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AN AUTOETHNOGRAPHIC EXPLORATION INTO TEACHING TERTIARY JAZZ PIANO AT A SOUTH AFRICAN UNIVERSITY

by

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ABSTRACT

Through an autoethnographic exploration, this study aimed to determine how I (the researcher) could enhance the learning experience of tertiary jazz piano students while focusing on self-reflection. Vygotsky's (1978) zone of proximal development and Csikszentmihalyi's (1990) flow theory were used as the theoretical background of the study. Based on the zone of proximal development, I aimed to enhance the students' learning during weekly piano lessons. Furthermore, based on flow, I intended to reflect on my own experiences while teaching.

For the duration of the study, data collection took place at a South African university with four first-year undergraduate jazz piano students. During weekly lessons, a reflective journal was kept, recording personal flow experiences including an assessment rubric where students' progress could be measured. Results were analysed and sorted under four elements of flow applicable to practical teaching – challenge/skill, clear goals, concentration on the task at hand and unambiguous feedback – including personal flow experiences. These flow dimensions served as a valuable guideline in adjusting teaching methods while teaching jazz. The personal flow experiences relates to Bakker's (2005) emotional contagion theory where a teachers flow experience can cross over to a student, or a teachers mood can influence the students' learning experiences. I found that reflecting on my own flow experiences enhances my confidence, motivation and concentration as a lecturer. Additionally, based on the zone of proximal development, aural/video imitation and scaffolding proved to be important concepts while teaching jazz piano.

Keywords

Jazz education, Jazz piano, Zone of proximal development, Flow theory, Autoethnography, Self-reflection.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

LIST OF FIGURES

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ZPD   Zone of proximal development

FSS-2   Flow State Scale-2

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

Over the past 100 years, jazz has flourished as a definitive style, evolving from its American roots to become a truly international art form. In the South African context, jazz originated from an amalgamation of American swing with indigenous styles such as Marabi and Kwela (Ballantine, 1993; Devroop & Walton, 2007).

As jazz is a more recently developed art form, formal university study programmes have been developed much later than for genres such as western art music. Schillinger House, in Boston Massachusetts, was founded by Lawrence Berk in 1945 which offered one of the first jazz programmes. The school later changed its name to Berklee School of Music (Hazell, 1995). The University of North Texas College of Music established its first jazz programme in 1946 (Joyner & Murphy, n.d.). Today, there is a plethora of information available which includes jazz education method books, materials and aids, instructional videos and online interactive lessons. University jazz programmes follow standardised curricula in order to develop key elements of jazz amongst students. However, the process of teaching jazz, can be structured so as to embraces various regional approaches as well as different methods of teaching and learning. It is therefore important to look at the pedagogical process in teaching jazz, within a localised context while maintaining a global outlook to reinforce universal concepts in the jazz style and to achieve successful educational outcomes.

Taking the above into consideration I endeavour to investigate how to enhance and develop the learning experience of tertiary jazz piano students. The study will be conducted at a South African university where I will follow an autoethnographic exploration based on self-observation and reflexive investigation. This will allow me the opportunity to focus on my own teaching.

Jazz pedagogy captured my interest for the first time in 2014. While completing my music degree (2014) at a tertiary institution, I became a tutor for the second-year jazz pianists. There I discovered the importance of using the correct teaching methods and approaches. It was the first time I had taught at a tertiary level, and my aim was to develop myself as a teacher. After completing my degree in 2015, I was employed as a part-time lecturer at a South African university, teaching first and second-year pianists. My initial approach to teaching was based on technical work, improvisational techniques and jazz repertoire. My first and second-year students were required to do the following:

- Play four to five instrumental piano pieces, per semester, covering the different jazz styles (Latin, swing, bebop, jazz waltz).

- Acquire basic jazz techniques within the context of ii-7-V7-I chord progressions, applying modes and bebop scales over chord progressions.

- Work on improvisation transcriptions by well-known jazz musicians.

- Apply basic jazz piano techniques, playing all scales (major, harmonic- and melodic minor, major and minor pentatonics, blues, bebop) and modes (modes of the major and melodic minor).

- Perform sight-reading exercises.

My teaching approach focused on setting instructional goals and addressing the requirements of the curriculum. However, I found that the students had diverse musical backgrounds which influenced the learning style, teaching methods and the approach of applied pedagogy. Some students had previous formal training, while others had informal musical experiences through listening, exposure to live performances and community music-making. I perceived that one's teaching methods and approaches must allow for a variety of student personalities, abilities and backgrounds. This led me to question my

approach process to teaching, realising that I needed to explore various teaching methods in an attempt to enhance the learning experience of my jazz students. Peters and Miller (1982, p. 55) write about seven stages of concern in a music teacher's career. Two of the stages are relevant to my study: consequence and refocusing. Consequence signifies the impact of teaching methods on students and refocusing suggests examining the consequences of the teaching methods and becoming creative in developing new methods.

The following two theories resonate with what I aim to achieve in my teaching and will be used as a lens through which I could improve my own practice: flow (Csikszentmihalyi) and the zone of proximal development (Vygotsky). Flow represents the state in which an individual may achieve optimal experience and the zone of proximal development represents the relationship between development and learning. Both of these concepts will form the theoretical background of my study.

1.2 AIM OF THE STUDY

This study aims to determine how I can enhance and develop the learning experience of jazz students through an autoethnographic exploration into my own teaching. I intend to focus on enhancing the students' learning based on the zone of proximal development and plan to reflect on my own experiences of flow while teaching in order to discover ways in which this may be useful. Furthermore, through this study, I aim to offer other educators some insight into teaching jazz piano at a tertiary level.

1.3 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Primary research question

In what way can an autoethnographic exploration into teaching jazz piano offer insights that may enhance the learning experience of tertiary jazz piano students?

- How do I adjust my teaching to best approach the students' needs and address the course outcomes and what are my observations of the consequences of this?

- What are my own experiences of flow in teaching my students and in what way is it useful to reflect on this?

- What is my experience of enhancing students' learning in relation to considering their zone of proximal development?

1.4 THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

1.4.1   Zone of proximal development

The zone of proximal development (ZPD) is a concept, or theory, by Vygotsky that seeks to explain the relationship between development and learning. The ZPD is one of the aspects of Vygotsky's broader social development theory. This theory is also known as social constructivism and describes the process in which knowledge is acquired through the interactions of individuals within their society, thus giving meaning to worthless things (Amineh & Asl, 2015, p. 13). Vygotsky (1978, p. 86) states that the ZPD is the "distance between the actual developmental level as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development as determined through problem-solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers". The word *zone* refers to the maturation of development which is not a point one reaches on a scale but is rather a continuous learning zone (Bodrova & Leong, 2007, p. 40).

Bodrova and Leong (2007) agree with Vygotsky that there are two levels within the ZPD: independent performance (what the student already knows and can do alone) and assisted performance (the maximum learning capacity the student can achieve with help). There is also the zone between the two levels that symbolises partially-assisted performances. The ZPD represents a dynamic and constantly-changing set of skills and behaviours. With each change or shift the student becomes increasingly capable of developing and learning more complex skills and concepts. What can be done with some assistance today could be done

independently tomorrow (Bodrova & Leong, 2007, p. 40). Bodrova and Leong (2007, p. 41) add that not all students develop at the same pace and the level of assistance needed might be different from one student to another (extensive assistance might be needed for little development whereas slight assistance can yield a lot of development). Teachers should always observe each student's development and progress. If a skill falls outside the assisted performance level, the student might ignore or use that skill incorrectly.

The term *scaffolding* refers to what the educator can do in order to ease the student's learning without necessarily affecting the actual task requirement. The task should not change but rather the student's action made easier with assistance. The student gradually takes more responsibility to complete the task with less assistance from the teacher. By doing this the student can become increasingly independent while still focusing on the same task (Bodrova & Leong, 2007, p. 47).

In my research, I constantly measured the change in skills and behaviours. I focused on keeping a balance between the students' performance levels and skills. It allowed me to closely measure the guidance needed for each student where I aimed to facilitate scaffolding.

1.4.2 Flow theory

During the 1960's, Csikszentmihalyi began his research in flow experiences while lecturing at the University of Chicago (Mirvis, 1991). Csikszentmihalyi (1975 & 2000) studied artists, top athletes, chess masters, dancers, scientists, surgeons, virtually all kinds of people that demonstrated enjoyment in what they were doing. He employed intrinsic and extrinsic rewards. Csikszentmihalyi (1988, p. 29) revealed that, when doing different tasks, the activity should be perceived as being worthwhile. Enjoyment is a key factor in the theory, along with motivation and achieving optimal experience in the task at hand. Csikszentmihalyi (1988, p. 30) further argues that enjoyment can be achieved by creating a balance between 'challenge' and 'skill'. When a certain challenge arises, it needs to be met with a certain skill. When this is balanced, optimal experience occurs. Anxiety takes effect as soon as the challenge exceeds the required skills; if the skill exceeds the challenge, boredom occurs as an individual tends to become more relaxed (Csikszentmihalyi & Nakamura, 2002, p. 90).

For example, a piano player may become less motivated if an instrumental piece is either too difficult (anxiety) or too easy (boredom).

Below is a summary of Csikszentmihalyi's nine dimensions of flow that evaluates how a person experiences flow:

- *Challenge/skill.* Challenge/skill is one of the main dimensions of experiencing flow. When the required challenge meets the appropriate skill, flow occurs. Jackson and Csikszentmihalyi (1999, p. 17) state that a balance can form between a person's skill and challenge. The required skills needed for this balance can be uniquely perceived. If an athlete believes that they have the ability for a given situation, their mindset could overshadow their actual abilities and contribute more to the experience. Panebianco-Warrens (2014, p. 68) refers to "good technique and a challenge" as an important subtheme in the challenge/skill dimension. During her interviews, five ballet dancers indicated that they experienced the challenge/skill dimension during a stressful performance.

- *Action-awareness merging.* This dimension occurs when an individual is entirely immersed in an activity, resulting in a focused awareness of the activity itself. Total absorption occurs, and the challenge or activity becomes so important that nothing else matters (Jackson & Csikszentmihalyi, 1999, pp. 19-20).

- *Clear goals.* This dimension refers to clear objectives, understanding how to plan and prepare, and knowing what objectives a person is trying to accomplish (Panebianco-Warrens, 2014, p. 68).

- *Unambiguous feedback.* Acquiring feedback is important for self-progression. If a person is on the right track in pursuing their goals, constant feedback reinforces a successful experience. An athlete can receive internal feedback from his/her body (kinaesthetic awareness), or external feedback from a coach or friends (Jackson & Csikszentmihalyi, 1999, pp. 22-23).

- *Concentration on the task at hand.* This dimension refers to complete focus on the specific task. Even when clear goals, feedback, and challenge-skill occur, one still needs to be completely immersed and focused on the task (Jackson & Csikszentmihalyi, 1999, pp. 24-25).

- *Sense of control.* Jackson and Csikszentmihalyi (1999, p. 26) suggest that a sense of control results in a person believing they have the required skills for the task. They are completely confident that they know what to do next and that things will fall into place.

- *Loss of self-consciousness.* This dimension occurs when one forgets about oneself and disregards all negative thoughts. Jackson and Csikszentmihalyi (1999, p. 27) allude to a paradox that exists between a sense of control and loss of self-consciousness.

- *Transformation of time.* If the perceived time passes slower or faster than the actual time, flow experience has occurred. Time becomes insignificant and the experience is enhanced (Panebianco-Warrens, 2014; Jackson & Csikszentmihalyi, 1999).

- *Autotelic experience.* When an activity is intrinsically rewarding it becomes an autotelic experience, which means the experience is enjoyable and provides an incentive for the person to repeat the activity (Panebianco-Warrens, 2014; Csikszentmihalyi, 2000; Jackson & Csikszentmihalyi, 1999).

