllabus emphasises the significance of students establishing their basic skills and improving techniques (Central Conservatory of Music, 2020). The syllabus indicates:

> For Year 1 and 2 students, the emphasis is on the acquisition of solid playing skills and strives to integrate technical training with the cultivation of musicianship; for Year 3 and 4 students, the emphasis is on the cultivating of musical expression and creativity while strengthening technical training (Central Conservatory of Music, 2020, p. 1).

In respect to the videoed lessons in Chapter 6, Lesson A with S9, who was in year 3, showed slightly more discussion and reflection on musical expression compared with the other two videoed piano lessons; however, it seems as though that S9 was still not given much freedom to develop their own independence and creativity. This might be because the syllabus does not appear to include specific guidance or assessments aimed at enhancing musicianship and creativity. By contrast, technical assessment occurs once a year. Thus, it can be observed that the teaching syllabus recognises musicianship and creativity as skills that might be achieved after four years of study. This is reflected in the data which indicates that H2 views the development of certain abilities, such as intrinsic motivation, as a long-term goal to be accomplished after students graduate rather than during their undergraduate studies (see Chapter 4, section 4.4.2).

According to the syllabus, the examination in the first term of Years 1, 2 and 3 is referred to as 'technical examination' (Central Conservatory of Music, 2020, p. 3), which indicates that strong focus is placed on students' technical growth. This is also reflected in the findings of this PhD research: there is a tendency towards technique-oriented teaching seen in Lessons A, B and C for students in Years 1 and 3 (see Chapters 5 and 6). This may explain why Lin (2002) indicates that the teaching philosophy at the Central Conservatory has a considerable influence on the field of piano education in Chinese context. However, the tendency of Chinese education is emphasising basic knowledge and skills (Gardner, 1997):

> So long as the society wants to develop both skills and creativity, it can have both. It is important that the alternative approach be kept in mind, lest an exclusive orientation toward creativity, or a total commitment toward skill development, preclude the possibility of developing the other facility (p. 156).

Therefore, technique and creativity are not mutually exclusive; neither is creativity conceivable without mastery of technique. Creativity and technique can co-exist but are not seen in this format in these research findings.

7.6.3 Lack of teacher training/self-development of creative teaching

The findings showed that self-development, as perceived by some of the teacher participants, appeared to be about improving their own playing and by performing more concerts, as if this will enable them to impart knowledge to students; however, improving their teaching skills seemed not to be included. This is in line with Zhu (2018), who argued that piano teachers are more concerned with developing their own performance skills than with teaching, which might result in teachers being superficial in their pedagogy and providing insufficient help to students. In this PhD research, one of the teacher participants appeared to value self-development through taking occasional one-to-one lessons to improve their piano performance: 'I basically go back to Germany to give concerts every year, so I still take piano lessons with my professor before the performance' [T4]. However, it might be argued that this teacher's external experience does not necessarily lead to develop creative teaching, as they might have still encountered strongly master-apprentice teaching with little or no emphasis on creativity while studying overseas.

Moreover, T10 questioned the significance of teacher training: 'do you believe that teacher training is beneficial in the piano subject? Can you be creative after listening to a presentation or lecture?'. Therefore, this might show this teacher's questioning of the need for piano teachers to engage in teacher training for self-improvement, and related concerns about how creativity might develop. Furthermore, the supervising system for staff provided by these higher education institutions in China appeared not to support the development of teaching quality, even though it would provide evaluation. T2 stated that:

> In China, to evaluate the quality of teachers' teaching, the head of department and the head of the Dean's office would observe teachers in the classroom. This supervising system is superficial, providing the teacher with only broad feedback, such as pass or fail, which is a formality [T2].

However, T2, on the other hand, compared what he had learned about enhancing teaching skills when he studied abroad in the United States:

> My professor would invite a professional educator to observe the piano teacher lessons. What do they take note of? They watch you teaching a lesson to your students, such as a thirty-minute lesson. Following the lesson, the educator advised the teacher on the language they used, the teaching approach they took, and even the teaching methods they used while assisting students with the intricacies of their work ... I also use this method with myself; for instance, when my teaching assistant is instructing a student, I observe and provide advice. Therefore, I believe that this approach can help teachers to enhance their teaching quality, and it is well worth promoting and supporting. Several private [musical] institutions have also asked me to serve as a teaching supervisor, supervising their teachers on how to teach their students [T2].

It might be observed that this piano teacher is conscious of actively developing his teaching abilities; he takes what he has learnt overseas and implements it with his teaching assistant and other private musical institutions and believes that the approach is worth promoting. However, this aspect of development was not mentioned by the other participants. Therefore, it appears as though some private institutions might have a greater focus on the development of pedagogy in their teachers than the higher education institutions that were represented by the teachers and students in this PhD research.

7.6.4 Limited teaching strategies

According to Benson and Fung (2005), an analysis of piano teachers' verbalisations revealed that Chinese piano teachers mostly employed instruction and directive as teaching strategies to younger students; moreover, they used multiple modelling, such as singing, gesturing and playing frequently. Their study also found that in comparison to American piano teachers, Chinese piano teachers are less likely to ask students questions during their lessons. However, this PhD research is focusing on older students, and the three filmed lessons (see Chapter 6) also demonstrate that the teachers' verbalisation is dominated by instructions and directives; they rarely ask their students questions, aside from rhetorical ones which they then frequently answered without the student having a chance to think about or answer them. Additionally, demonstration is widely used in the teaching in the three filmed lessons, and it

is also shown in Chapter 5 (section 5.5.4). In general, this might imply that there is a lack of variation in the teaching strategies of piano teachers in this PhD research with the two main teaching strategies being teachers' verbalisation and demonstration.

7.6.5 Cultural and societal influences on creative teaching

The findings also show how cultural and societal factors influence creative teaching in Chinese higher music education institutions (see Chapter 4). The head, teacher and student participants revealed that creativity comes from experiences, solid performance and theoretical foundation as knowledge. In addition, creativity is a process of constant learning and improvement. Thus, creativity might be seen as a development process that comes from one's past experience and knowledge. As indicated by Niu (2012), while novelty continues to be a significant aspect of creativity in Confucianism, the cultural context emphasises a gradual development, suggesting that creativity is perceived as gradually evolving tradition. However, the findings in this PhD research indicate that there might be an imbalance between knowledge and creativity in Chinese higher music education institutions, with teaching placing emphasis on improving students' knowledge while ignoring the cultivation of creativity.

Bai (2021) states studying the piano has opened new paths to happiness and success, enabling Chinese people to compete in society, and to enhance their social position. Therefore, Bai (2021) further illustrates that the rise in the demand for piano tuition is mirrored in the number of pianos manufactured within and imported to China, the number of individuals learning to play piano and the status given to the piano that reflects that China has become a piano-pursuing culture. Teachers are eager to take on private students in order to earn money, which keeps them too busy to develop knowledge of piano pedagogy (Zhu, 2018).

Moreover, Yeh (2018) found one of their piano teacher participants in Taiwan gave 42 piano lessons each week because the students' parents believe the teacher can assist their children to pass piano graded tests or to win competitions. Therefore, Yeh (2018) indicates that such a belief may lead piano teachers to narrow their teaching goals to passing piano graded tests or winning competitions, and therefore they might lack the time and motivation to expand and develop their teaching skills. Regarding the influences of competition, T2 stated: 'even if teachers have clear personal artistic characteristics, performers often want to be accepted by more judges, so as far as possible not to 'provoke' any judge, which makes more and more performance loses their characteristics'. Therefore, due to such societal influence, as stated

by P1, teachers are ‘afraid of trouble’ (see Chapter 4, section 4.5.3), demonstrating that they teach what they have been taught and want to be accepted by more people, thus they rarely explore creative approaches. T10 also reflected: ‘I believe that in such a chaotic environment as China's, when everyone is focused on making money, how can you expect piano teachers to reflect on creative teaching?’ [T10]. These comments suggest challenging situations for piano teachers in China which may have a negative impact on their ability to develop as teachers.

7.6.6 Lack of creative teaching resources available

As discussed in Chapter 4, the policy of creative teaching in higher education in China might be seen as a slogan not grounded in reality, at least for piano education, because the government has not taken substantial measures to guide and implement creative teaching in higher music education institutions (see Chapter 4, section 4.2.1). According to Zheng and Leung (2021), research on creativity in piano pedagogy in the Chinese context still shows an ‘elementary, definitional understanding of creativity, viewing it firmly from the perspective of traditional instrumental performance while simultaneously aiming to draw the attention of the wider public to its significance’ (p. 1). This might suggest that China’s understanding of creativity in piano pedagogy is still rooted in the traditional concept of instrumental teaching, that is, in a single pedagogical approach (Su, 2019) of hierarchical technique-driven teaching (Guo & Cosaitis, 2020).

As Zheng and Leung (2021) demonstrate, establishing a creative identity for piano teachers serves as a scaffold for developing students’ creativity in piano playing. The authors state that piano teachers must actively and intrinsically build their creative identities. However, it appears as though they neglected more detailed instructions of how to establish a creative identity for piano teachers. According to Horng et al. (2005), while a variety of elements might impact a teacher’s self-perception of creativity development, the following factors are essential for the formation of creative identity: educational beliefs of self-expression, communication and sharing should be fostered by teachers themselves while passing them on to their students; more importantly, motivation and devotion to creative pedagogy are needed to help teachers to build up their own creative identity. These latter attributes were not seen in the present research.

Furthermore, imagination is a critical source for creativity; hence, teachers might promote students' imagination by sharing their own imaginative ideas. However, Zheng and Leung (2021) did not investigate the impact of student-teacher relationships on enhancing students' creativity and creative teaching, or consider various factors of teaching methods and content that could encourage creative teaching in lessons, or the relationship of teaching to curriculum and assessment in Chinese higher education institutions. Guo and Cosaitis (2020), however, recommend Xindi's applied piano pedagogy as a unique and revolutionary teaching method in China, which emphasises the need for cultivating the learner's 'interest, creativity and collaborative abilities' (p. 10). Firstly, this approach is based on the 62 textbooks by Xindi and is aimed at piano learners of all ages, as well as professional and amateur pianists. Secondly, this prioritises the development of singing-playing skills. However, such a broad approach and emphasis may not be appropriate for adult pianists in higher music education. Likewise, Wang's (2020) empirical research focuses on the use and role of computers in piano teaching, and Zhu's (2018) article discusses several broad perspectives for the development of piano teaching in China but neither provides specific teaching strategies for creative teaching in one-to-one piano lessons for higher education. These studies therefore show challenges in this context in relation to creativity.