Flow in Education

A vast amount of research has been done on flow theory, happiness, and positive psychology (Bakker, 2005; Bloom & Skutnick-Henley, 2005; Csikszentmihalyi, 1990, 2000; Csikszentmihalyi & Asakawa, 2016; M. Csikszentmihalyi & Csikszentmihalyi, 1988; Csikszentmihalyi & Graef, 1980; Csikszentmihalyi & Nakamura, 2002; Fritz & Avsec, 2007; Fullagar, Knight, & Sovern, 2013; Panebianco-Warrens, 2014; Parncutt & McPherson, 2002; Sinnamon, Moran, & O'Connell, 2012). Various researchers have studied flow theory in different contexts. Flow within education, sport, music, art, and dance is all relevant to achieving an optimal learning experience (Bakker, 2005; Fullagar *et al.*, 2013; Guo & Ro, 2008; Harper, 2015; Jackson & Csikszentmihalyi, 1999; Jackson, Ford, Kimiecik, & Marsh, 1998; Panebianco-Warrens, 2014; Sinnamon *et al.*, 2012).

Bakker (2005, p. 26) states "using emotional contagion theory, it is hypothesized that flow may crossover from teachers to their students." Bakker argues that flow is based on

absorption, enjoyment, and intrinsic motivation. In his study, Bakker (2005, p. 29) formulates a hypothesis that uses four job resources (social support, supervisory coaching, autonomy, and feedback on performance) which have a positive influence on the balance between a music teacher's challenges and skills. The balance then contributes to the three flow elements (absorption, enjoyment, intrinsic motivation). This positive effect or flow experience can then be transferred to the student. Through 'emotional contagion' students, employees, or colleagues can adopt positive or negative emotions. Therefore, a music teacher's mood can be a governing factor in creating positive or negative emotions during a lesson. Bakker (2005, p. 31) emulates a second hypothesis based on the first one, stating that a positive relationship exists between the flow experience of a student and a teacher. In Bakker's findings, it is evident that there is a strong correlation between the four job resources and how it affects the balance between challenge and skill, and a partial correlation between a teacher's flow experience and that of a student. The study confirmed that higher flow experiences amongst teachers predict higher flow amongst students. In this way, Bakker's results are in alignment with the emotional contagion theory. In my mini-dissertation, I focus on applying the theories on flow, as I believe that they are relevant to the study of jazz piano at a tertiary level in South Africa. Flow seems to be a useful tool in teaching, and as such, I planned to test the theory by reflecting on my own experience of flow. I further aimed to explore the practical dimensions (challenge/skill, clear goals and concentration on the task at hand) in an educational setting.

1.5 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This section includes an overview of the research methodology used in this study. A more comprehensive methodology will be discussed in Chapter 3.

This study used an autoethnographic approach which is based on a qualitative research design. The rationale behind using autoethnography as a research approach falls on the self-observation and reflexive investigation (Maréchal, 2010, p. 2). The researchers reflect on their personal experience. This assists me (as a lecturer at a tertiary institution) to work with students in jazz piano and reflect on my own teaching ability and methods.

A sample of four jazz piano first-year students (enrolled for jazz and pop music in 2019 at a South African university) were invited to participate in this study. During the study a reflective journal was kept where all my activities, interventions and observations were recorded. To assist with the data collection process, an assessment rubric was constructed to evaluate weekly progress. Data was analysed, which included the reflective journal, assessment rubric and informal discussions during class and coded according to main themes and subordinate themes.

1.6 CHAPTER OUTLINE

Chapter 1: Introduction

Chapter 1 provides a framework for this study. It includes background, rationale and aim of the study, as well as a summary of the research methodology. The theoretical background is explained.

Chapter 2: Literature review

Chapter 2 reviews current literature teaching music at a tertiary level, including proposed research on jazz education and music education in general and reflective teaching.

Chapter 3: Research methodology

Chapter 3 outlines the research methodology and processes. It explains the approach, sampling method, data collection and analysis, including relevant ethical considerations.

Chapter 4: Data analysis, results and discussion

Chapter 4 introduces the main findings of the study. Data is interpreted and arranged according to the main themes and subordinate themes. The results are discussed, and tables were used to assist with the representation of themes.

Chapter 5: Conclusions and recommendations

Chapter 5 provides a summary and conclusion of the study, answering both the secondary and primary research questions. Limitations and recommendations for further research are discussed.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

This literature review will include research on teaching music at a tertiary level, exploring different teaching methods in jazz education and self-reflection while teaching. It is important to have an understanding of pedagogy in music and explore that specifically within the jazz language. As Prouty (2005) talks about the history of jazz education and the relationship between jazz pedagogy and the jazz community, it is important to look at how jazz teaching and learning has developed. Authors such as Herzig, Dunscomb and Hill and Watson suggests the importance of techniques which include aural imitation, listening and developing a jazz vocabulary by immersing yourself in the music (Dunscomb & Hill, 2002; Herzig, 1997; Watson, 2010b). Other research that focuses on self-reflection will form an important part of the research as the study focuses on me as the lecturer. It looks at research by Nummedal (1996) who explored assessment and self-reflection while teaching. Another aim was to explore the available literature on jazz pedagogy within a South African context.

2.2 MUSIC TEACHING FOR UNIVERSITY STUDENTS

A good teacher always tries to gather new information or knowledge when making decisions. They constantly refocus their teaching techniques or methods (Angelo, 1995, p. 6). Peters and Miller (1982, p. 133) argue that there are three cognitive teaching techniques namely lecturing, modelling and discussion. Lecturing is a form of teaching where information is presented to a larger group of students and the teacher presents the material verbally. As a variation, the lecturer can ask questions to obtain student feedback. Modelling is a technique where the educator practically demonstrates a process rather than talking. Direct modelling is when a student responds after a technique is demonstrated and the teacher needs to give

feedback on the progress. With direct modelling, the teacher is able to assess if the student fully understands the process or technique. Discussion is the last technique where the lecturer and the students engage in a discussion about the subject or topic. These techniques are important when teaching at tertiary level.

Teaching is not only based on methods but also on taking the student into consideration. Taylor and Hallam (2008) looked at adults acquiring basic musical skills on a keyboard. Adults tend to worry more than children do when learning something new. They are more aware of their strengths and weaknesses and may constantly need emotional support from their teacher. Adults may also focus on a specific skill which addresses a specific challenge, and then develop that skill as their primary goal. Taylor and Hallam (2008, p. 287) further state that adult students need to "balance their motivational need". It is evident that during an adult piano jazz class, learners with a classical background are more comfortable with a formal, prescriptive teaching approach, and those without one are prone to wanting an informal class (Taylor & Hallam, 2008, p. 286). During their findings, they concluded that many categories and themes emerged (for example, love of music, source of enjoyment, achievement, frustration, emotional significance, self-confidence, musical identity) that are relevant to adult music students (Taylor & Hallam, 2008, p. 290).

Conway (1999) developed and analysed teaching cases to develop instrumental music education methods. This study focused on four instrumental music teachers (which consisted of elementary, middle school, and high school teachers). Some of the key teaching cases were curricula and objectives, choosing literature, motivation, assessment and grading, musicianship and rapport with the students. Although the study was not conducted at a tertiary level, there are still important aspects which apply to teaching music. Although curricula and objectives were derived from different viewpoints from each teacher during classes, the same objective still needed to be achieved. Musicianship represented the students' aural skills, instrumental technical skills, conducting and improvisational skills. Lastly, assessment, grading and rapport with the students proved to be important while teaching.

2.3 JAZZ EDUCATION

Prouty (2005) studied the history of jazz education and the relationship between the jazz community (professional jazz musicians) and jazz pedagogy. Prouty (2005, p. 89) suggests that jazz, in the early days, was taught in some form where not many documentations were done on jazz education. Later, musicians could analyse and break down the audio as a learning method. Improvisation could be played on repeat in order to successfully imitate the passage. The recordings were an actual representation of how the piece should sound. Method books such as George Russell's "*Lydian Chromatic Concept of Tonal Organization"* (1959), or David Baker's *"Jazz pedagogy"* (1979) created an emerging development in jazz education. Chord-scale relationship and bebop concepts became an important aspect of jazz education (Prouty, 2005, p. 97). Prouty (2005, p. 100) concluded that there is a relationship between the jazz community and jazz education. Students who study jazz are also part of the jazz community and not only part of an institutional heritage, and jazz method books serve as an important connection between the two worlds.

Monika Herzig's (1997) doctoral dissertation focused on comparing jazz piano method books and interviewing accomplished jazz piano players in the industry in order to identify instructional jazz piano techniques. Herzig found that jazz method books emphasise scales and patterns as well as harmonic and rhythmic accompaniments. The jazz pianists that were interviewed suggested that aural training, listening, transcribing, style and rhythmic feel are important elements. Herzig concluded that a combination of techniques is important in jazz piano pedagogy: learning from books, class lessons and interacting with other musicians. However, in a review, Madura (2000, p. 81) mentions that Herzig omits the important element of aural imitation and transcribing in her conclusion, but praises her study for the contribution to jazz pedagogy.

Tomlinson and Germundson (2007) agree with Humphreys and Hyland (2010), in that teaching well is like creating jazz. Both teaching and jazz require a combination of cultural styles with educational techniques, theories and improvisation. They further state that four elements of quality teaching are essential in jazz education namely curriculum, instructions, creating a connection with the students and assessment. It is vital to connect the material

with the student, which is where the connection with the student comes in; to understand their vulnerabilities and see how teaching can benefit their well-being. Tomlinson and Germundson (2007, p. 29) suggest that teaching can be demanding. If the teacher does not have a connection with the student, it can enforce a difficult learning environment. Assessment is the last element that helps with student progress. It is important to observe and frequently determine the progress and goals of each student.

Humphreys and Hyland (2010) discuss the connection between education and expertise and how the professional life of the teacher also plays a role in the classroom. Furthermore, they state that there is a connection between improvisation in jazz and the requirements for effective teaching. Both require understanding and knowledge of skills, conventions, and social norms. Good improvisation in jazz requires an acceptable understanding of the musical style, technical ability and understanding of jazz, which is gained by practising. Biasutti and Frezza (2009) state in their study that skills (practice and knowledge) are an important predictor of improvisation. This improvisation can also occur in a classroom, while still using a well-planned framework, knowledge, and intuitive insight. Humphreys and Hyland (2010, p. 11) state that "The best teachers are not only well prepared but also practised and skilful improvisers". Subsequently, they suggest that limited, formulaic and algorithmic teaching are insufficient because they do not cover exploration outside the limitations. This means that the teacher can still have drawn up lesson plans, outcome learning predictions and work frameworks, but should then use the formulaic tools and combine them with creativity and improvisation. They conclude that when teaching jazz, the process of teaching should be the focus in conjunction with the text, lesson plans and framework. Furthermore, it is important for jazz educators to focus on their skills and keep improving as jazz musicians.

Watson (2010b, p. 241) agrees with David Baker on the importance of improvisation in jazz education. In his study, he looks at two groups: group one focused on aural imitation and group two concentrated on notated material. Watson (2010b, p. 250) concludes that aural imitation is a significant instructional material which should be incorporated by other educators in their teaching methodologies. In another article, Watson (2010a, p. 384) found three variables important in jazz improvisation: aural imitation, jazz theory knowledge and self-evaluation of improvisation skill.

Jazz piano pedagogy in South Africa

While there is research on jazz pedagogy in South Africa, there are no studies focussing specifically on jazz piano pedagogy at a South African university using an autoethnographic approach.