The focus now turns to a broader evaluation and connection between the emergent themes and the literature within which the research is situated. These concern cultural expectations (7.7) and Chinese views of creativity and creative teaching (7.8) and lead to the presentation of recommendations for promoting creative teaching (7.9) and further specific recommendations for promoting creative piano pedagogy (7.10).

7.7 Cultural expectations

According to Hu (2002), the educational system in China is considerably different from other countries, as it has a distinguishing teaching and learning culture. This section shows how the present study is affected by the teaching and learning culture from the following perspectives: moral education, examination-oriented education, the role of the teacher in society, the role of the student in society, limitations of technique-oriented teaching, and the student-teacher relationship.

7.7.1 Moral education

The primary focus of Confucianism was to construct the moral education of a citizen or ruler, thereby allowing the country to be ruled by moral goodness (Lawrence, 2000). According to Mingyuan (2006), education has always been intertwined with cultures and countries: in Ancient China, the goal of education was to 'cultivate personal life, regulate home life, and make the world peaceful' (Mingyuan, 2006, p. 172); thus, ancient China prioritised ethics above sciences. Confucius developed students' ethical values through music (Huang & Thibodeaux, 2016). Mingyuan (2006) further indicates that as a result of moral education, Chinese people have prioritised morality, emphasised collectivism rather than individualism, and people have been limited to ethical relationships; thus, 'dare not think, dare not speak, dare not take risks, and lack in pioneering and innovating spirit' (p. 173) are features of this educational approach. Such an educational paradigm may foster servility rather than individuality and it continues to influence Chinese education today (Mingyuan, 2006).

Furthermore, education and teachers were elevated to a position of predominance as a result of Confucius's thinking. Hu (2002), for example, indicated that Confucius placed a high value on education, seeing it as a method of transforming a common individual into a superior person. As a result, Chinese teachers and students see education as a serious enterprise that demands profound dedication and meticulous work (Cortazzi & Jin, 1996b). This confirms Pratt, Kelly and Wong's (1999) study showing that people's perceptions of social roles are highly culturally specific; for example, Chinese people often see teachers as experts since they are perceived as having comprehensive knowledge in their field. Moreover, Staats (2011) states that the philosophical concept of Confucianism relates to education through 'a clear division between work and play, a diminishing of play' in the classroom (p. 47); in addition, 'uncertainty avoidance' (p. 48), would be present, and these features were shown in the videoed lessons (see Chapter 6).

Cultural expectations, such as seeing teachers as experts possessing comprehensive knowledge in a particular field, and the viewing of teaching and learning environments as serious enterprises, leading to a decrease in play and an increase in avoidance of uncertainty in the classroom, may all potentially inhibit students' development of creative thinking skills; this could relate to the piano pedagogy as seen in the higher education videoed lessons.

7.7.2 Examination-oriented education

Historically, the Chinese imperial civil service examination system began as a means of selecting people for positions in the Chinese government, and thus the Chinese educational tradition was closely linked to this examination system (Miyazaki, 1981). According to Mingyuan (2006), Chinese society was greatly influenced by the imperial civil service examination system since the value of credential was generated by it; education at that time was associated with the purpose of obtaining wealth and a position in the Chinese government. Consequently, Chinese students' motivation for studying has been labelled as extrinsic (Mingyuan, 2006).

Pintrich (2000) proposes three perspectives on goals, in one of which the task goal does not emphasise the reasons or motivations for why individuals might want to accomplish something, but the target goal provides the standards against which individuals may evaluate their performance. Consequently, these factors of exam-focused teaching and teacher-assigned repertoire may make it difficult to motivate students to learn intrinsically. According to Renwick and McPherson (2009), high-level intrinsic motivation results in students' better performance compared with students who show low-level intrinsic motivation. Renwick and McPherson (2009) also found that if intrinsic and extrinsic motivation are integrated, excellent performance can be achieved by students; however, extrinsic motivation alone is insufficient to motivate effective learning. In addition to Amabile's (1998) three components of creativity, motivation (particularly intrinsic motivation) is a vital component in developing creativity.

Nevertheless, the examination system in China has existed since the Han Dynasty (202 B.C.), from imperial examination to the current college entrance examination, and examination-centred education appears to have intensified (Li, 2021). Li (2021) notes that examination-focused education leads to "Neijuan" (p. 1028), a term that has become popular in China since 2020 which refers to people who are engaged in a competition to keep up with their peers and make an effort for an outstanding result. However, Li believes that the social phenomenon of "Neijuan" leads to negative competition rather than positive, which results in students having little intrinsic motivation; as Li (2021) states, they 'desire the desire of others' (p. 1030). Without or with only a small amount of intrinsic motivation, students do not choose what they are willing to do; rather, they follow their teachers' advice and select

subjects that are relatively simple to earn high grades in. Moreover, "Neijuan" can lead to excessively apprehensive and energy-drained individuals (Li, 2021). Regarding students who have enrolled in higher education, however, the status of exams could be somewhat lowered by institutions, and in the meantime, the students' intrinsic motivation could be emphasised and supported by encouraging them to choose the repertoire with which they are most comfortable and interested in performing, thereby strengthening their intrinsic motivation.

7.7.3 Role of the teacher in society

Traditional Chinese education has influenced ideas of the teaching and learning process, as well as expectations of the traits that a good teacher will possess. According to Cortazzi and Jin (1996), the key criterion for a successful teacher in the Chinese context appears to be substantial subject knowledge, whereas teaching abilities such as motivating students, utilising effective pedagogy, and providing clear explanations appear to be less essential based on Chinese students' opinions of what makes a good teacher. Chen (2015) argues that Chinese teachers have full control over the classroom; this includes the teacher selecting knowledge for students to learn and delivering it to them for memorisation, and the teacher dominating classroom activities. Furthermore, Rao (1996) suggested that the most important obligation for a good teacher is 'being the model for people to follow' (p. 461); this is again thrusting the teacher into a sacred position. As a result, education in Chinese context is often regarded to be monological in nature and transmission-based (Hu, 2002). In addition, Qi, Dong and Xue (2021) illustrate that teachers play a vital role by sharing their personal experiences with students as much as possible in one-to-one piano tuition in China.

7.7.4 Role of the student in society

Chinese students are frequently characterised as passive learners who are unwilling to raise questions and are quiet in front of others or passive when participating in classroom activities (Ballard & Clanchy, 1991). This is confirmed by Sit (2013), who observed that Chinese students are quiet and submissive to ensure silent learning. Very recently, Zhu and O'Sullivan (2020) observed in their empirical research that the majority of Chinese students remain silent when asked questions. Furthermore, Cortazzi and Jin (1996) indicate that Chinese students are socialised according to social expectations from an early age in the Chinese educational tradition, which emphasises conformity. However, through interviews with students influenced by Confucian culture, Tran (2013) found several reasons for this passive state of

learning. While cultural factors are one of them, the study also reveals other factors such as the educational system, syllabus requirements, workload, teaching methods and learning environment (Tran, 2013).

Rote learning seems to be the primary approach used by Chinese students. According to the *Analects of Confucius*, Confucius said: 'Learn something and then review and practice it frequently. Isn't it a pleasure?' *[xue er shi xi zhi, bu yi le hu 学而时习之, 不亦乐乎]* (Song, 2010, p. 2). Likewise, as cited by Fung (2018) 'Reviewing the known is the foundation of knowing new perspectives' *[wen gu er zhi xin, 温故而知新]* (Fung, 2018, p. 148). By reviewing what they have just learned, the student gains knowledge and a deeper understanding of the subject, thus memorisation is regarded as one of the most effective learning techniques by Chinese students (Rao, 1996). This is recognised by Hu (2002) who indicates that memorisation and rote learning are critical since education has been viewed by the Chinese as a process of information accumulation; learning happens by imitation of others rather than independent thought, which is why it is regarded a reproductive instead of analytical.

Liu (2006) suggests that the rote learning approach is a distinguishing feature of Chinese education, and it appears to be seen at all levels in China (Liu, 2006). However, it was discovered by Marton and Säljö (1976) that distinct levels of processing information among Swedish university students correlate to the different elements of learning material that students concentrate on; the authors named these deep-level and surface-level processing approaches. During surface-level processing, students focus on memorising the text and have a reproductive notion of learning, which implies that they are somewhat compelled to use a rote learning approach. Deep-level processing, on the other hand, directs the student's attention to the learning material's purposeful substance. As a result, rote learning was described as being strongly connected to the technique of surface learning by Marton and Säljö (1976). While Liu (2006) argues that a rote learning approach leaves students who are enrolled in higher education underprepared to deal with unexpected challenges, it cannot be applied as a learning strategy without some understanding. Since rote learning and repetition dampens originality and fosters servility (Liu, 2006), this process is criticised for a lack of creativity and critical thinking among Chinese students and failure to put enough emphasis on independent thought (Hu, 2002).

In music teaching, Sha (2019) indicates that 'many teachers are still accustomed to the "cramming" teaching method, focusing on explanation and demonstration, leaving little room for students to explore and discover' (Sha, 2019, p. 929). Xia (2020) also indicates that teachers are critical in that they educate students from their own experiences; as a result, students exhibit a high level of imitation and listening behaviour, and their independence cannot be developed by one-to-one tuition. However, limited verbal communication might result in students unable to obtain advice from the teacher. Additionally, teachers might not be able to grasp the situation and requirements of students in terms of any issues arising in their independent practice, and this might lead to a mismatch between adopting teaching strategies and the students' needs.

7.7.5 Student-teacher relationship

In terms of the student-teacher relationship in the Chinese context, Huang and Thibodeaux (2016) found the relationships at the College of Arts in Xiamen University to be formal and serious, as teachers were reluctant to encourage and praise students. As a result of this type of instruction, Chinese students have developed a conservative approach to learning, with a reluctance to engage in critical and independent thinking and a contentment with being passive recipients of knowledge (Rao, 1996). Recent studies have confirmed a teacher-centred teaching and didactic methods in one-to-one piano lessons in Chinese higher music higher education institutions (Li & Timmers 2021; Luo, 2018; Zheng & Leung, 2021). Moreover, Kang and Chang (2016), as noted earlier, found that teachers are perceived as parents under the influence of Confucian culture.

Li and Wegerif (2014) also indicate that numerous Western researchers raise concern about teacher-centred methodology which emphasises rote learning and mimetic methods in the Chinese context, as these approaches are not considered to be conducive to accomplishing crucial educational aims, particularly higher-order thinking. Furthermore, Gibson (2010) suggest that a setting that fosters creative teaching 'encourages risk-taking, independence and flexibility' (p. 607). However, the learning environments observed in this research are indicative of the teacher-centred style and seem to be somewhat opposite to creative teaching, as the teachers appear to have dominated authority, and little flexibility, potentially creating dependent learners. As seen in Figure 7.1, a master-apprentice approach is used in the context of these lessons observed in Chinese higher education institutions in this PhD

research. As two subjects, the teacher and the student exhibit an unequal teacher-student relationship while simultaneously reflecting the teacher's one-way instruction. On this basis, the teacher demonstrates the characteristics of authority, role model, control and limited questioning, whereas the student demonstrates a compliant lack of independent thinking, limited creativity, and a passive and quiet learning attitude.

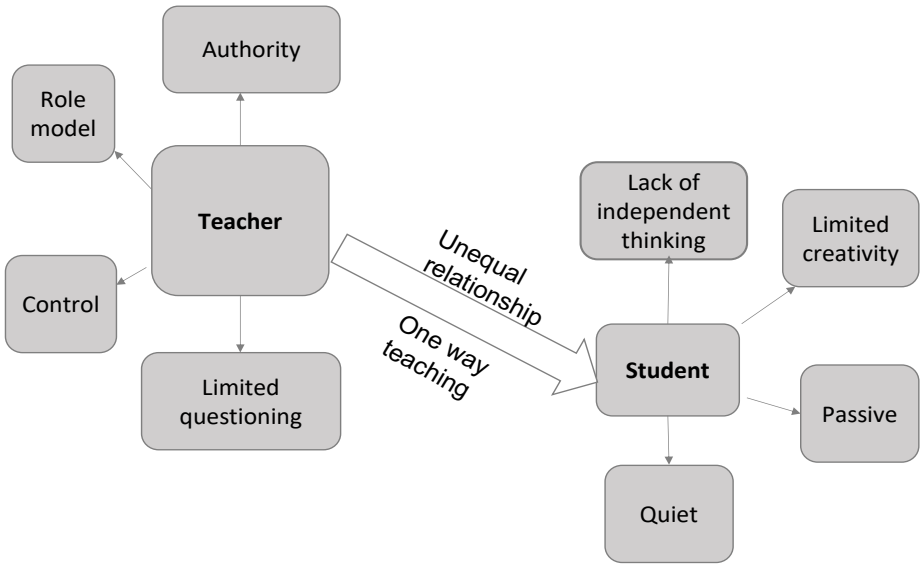

Figure 7.1 Model of master-apprentice approach in the context of these three lessons observed in Chinese higher education institutions

7.7.6 Technique-oriented teaching and Western music focused content

Ma and Wang (2016) state that piano teaching seems to be centred on technical aspects in Chinese higher education institutions; Huang and Thibodeaux (2016) also suggest that Chinese students concentrate on demonstrating technical skill rather than meaningful connection with musical expression. According to Zhou (2019), many piano students began their learning at an early age, and a significant number of them regard piano to be a lifelong career; thus, there might be a growing focus on technique in piano teaching and learning, even to the point where it becomes the primary consideration for evaluation. However, an increasing number of Chinese scholars recognise that piano pedagogy should not be limited to technical improvement. For example, Ma and Wang (2016) illustrate that piano teaching is also a culture-related subject, thus perceiving and experiencing the culture behind the repertoire should take priority rather than gaining technical proficiency. Wang (2018) also

stated that Western piano music has dominated in piano education in higher education in China. However, the limited teaching focus and teaching content might not encourage students' creativity and thus does not appear to promote creative teaching at the higher education level.

7.8 Chinese views of creativity and creative teaching

Zheng and Leung state (2021b): 'creativity does not emerge out of nowhere; it is related to his or her knowledge' (p. 6), thus knowledge propels creativity. Furthermore, a wealth of experience is also seen as creativity, as T2 indicated: 'creativity is that what you experience, that is what you see and hear should be rich enough'. Zheng and Leung (2021b) indicate that a musician's life experiences might enhance their personal style in performance, thus creativity increases. Therefore, as indicated by Fung (2018), although creativity is explained as 'newness' (p. 148), it is dependent on past experience and knowledge. This is aligned with Niu (2012), who argues that creativity can be expressed as novelty; however, novelty is 'never a sharp breakthrough from the tradition; rather it can be seen as an extension of tradition' in Confucian heritage in Chinese context (p. 280).

According to Amabile's (1998) model of creativity, intrinsic motivation and creative thinking ability are also critical components of creative development; however, they appear to be underemphasised in the findings of this PhD research. Consequently, the role of the teacher and the extent to which creativity occurs in piano lessons will be discussed in section 7.9, in relation to recommendations connecting to intrinsic motivation and creative thinking skills.

Creative teaching can be defined as a learner-focused approach that increases students' independent thinking, active participation and openly expressing themselves (Horng, Hong, ChanLin, Chang & Chu, 2005). However, the findings suggest limited use of creativity and creative teaching on the basis of the interview data and the observed lessons. Consequently, there is a need to provide recommendations specifically in relation to this in one-to-one piano pedagogy in higher education context, which will be addressed in the following section.

7.9 Recommendations for promoting creative teaching

A very strong master-apprentice relationship was demonstrated in this PhD study, which showed very low amounts of student speech in the three filmed lessons. Li and Timmers (2021) also found similar results in a study which took place over a three-week period at a Chinese University, with two piano teachers who conducted a weekly lesson normally for the first two weeks and then employed a dialogic approach for the lesson in the third week. Their students also displayed a very low amount of speaking during the first two lessons of their research, whereas in the third lesson, when teachers were encouraged to use dialogic teaching and asked more open questions, the students had more opportunities to ask and answer questions, and thus the students' independent thinking was developed in the last week.

Consequently, a teaching approach with little verbal interaction between the student and the teacher might result in learners lacking independent thinking and creativity, being dependent on their teachers and thus potentially being unable to take responsibility for their own learning (Jørgensen, 2000). Daniel (2006) also noted that master-apprentice teaching in the one-to-one context limits interaction between the student and the teacher and contributions from the student. While the master-apprentice system has been strongly connected to traditional Chinese culture (Zhou, Lapointe & Zhou, 2019), it is likely that it has an inhibiting effect on the development of independent and creative learners, as seen in this PhD research.

As illustrated in Figure 7.2, a model presented for creative teaching in piano pedagogy is based on the current PhD research and published literature. The model is primarily focused on four aspects, as indicated by the central circle: teaching approach, teaching method, teaching focus and repertoire development. Specific recommendations are included in the boxes that relate to these four areas.

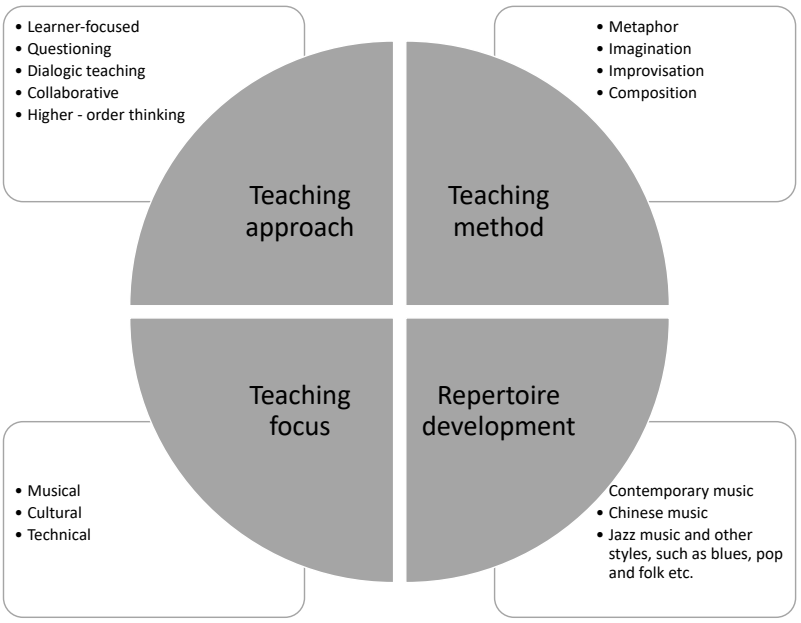

Figure 7.2 Model of creative teaching in piano pedagogy

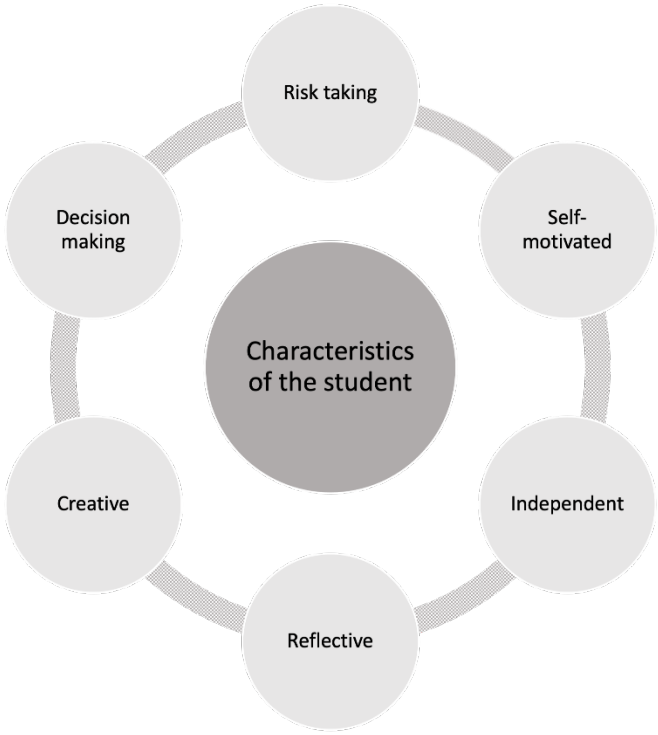

Figure 7.3 Possible characteristics of the student operating within the Figure 7.2 creative teaching model

Alongside the model presented in Figure 7.2, the outcomes of this creative teaching model are presented in Figure 7.3, indicating the potential development of students' characteristics, such as risk taking, decision making, self-motivated, independent, reflective, and creative

learning. Learner attributes such as confidence and enjoyment in learning may also emerge through these characteristics, thus contributing to further learner motivation and potentially supporting positive engagement with the peer group and/or wider community of learners. Sections 7.9.1 to 7.9.6 further expand the creative teaching model and discuss this with reference to relevant literature.