2.4 REFLECTIVE TEACHING

Nummedal (1996) talks about how reflective teaching, or self-reflection, can be important in the classroom. When there is a challenge, hesitation or uncertainty during teaching, self-reflection proves to be most suited (Nummedal, 1996, p. 40). Furthermore, to establish possible solutions for challenges and conditions, it is important to try and gather evidence on the situation. This can be done through assessment and observations. In the article Nummedal (1996, p. 41) talks about a professor facing a challenge during a psychology course. The professor aims for better student involvement but is unsure how to achieve it. Active involvement (active participation and discussion during class) suggests better learning and it creates a dynamic environment for self-reflection and assessment. It is important to answer and construct questions for oneself to find the best and most effective way to achieve the goal. In the professor's situation, asking questions about student motivation and demands that could limit student involvement could provide useful answers in order to achieve the goal. So, reflection, in a sense, could be far more focused on asking questions about the teaching process and questioning assumptions made. Nummedal (1996, p. 45) states that "being at odds with oneself opens the door to self-investigation". She concludes the importance of assessment in both a technical and an internal way. To rethink assessment methods and structures can enhance the reflective process. Nummedal (1996, p. 47) ends her conclusion with "Assessments that help reveal this underlying structure of our practice do indeed have the potential for enhancing the reflective process and leading to improvement in our students' learning."

2.5 CONCLUSION

Looking at the proposed literature, there are a few crucial theories to take into consideration while conducting this study. Self-reflection and observation could help assess challenges during classes. Through assessment, one can not only evaluate progress but can enhance the reflective process. As Tomlinson and Germundson (2007) suggest, it is vital to connect the material or tasks with the students, self-reflection could be beneficial to accomplish just that. Other techniques like aural imitation, listening and developing a jazz vocabulary are important to consider while teaching jazz. It is evident that most of these theories overlap and will need to be taken into consideration during the study.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

Chapter 3 will discuss the research approach of this study. It will include the sampling, data collection and research instruments. Lastly, this chapter will conclude with a reflection of the data analysis process, including ethical considerations.

3.2 RESEARCH APPROACH

While conducting this study, I used an autoethnographic research approach and design. Autoethnography is a form of qualitative research. Creswell (2003, p. 18) explains that a qualitative research approach is based on individual experiences or a phenomenon, and is used with the intent to create a pattern/theory within the research. Kumar (2014, p. 104) states that an important feature of qualitative research is the link between the researcher and the participant, and how the researcher's experiences, conclusions and perceptions relates to the participant. Qualitative researchers collect their own data (Creswell, 2009, p. 175). Maréchal (2010, p. 2) conceptualizes autoethnography as a combination of self-observation and reflexive investigation. Anderson (2006, p. 380) writes that the researcher using autoethnography as a method needs to document, analyse and purposively engage in the study. The researcher writes and reflects on their own personal experience in an autobiographical narrative. Maréchal (2010, p. 2) further suggests that the term refers to "the narrator's subjective experience and subjectivity (autobiographical writing that has ethnographic interest)".

Autoethnography as a method in higher education has been researched by various authors (Humphreys, 2005; Sambrook, Jones, & Doloriert, 2014). These authors focused on using an autoethnographic approach while doing research as an employee (administrator/teacher). Sambrook, *et al.* (2014) argue that autoethnography is a "suitable method to capture both the individual and social nature of self in employee engagement". This method allowed me to systematically analyse and describe my personal experiences while teaching, which included student progress, interventions, teaching methods and motives for my actions.

3.3 SAMPLING

This study used a sample of four jazz piano students enrolled in jazz and popular music at a South African university. The sample was based on the total number of registered first-year students in 2019, all of whom were my students. All four students were male. Historically, there are very few students who enrol for jazz piano at this university, which explains the small sample.

3.4 DATA COLLECTION AND RESEARCH INSTRUMENTS

Before data collection commenced, the Head of the music department at this South African university was asked for permission to conduct the study. All participants were asked to sign consent forms after they had received an information letter. Data was then collected through a combination of techniques. Firstly, I kept a reflective journal log where all my activities and observations, from my respective students, were recorded. The journal focused on reflecting my continual observations, interventions and conclusions that sought to improve my teaching ability. The zone of proximal development and flow theory formed the basis of how I adapted my teaching techniques. I continually attempted to enhance the students' development based on the zone of proximal development and I documented my experience. Based on flow, I kept record of my own experience and my perceptions of the students' level of focus and engagement during their lesson times. Self-reflection allowed me to question my choices and adjust my teaching techniques accordingly. Creswell (2009) states that the

advantages of observation includes the researcher having first-hand experience with the participant, the researcher recording or capturing information as it happens, and any distinct facets of information discovered during observation.

Secondly, I used an assessment rubric (Appendix A) where progress was measured on a weekly basis. This included progress on repertoire (melody, harmony, rhythm), expression, technique and improvisation. The results assisted me to adjust my teaching in order to address both the course outcomes and the students' needs. The data assisted me in adjusting the way I structured weekly tasks, adapting my old teaching methods and adding helpful material.

The data collection took place at this same South African university for the duration of two semesters with four first-year undergraduate jazz piano students. These four piano students were assigned to me, as their teacher, during this period. Each student had a weekly, thirty-minute lesson. The observation followed an observational protocol with descriptive and reflective notes whereby I collected the data for each week (Creswell, 2009, p. 182).

3.5 DATA ANALYSIS

The raw data was coded according to emergent themes or patterns. This means that all notes were sorted and arranged according to repeated patterns and themes. I analysed my reflective journal, including the weekly assessments and based my themes on how my teaching experience was adapted, what interventions were made and the outcome for each week. There were four sub-themes under dimensions of flow (Challenge/skill, clear goals, concentration on the task at hand and unambiguous feedback) that categorised various challenges and interventions I made within each theme. Using the reflective journal and assessment rubric I could keep track of my teaching adaptations and weekly outcomes. My main themes were based on the two main theories (zone of proximal development and flow theory). Some of my themes were assisted by tables where the material or methods could be clearly demonstrated.

After these steps were followed, interpretation was the last stage to bring meaning to the information. Creswell (2009, p. 189) stated that in interpreting data, one needs to ask 'What were the lessons learned?' Furthermore, he explains that the researcher's own personal interpretation can be used, or a combination of personal interpretations and comparisons of information gathered from the literature.

3.6 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

The Head of the music department at the South African university where I teach was asked for permission to conduct the study. The focus of the study was on me and my teaching and not the participants. Being the teacher-researcher, I am aware that I held a biased position in the hierarchy of the music department and therefore focused my study solely on me and my teaching whilst students continued with classes as normal.

All participants were given an information letter and were asked to sign an informed consent form (Appendix B). The information letter clearly stated that the focus of the study is only on me (the researcher) and reflections based on my teaching. The letter further affirmed that participation is voluntary and that any participant had the right to withdraw permission to be observed (for the purpose of research) at any time, with no negative consequences. The information letter and consent form were given to the students by a colleague so that no pressure was enforced to participate in the study. All the participants remain anonymous to the reader and are referred to as "students A-D" which protects their confidentiality. No participants were put at risk and the participants followed their usual class routines (Creswell, 2009, p. 89-90). The ethical guidelines of the University of Pretoria were adhered to at all times. Upon writing and disseminating the research, no biased language was used. During the data collection period, information was only discussed between the researcher and his supervisor.

CHAPTER 4

DATA ANALYSIS, RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 INTRODUCTION

As I have discussed the nine dimensions of experiencing flow, there were some dimensions that were useful in my own teaching. I found that by being aware of the dimensions I could benefit in the way I teach. Of these nine dimensions, I found four dimensions to be practically applicable to teaching. These four dimensions were challenge/skill, clear goals, concentration on the task at hand and unambiguous feedback. The other dimensions were largely intrinsic and related to my own experiences.

The analyses of the data collected showed that there were four relevant dimensions that could be practically applied as teaching methods, namely challenge/skill, clear goals, concentration on the task at hand and unambiguous feedback. The other dimensions were intrinsic and based on experiences. I perceived that action-awareness merging, sense of control, autotelic experience and transformation of time increased my teaching capability and facilitated a student's motivation, thereby increasing their development zone. In this chapter, all nine dimensions, including my reflections, will be discussed in detail. The zone of proximal development was the last prominent theme. The zone of proximal development theory enforced the use of aural and video imitation. Scaffolding is another technique used, which is based on the ZPD. Based on my experience, South African jazz students who enrol for jazz and popular music at the university at which I teach, generally have a much better practical background than a theoretical or academic background. This means that the students usually have stronger aural abilities and struggle to sight-read. However, this would require further research. Sight-reading can be seen as a separate challenge that should be rehearsed weekly, where aural imitation can help the development or the learning process of other elements and tasks. Melody, harmony, improvisation and rhythm were the main elements of the rubric which I used for assessment. Technique and expression were also essential elements. The dimensions of flow and ZPD were the basis of my themes and I

looked at how my teaching methods were adapted; what interventions were made and the outcome. In Table 1 below, there is a representation of themes and sub-themes which will be discussed.

Table 1: Themes and sub-themes

Main Themes	Sub-themes

Elements of flow applicable to practical teaching	• Challenge/skill
	• Clear goals
	   a) Weekly notes
	   b) Macro goals
	   c) Micro goals
	• Concentration on the task at hand
	• Unambiguous feedback
	   a) Lecturer feedback
	   b) Self-feedback/reflection

Intrinsic flow dimensions	• Personal flow experiences while teaching
Zone of proximal development	• Aural/video imitation • Scaffolding

4.2 ELEMENTS OF FLOW APPLICABLE TO PRACTICAL TEACHING

4.2.1 Challenge/Skill

The first dimension of flow theory suggests that the challenge should match the ability. My participants were required to cover the university syllabus for piano 1.

First semester

In the first semester, students had to perform four musical pieces (jazz standards) and a set of related technical requirements (appendix A). Firstly, I tested the challenge/skill dimension with the musical pieces. Students had to perform the following styles: bebop, bossa nova, swing and jazz waltz.

- *Ornithology* (Charlie Parker) (*The Real Book*, 2004, p. 317) – Bebop
- *Blue Bossa* (Kenny Dorham) (*The Real Book*, 2004, p. 50) – Bossa Nova
- *Have you met Miss Jones?* (Richard Rogers) (*The Real Book*, 2004, p. 172) – Swing
- *How my heart sings* (Earl Zindars and Anne Zindars) (*The Real Book*, 2004, p. 182) – Jazz waltz

The above jazz standards were chosen to cover the required jazz styles and to portray the applicable techniques. I chose the pieces *Have you met Miss Jones?* and *How my heart sings* in order to cover ii-7-V7-I chord progressions and to incorporate the technical chord patterns (cycle of 4ths and ii-7-V7-I chords) within the pieces. I chose *Ornithology* to cover the bebop language (including the transcription of Charlie Parker's solo) and *Blue Bossa* for the study of jazz-Latin.

The students were all first-year students which meant I had no prior knowledge of their backgrounds, and I was not aware of their precise skill levels. After the first two weeks, I realized that one of the pieces (*How my heart sings*) was quite a challenge for the students, while the other pieces matched their skill level. The jazz waltz has a middle section which transitions to 4/4 time for eight bars and then repeats from the beginning (back to 3/4 time).

Figure 1: How my heart sings

How my heart sings - B section

This transition was challenging for the students which led me to believe that the piece of music I had chosen may have been too difficult, especially with it being their first jazz waltz. However, I decided to keep the piece and find ways to increase their skills to match the challenge.

With all the pieces I used a rubric (Appendix A) which assessed the following aspects: melody, harmony, rhythm, expression and improvisation. The assessment criteria helped me to focus on specific challenges and regulate improvements which were made each week.