7.9.1 Transferring from master-apprentice teaching to learner-focused teaching

The findings have shown that learner-focused teaching approaches might be considered as creative teaching (see Chapter 4, section 4.3.1.1). According to a student participant in this study, the teacher who facilitates creative teaching should respect the student's views, encourage equitable and open dialogue, and help students build their independence in learning (see Chapter 4, section 4.3.1.1). This is recognised by Dai (2019) who advocates that the teaching model for piano education in higher education institutions in China should be constantly revised in order to establish a new concept of music education, provide truly quality education, and cultivate students to have the skills that are needed by society. Additionally, Li (2019) advises Chinese piano teachers to transition from a teacher-directed to a learner-centred approach. According to Li (2019), teachers might establish a positive teaching and learning environment for students and foster effective communication with them; the author suggests that teachers might need to abandon traditional teaching concepts and ideas and actively study new ones in order to improve students' creativity and independent thinking, and teachers should provide students with more opportunity to express their ideas.

Gibson (2010) suggests that a teaching and learning environment that centres on creative teaching is one that encourages 'risk-taking, independence and flexibility' (p. 607). As indicated in the literature review (see Chapter 1), there are two primary teaching models of student-teacher relationship, referred to as master-apprentice and mentor-friend models, where mentor-friend encourages more communication between teachers and students. In that case, teaching entails guiding students' own musical experiences, which may stimulate students' independent thinking and further increase their motivation for learning and thus increase their creativity (Lehmann, Sloboda & Woody, 2007). Therefore, Gibson (2010) believes creative teaching could be achieved by a learner-centred style concentrating on

regularly creative activity and students' active engagement. How could educators implement student-centred teaching approach in one-to-one piano pedagogy in the Chinese context?

According to Weimer (2002) changing the role of teacher is central to implementing a student-centred approach. Traditionally, the teacher has been responsible for the majority of the learning activities: selecting and arranging the content, interpreting and applying ideas, and evaluating student learning, while the students' efforts have been concentrated on memorising the knowledge (Wright, 2011). Weimer (2002) argues that teaching that fosters learning is not instructing students constantly on what they should know and how. Rather than that, it facilitates the obtaining of knowledge. Weimer states that a teacher can be metaphorically referred to as a midwife in the learner-focused approach, since they know when to remain silent, when to wait and wonder what is going on around students (Weimer, 2002). According to Burwell (2005), the development of student independence is crucial to instrumental teaching and learning, since students are spending more time with their instruments practising independently than they are with the teacher, thus they should have begun to take charge of their own learning by the time they reach undergraduate level (Burwell, 2005).

However, is it possible to recognise a student-centred approach in the Chinese context that has been influenced by master-apprentice culture, in particular one-to-one tuition? How can a student-centred approach be implemented effectively? According to Yang and Lin (2016), yin and yang are intertwined in the ancient Chinese concept of Tai Chi; thus, they claim that a student-centred approach and a teacher-centred approach forms an interactive model as they are complementary, interconnected and interdependent rather than opposed. In this way, the combination of traditional philosophes and related Western educational theories could open another window for development and thus build a collaborative educational culture by applying the term 'teacher-centred' while having a practice that embraces many elements of a learner-centred approach (Yang & Lin, 2016).

Yang and Lin (2016) also highlight that while both approaches are interactive in the teaching, students may learn effectively by being active and independent learners in the teaching and learning process. For example, students will benefit from the positive effects of both types of approach, while issues such as the negative effect of passive students in the teacher-centred

approach or the lack of direction in an entirely learner-focused method will be effectively addressed, resulting in an integrative, balanced educational culture.

The teachers do not appear to emphasise questioning abilities in this PhD research, despite the fact that there is much evidence on how teachers could ask questions in Western research which indicates that teacher's questioning skill is crucial; the type and the quantity of questions they ask students might stimulate students' thinking, encourage their active involvement and also help them develop into autonomous learners (Kassner, 1998; Allsup & Baxter, 2004; Burwell, 2005). For example, Burwell (2005) believes that effective questioning is one of the most essential methods to encourage students to make efforts during the lesson. Effective questions allow, encourage and enable students to engage actively in the learning procedure, and thus this must support a critical development period for the student to become a mature and independent learner (Burwell, 2005). Moreover, students can be equipped with skills and language to discuss their musical feeling and experiences through the discussion with their teachers and greater depths of understanding can be achieved, and both students and teachers can be inspired by good discussion (Allsup & Baxter, 2004). Furthermore, teachers might assist the students to explore a creative process without imposing the teachers' own ideas by questioning rather than telling (Kassner, 1998).

However, different types of questions have different effects on students. Allsup and Baxter (2004) note that teachers may use three types of questions: open, guided and closed questions. They claim that although open and guided questions promote student-centred engagement by assisting students in gathering musical information and discovering new things, closed questions may result in a single answer. In comparison to giving direction to students, conversation requires teachers to listen to students and continuously ask better questions, such as open and guided questions. Burwell's (2005) empirical study involves video recordings and interviews, and findings suggest that while exploratory questions may appear to be the most successful in eliciting student involvement, disguised instruction and rhetorical questions might be seen as low-level questions and not appear to need a response from the student. Meissner and Timmers' (2020) research also indicates that open questions designed to facilitate students' thinking might involve various perspectives such as pitch, rhythm, dynamic markings and technical elements of playing, as well as questions about technical proficiency and accuracy. Open questions might also involve students evaluating their own

playing and daily practice; this might be more beneficial than others analysing it for them. Additionally, Esquivel (1995) recognises open questions as a defining feature of creative teaching. Consequently, questions that are open and exploratory are more likely to inspire more effective learning and encourage creative teaching.

Moreover, Hallam (2001) emphasises that questioning is a significant method to develop students' higher-order thinking and metacognitive skills; this enables them to become professional musicians and independent learners. Hallam's study demonstrates that assessing one's strengths and limitations and devising methods to overcome difficulties may be enhanced via development of metacognitive abilities (Hallam, 2001). As a result, teachers who encourage discussion of more general metacognitive abilities may support this process. For example, through considering 'personal strengths and weaknesses; assessing task difficulties; the selection of appropriate practising strategies; setting goals and monitoring progress; evaluating performance; ways of developing interpretation; strategies for memorisation; enhancing motivation; time management; improving concentration; performance strategies' (Hallam 2001, p. 38). As a result, the implications for Chinese piano teachers are that they could enhance their awareness of the concerns listed above and create room in their lessons for discussion and questioning with their students, while also demonstrating an openness to the learner's responses.

7.9.2 Various teaching methods: metaphor and imagination

The current study demonstrates limited teaching methods in one-to-one lessons. The most often-used teaching methods in this study were demonstration and directives; nevertheless, the use of metaphors, mental imagery and student-teacher collaboration were occasionally displayed (see Chapter 6). In Chapter 6, the analysis of Lesson A illustrated the teacher's use of metaphor and imagination, which not only exhibited their sense of humour, but also assisted the student in effectively realising the intended musical performance. However, such teaching strategies were rarely used in Lessons B and C. Li (2019) notes that piano teaching in China suffers from a lack of creativity and innovation in teaching strategies, and teaching strategies are currently unable to keep up with the rate at which students' creative thinking is developing. According to Li (2019), under the influence of the examination-oriented system, piano teaching continues to employ the cramming approach, making it difficult to stimulate students' enthusiasm, and thus it is vital to innovate teaching strategies in order to increase

students' intrinsic motivation and foster their creative thinking (Li, 2019). Likewise, Qi, Dong and Xue (2021) also demonstrate limited teaching methods in piano pedagogy in China and emphasise the importance of strengthening teaching strategies in order to nurture all-round skill development.

Metaphor research has grown in popularity among cognitive science disciplines as an interdisciplinary field of study (Shen, 1992). In literature as well as education, metaphors are widely acknowledged to perform an 'aesthetical, ornamental and pedagogical role' (Botha, 2009, p. 431). However, the use of metaphor and mental imagery seems to have received little attention in piano pedagogy in China (Benson & Fung, 2005; Li, 2019; Sha, 2019; Qi, Dong & Xue, 2021). Research by Li and Timmers (2021) demonstrates that piano teachers employed a variety of metaphors and imagery as scaffolds to facilitate students' learning. However, their study discovered that the teachers frequently demonstrate through moving their students' arms physically or using other body language rather than constructing ideas verbally. Therefore, this might be further evidence that Chinese piano teachers undervalue the use of metaphors and imagery in piano pedagogy.

The use of metaphor as part of a verbal teaching strategy has been addressed in teaching music by Western scholars. For example, Davidson (1989) argued that the role of metaphor in teaching expressive performance:

> Helps the student attain a multidimensional grasp of the music … The metaphor creates an affective state within which the performer can attempt to match the model … The multiple representations which result from maintaining the balance between making exact copies and matching the affective image evoked by the metaphor and description make a highly effective way of constructing musical ability (p. 95).

Moreover, the use of metaphorical language, according to brain scans, activates the same areas of the brain as creative processes like imagination and emotion, as well as musical and artistic expression (Grainger, Barnes & Scoffham, 2004). As stated by Moreira and Carvalho (2010), metaphors provide new views on a topic, might generate connections to different fields and provide a fresh idea for redefining the issue; additionally, metaphors might be applied to strengthen an initial understanding of a particular issue (Lubart & Getz, 1997). Thus,

mastering metaphor methods in teaching and frequently employing them might encourage both teachers and students to draw connections between ideas and develop new means of accessing previously formed knowledge. The findings in this PhD research showed that from the teachers' perspective, creativity was defined as finding new methods to access existing information (see Chapter 4), thus metaphor might be an appropriate and effective tool to develop both students' and teachers' creativity.

Woody (2002) suggests that metaphor plays a significant role to help students make connections between music and emotion in teaching. Lindström et al. (2003) conducted a survey of 135 adult music students and discovered that the use of metaphor was regarded as the most effective and most often encountered method for teaching expressivity in the conservatory setting. This is confirmed by Meissner (2020) who suggests that using metaphors can be an effective way to help tertiary students and adult musicians improve their expressiveness in music performance. According to Schippers (2006), metaphor is critical for students to build a deeper understanding of music learning relating to aspects of technique, structure and interpretation based on data collected worldwide about teachers' use of metaphor in education, thus Schippers emphasises the need for teachers to be fully aware of the pedagogical function of metaphor, supporting students in developing creative musicianship.

Additionally, Huang and Thibodeaux (2016) imply that metaphor appears to foster creativity in Chinese students when employed in teaching, as metaphor elicits a variety of reactions from Chinese students. This leads to consideration of the most effective teaching approaches for eliciting students' creativity in the Chinese environment. Given that the findings of this PhD research indicate that piano education is a 'finger-based' rather than aural-based process [T10], and that S2 argues that demonstration does not contribute to effective teaching in piano pedagogy, as the teacher's ability to play well does not imply that the student can also play well, there may be a case for greater use of metaphor in piano teaching in China.

Finally, in their empirical study on mental imagery and imagination in teaching, Zheng and Leung (2021) discovered that imagination is an efficient technique to enhance students' creativity. According to the authors, teachers begin by stimulating students' imaginations through sharing their imaginative ideas; however, teachers also need to reflect on how their own performance and learning experiences grow, thus supporting the development of their

own creativity as well as that of students. This was also identified by Chen (2019), who noted that creativity and imagination were deemed synonymous, and that developing that imagination could accomplished via a variety of teaching content, nurturing students' creative thinking and boosting their motivation to learn. Therefore, imagination seems to be important for the development of students' creativity and hence for the promoting of creative piano pedagogy. As shown by the findings from this PhD research, the imaginative method was used by several teacher participants (see Chapter 4, section 4.4.2.2). Imaginative strategies not only provided a variety of teaching methods for creative teaching, but also helped students' interpretation and expressing themselves through music; however, there was scope for these teachers to invite more collaboration in this process and to make further use of students' own ideas.

7.9.3 Improvisation and composition

Gibson (2010) believes that a teaching and learning environment that focuses on creative teaching is one that supports challenging tasks. According to Riveire (2006), improvisation might be a challenging but enjoyable practice for both students and teachers, and it is an effective teaching tool. Based on Azzara (2002), it is via improvisation activity that students are able to express themselves more creatively, enhance higher order thinking abilities, and in turn develop their independence and creativity while building a deeper connection with music. Furthermore, Biasutti (2015) notes that reading a score forces performers into a passive state in which they focus exclusively on the printed score and pay less attention to musical interpretation and sound quality; however, improvisation enables performers to be active and engaged in this process while performing tasks that require real-time reaction. Therefore, improvisation activities might be considered as not only having significance influence on students' technical and musical development, but also as a creative strategy in instrumental teaching (Moreira & Carvalho, 2010).

The results of the current PhD study demonstrate the importance of strengthening students' ability to improvise, which has been acknowledged by both students and teachers (see Chapter 4, section 4.3.6). They emphasised the importance of improvisation in piano teaching and learning; T7 elaborated on how the students improvising was accomplished through interaction between the teacher and the student. This was seen to not only help students have a better understanding of the piece they are playing, but also to help them enhance

their technical and musical capabilities, as well as their creative thinking. Additionally, the Chinese Academic Journal Network (2021) (see Chapter 2, section 2.2.4.4) mentioned the importance of group lessons on improvisation in piano pedagogy in the Chinese context, which was not stated by the present research participants.

Kenny and Gellrich (2002) considered that interactive group improvisation might be viewed as a complement to personal practice. According to the authors, improvisation occurs more frequently in a group setting. As a result, there may be an echo here with one of the findings, which is the value of the diversification of learning contexts (see Chapter 4, section 4.4.1). Despite the fact that the one-to-one lesson plays a significant role in piano teaching and learning in higher education institutions in the Chinese context, learners could be encouraged to participate in extra activities rather than depending solely on one-to-one piano lessons. In this approach, improvisation could be promoted not just as a creative teaching method in one-to-one tuition, but also in a group environment (Biasutti, 2015). Furthermore, as previously discussed in this chapter, composition in a group context might encourage students' creativity (MacDonald, Byrne & Carlton, 2006). As a result, improvisation and composition could be utilised in a group setting to help students develop their independence and creativity.

7.9.4 Diversification of learning context

The data analysis also emphasises the need for diversifying the learning setting while establishing creative teaching (see Chapter 4, section 4.3.2), as H2 indicated that 'the piano curriculum mainly focuses on one-to-one lessons, but we must not take students as teachers' own private property, because teachers have limitations, and those limitations might restrict students' development'. According to Haddon (2011), students could be encouraged to participate in alternative learning environments or study with other teachers since there are many benefits for students, including exposure to a broader range of musical and technical concepts and increased pedagogical awareness. This teaching philosophy is also represented in Confucius's culture, as reflected by one of the teacher participants in this PhD research, *'Sanren Xing Biyou Woshi' [三人行必有我师]*, which literally means that among any three people, one can find something to learn from other two for sure (see Chapter 4, section 4.3.2). Therefore, it emphasises that learning can occur with individuals other than the teacher and in settings other than the classroom.

Simons and Hicks (2006) also recognise that it is necessary to promote learners' creativity by encouraging them to participate in a variety of activities. Alternative models of one-to-one lessons include 'group lessons, workshops, and student-led sessions, as well as situations where student are taught individually by two or more teachers who take different roles in the teaching and learning process' Carey and Grant (2015, p. 15). Team working might improve and widen both the teachers' and students' one-to-one experiences; some of the potential disadvantages of one-to-one lesson, such as dependency of learner, might be reduced by employing a variety of learning environments (Carey & Grant, 2015).

7.9.5 Enhancing praise and encouragement of creative thinking

The data analysis for this study revealed that teachers were not forthcoming in their praise during the recorded lessons (see Chapter 6). According to Bartholomew (1993), both positive and negative feedback from teachers may have a substantial effect on students' motivation. For Bartholomew, positive comments from teachers were found to have a more stimulating influence on students than negative evaluation; the author also emphasises the need of being aware of the many intentions connected with praise and the fact that generic compliments do not address the learner's unique situation. Qi, Dong and Xue (2021) studied the value of enhancing encouragement in piano education in the Chinese context. Their findings indicate that teachers' encouragements might increase students' motivation and help them better perform in piano lessons. Therefore, there is scope for teachers to extend their awareness of using praise in piano pedagogy.

7.9.6 Repertoire development

According to the findings of this PhD research, some teachers appear to feel that teaching piano means teaching classical music; hence classical music is the major teaching material; this is also aligned to the graded examination requirements and those within higher music education institutions for piano. For example, the findings showed that one of the teacher participants believes that performing classical repertoire is critical for their students' technical development; however, technical development seems to be the focus of piano teaching, thus this might be a strong reason why teachers prioritise classical repertoire. Moreover, the piano education gained by the teacher participants appears to have had a substantial effect on their teaching practice; for example, as T9 was taught classical music, so they teach classical music to their students. This aligns with the findings of Ward (2014), who believes that Western

classical music plays a significant role in Chinese higher education institutions. Moreover, Western classical music is the most often taught repertoire in China, according to Li (2019).

However, the findings of this PhD research included H1 questioning if higher music education in China should prioritise Western classical traditions, as this participant recognised that the students exhibited a greater interest in non-Western classical music than in Western classical music, such as pop music (see Chapter 5, section 5.4.1). According to Zheng and Leung (2021), when students were encouraged to perform repertoire in a variety of musical styles and the requirement for replicating music scores was relaxed, students' individual performance style, which could represent their creativity, increased significantly, indicating that it is beneficial for students' personal development when they are encouraged to play repertoire in a variety of musical styles and allowed to be creative.

Pieces in musical styles that the teacher participants in this PhD research were unfamiliar with, such as contemporary works, did not appear to be a main emphasis in their teaching. This reflects an appreciation for the importance of Western classical music in piano teaching. As suggested in this PhD research (see Chapter 4, section 4.3.1.3), diversified repertoire might be seen as a creative teaching strategy in piano pedagogy, through including contemporary, jazz, Chinese and other styles of music. The importance of incorporating Chinese traditional music culture into piano education has been emphasised in the context of Chinese higher education by Su (2019), who believes that the combination of Chinese and Western music is necessary for students' knowledge to increase and their creativity to develop.

Therefore, another implication of this PhD research is that it would be beneficial to foster mutual trust between teachers and students; students could be encouraged to choose and experiment with a variety of musical styles, and teachers could encourage students to be creative in their approach by deploying flexibility in their expectations to replicate music scores according to the performance and technique requirements of the teacher, while also considering the extent of the level of detailed feedback that teachers provide, as well as their use of praise. Rather than focusing on developing students' professional skills (repertoire, technique and ability to pass exams) during their four years of undergraduate study, teachers could also strive to broaden students' horizons and consider their future development, thereby assisting students in becoming autonomous lifelong learners with a greater range of skills, including creative agency.

7.10 Specific recommendations

- Refining syllabi, emphasising developing students' creative performance as part of teaching, examination curricula, the entire four-year curriculum, and making repertoire more diverse.
- Students should be given opportunities to express their ideas, both in lessons and in the wider institutional context, and this should be facilitated by allowing students speak with the department head and/ or by providing them with anonymous feedback opportunities.
- A learner-centred approach should be encouraged in the teaching; open-ended and exploratory questions should be employed frequently; preliminary and open conversation to connect to the student should be facilitated into each one-to-one lesson.
- Exploratory expressive work should be encouraged in lessons, considering various phrasing, dynamics, tempo options, and interpretations of the music, for instance, with teacher and student evaluating these together through verbal dialogue.
- Students should be encouraged to explore a variety of musical styles, such as contemporary music, Chinese music, jazz, blues, pop, and folk music in addition to more standard classical repertoire.
- Improvisation and/or collaborative composition group sessions should be facilitated alongside individual lessons. Students should also develop a deeper comprehension of music theory and enhance their overall creativity by improvising or composing their own music.

In consideration of these recommendations, taking as an example the Undergraduate teaching of Central Conservatory of Music, on the basis of the evaluative syllabus (discussed in sections 7.6.1 and 7.6.2) it has been found that the piano repertoire being taught is technique-focused, as technical training is the central focus of the four-year programme. While the curriculum emphasised that Year 3 and Year 4 students should be more focused on developing musical expression and creativity, technical training needs to continue. Therefore, an overemphasis on technical skill does not appear to be conducive to fostering creative teaching and student performance. The findings from this research indicate that facilitating creative teaching and developing students' creative performance should be incorporated into both the teaching and examination curricula and the entire four-year curriculum. Gardner's (1997) analysis of skills-oriented development in the Chinese context showed that creativity and technique are not mutually exclusive; rather, they can coexist, and it is essential to keep both in mind at all times. Thus, refining the repertoire, and in particular marking the

repertoire more diverse is a fundamental action that should be performed initially. Refining the exam syllabi may require some time for leaders to consider, deliberate, and ultimately complete this process. Moreover, from the institutional level, students should be given opportunities to express their ideas, as they desire to be valued and respected. This should be facilitated by allowing students to speak with the department head or by providing them with anonymous feedback opportunities. The findings also indicate that teachers and department leaders have a hierarchical view of creativity; a number of them believe that creativity pertains to higher-level performers or those who are referred to as talented. However, this might not help in fostering the creative performance of students. Therefore, they also have to embrace that everyone has creative potential.