In the first week, the students received all their material and we revised the jazz styles which had to be performed. I discussed each style, presenting and demonstrating the characteristics and how it should be played on the piano. From week two to five we focused on playing the 'head' (melody) of all the pieces, technical exercises and chord progressions, with voice-leading. Students A, B, and D struggled with the swing feel in *Have you met Miss Jones?* I instructed the students to listen to a few recordings in order to internalize the rhythmic feel. However, the students continued to struggle with the laid-back swing feel and played it very mechanically. It sounded like they perceived the swing with a dotted eighth note, followed by a sixteenth note figure.

Figure 2: Swing feel

I then decided to give the students a drum recording (playing a swing style) and instructed them to focus on feeling the eighth-note triplet feel. This worked sufficiently well for students A and B. I found that the drum track acted as a metronome and aided with the swing feel, due to the swinging eighth notes on the ride cymbal and high-hat pattern placed on beats two and four. Student D however still struggled with correctly portraying the feel of the piece. I gave student D the task of practicing the melody on a sub-divided metronome, based on triplets, where the metronome allowed him to mute the middle quaver (as shown above in figure 2). I asked student D to firstly focus only on this and then gradually add the chords on beats two and four with his left hand. The left hand, in this scenario, portrays the consistent high-hat feel allowing the right hand to focus on keeping the triplet feel. By the following week I could already notice an improvement of the swing feel and within three weeks student D's swing feel had improved by 15%, according to the assessment rubric.

Student C, on the other hand, had some background in jazz which meant he already had a feel for the styles and could improvise freely. His knowledge of harmony was excellent, as was demonstrated by his ability to add tensions and reharmonizations on his own. In order to adhere to the challenge/skill dimension, theoretically, I had to increase the challenge to deter from the student becoming bored. I chose to focus on the aspects that he struggled with first, which was technique and sight-reading, and thereafter to work on more advanced improvisation techniques.

Balancing challenge/skill in sight-reading

Sight-reading was an overall challenge for all the students which prolonged the time they took to learn new pieces. This was particularly evident in the solo transcription of *Ornithology*. In order to develop this skill, I gave the students an easy-reading exercise each week and instructed them to play through at least two jazz standards per week or any classical piece of music. The students were given the following instructions to apply when reading music:

- Always play through the piece slowly.
- Work on a variety of rhythms and familiarize yourself with different rhythms in various time signatures (I prescribed a few sight-reading websites to practice rhythm).
- Try to play without looking at the hands.
- Before you begin, analyze the sheet music and look for any problematic intervallic leaps, patterns or rhythms. Make sure you are aware of the time and key signature.
- Always play without stopping.
- Rather than reading each note, focus on one bar or half a bar at a time. Aim for the downbeats.
- Aim to recognize chords and intervals.

Within the first two weeks, I noticed that student D had a challenge with rhythmic accuracy while playing the chosen pieces. Difficulties were also evident in his reading of music. Pike and Carter (2010) completed a study on comparing different sight-reading cognitive chunking techniques with university music students. They wanted to determine if students' sight-reading would improve by using different rhythm and pitch drills. The research focused on three different groups. Group A focused on pitch, group B on rhythm and continuity and group C on rhythm, pitch and continuity. In their findings, they concluded that group B made

a significant improvement in rhythm and continuity, but their pitch recognition remained a problem. Group C made improvements in pitch, rhythm and continuity which helped their overall sight-reading ability. Group C could recognize different tone and rhythmic patterns. The results showed that it is imperative to recognize rhythmic patterns to free up memory for pitch and recognize pitch patterns in all twelve keys in order to focus on rhythm. I decided to use the above-mentioned techniques with student D and began with rhythmic drills. Student D had to practice clapping the exercises for four weeks (week two to six). For the subsequent four weeks (week six to ten) he was given pitch drills, where I would increase the difficulty as soon as he progressed with the previous exercise. I continued to provide him with pitch and rhythm drills and by week ten, his reading (according to the rubric) had increased by approximately 15% from week one. Upon analysing the overall progress of sight-reading over two semesters, data revealed little improvement. The resulting data could be associated with poor sight-reading practice schedules (which was confessed in an informal discussion). Sight-reading requires consistent work, practice and time to improve. However, based on informal discussions, the students perceived that the drills did help them with their reading skills.

Student practice methods as a challenge

Another big challenge I had to address was the practice method of each student. It became apparent that students B and D would, occasionally, return after a week and still struggle with the same problems or have made no improvement at all. There are a few variables that can influence this. It can be caused by a lack of practice or by incorrect practice methods. When asked how they practice, they told me they play the piece from beginning to end attempting to play it correctly, instead of working on crucial sections they struggle with. I referred to the 'concentration on the task at hand' dimension and explained to the students that they are wasting their own time by repeating the things they know and not focusing on the fundamental problems. This information was helpful to the students as they were both not aware of this.

Second semester

In the second semester I reworked my strategy and chose the following repertoire:

- *Lester leaps in* (Lester Young) (Weise, 2017) – Bebop (Transcription)
- *Au privave* (Charlie Parker) (*The Real Book*, 2004, p. 37) – Blues swing
- *Misty* (Erroll Garner) (*The Real Book*, 2004, p. 277) - Ballad
- *Recorda-me* (Joe Henderson) (*The Real Book*, 2004, p. 337) – Bossa Nova

My repertoire decisions were based on the following:

I chose *Lester leaps in* so as to focus on basic rhythm changes with an easy melody and an intermediate solo transcription. I realized that some of the students were still unacquainted with the rhythm changes chord progression, which is why I selected *Lester leaps in* as it has an easy melody which allowed them to focus on the harmony and transcribing the solo (Aural imitation). Although I briefly covered the blues in the first semester, I perceived that the students were still uncomfortable with playing basic blues, which led me to choose *Au Privave.* This piece focused on form and improvisation. *Misty* was chosen in order to focus on harmony, tension chords (9th chords), open chords and striding. Lastly, I selected *Recorda-me* to expand on the left-hand bass line technique and bossa nova stylistic elements.

Overall, the dimension of challenge/skill was prominent throughout the study and can be seen as the primary dimension or theme of the research. I continuously looked at specific challenges that arose in the pieces, improvisation or technical work, and tried to increase the students' skill level to address the problem.

4.2.2   Clear Goals

Since the start of teaching university students in 2015, I came across a few aspects that are very important and helpful when teaching. One of those aspects is knowing what to practice, planning your practice schedule and completing the goals set out. 'Clear goals' are the second dimension of flow which was very prominent in my study.

<u>Weekly notes</u>

If the students know exactly what to practice and what to focus on, their progression is much quicker. My university lecturer always wrote out the notes of my lesson in a notepad which he gave to me after the class. Personally, this was extremely helpful because I could clearly remember what we covered in the lesson and what to practice. From week five onwards I tested this with my four students and wrote out each lesson note stating what they have to practice. They all appeared to appreciate it placing their focus on the specific tasks given to them. I noticed the improvement in their weekly practice routines including their practice methods. By writing out what to focus on (for example, focus on the articulation in bar 10-20) also improved their weekly progression as they were correcting problems quicker. To test a theory in the second semester, I discussed the lesson requirements verbally during the first two weeks, rather than writing notes. After the two-week period, I noticed that the amount of work the students prepared had decreased. Three students asked me to write out notes again and informed me that without the notes they occasionally forget what to practice.

<u>Macro goals</u>

Having clear goals are not only based on weekly information, but seeing the holistic picture of what is required. In 2016 I taught a student who always planned and wanted to know what was required. I perceived that by not discussing the guidelines or syllabus regularly, the student progressed at a slower rate as the student could not see the complete requirements or measure what still needed to be done. One reason might be because the students sometimes forget to use their study guides. I realized the importance in discussing the whole syllabus in the first lesson and have that information readily available to the student. Furthermore, to give a printed copy of the syllabus and the requirements are important to remind the student of the goals they need to achieve by the end of the year.

<u>Micro goals</u>

I decided to take it a step further and set up micro goals within the syllabus. This concept was very close to the dimension "concentration on the task at hand" as they could focus on specific goals each week in order to improve at a quicker rate. If a challenge emerged with a micro goal, I would try to match that challenge with a possible solution and test the outcome the following week. It was set up in the following way:

Table 2: First semester micro goals

Week 1-5	Week 5-10
• Hanon (1992) 1-4 – a minimum of 70 bpm • ii-7-V7-I chord pattern starting on D-7	• Hanon (1992) 1-4 – a minimum of 85 bpm • ii-7-V7-I chord pattern starting on Eb-7
• *Scales:* major, harmonic and melodic minor, major pentatonics	• *Scales:* modes of the major and minor pentatonics
• *Blue Bossa* • *Have you met Miss Jones?*	• *Ornithology* • *How my heart sings*

Table 3: Second semester micro goals

Week 1-5	Week 5-10
• Hanon (1992) 6-10 – a minimum of 70 bpm • ii-7-V7-I chord pattern starting on D-7 (All inversions)	• Hanon (1992) 6-10 – a minimum of 85 bpm • ii-7-V7-I chord pattern starting on Eb-7 (All inversions)
• *Scales:* major, harmonic and melodic minor, major pentatonics, bebop	• *Scales:* modes of the major and minor pentatonics • *Arpeggios:* major, minor, minor7b5 and diminished
• *Misty* • *Au privave*	• *Lester leaps in* + transcription • *Recorda-me*

Table 2 and Table 3 above helped the students to plan ahead and structure their rehearsal schedules in order to meet their deadlines. I also found that the students perceived the work to be less and more manageable. The remainder of the weeks we focused on improvisation and improvisation techniques.

4.2.3   Concentration on the task at hand

This dimension coincided with the clear goals and challenge/skill dimension as we would take a goal or challenge and focus on that goal or challenge exclusively, until it was achieved. All the students showed increasingly better results while concentrating on specific tasks. For this dimension, I will discuss the performance of each student and how each task

was, or was not, achieved through specific focus.

Student A had a challenge with improvisation on *Au Privave*. I instructed him to first listen to three different recordings — one by Charlie Parker, one by Phil Woods and one by Red Garland quartet – along with an instructional video on the piano. Next, I asked him to focus on playing a scalar solo over the chords. He had to use a combination of blues scales and other modes. We then concentrated on melodic development based on the scales he used. I asked him to read through Jamie Aebersold's book *How to play jazz and improvise* (1992)*.* I advised him that in his playing, he should try to create tension, have a climax point and then release. Another challenge which I wanted him to concentrate on, was keeping time during his piece. He said he used a metronome to practice, but I asked him to use a swing beat or drum track that loops while playing. Both his improvisation and time-keeping improved within the first four weeks. Student B had a challenge with his technique (chords and ii-7-V7-I progressions). I advised him to focus on all his chords patterns in all inversions for two weeks and to leave his pieces entirely. The following week his chords had improved by 50% (according to my assessment rubric) which then helped him with the voice leading in his pieces. With students C and D, I continued with this process and saw the same positive results. Student D had to learn how to use the damper pedal in *Misty*. This was his first time using the damper pedal and he had to combine it with the striding technique. I split the process by doing pedal and chords only. I had student D start with one chord (Ebmaj7) and try to play as legato as possible using the pedal. Subsequently, he was to use two chords while working on the change, and then add the stride. Again, the following week, he was able to use the pedal throughout the entire piece with only minor mistakes or muddy chords. After two weeks of practicing in this manner he became comfortable playing *Misty* without making any mistakes. We then moved on to add variation in the stride while using the pedal. The data showed the same results as with working on sight-reading while focusing on small tasks at a time (as mentioned under challenge/skill).

4.2.4   Unambiguous feedback

Lecturer feedback

Acquiring feedback is important for self-progression. One can assume that in general, students receive feedback during lessons on weekly tasks and requirements. Taylor and Hallam (2008) discuss how adults tend to worry more and might need more emotional

support from their teachers. This emotional need is relevant while teaching at a tertiary level, where students need to acquire feedback from the lecturer. Based on this study I included an overall feedback session every three weeks based on my students' progress. I did this in an effort to keep the students up to date with their personal progress in order for them to plan and be prepared for their end of semester exams.

<u>Self-feedback/reflection</u>

Occasionally, students do not realise when they make mistakes or if they have corrected a problem presented by their lecturer. As I only see the students once a week, they waste time if they are practicing something incorrectly. I started with the concept of self-feedback, or self-reflection. Reflective teaching is a form of self-reflection where a teacher or lecturer continuously examines their own teaching methods or strategies and tries to generate possible interventions or improvement where possible (Nummedal, 1996, p. 40). Reflective teaching points directly to the aim of this study. However, I experimented with this theory and used a self-reflective method based on video recordings. If a student struggled with a task, I would ask them to record themselves playing the piece, or pattern, and then send me the video halfway through the week. In the lesson the following week, I would play the recording again and ask them to give feedback on their own playing. The reason for requesting the video earlier in the week is to ensure that they practice regularly instead of leaving all their practicing until the day before their lesson. Another reason is that if I hear they are struggling with something crucial, I can reply straight away with constructive feedback. This means that they do not have to wait until their next lesson to address the problem. I used this method with all the students. Student A struggled to record the videos at first but after he was absent for one week, I asked him to specifically focus on the videos so that we do not lose time. In the following lesson, he brought the recording of *Misty* and *Au Privave*. He made the following self-reflections while watching his own videos: In *Misty*, he told me he struggled to keep time. This was also one of the challenges he had with the previous dimensions. He further stated that he tried to sing the melody while improvising, to keep the form and know exactly where he was in the piece. In *Au Privave* he realised that he was rushing the piece because he played many melody mistakes. This was very good feedback as he had started to listen to his own playing and consciously tried to work on the challenges. Student B also recorded himself performing *Au Privave*. He perceived that he captured the style perfectly and that he would give himself 70% on the melody. My feedback

was the same except that he struggled with the rhythm of the piece and that the style was better but not 100%. Even though he could distinguish which aspects still needed work, he did not improve from the previous week (according to the assessment rubric). At the end of the lesson, he did confess to not having practiced much that week. Student D also had a problem with rhythmic accuracy. After only one week of playing *Au Privave* he attempted to play it at 220 beats per minute, which was ambitious as he was struggling to play two consecutive bars fluently. I advised him to reduce the tempo and focus on accuracy, then listen to himself and reflect on the results. The results indicated that students A and B benefited from the video method whereas student D had less success.

4.3 INTRINSIC FLOW DIMENSIONS

Personal flow experiences while teaching

I have already discussed the nine dimensions of experiencing flow, and some of these nine dimensions were specifically useful in my own teaching. I found that being aware of the dimensions could benefit the way in which I teach.

For the duration of the study, I captured my flow experiences in my reflective journal after each lesson with the students. Within 30 minutes of the lesson being completed, I would document everything I had experienced during the class. I had three criteria – concentration, enjoyment and motivation – on which I rated myself out of ten and made notes based on the outcome. If my level of concentration was high or low during a lesson I would try and justify why I had experienced that. The same applied with enjoyment and motivation. I focused on Bakker's (2005, p. 26) emotional contagion theory where his hypothesis is based on four job resources (supervisory coaching, social support, autonomy, and feedback on performances). As mentioned, these four job resources have a positive influence on the balance between a music teacher's challenges and skills which then contribute to the three flow elements (absorption, enjoyment, intrinsic motivation). This positive effect or flow experience can then be transferred to the student, suggesting that a music teacher's mood can be a governing factor in creating positive or negative emotions during a lesson. During my lessons, I found that when I show more concentration and I am absorbed in teaching a

concept or task (in other words, when I report a high level of enjoyment and motivation during a lesson), my students show more concentration on the specific task. The following examples aim to demonstrate how my experiences during the lessons were explored and provides further data to justify the above-mentioned statement.

In week 13, we worked on improvisational techniques. The students had to learn how to improvise over the harmonic changes of *Have you met Miss Jones?* Student A already demonstrated some knowledge on which chord tones and chord scales work, based on that I elected to start the lesson by looking at well-known jazz pianists' transcribed solos. Through teaching experience and research, I discovered the importance of transcribing solos, which assists in building ideas and exploring other improvisational possibilities. I asked the student to choose a recording he enjoyed, he selected a recording of *Have you met Miss Jones?* by McCoy Tyner trio (from the album "*Reaching Fourth*" (Tyner, 1963)). We analysed the solo to identify how Tyner planned and structured his ideas. Next, I asked the student to play one idea (four to eight bars at a time) and translate the line in all 12 keys. I felt it was important for the student to choose a phrase that he enjoyed and would like to play in his own solos. When the student selected this recording of Tyner, I felt a sudden sense of excitement as I had been learning this solo transcription a few months back which gave me a sense of nostalgia and confidence to demonstrate the solo. Student A could grasp the concept on playing one idea in 12 keys quickly and showed undivided attention throughout the lesson (which I realised during my post reflection session, was because he followed instructions clearly and the amount of work which we had covered was increasingly more than usual). While I had to demonstrate and play the transcription, I felt more immersed in the activity and enjoyed teaching this concept. When reflecting on the lesson, I noted that not only did I have to focus on reading the improvisation (because it was a while since I had played it), I had to concentrate on demonstrating the stylistic elements as well. Not only was the concentration rating high, but I was certainly enjoying myself, which resulted in a high enjoyment rating. The spontaneity I had when developing new lines based on Tyner's lines and demonstrating that to the student, motivated me throughout the lesson, as well as for the rest of the day teaching other subjects. Although it was purely my perception of the students' flow experience, I did notice an increase in attention, concentration and willingness to learn during the lesson. In week six, I had a lesson with student B where we were busy with style and harmony. He told me he struggled to voice the chords over *How my heart*

sings. This made me question my capability of expanding on harmony on the piece, so I went to do some research. Firstly, I went back to the recording played by Bill Evans (1964) and searched for my transcription to play through it. I last played this transcription while studying in 2013. I listened to various other recordings including a version played by Mulgrew Miller (1996) and Mitchel Forman (1993), which helped me to gather listening material for the student. The following week, we focused on the basic voicings, followed by adding drop two voicings and some three-note voicings. This approach was based on Bill Evans's voicings which I referred to in class. Once the student started to grasp the concept and had mastered the chords within the piece, I became more and more immersed in the lesson which made me more confident to teach more interesting voicings. Not only did I aim to teach one single way to voice the chords, but I began to explore other alternatives with him in the class. Over an Am7(11) we voiced the chord as a spread voicing that is built on 5[ths], including adding more tensions to dominant 7th chords (flat 9th, sharp 5th).

Figure 3: Voicings with tensions

Soon after we were looking at a combination of voicings in different jazz standards, deciding on which combinations worked and which did not. I started bringing up examples from pianists like Kenny Barron and Chick Corea and how they use harmony and voicings in their playing. With my student and I fully immersed in the practice, I realised we had been busy for 50 minutes and had worked 20 minutes over the allotted time. I had completely lost track of time and of other distractions. This correlates with the transformation of time dimension of flow, where we both completely forgot about the time. After the lesson, I asked the student if he realised that we went over the allotted 30 minutes. Shocked, he responded that he had no idea and was late for his next class. I expressed to the student that I had also not realised we had exceeded the 30-minute lesson time and asked him how he felt during the lesson. He described the lesson as "really inspiring" and was excited to practice for the next week. His reply was also inspiring to me and gave me a euphoric feeling because of what he had

experienced during the class. The sense of euphoria was also related to how I motivated the student to practice, listen and develop his jazz language. Other dimensions like concentration on the task at hand (focusing only on harmony and chords), action-awareness merging (we were more immersed in the activity) and autotelic experience (the activity was very rewarding for me because the student could master the challenge and showed excitement as soon as I demonstrated a better way to voice the chord) were also prominent during the lesson. This same phenomenon occurred with student D in week two, when we looked at various jazz pianists and how their styles differ. I would demonstrate the approach of pianists McCoy Tyner, Chick Corea, Herbie Hancock and Bill Evans on the same jazz standard and how they creatively made it their own. During the lesson, I picked up on a few aspects in the recordings I did not hear before which, in a way, forced me to be more immersed in the activity and focus on listening, to confidently preview or demonstrate some techniques the pianists were playing.

As Bakker (2005, p. 26) suggests that flow can cross over from teacher to student, my perception was the same as three of my students' perceptions. Based on my reflection and feedback it was evident that having higher levels of enjoyment, motivation and concentration can cross over to the students. This in effect had an influence on how they perform or how they perceive the lesson. It exhibited that I (as the teacher) should constantly think about my own level of concentration during a lesson, think about how motivated I am to teach and focus on my own enjoyment of a lesson. However, other factors could influence these levels (when students do not practice or do not follow instructions) which demands a different teaching method.

While exploring flow, I also discovered that when I have a negative attitude or when I am not immersed in my teaching, it can have a negative influence on the students during a lesson. As mentioned by Taylor and Hallam (2008), adults tend to worry more than children when learning something new. When I (as the teacher) have a negative attitude or are distracted during a lesson, the students struggle to be immersed. This occurred twice during the study when, after reflecting on the lesson, I realised that I was distracted because of unrelated reasons. On these particular occasions, my concentration was rated three out of ten. On the first occasion, I was distracted by a big performance that specific evening and

on the second occasion I had to address a problem with my other job. The students can get demotivated or will not experience the lesson productively, which in turn can cause them to worry more. Both times the results from the assessment rubric showed a decrease in their song performance, including improvisation. While reflecting on my experience and writing down my notes, I realised I needed to change or address my mood in the next lesson. I could see an improvement again with their performance based on the assessment rubric. I could construct a conclusion that because of the environment and my mood during the lesson, the students may have negative experiences during their lessons. Not only negative experiences, but distractions could occur because I am distracted. This, however, does not apply to being strict when a student does not practice, but rather to when the lecturer's mood is affected by factors unrelated to the lesson or the student.

I agree with Bakker's (2005) study that higher flow experiences amongst teachers may predict higher flow amongst students. I can confirm that in my study I perceived that when I am in flow (experience some dimensions of flow), my students experience some dimensions of flow (action-awareness merging, transformation of time, autotelic experience and sense of control). However, I acknowledge that this is only based on my perception and it will not be the same with every student. The data reflecting students' flow experiences were based on my perceptions including questions I asked after each lesson (informal discussions). If the lecturer experiences flow and reflects on their own experiences, it may have a positive outcome in their teaching ability. In my personal experience, and based on the data of this study, I perceived that to reflect on my own experiences in some way (reflective journal, recordings) helps to analyse how I, as the teacher, feel during the lesson. It also helped me to adjust my mindset in order to inspire the student and improve my teaching ability through my own experiences. I noticed that I had started to teach with more confidence on certain topics and that I am more aware of my capabilities and teaching ability.

4.4 ZONE OF PROXIMAL DEVELOPMENT

The zone of proximal development expresses the difference between what the student can do independently and what they are able to achieve with assistance from a more capable peer. The ZPD plays a vital role in the development of teachers (Jones, Rua, & Carter,

1998). Vygotsky (1978, p. 91) discusses how the developmental process in a child's growth lags behind the learning methods. As soon as a student masters a task or challenge, their developmental process in the context of the given tasks is completed. The learning process then continues on a new or more difficult task, and the developmental process starts again. Vygotsky makes a second notion that a child's development does not flow parallel with learning, although it is related. Vygotsky (1978, p. 91) says "In actuality, there are highly complex dynamic relations between development and learning processes that cannot be encompassed by an unchanging hypothetical formulation". This means that one theory cannot form a definite link between the development and learning process, but rather a complex relationship of different learning processes that boosts the development of an individual. I found that the above-mentioned theory was relevant to my students' development. Although my study was based on a weekly 30-minute lesson where I would work with the students and focus on enhancing their development, other learning experiences through other subjects played an important role in their jazz development. In the course *Improvisation I*, they learn the basics of improvising using chord tone melodies (constructing melodies using only chord tones), chord scale melodies (constructing melodies using only chord scales), motivic and rhythmic development. In Ensemble they learn how to play in a group and start to learn more repertoire where they are forced to use their chord knowledge learnt from instrument I. All the other subjects play an important role in the students' development and it is important for me to notice knowledge which is missing from other subjects or possible improvement on concepts. The ZPD made me aware of this development zone and made me think constantly about it while teaching.