In addition, by facilitating higher order thinking skills by asking more open-ended and exploratory questions to students, and encouraging them to experiment with various approaches to their performance, a learner-centred approach to instruction should be developed. Students desire to communicate with their teachers and should be given further opportunities to do so; this should be facilitated by spending some time at the beginning of each lesson in discussion, using questions to ask about students' ideas and piano practising before continuing a discursive approach within the teaching. Teachers should encourage students to experiment with various phrasing, dynamics, speeds, and interpretations of the music, for instance, and evaluate these together through verbal dialogue. In addition, rather than using classical music as the primary teaching material, students should be encouraged to explore a variety of musical styles, such as contemporary music, Chinese music, jazz, blues, pop, and folk music. This may not only help them take responsibility for their own learning, but should additionally support them to develop a greater understanding of the music and incorporate elements of diverse styles into their performances. The challenge of adopting a student-centred approach is that teachers may need training in order to have a clearer understanding of how to carry it out, and it may take students some time to adjust to this approach, developing their thinking, taking responsibility for their learning, and fostering their creativity.

Teachers may need to be kind and keep encouraging their students to take risks and gain higher-order thinking skills, through encouraging students to experiment, a process that should be advantageous for teacher-student communication. However, teachers should consider how to maintain a balance in one-on-one lessons between employing teaching methods that encourage students' speaking, thinking, and creativity, and taking the role of an expert. Rather than relying solely on instruction and demonstration when communicating with students, employing metaphor and imagery as teaching strategies may help develop students' imaginations and facilitate creative performance. This might present a challenge for teachers, who may need to reconsider their reliance on instruction, demonstration and modelling in favour of using more metaphorical and imagery approaches to develop students' higher order thinking.

Finally, improvisation and/or collaborative composition group sessions should be facilitated in line with individual lessons. In the group sessions, the tutor should explore different types of teacher-student relationships, including between peers, and should also facilitate students' ideas and discussions by posing questions when necessary. Students should also develop a deeper comprehension of music theory and enhance their overall creativity by improvising or composing their own music. However, tutors need to be trained to facilitate discussion-based teaching, and will need knowledge of improvisation and composition and confidence to explore these with students. In addition, enhancing teaching facilities may involve expanding video resources or providing students with access to YouTube so they can discover the more valuable information they need, as well as providing larger classrooms with better equipment, such as projectors and speakers. These recommendations therefore encompass syllabus, examination, teacher behaviour and actions within lessons, and suggest a need for teacher training to support relevant changes of practice.

7.11 Conclusion

This chapter explored the cultural expectations and educational traditions that contribute to the deployment of the master-apprentice approach to piano teaching and learning. On this basis, how the Chinese style of teaching and learning influenced the roles of teacher and student in society, as well as how the student-teacher relationship was presented is demonstrated in teacher-centred piano pedagogy. As a result of this PhD research, a model (Figure 7.1) was created to demonstrate how the master-apprentice approach is presented in

one-to-one piano pedagogy in the examined contexts within the Chinese setting, as well as the features of both teacher and student. Students might lack independence and creativity as a result of this strong master-apprentice approach; this strong master-apprentice teaching style might affect consideration of and implementation of creative teaching in practice. Likewise, it appears as though the Chinese cultural heritage created and emphasised the notion of skill improvement as the foundation of instrumental education, and its relationship to assessment by examination. Other issues such as the influence of the syllabus, limited teaching strategies, cultural and societal influences, a lack of resources and inadequate teacher training also affected creative teaching.

This chapter also considered a recommendation framework (see Figure 7.2) for promoting creative teaching in one-to-one piano pedagogy in Chinese higher education institutions, which included a variety of perspectives, for example, moving from solely master-apprentice teaching to learner-focused teaching by establishing mutual trust and a more equal relationship between the student and the teacher in one-to-one lessons, respecting students' opinions, and promoting equitable and open dialogue between the student and the teacher; promoting a variety of teaching methods in order to foster creative teaching; moving the emphasis of teaching from technique to musicality and considering cultural background influences to the musical compositions, and employing diverse repertoire including Western classical music as well as other styles of music. Figure 7.3 presented a model indicating student characteristics that could operate within this. Additionally, the importance of diversifying the learning environment is addressed. The following chapter will explore the implications for institutions, including fostering creative teaching in curriculum design, and examination and teaching syllabus development, as well as strengthening teacher training for creative teaching. A number of recommendations are made for Chinese piano students; limitations of this PhD study and future research directions are also presented.

CHAPTER 8: CONCLUSION, LIMITATIONS, IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

8.1 Introduction

This PhD research makes various recommendations for one-to-one piano pedagogy, including teaching approaches, methods, content and priorities to implement creative teaching in one-to-one piano pedagogy. Due to the fact that the data indicate limited teacher training opportunities in the Chinese context, this highlights another deficit in teacher education and curriculum design for the higher education context, as well as the implications for the students, and thus the following sub-sections 8.2 to 8.4 will discuss this in detail. Additionally, the limitations of this PhD research and suggestions for future research will be presented in this chapter.

8.2 Enhancing teacher training for fostering creative teaching

The data analysis showed that one of the teacher participants was aware that teacher education in the piano field is relatively underdeveloped in China, and hence emphasised the need of strengthening teacher education in this subject:

> Due to China's unequal regional growth, I am now investing an increasing amount of time and effort in teacher training. As a result, the condition of some students from places with insufficient piano education has remained unchanged for decades. As a result, I believe teacher training is crucial, even more so than if I were to coach a student who wins a competition ... As a result, anytime the institution requests that I educate instructors, I would happily take, and among my private students will be some piano teachers. Because how many students are you capable of teaching? However, if you teach piano teachers, this is more successful since those teachers will also have a large number of students, and so you will have a greater influence by teaching them [T2].

Despite the fact that T2 has recognised the vital role of teacher education in the growth of piano teaching, it appears as though the value of creative teaching has been overlooked within the teacher education process.

8.2.1 Acceptance of creativity and taking risks in creative teaching

Rinkevich (2011) thinks that strengthening creative teaching should begin with teacher education, and that throughout teacher education, the importance and advantages of creative teaching should be emphasised. Indeed, Rinkevich (2011) believes that by changing negative attitudes about the notion of creativity, creativity might be integrated in a way that benefits both students and instructors. Therefore, it is critical to maintain this attitude toward embracing creativity in teaching and learning, as well as to influence awareness and perceptions in teacher education, which appears to be the first step. Moreover, the willingness to take risks and avoid always using safe approaches is critical for teachers engaged in creative pedagogy (Burnard & White, 2008), this will also be discussed in section 8.3.1.

8.2.2 Centralising teachers' creative learning

Building on Lin's (2011) model for creative pedagogy as discussed in Chapter 1, creative pedagogy was viewed by Lin (2011) as being at the centre, and the three components of creative teaching, teaching for creativity and creative learning are interconnected and surround creative pedagogy. However, Selkrig and Keamy (2017) believes that teachers' creative learning should be in the centre instead of creative pedagogy. As indicated by Selkrig and Keamy, teachers' creative pedagogies are not a reused approach; instead, their teaching approach is formed by reflective capabilities, critical analysis, and their own professional and creative growth. Indeed, teachers' creative learning should be at the centre for creative pedagogy. Therefore, the suggestion here might be to continue fostering teachers' creative learning growth within the setting of higher education. There is not only professional development involved, but also significant creative learning, such as reflective ability and critical evaluation which could positively change their own teaching. Additionally, this PhD research (see Chapter 6) found that teachers did not ask students about how they were or about their independent practice between lessons; it might be beneficial for teachers to do so, since it demonstrates teachers' caring attitude and an interest in students' lives and practice which would have relevance to both the immediate lesson and the ongoing student-teacher relationship.

8.2.2.1 Reflection capability

Self-reflection by teachers appears to enhance their self-development, potentially promoting creative teaching in practice. Yeh's (2018) research in Taiwan revealed that piano teachers are unaware of the significance of reflective practice in their profession. However, writing a reflective diary supported the piano teachers to reflect on and review their own teaching on a regular basis, and they discovered that it was beneficial for them to see new dimensions of their teaching (Yeh, 2018). Zheng and Leung (2021) also advocate piano teachers to engage in self-reflection for three reasons. Teacher self-reflection may encourage their own creativity; it may also promote students' self-reflection; and might infuse new ideas into teaching strategies, thereby making teaching more engaging and creative. Self-reflection in this PhD research was rarely mentioned by teacher or student participants. While P1 in this PhD research did mention that it is critical for reflection to take place in each lesson in order for students to build their own creative thinking, while also providing them with some space (see Chapter 4, section 4.3.3.3), there are no further points from other participants. However, this teacher seemed to have overlooked the use of self-reflection for a teacher's personal pedagogical development, and the benefits of supporting creative teaching in practice.

8.2.3 Enhancing creative team collaboration

Chapter 2 has highlighted that the Chinese Ministry of Education has advocated for the development of innovation teams for teachers and implemented the 'Innovation Team Development Program' (ITDP), a research-based programme in higher education institutions since 2004 (see Chapter 2, section 2.3.3). However, it seems that the ITDP was not developed in higher music education settings specifically in connection to foster creativity and creative teaching. Therefore, this could be a strategy that motivates instrumental teachers at higher education level to develop their own research projects and then incorporate the findings into their own teaching. This is also confirmed by Peng (2021) that developing teacher research capability can promote creative piano pedagogy in Chinese higher music education institutions (see Chapter 2, section 2.2.4.4). Burnard and White (2008) also suggest that it is important to emphasise the value of educators working together creatively and collaboratively. Consequently, the implication here might be a consideration for institutions to give chances for educators to collaborate creatively or for educators to organise their own

creative teams to research and develop strategies for creative pedagogy in instrumental tuition.

8.3 Implications for higher education institutions

As mentioned previously, the institution plays a significant role to encourage creative teaching in the higher education context. Therefore, the following sections will discuss recommendations for institutions in the light of Chapter 7.