Two sub-themes were prominent while I explored the ZPD: aural and video imitation and scaffolding. In this era of technology, there is a plethora of learning material available on the internet. Various websites include countless videos and jazz tutorials on jazz concepts and jazz harmony. It has become increasingly easy to gather additional information by watching online videos and reading online sources. This availability of information sparked my interest to combine the use of videos and the ZPD. I found that by using an instructional video the student can see and hear what I am doing. The ZPD suggests that what the student can do today with assistance, they could do independently tomorrow.

4.4.1 Aural and video imitation

During my lessons, I found that I would demonstrate a concept or task and the student would usually be able to play it. When the student returns the following week however, they sometimes struggled with the task they could play in class the previous week. After implementing the clear goals dimension and finding that students B and D were still challenged, I looked at aural and video imitation. In week nine, student B struggled with playing the correct phrasing and articulation in *Ornithology*, including playing through the transcription. I asked the student to record me while I demonstrated how to play the solo transcription and asked him to focus on imitating me, but only taking a few bars at a time. The result was impressive. The student was able to play the notes with the correct bebop feel and he could play through the entire transcription the following week. Students A, C and D showed the same results when I focused on specific challenges. They all showed improvement and development based on what they had learnt in one week. Because they had the videos, and because they always had access to these videos, they remained in the assisted performance level for a longer duration of time during the week. The only negative implication was that this teaching method did not help their sight-reading as they would only imitate and not focus on reading the notes in the transcription.

The other challenges, feel, harmony and improvisation also showed increased weekly development in that they would listen to the recording for a longer amount of time and analyse the harmony and chords. After implementing the aural imitation theory, student D told me that by using my video he felt he could achieve more in one week. He would imitate the chord voicings I played and present it to me precisely note by note. While using this theory on *Au Privave* and *Misty*, student D's rhythm and feel improved by 50% after two weeks. He could imitate my comping patterns and placement and became more comfortable with the triplet swing feel because he did not have to focus on the harmony and melody as much. Based on the rubric, student D received a mark of 45% in week ten when his melody, harmony and rhythm was assessed. In week 12 he received a mark of 80% on the same two pieces. That shows an increase of 35% in two weeks while focusing on the ZPD and using aural imitation.

4.4.2 Scaffolding

Building on this theory I looked at effective scaffolding. The aural imitation technique allowed the students to imitate me and remain in the assisted performance level for longer. However, while the benefit of staying in this zone has been demonstrated by this study, the students should still reach an independent level in order to master a specific challenge. Scaffolding suggests that I (the teacher) should shift more responsibility onto the student while progressing through the assisted performance level. The strategy I chose to follow was to build my lessons based on previous lessons and knowledge acquired through other subjects. I tested this with the improvisation aspect in their assessment criteria in the second week. For all four students I would link the improvisational aspects (like chord tone melody, chord scale melody and motivic development) which they learn in their theory subject Improvisation IA and with their instrumental lessons and build on that. I would discuss chord tone melody, play an example over a four-bar passage and ask them to imitate me. Then I would instruct them to play a different melody while I play the accompaniment. After that, they were to accompany themselves while still improvising. As soon as the students became comfortable with improvising using chord tones only, we would start with chord scale melodies. Again, I would start by playing an example, then ask them to perform it and explore while gradually decreasing my assistance and allowing the students to improvise and initiate their own ideas. Finally, we would look at motivic development. I instructed them to improvise over eight bars at a time while gradually increasing the number of notes played, starting with one note, then two, three, four and so forth. Subsequently they were to listen to the harmony and try to develop a motive. After playing the motive, they were to leave some space and start to develop again. With all the students, scaffolding showed positive results where they would gradually start improvising on their own. Student C was at a more advanced level with his improvisation, but I still followed the same procedures, but using a higher difficulty level on the tasks (focusing on advanced scales and modes to improvise on, looking at pattern material and exploring different rhythmic ideas).

In the second semester, I wanted to use the same aural and video imitation technique, so I prepared the four pieces before the semester started and decided to upload all the sheet music with a basic instructional video, including a recording from the composer of the piece to allow the students to listen to the original piece. I uploaded this on a learning platform on a website which I developed. Each student received a login name and password to access the website where the following was uploaded:

- Instrumental pieces

- Technical exercises

- Video recording of instrumental pieces

- Syllabus

I did this based on the idea to combine the ZPD theory (with the videos), and the dimensions of flow that were discussed and to make it easier for the students to retrieve all the information. The students could also upload their videos as assignments (as mentioned in the unambiguous feedback dimension), where I could then listen to them and give feedback the next week. The uploaded online information allowed the students to listen to jazz on a more regular basis. I could upload recordings of different jazz artists each week and request a discussion on the style, improvisation, harmony and rhythm of the prescribed pieces.

4.5 CONCLUSION

During my research, I found several key elements that are important in teaching jazz piano and which worked for me as an educator. Based on my study, challenge/skill, clear goals, concentration on the task at hand and unambiguous feedback are dimensions that all play an important role in teaching jazz piano. Not only are these integral as separate constructs, but they also benefit teaching when they are combined with lessons. The above-mentioned dimensions were explored practically by linking them to different teaching methods. The challenge/skill dimension is vital to constantly measure the relationship between the task and the students' skill level and it is important to adjust the challenge accordingly. Even the

smallest challenge should be measured against the student's skill level. Clear goals, concentration on the task at hand and unambiguous feedback are all secondary dimensions that help the student in overcoming a challenge. Clear goals help the students to distinguish what needs to be done within a certain time-frame. Furthermore, by dividing bigger tasks into smaller tasks the students perceive that they can accomplish the task quicker. This motivates them to continue and keep the flow of development without having to worry about what must still be done.

There were three prominent elements in my findings: the main discussion of the syllabus (macro goals), writing notes of the required tasks for every lesson and dividing the syllabus into micro goals. The first element might benefit some students more than others, where the second and third elements demonstrated a definite increase in the performance of all the students' weekly development. Concentration on the task at hand was just as prominent as clear goals and they worked hand-in-hand. By focusing on a specific task, I tried to use the micro goals and focus on each task in one semester. The data showed improvement in harmony, melody, rhythm and improvisation. The last dimension was more connected with the zone of proximal development. Direct modelling was used to demonstrate a task, the student would try it on their own and the lecturer would give feedback. This is the most basic teaching method that worked with my students. Self-feedback is the other facet that worked. The technique enforces the students to listen to themselves and focus on their mistakes. It employs another cognitive teaching technique called discussion, where I could discuss the video (the recording they had to make during the week) with the students. Finally, it monitors student practice sessions where the student must practice in order to send me the video halfway through the week. The data showed increased practice time in their schedule since I incorporated this dimension. This was also confirmed in an informal interview when I asked the students if they practice more when they are expected to make the recording. Other dimensions like action-awareness merging, transformation of time, autotelic experience and sense of control were prominent in my own teaching. Based on self-reflection I would experience one or more dimensions while teaching. I found that it can be beneficial to reflect on my own flow experiences in order to evaluate how immersed I am in the lesson.

I found the ZPD to be an extremely important aspect while working with the students, both for my own development and the students'. Herzig (1997) writes in her conclusion that the pianists which she interviewed suggested that aural imitation, listening and transcribing are some of the most important aspects in learning jazz. Watson (2010b, p. 250) also concludes that aural imitation is a significant instructional method. I agree with Herzig and Watson on the importance of aural training and imitation. Although the students' reading did not benefit from aural imitation, their development in improvisation, harmony, melody and rhythm increased considerably. I perceived that the use of listening and aural imitation helped boost the students' confidence and immersion. I feel that in this era of technology it is important to make use of the available technology and combine it with your teaching methods to allow the students to have the most resources available.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

The main objective of this research was to determine how I could enhance and develop the learning experience of jazz students through an autoethnographic exploration into my own teaching. My aim was to enhance the learning experience of my students based on the zone of proximal development and to reflect on my own experiences of flow while teaching in order to find out in which ways it may be useful. This was done by keeping a reflective journal where all my activities and observations, from my own perspective, were recorded, including an assessment rubric where I could measure weekly progress and adapt my teaching methods based on the outcome of each lesson.

Chapter 1 presented an introduction and background, aim of the study, research questions and theoretical background. Chapter 2 provided a review of the current literature on the zone of proximal development and flow. The literature review focused on the two theories, music teaching in general and jazz education. Based on the literature review it was also noted that no studies have been done focussing specifically on jazz piano pedagogy at any South African university using an autoethnographic approach. Chapter 3 introduced an overview of the methodology which included information pertaining to data collection, data analysis and interpretation and ethical considerations. Chapter 4 offered an overview of the weekly data collected through a reflective journal and assessment rubrics. It provided a description of relevant themes and sub-themes based on the two theories (zone of proximal development and flow) and a comprehensive discussion on each theme. This final chapter, Chapter 5, answers the research questions of the study and presents a summary and conclusion of the information studied in this mini-dissertation. Furthermore, it includes the limitations of the study and recommendations for further research.

5.2 ANSWERING THE RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The aim of this study was to explore in what way an autoethnographic exploration into teaching jazz piano can offer insights that may enhance the learning experience of tertiary jazz piano students. The answers to the following secondary research questions will assist in addressing the primary research question.

5.2.1   Secondary research questions

How do I adjust my teaching to best approach the students' needs and address the course outcomes and what are my observations of the consequences of this?

The current study revealed that there were two main themes which formed the crux of how I adapted my teaching approach. The first theme, based on the flow theory, revealed four dimensions that could be practically applied during the weekly student lessons, namely challenge/skill, clear goals, concentration on the task at hand and unambiguous feedback. As Csikszentmihalyi (1988, p. 30) argues, enjoyment can be achieved by creating a balance between 'challenge' and 'skill'. This was one of the main ways in which I had to adapt my teaching methods. I continuously looked at specific challenges that arose in the pieces, improvisation or technical work, and tried to increase their skill level to master the challenge. I found that by constantly evaluating the skill level of each student I could plan more constructively for the next lesson. Furthermore, by constantly assessing and evaluating specific challenges I found that I would actively do more research, watch videos and read material which would assist my students. Clear goals proved to be a valuable dimension with three prominent aspects that proved helpful to the students' learning process – macro goals, micro goals and weekly notes. The macro goals gave the students a general idea of the course outcome and requirements. It assisted the students with an understanding of how to plan, prepare, and know what objectives they needed to accomplish. The micro goals were created to give the students weekly goals to complete which gave the students the perception that the work is less and more manageable. It allowed the students to become more aware of their progress on a regular basis. The third aspect of clear goals (weekly notes) proved that when these measures are put into place, the students practice more regularly and arrive at each lesson being more prepared. It was also proven that all four students benefitted from the weekly notes. Concentration on the task at hand demonstrated

how important it is to focus on specific challenges. I found that some students tend to get distracted or forget to practice cleverly and efficiently during their practice session. This dimension was applied to each individual challenge every student was facing in harmony, melody, rhythm, improvisation or technique. From my perception, I found that it is important for the students to experience progress with their work otherwise they become frustrated. As mentioned by Csikszentmihalyi and Nakamura (2002, p. 90), anxiety takes effect as soon as the challenge exceeds the required skills. I found that facing a challenge and breaking it up into small tasks, placing focus on each task over a specific period of time until it is mastered, and then seeing if the student can overcome the initial challenge, proved to be beneficial to the students. Unambiguous feedback was also divided into two aspects – lecturer feedback and self-feedback or self-reflection. Lecturer feedback represents the feedback I gave during each lesson, including the overall feedback session every three weeks. Self-reflection describes how each student's needs was required to reflect or give feedback on their own playing. I would request that the students send me a recording (during the week) of the jazz piece/pieces we were busy with. The next lesson we would start with the recording and the student had to give feedback on his own playing based on the recording. This method was extremely beneficial to students A and B in that they could distinguish what they did wrong and how to correct their mistakes. Student C already had an idea of self-feedback and he would apply it during his practice sessions, while student D did not put too much focus on recordings. Nonetheless, both students C and D had increased rehearsal time during the week which suggests that the recordings played a valuable role.

I found that through adjusting my teaching method to accommodate all four dimensions, I could assist the students' needs more efficiently while still concentrating on the course outcome and piano syllabus. As mentioned in the conclusion of Chapter 4, I found that all the dimensions should be used simultaneously, with challenge/skill as the main dimension and clear goals, concentration on the task at hand, unambiguous feedback as the secondary dimensions that contribute to overcoming the task. In relation to jazz piano, I conclude that the assessment rubric assisted me in evaluating the students' progress, establishing the challenges and exploring the dimensions and application thereof. I believe that finding a link between the students' needs and required course outcome, allowed me to explore more teaching methods and efficient ways to assist the students. I found that it facilitated a better

teaching environment for me as a teacher and aided me in adapting and growing based on my knowledge.

What are my own experiences of flow in teaching my students and in what way is it useful to reflect on this?

During my research, I experienced some of the flow dimensions while teaching my students. Transformation of time, action-awareness merging and autotelic experience were prominent in my own experience. Numerous times I would find myself going over the weekly 30-minute time allocation per lesson where I completely forgot about the time and taught an extra ten to 20 minutes longer than the allotted 30 minutes. This occurred when we became so immersed in the activity that we forgot the time. As mentioned by Jackson and Csikszentmihalyi (1999, pp. 19-22), if the perceived time passes slower or faster than the actual time, flow experience can occur. Time becomes insignificant and the experience increases. The combination of the two dimensions (transformation of time and action-awareness) was a strong predictor in how I experienced flow and resulted in a focused awareness of the activity (class) itself. I also experienced the autotelic experience dimension where the lesson was extremely rewarding for me because the students showed increased excitement as soon as they began to master a challenge.

Bakker (2005, p. 29) argued that a positive effect or flow experience by the teacher can be transferred to the student, which suggests that a music teacher's mood can be a governing factor in creating positive or negative emotions during a lesson. Bakker's study confirmed that higher flow experiences amongst teachers predict higher flow amongst students. During my lessons, I found that when I show high levels of concentration, enjoyment and motivation in teaching a concept or task, my students show more concertation on the specific task. My results echo Bakker's hypothesis on the emotional contagion theory and that my mood during a lesson is an important predictor of how the lesson can be positive or negative. My study also corroborates the finding that enhancing my teaching experience aids my students' learning experience. There is a strong link between the two flow experiences. In many instances during class, I found the importance of self-reflection based on concentration, enjoyment and motivation.

What is my experience of enhancing students' learning in relation to considering their zone of proximal development?

The two emergent themes while exploring the ZPD were aural/video imitation and scaffolding. For me, it was important to look at the theory and try to enhance the students' development zone and experience.

Monika Herzig (1997), in her thesis, states that the jazz pianists she interviewed suggested that aural imitation is an important element in teaching jazz piano. In her conclusion, she determined that a combination of techniques is important in jazz piano pedagogy: learning from books, class lessons and interacting with other musicians. In my study, I focused on the importance of aural imitation and combined it with video imitation during lessons. I found that using both aural and video imitation contributed to the enhancement of the students' experiences. My decision was based on how the ZPD suggests that what the student can do today with assistance, they could do independently tomorrow. I aimed to keep the students in the assisted performance level or developmental zone for a longer period of time. This was done by giving the students a recording of the tasks that needed to be accomplished. They could then focus on listening and imitating me throughout the week in their own time.

Although the aural imitation technique allowed the students to imitate me and remain in the assisted performance level longer, they still needed to reach the independent level to master a specific challenge. The scaffolding method was applied to gradually shift more and more responsibility onto the student while progressing through the assisted performance level. I constantly focused on anticipating errors to guide the students away from unsuccessful learning methods or mistakes. Another important facet of scaffolding is the emotive factors experienced by the learner. Levykh (2008, p. 88) stated how humans attempt to master their behavioural condition. When unsatisfied, they first focus on changing their behaviour, after which they start using artificial tools in order to assist with the change. I found that during the lessons, I had to pay special attention to the students' emotional needs and predict any frustration or loss of interest while teaching. Furthermore, I attempted to manage their behavioural change with the use of encouragement and reverting back to the assisted performance level. I concluded that by using encouragement and referring back to the

practical dimensions of flow (for example, concentration on the task at hand) the students would manage frustration and other emotional experiences better.

5.2.2 Primary research questions

In what way can an autoethnographic exploration into teaching jazz piano offer insights that may enhance the learning experience of tertiary jazz piano students?

It is evident that by using an autoethnographic exploration, one can focus intently on self-reflection and personal experience. The research method employed in this study allowed data collection and analysis to proceed at the same time which assisted with continuous personal learning and adaption. The exploration of two theories (ZPD and flow) aided the discovery of new teaching methods and creative techniques. By enhancing one's own personal experience and focusing on self-reflection, one can understand and enhance the learning experience of one's students better. Relating to the current study the following factors assisted this enhancement: elements of flow applicable to practical teaching, personal flow experiences, audio and video imitation and effective scaffolding within the ZPD. Using an autoethnographic exploration can also offer insights to other educators.

5.3 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

This study focused on a psychological theory called flow, which is a mental state that a person can experience. Because this study focused solely on me as an educator, most flow experiences were captured from my personal point of view. Student flow experiences could not be explored, measured and analysed because each student has an individual lesson and the environment for each student could be different. However, some student flow experiences were captured through verbal discussions. Although four dimensions of flow were used and explored as teaching methods and techniques, each student's flow experience was not measured on a weekly basis.

Because this study uses an autoethnographic approach, the data is mostly based on personal experience, and it may be argued that some assessments (specific to the weekly assessments done by myself) are not conclusive enough. The conclusions were drawn up based on personal assessments. This means that each week the results of the assessments were compared to find possible interventions and compare progress. It would have been interesting to compare the first examination with the final examination in order to determine the validity of the methods and the results, especially with an external examiner. However, due to the nature of the research and the fact that data collection was done during scheduled class time, the weekly assessment could only be conducted through me.

Given the historical registration history of registered first-year students, it was the norm that there would not be a vast number of piano students. It was therefore anticipated that the study would be conducted with a small group of learners. In 2019, only four students registered for jazz piano, which explains the reasoning behind the small target audience. The study was, as a result, limited to four jazz piano students. It would be very interesting to see the results if this study was conducted using a larger sample from numerous universities.

5.4 RECOMMENDATIONS

Future research could focus on other specializations in jazz, for example, improvisation or jazz performance. Research may also focus on other instruments. This study focused on tertiary students due to my work at the university, however, educators may choose to replicate the study with other learners (adult students in community music programs and possibly middle school or high school students). Flow experiences in jazz could also be explored in capturing specific student experiences. This can be in the form of group lectures with a quantitative approach where flow experiences could be measured while teaching jazz. The Flow State Scale-2 (FSS-2) could be used with a larger target audience to measure flow during ensemble performances, improvisation classes or instrument classes. While looking at the zone of proximal development, aural imitation could also be further explored where the environment could be controlled and not during individual lessons (thus, the settings would be the same for each student). For example, in a group improvisation class

where a few students have the same lesson presented by one lecturer. It could be beneficial to do a study on other instrumental lecturers while focusing on flow, motivation and self-reflection.

5.5 CONCLUSION

The findings of this study prove the validity of self-reflection while teaching. Through exploration, one can distinguish between effective and ineffective teaching methods and continuously adjust accordingly. The main findings of this research represent how I, as the educator, adjusted my teaching methods and techniques in order to enhance the learning experience of my students. The following themes were formulated to assist this enhancement.

Four dimensions of flow (challenge/skill, clear goals, concentration on the task at hand and unambiguous feedback) were found to be applicable to the practical teaching of Jazz piano. These dimensions served as a guideline of how I adjusted my teaching methods. Each dimension however, should be linked to each other and should simultaneously focus on overcoming specific tasks. Aural imitation proved to be a crucial part of this study. Results demonstrated the importance of how aural imitation assists the students with learning different jazz styles and internalising the jazz language. Through transcribing, the student develops their ear, learns melodic improvisational techniques and can even analyse harmonic and rhythmic techniques. As Herzig (1997) mentioned, method books cover mostly theoretical topics, while aural imitation is also a crucial aspect of learning jazz. Video imitation was combined with the aural imitation theme whereby students' practice time and learning efficiency would improve because they could stay in the assisted performance level (ZPD) for longer during the week and aim to master the challenge on their own. Scaffolding is the third theme which proved to be valuable. This theme was important as the student would become more independent by gradually taking more responsibility in completing a given task with less assistance from the teacher. Two important components of scaffolding, applied by me as the lecturer, were the anticipation of errors and the recognition of the emotive factors of each student. I would aim to guide the students away from any unsuccessful methods by anticipating any future mistakes the student may make. Lastly, considering the emotional state of each student is crucial while teaching. I constantly found

that students get frustrated with some tasks and even after adjusting and focusing on the other dimensions of flow they still get frustrated. It was during these times that motivation and encouragement helped the students. This effective scaffolding technique relates to Bakker's (2005, p. 26) emotional contagion theory, where he argues that flow may move from teachers to their students. My own personal flow experiences proved useful to the learning experiences of students as they exhibited more confidence in their normal lessons. As soon as I experienced some sense of flow during a lesson, I expressed more confidence in my teaching ability which is ultimately beneficial to the students. Reflecting on my own experiences assists in doing more research and constantly self-evaluating my teaching methods and ability. As a result, my students showed increased concentration and engagement. This emotional contagion theory proves to be a crucial link to the scaffolding technique which aids motivation and encouragement. By focusing on my own flow experience, the students' learning environment is enhanced.

The findings presented in this study suggest that all these elements – elements of flow applicable to practical teaching, personal flow experiences, aural/video imitation, scaffolding and self-reflection – proved to be useful in teaching jazz piano at a South African university. Although these elements can be applied and explored within other subjects or teaching, I found that elements like challenge/skill, aural and video imitation and flow experiences are all beneficial aspects in assisting with learning jazz piano. But most importantly, self-reflection and exploring these elements during lessons proved to be beneficial for my own teaching and development and improved my self-confidence as a lecturer.

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Appendix A: Assessment Rubric

Rubric – Weekly Assessment Criteria (Jazz Piano)

Name:

Date(week):

Category	Criteria	Syllabus	Does not meet the Expectations (1)	Below Expectations (2)	Meets Expectations (3)	Exceeds Expectations (4)	TOTAL
Technique	Technical exersies. Rhythmic independence with both hands and fluent use of all fingers.	Hanon 5-10 & Jazz Licks	Student does not demonstrate rhythmic independence and struggles to play techinical excercises fluently. Student cannot play jazz licks.	Student rarely demonstrates rhythmic independence and struggles to play techinical excercises fluently. Student can barely play one jazz lick.	Student demonstrates rhythmic independence and plays technical excercises fluently. Student can play the required jazz licks.	Student demonstrates complete control over instrument, rhythmic independence and plays technical excercises fluently. Student can play all the jazz licks.	
	Chord tone, chord scale knowledge.	II-V-I (All 12 keys - Start on D-7 and Eb-7) Cycle of fourths	Student does not demonstrate appropriate knowledge of Major and minor ii-V-I's. The student struggles to understand chord scales.	Student demonstrates somewhat appropriate knowledge of Major and minor ii-V-I's. The student shows an emerging understanding of chord scales.	Student demonstrates competent knowledge of Major and minor ii-V-I's and chord scales.	Student demonstrates complete knowledge of Major and minor ii-V-I's and chord scales. Including use of tensions and extention.	
	Scales and arpeggios. Tone production and articulation.	• 2-octave - hands together and separate: • major scales – 12 Keys • major and minor pentatonic • Blues scales • Chromatic scales • Modes of the Major: Ionian, Dorian, Phrygian, Lydian, Mixolydian, Aeolian, Locrian • Maj7, Min7, Dom7 arpeggios.	Student cannot play the scales and arpeggios. Does not demonstrate appropriate tone production and no articulation is portrayed.	Student can play a few of the scales and arpeggios. Some tone production and articulation is portrayed.	Student can play most scales and arpeggios. Compenent tone production and articulation is portrayed.	Student can play all scales and arpeggios without mistakes. A mastery of tone production and articulation is portrayed.	
Melody	Melodic motives, motivic development.	Instrumental Pieces	Student does not demonstrate execution of melodic motives and motivic development.	Student demonstrates an emerging execution of melodic motives and motivic development.	Student demonstrates competent execution of melodic motives and motivic development.	Student demonstrates complete execution of melodic motives and motivic development.	
	Phrasing, idiomatic material.	Au privave	Student does not demonstrate any phrasing or construction of idiomatic material.	Student demonstrates some use of phrasing or construction of idiomatic material.	Student demonstrates competent use of phrasing and construction of idiomatic material.	Student demonstrates complete use of phrasing and construction of idiomatic material.	
Harmony	Application of harmonic understanding in instrumental pieces.	Lester leaps in (Rhythm changes)(Transcription)	Student does not demonstrate understanding of harmonic application within the instrumental pieces.	Student demonstrates an emerging understanding of harmonic application within the instrumental pieces.	Student demonstrates competent understanding of harmonic application within the intrumental pieces.	Student demonstrates complete understanding of harmonic application within the intrumental pieces.	
Rhythm	Rhythmic accuracy and style.	Recordo-me	Student does not demonstrate appropriate sense of rhythm. Inconsistencies in rhythmic accuracy. Struggles to demonstrate correct understanding of different jazz styles (latin, swing, funk).	Student demonstrates an emerging sense of rhythm. Inconsistencies in rhythmic accuracy. Displays an emerging understanding of different jazz styles (latin, swing, funk).	Student demonstrates competent sense of rhythmic conception. Rhythms are mostly accurate. Competent understanding of different jazz styles (latin, swing, funk).	Student demonstrates a complete sense of rhythmic conception. Proper rhythmic accuracy. The student have mastered the different jazz styles (latin, swing, funk).	
Expression	Dynamics, musical interpretation/style and articulation.	Misty	Student does not demonstrate any use of dynamics, articulation and musical interpretation within the current jazz style.	Student demonstrates some use of dynamics, articulation and musical interpretation within the current jazz style.	Student demonstrates competent use of dynamics, articulation and musical interpretation within the current jazz style.	Student demonstrates complete use of dynamics, articulation and musical interpretation within the current jazz style.	
Improvisation	Tonal Accuracy		Student does not demonstrate appropriate use of chord scales while improvising. Student is unable to improvise on a piece without stopping.	Student demonstrates somewhat appropriate use of chord scales while improvising. Student can improvise through a piece with some stops.	Student demonstrates competent use of chord scales while improvising. Student can improvise on a piece without stopping.	Student demonstrates complete use of chord scales while improvising. Student has no problem with improvising using tonal and atonal concepts.	
	Demonstrate motivic and rhythmic development.		Student does not demonstrate use of motivic and rhythmic development.	Student demonstrates some use of motivic and rhythmic development.	Student demonstrates competent use of motivic and rhythmic development.	Student demonstrates complete use of motivic and rhythmic development.	

TOTAL (40) :

Appendix B: Letter of informed consent

Letter of informed consent for the Students enrolled at the South African university.

Faculty of Humanities
Department of Music

3 July 2018

Study leader: Prof Mageshen Naidoo
Tel: 012 420 3586
E-mail: mageshen.naidoo@up.ac.za

Researcher: Marcel Dednam
Student number: 15390986
Student address: 537 32nd Avenue
                 Villieria
                 Pretoria
Tel: 074 727 1507

Title of the study: An autoethnographic exploration into teaching tertiary jazz piano at a South African university.

Dear Student

I am planning to do a research project aimed at improving teaching and learning jazz piano at university level. The project aims to find out how I can enhance and develop the learning experience of jazz students through an autoethnographic exploration into teaching jazz piano at a South African university. The study will focus on me as a lecturer and not on you (the student). This means that it is based on my reflections and developments, as lecturer and will not be a progress report on you. Participation is completely voluntary, and you are under no obligation to participate in the study. If you decide not to participate, this will not impact negatively on you. You (the student) have the right to withdraw permission to be observed for the purpose of research at any time. I hereby request your kind permission to allow me to record my observations during your weekly lesson. The research will continue for the duration of fifteen weeks. I will share the outcomes of the research after completion of the study, with participants. The identity of the participants in the study will remain anonymous.

If you are willing to participate in this study, please sign this letter as a declaration of your consent.

I, _____, grant permission that observations may be used for research and education. I am fully aware of the nature of the research and acknowledge that I may withdraw at any time and that my participation in this research is voluntary. I acknowledge that my anonymity and confidentiality will be guaranteed. I understand that this research may be used for the advancement of studies in pedagogy.

Participant: _____ Date: _____

Room 4-1.7, Level 4, Building
University of Pretoria, Private Bag X20
Hatfield 0028, South Africa
Tel +27 (0)12 420 1234
Fax +27 (0)12 420 5678
Email name.surname@up.ac.za
www.up.ac.za

Fakulteit Geesteswetenskappe
Departement Musiek
Lefapha la Bomotho
Kgoro ya Mmino

57

Appendix C: Letter of permission

Letter of permission for the researcher to conduct the study at the South African university.

Faculty of Humanities
Department of Music

UNIVERSITEIT VAN PRETORIA
UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA
YUNIBESITHI YA PRETORIA

3 July 2018

Study leader: Prof Mageshen Naidoo
Tel: 012 420 3586
E-mail: mageshen.naidoo@up.ac.za

Researcher: Marcel Dednam
Student number: 15390986
Student address: 537 32nd Avenue
                    Villieria
                    Pretoria
Tel: 074 727 1507

Title of the study: An autoethnographic exploration into teaching tertiary jazz piano at a South African university.

Dear Head

I am planning to do a research project aimed at improving teaching and learning jazz piano at university level. The project aims to find out how I can enhance and develop the learning experience of jazz students through an autoethnographic exploration into teaching jazz piano at a South African university. The focus of the study will be on me as a lecturer and not on the students. This means that it is based on my reflections and developments and will not be a progress report on the students. Participation will be voluntary, and no student will be forced to do the study. Any student has the right to withdraw at any time. If the students decide not to partake, it will have no influence on their studies. I hereby ask your kind permission to allow me to observe the participants during their lesson once per week and to conduct the entirety of the research within the jazz department at your university. The research will continue for the duration of fifteen weeks.

I will share the outcomes of the research with the university after completion of the study, which can be beneficial for further research or may be used for the advancement of studies in pedagogy. The identity of the participants in the study will remain anonymous. This research will help me as a lecturer, to improve and build on my teaching skills.

I, _____, give permission that the research may be conducted and observations may be used for research and education. I am fully aware of the nature of the research and acknowledge that the participant's anonymity and confidentiality will be respected.

HOD: _____ _____ Date: _____

Appendix D: Ethical clearance from the University of Pretoria

Letter of approval from the Research Ethics Committee.

UNIVERSITEIT VAN PRETORIA
UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA
YUNIBESITHI YA PRETORIA

Faculty of Humanities
Research Ethics Committee

27 November 2018

Dear Mr Dednam

Project:	An autoethnographic exploration into teaching tertiary jazz piano at a South African university
Researcher:	MJ Dednam
Supervisor:	Prof M Naidoo
Department:	Music
Reference number:	15309086 (GW20180818HS)

Thank you for your response to the Committee's correspondence.

I have pleasure in informing you that the Research Ethics Committee formally **approved** the above study at an *ad hoc* meeting held on 27 November 2018. Data collection may therefore commence.

Please note that this approval is based on the assumption that the research will be carried out along the lines laid out in the proposal. Should your actual research depart significantly from the proposed research, it will be necessary to apply for a new research approval and ethical clearance.

We wish you success with the project.

Sincerely

Prof Maxi Schoeman
Deputy Dean: Postgraduate and Research Ethics
Faculty of Humanities
UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA
e-mail: PGHumanities@up.ac.za

cc: Prof M Naidoo (Supervisor)
        Prof A Johnson (HoD)

Research Ethics Committee Members: Prof MME Schoeman (Deputy Dean); Prof KL Harris; Mr A Bizos; Dr L Blokland; Dr K Booyens; Dr A-M de Beer; Ms A dos Santos; Dr R Fasselt; Ms KT Govinder Andrew; Dr E Johnson; Dr W Kelleher; Mr A Mohamed; Dr C Puttergill; Dr D Reyburn; Dr M Soer; Prof E Taljard; Prof V Thebe; Ms B Tsebe; Ms D Mokalapa

DECLARATION OF ORIGINALITY
UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA

The Department of .... Music .... places great emphasis upon integrity and ethical conduct in the preparation of all written work submitted for academic evaluation.

While academic staff teach you about referencing techniques and how to avoid plagiarism, you too have a responsibility in this regard. If you are at any stage uncertain as to what is required, you should speak to your lecturer before any written work is submitted.

You are guilty of plagiarism if you copy something from another author's work (eg a book, an article or a website) without acknowledging the source and pass it off as your own. In effect you are stealing something that belongs to someone else. This is not only the case when you copy work word-for-word (verbatim), but also when you submit someone else's work in a slightly altered form (paraphrase) or use a line of argument without acknowledging it. You are not allowed to use work previously produced by another student. You are also not allowed to let anybody copy your work with the intention of passing if off as his/her work.

Students who commit plagiarism will not be given any credit for plagiarised work. The matter may also be referred to the Disciplinary Committee (Students) for a ruling. Plagiarism is regarded as a serious contravention of the University's rules and can lead to expulsion from the University.

The declaration which follows must accompany all written work submitted while you are a student of the Department of .... Music .... No written work will be accepted unless the declaration has been completed and attached.
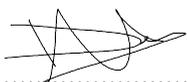
Full names of student: Marcel Johann Dednam

Student number: 15390986

Topic of work: An autoethnographic exploration into teaching tertiary jazz piano at a South African university

Declaration

1.   I understand what plagiarism is and am aware of the University's policy in this regard.

2.   I declare that this .... Mini-dissertation .... (eg essay, report, project, assignment, dissertation, thesis, etc) is my own original work. Where other people's work has been used (either from a printed source, Internet or any other source), this has been properly acknowledged and referenced in accordance with departmental requirements.

3.   I have not used work previously produced by another student or any other person to hand in as my own.

4.   I have not allowed, and will not allow, anyone to copy my work with the intention of passing it off as his or her own work.

SIGNATURE   ....