8.3.1 Creative teaching resources

The curriculum and syllabus could benefit from defining creative teaching and teaching styles in order to motivate staff to work toward that aim. Implications for assessment would also need careful consideration, beyond widening the repertoire required, to also include elements such as improvisation. In addition to providing more varied pedagogical settings such as group teaching, seminars, discussion and workshops, teachers could be supported to discuss teaching and creative teaching, such as through a music education forum for piano teachers to improve their own creativity and creative teaching by sharing ideas and hearing from other educators, potentially from different countries who have utilised processes such as reflection and creative approaches in their teaching. In addition, the findings also indicate that providing teachers with opportunities for research appears to be essential to promoting creative teaching, and thus teachers might need research leave to facilitate their research development. Hence, there might be a suggestion here that teachers should be encouraged to build up the English language skills which could help them communicate with teachers from different countries; secondly, proficient English could also encourage teachers to study music education course in English-speaking countries, such as instrumental and vocal teaching courses in the UK. Moreover, English language skills could also allow teachers to access worldwide resources including database access to research material that might help teachers improve their knowledge, attitudes, expectations and creative teaching in higher education institutions and piano teaching in general in China.

8.3.2 Enhancing teaching facilities

Teaching spaces could be improved in order to support creative pedagogy through considering room size and the provision of equipment that might promote and facilitate students' creativity, for example, by providing each room with a projector and access to a collection of performance videos. Moreover, other types of resource, for example, such as composers talking about their creative process, improvisers talking about their processes and their value may be useful. Moreover, training and professional development courses provided by the institutions for teachers could enhance creative education in higher education institutions in China. Therefore, providing teacher training on skills for creative teaching would be beneficial and could encourage creative teaching in higher education institutions in the Chinese context.

In the context of Chinese higher music education, thus it is necessary to foster not just creative teaching in one-to-one piano pedagogy, but also institutional support. As illustrated in Figure 8.1, the core aim arising from this research is the inclusion of creative teaching pedagogy in one-to-one lessons, and institutional support can be summarised in three areas: encouraging creative teaching in the syllabus and curriculum design, diversifying assessment and examination forms, and enhancing teacher training to include creative teaching. The institutional support surrounds the creative teaching in one-to-one piano pedagogy, which forms a stable triangle; according to this model, creative teaching might be developed in Chinese higher music education institutions.

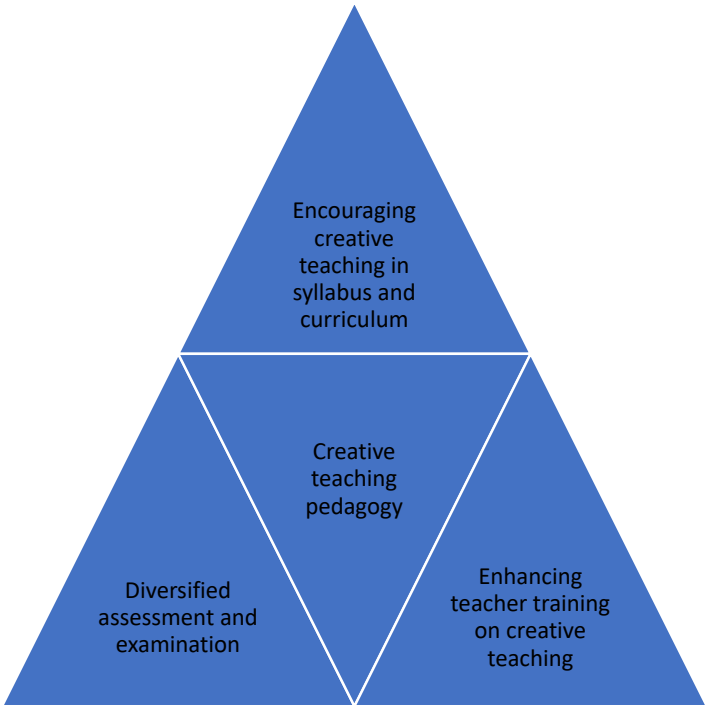

Figure 8.1 Creative pedagogy framework for Chinese higher education contexts

8.4 Implications for students

Students should build up confidence to ask questions or even to challenge the teacher. Possessing the ability to ask questions and develop thoughts could aid in learning and might help take responsibility for it. Moreover, students could make regular reflections on what they have learned in lessons and in their practicing and share these with the teacher during the next lesson.

Furthermore, students could be encouraged to do some research on the repertoire they wish to learn and discuss their preferences with the teacher. Playing the pieces that students are passionate about may help to increase their intrinsic motivation. Students could also be encouraged to understand that playing piano is not just about technique; for example, they could also learn about the composer and the historical context in order to broaden their understanding. This could make learning to play the piano more interesting and creative. Additionally, students could participate in additional group lessons, workshops, and activities in relation to piano performance, improvisation, and composition in institutions. Finally, students could be supported in practical activities such as teaching, which might foster creativity in terms of approaches and repertoire choices while also accumulating experience.

8.5 Limitations

The research has the following limitations:

- The study is restricted to Chinese higher music educations, and as a result, the results cannot be generalised. Additional study should be undertaken in China, where some of the results might be implemented and develop further research questions.
- The administration of interviews with departmental heads, teachers and students regarding their views of piano pedagogy, perhaps by adopting wide questions, the scope of the investigation might have been constrained in depth; therefore, more detailed questions should be used that might enable further data to emerge about these and related aspects that could affect creative piano pedagogy.
- The number of interviews with those who could offer head of department, principal and students perspectives is limited.
- This study only observed three teacher/student pairs in filmed lesson analysis. Interesting results may arise when comparing more teacher/student pairs.
- Year 4 students did not participate in a videoed lesson; creative teaching might be involved more for Year 4 students and their ideas might be taken into account by the teacher.
- Administrative and support employees are not included in this study. Teaching and learning environment, curriculum planning, assistance and examination for piano teaching and learning are all areas in which they may have expertise.
- The research does not include how curriculum development could be related to creative teaching from heads of department, teachers and students' perspectives.

8.6 Future research

Considering that this study seeks to be foundational research in the development of piano education in relation to creative teaching in higher education institutions in Chinese context, there are several prospective expansions to Chinese research in the future possible, using this thesis as a foundation.

- China is a large country, and this research investigated the views of participants within music higher education institutions in the Beijing-Tianjin-Hebei region. Future research could be extended to institutions located in central or southern regions of China.

- The current study is qualitative research. Subsequent studies could therefore use a mix of quantitative and qualitative methodologies to obtain richer data.
- This research focuses on the study of creative teaching for advanced level students in higher education. Future studies may be expanded to beginner level students, including children. What variables might contribute to creative teaching for beginner level students who are children, and how might these relate to the exam structures that they will need to progress through?
- While this study focused on public higher education institutions in China, it could potentially be expanded to private musical institutions in the country to determine what elements lead to creative teaching and how creative teaching might be considered and developed in private institutions.
- Comparative research with other music institutions in other countries, such as Singapore or Malaysia, may reveal a distinct set of issues related to creative teaching which could be applied to the Chinese context.
- There is potential for more study to be conducted on creative pedagogies in the teaching of other instruments or voice.
- Additional research on creative teaching not just in one-to-one piano pedagogy, but also in group pedagogy.
- Conducting research on the support and training needs for piano instructor who conduct creative pedagogy in institutional contexts will benefit students, teachers and institutions.
- Subsequent research on piano teaching could investigate students' motivation, as understanding students' motivation might help them learn more effectively.
- Further research might examine the model of this PhD research in one-to-one piano pedagogy in Chinese higher education context, for example, investigating which teaching methods most effectively stimulate students' creativity.

This research examined current piano pedagogy and the perceptions of teachers, students, heads of department and a principal in relation to creative teaching in higher music education institutions in mainland China. The findings suggest that the master-apprentice approach dominates and is commonly applied in one-to-one pedagogy; it also discovered that there was generally a positive attitude from the participants regarding creative teaching in the field of music. However, the current piano pedagogy seems to provide limited room for students

to develop their responsibility for learning and creativity. Thus, the present study not only contributes academic research to the literature on piano pedagogy in the Chinese context, but also establishes frameworks for one-to-one tuition and institutional level initiatives aimed at promoting creative teaching.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Interview questions for teachers

What kind of teacher-student relationship do you have in the one-to-one teaching with your students?
请问您在教学当中跟您的学生是一种什么样的师生关系呢？

Do you apply master-apprentice approaches in your one-to-one teaching?
您会运用师徒制模式在您的教学当中吗？

What do you think are the advantages and disadvantages of the master-apprentice teaching model?
您认为师徒制的优缺点是什么呢？

Do you apply a mentor-friend or student-centred approach in your one-to-one piano teaching?
那您在教学中会运用学生中心制的教学模式吗？

How do you decide how the relationship works between you and your student?
什么原因促使你选择运用哪种师生关系呢？

Does the institution influence the ways that teachers have to teach?
学校对于师生关系或者说教学模式有要求吗？

How often do students receive one-to-one piano lessons in your institution?
学生多久上一次一对一的钢琴课呢？一次多久？

Do students have to learn set pieces for an exam, or can they choose what they focus on?
学生是根据自己的意愿选择曲目呢还是根据考试要求?

Do you know how students adjust to a new teacher at your institution?
您知道学生进入大学后如何调整自己适应新老师的吗?

What do you think the term 'creativity' means?
请问您是怎么理解创造力教学的?

Do you think there are differences between Chinese and Western understandings of 'creativity'?

您认为中西方对于'创造力'的理解有何不同呢?

Do you include creativity in your piano teaching?

在钢琴教学中您有用到创造力吗?

If yes, who is being creative? Are you, the teacher, being creative, or is the student being creative? [or both?]

是老师您在运用创造力呢?还是学生在运用创造力呢?还是你们双方都在运用创造力呢?

Can you give me some examples of you using creativity in your piano teaching?

您能举例说明您的在钢琴教学中的创造力吗?

Can you give me some examples of a student using creativity in your piano lessons?

您能举例说明学生在钢琴课当中的创造力吗？

If you are not using creativity, why not?

如果您从不具有创造力，那么为什么不呢？

How do your students respond to creativity in your piano lessons?

对于您的教学当中的创造力，学生们是如何反馈的呢？

Do you think that creativity has an influence on the relationship between teacher and student? If so, how?
您认为创造力对于师生关系上有影响吗？如何影响的呢？

Would you think you are skill-orientated or focused towards creative teaching – or both? How can you balance skill-teaching and creative teaching with your students? Can these be combined? Can you give some examples?

请问您认为您是偏向技术型的教学还是创造力的教学？您在教学中是如何平衡这两种的呢？您认为两者能够结合吗？能不能举例说明呢？

Would you use creative approaches just with young children / beginners, or do you use it in your work with advanced students at this institution? - If so, how does your approach change if you compare teaching children to teaching adults?

您是只对孩子或者初学者使用创造力的教学法呢还是对于专业的学生才会使用创造力的教学法呢？对于不同年龄段的学生，方法有没有变化呢？

What can help promote creative teaching, and why? [materials? Teacher's attitude? Teacher's experience? Student's attitude? Student's experience? No pressure of exam? The teaching room and environment?]

您认为什么能够促进创造力呢？为什么？比如说，教材？老师的态度？老师的经验？学生的态度？学生的经验？没有考试的压力？教学环境？

Do you think creative teaching is productive?

您认为创造力教学是有帮助的吗？

How might creative teaching helps students develop – can you explain your answer?

创造力如何帮助学生发展呢？您能解释一下吗？

Does it help them become a better pianist? Or a better musician?

创造力帮助学生成为更好的钢琴家？或者更好的音乐家?

If so, what is changing, and how is this useful to them?

如果是的话，什么改变了？又是如何对学生有益的呢？

Does creativity in piano lessons connect to the students' development beyond learning piano?

是不是钢琴课中的创造力对于学生其他方面的发展也有益处呢？

Is creativity mentioned in any policy documents from your institution?

在您所工作的单位里，有没有哪些关于创造力的政策或文件呢？

How do you develop creative teaching under the Chinese [or UK] education policy? [how the policy influences your teaching]

在中国教育的政策下，您是如何发展您的创造力教学的呢？

What instructions are you given about your teaching at this institution? Do you have targets to aim for? Do you have a curriculum to follow or can you develop your own curriculum and syllabus?

在您所工作的单位里，有没有给出具体的教学大纲呢？你们的教学目标是什么？作为老师是需要严谨的跟着教学大纲教学还是您可以发展自己的教学大纲或者自己设置？

Did you have training as a teacher? Where was this, what did the training involve, and did this include anything about creativity? How did you feel about it when you encountered it?

作为老师你们会有培训吗？培训中都包含什么呢，这些培训中包含了创造力教学吗？您如何评价您所接受的这些培训呢？

If you have having lessons yourself, is creativity part of those lessons? If so, how is your teacher working with you? If not, why not? If yes, do you apply any of these ideas into your own teaching? Can you give examples?

当您自己作为学生在上专业课的时候，您的老师有包含创造力吗？如果有，您跟您的老师合作的怎么样呢？如果没有，您认为为什么没有呢？如果有，您有没有运用这些创造力的教学法到您自己的教学中呢？能不能举例说明呢？

What about creative teaching in teaching resources? Are you aware of it within piano tutor books? Text books? Piano repertoire / technique resources for students? Is this present in resources at all levels (beginner to advanced?)

在您周围所接触的教学资源上有没有创造力教学呢？钢琴教学书上？教材上？或者是一些音乐会上面？那么现有的这些资源是针对所有年龄段吗 （初学者到高水平的学生）？

Do you have any other comments?

您还有什么其他想说的吗？

Appendix 2: Interview questions for students

What kind of teacher-student relationship do you have in your one-to-one piano lesson?
请问您在钢琴课中跟您的钢琴老师是一种什么样的师生关系呢？

What do you think are the advantages and disadvantages of the master-apprentice approach?
那你觉得师徒制有什么优点和缺点呢？

Does your teacher apply a student-centred teaching style?
你的老师会运用到以学生中心吗？

If not, why not?
如果没有，为什么没有呢？

Do you think a student-centred teaching style can apply for all students?
你觉得学生中心制适合所有的学生吗？

How often do you receive one-to-one lessons in your institution?
你是多久上一次一对一的钢琴课呢？一次多久？

Do you have to learn set pieces for an exam, or can you choose what you focus on?
你是根据自己的意愿选择曲目呢还是根据考试要求?

What do you think the term 'creativity' means?
请问您是怎么理解"创造力"的？

Do you think there are differences between Chinese and Western understandings of creativity?
您认为中西方对于"创造力"的理解有何不同呢？

Do your piano lessons include creativity?

在钢琴课中，您有接受到创造力吗？

If yes, can you give me some examples?

如果有，能不能举例说明呢?

Are you expecting creativity in your piano lessons?

在钢琴课中，您会期待创造力吗？

If so, why?

如果期待，为什么呢？

If not, why not?

如果不期待，为什么不呢？

What kind of creative teaching are you expecting? For example, materials being more creative? Teachers' attitude being more creative or the teaching room and environment being more creative?

您期待的什么类型的创造力？比如说，具有创造力的教材？老师的态度和想法比较具有创新？上课的教室和环境比较具有创造力？

Do you think that creativity has an influence on the relationship between teacher and student? If so, how?

您觉得创造力对于你们的师生关系有影响吗？如果有，如何影响的？

Do you think you are skill-oriented or focused towards being a creative student?

您认为您是技术型的学生呢还是偏向于创造力的学生？

What kind of student do you want to be? Skill-oriented or focused towards creative student? Do you think you are a combined student? Why?

您想成为哪种类型的学生呢？技术型的或者是创造力的学生？或者您认为您是两者结合的学生？为什么？

Do you think creativity is productive for yourself? How might it help you? Can you give me an example? Do you think creativity helps you become a better pianist or better musician? If so, what is changing, and how is this useful to you?

您认为创造力对于您来说有帮助吗？是如何帮助的呢?能否举例说明？您认为创造力帮助您成为了一个更好的钢琴家或者是音乐家吗？如果有帮助，创造力帮助您改变了什么呢?这其中是什么对您起到了作用？

Do you have any other comments?

您还有其他想说的吗？

Appendix 3: Interview questions for Principal and the heads of departments

What do you think the term 'creativity' means?
您是怎么理解'创造力'的呢?

Do you think there are differences between Chinese and Western understandings of creativity?
您认为中西方对于'创造力'的理解有什么不同呢?

Is creativity mentioned in any policy documents from your institution? If so, how is it described?
在学校的政策文件上，有没有提到创造力呢？如何描述的呢?

Is creativity mentioned in any teaching instructions within your institution? If so, how is it described?
在学校的教学大纲上，有没有提到创造力呢？如何描述的呢?

Is creativity defined as part of music education within Chinese education policy? If so, how? What does the policy say?
在中国教育政策方面，创造力是不是也作为音乐教育的一部分呢？政策里是如何说明的呢?

Is it creativity defined in relation to instrumental teaching in the Chinese education policy? If so, how? What does the policy say?
是不是在器乐教学中也提到了创造力呢？政策里如何说明的呢?

Do you think the policy has an influence on instrumental music teaching? If so, how?
您认为政策对于器乐教学有影响吗？如何影响的呢?

Do you think that creativity has an influence on the relationship between teacher and student? If so, how?
您认为创造力对于师生关系有影响吗？如何影响的呢?

Do teachers receive creative training in your institutions or anywhere else? If so, how are they trained to be creative in their teaching?
老师们在学校或者校外会接受创造力教育的培训吗？是怎样的呢?

Can you give any examples of how you think instrumental (piano) teachers are using creativity in their teaching?
您能举例说明您认为老师们应该如何在器乐（钢琴）教学中运用创造力吗？

Do you think creative teaching is productive for students and teachers? What might the benefits be?
您认为创造力的教学对于老师和学生们有益处吗？有哪些方面的益处呢？

Would there be any challenges or difficulties in using creativity in instrumental music learning? If so, what might they be?
您认为老师们在器乐（钢琴）教学中运用创造力时会有哪些困难和挑战呢？

How might these be resolved?
这些困难和挑战该如何解决呢？

Do you have any other comments?
您还有其他建议吗？

Appendix 4: Project information sheet

Project Title:

PhD Research Project in Music Education: The role of creative pedagogy in one-to-one piano teaching in higher education institutions in mainland China. The purpose of this study is to find out what creativity means in piano teaching and to improve creative pedagogy in Chinese higher music education.

Invitation:

You are being invited to be video recorded and participate in the interview on the question of creative teaching. This interview is conducted by Mengyao Zhao, I am a PhD candidate in Music Education, Department of Music at the University of York. My supervisor is Dr Liz Haddon (liz.haddon@york.ac.uk).

What will happen:

In the interview, you will be asked approximately fifteen questions, the results will be used to support my PhD research project.

Time Commitment:

The interview will take an hour and half, and the data will be analysed after the interview.

Participants' Rights:

You have the right to stop the interview at any time you like.

You have the right to omit or refuse to answer or respond to any questions that is asked of you.

You have the right to ask that any data you have supplied to that point be withdrawn and destroyed.

You have the right to ask questions while the interview is in the progress, so please feel free to ask me if you are unsure about any questions.

Benefits and Risks:

The potential benefit and risk could be reflecting carefully on your creative approaches during the interview and questioning the effectiveness of your approaches.

Cost, Reimbursement and Compensation:

Your participation in this study is voluntary, but the researcher will give you a nice gift as compensation at the end of interview, for example: chocolate or perfume.

Confidentiality/Anonymity:

The collected data will not contain any personal information that connects to your own privacy. All responses will be made anonymous and stored securely in the Google drive within my password protected account in line with university recommendation for a minimum 10 years period, and no identifying information will be supplied within my thesis. All the data will be destroyed afterwards.

If you have any question, please feel free to email me at mengyao.zhao@york.ac.uk or call me on +44(0) 7477030070.

Appendix 5: Research consent form

Project name: The role of creative pedagogy in one-to-one piano teaching in higher education institutions in mainland China.

Name of Student: Mengyao Zhao （mengyao.zhao@york.ac.uk）

Supervisor: Liz. Haddon **(**liz.haddon@york.ac.uk**)**

Information:

1. As a student on the PhD in Music Education, I am going to do some research about the role of creative pedagogy in one-to-one piano teaching in higher education institutions in mainland China. The purpose of this study is to find out what creativity means in piano teaching and to improve creative pedagogy further in Chinese higher music education.

2. The video recording and the interview will be used to collect data about the role of creative teaching in piano teaching: a study in the UK and Chinese contexts, and the collected data will support my research project.

3. There are approximately fifteen questions in the interview, and it will take an hour and half. All information from the participants will be firmly anonymised, including names, occupation and gender. Data will be stored securely in the Google drive within my password protected account for a minimum 10 years period in line with university recommendations, and it will not be shared with anyone else. All the data will be destroyed afterwards.

4. As a participant you will receive the consent form and the participant information sheet. Please sign below to show you understand and agree with the information above.

Please complete below:

☐ Please tick here to show that you understand and agree you are happy to work as my participant for this project.

☐ If you agree to accept for this purpose, please tick here.

Name of Participant:_____ Date:_____

Signature of Participant:_____ Date: