

**Students' reflections on changing teachers
in one-to-one instrumental music teaching
in Finland and Turkey**

Final paper
Teacher's pedagogical studies
04/06/2021

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Title	Pages
Students' reflections on changing teachers in one-to-one instrumental music teaching in Finland and Turkey	27
Author	Semester
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Department	
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Abstract	
<p>This research focuses on the problematic aspects of changing teachers during the instrumental music studies. The research aims to create awareness on the psychological, social and cultural process of students when there is a situation of changing teachers. The participants of this research are instrumental music students from Turkey and students who study or studied in Finland. This paper takes a close look at the similarities and differences between the reasons of changing teachers by comparing the students' situations in both countries.</p> <p>The framework of this study is based on the conception that safe space in one-to-one music lessons favours good student-teacher relationships where constructive interaction is key to fruitful learning and progress, and in case of changing teachers, facilitates a smooth transition.</p> <p>The data collection of this research lies in collecting individual students' experiences through a series of semi-structured interviews, but I have used also my own experiences of changing teachers as a reflective surface. All the participants remain anonymous, because the information they provide for this research is sensitive and private.</p> <p>The findings explicate that factors such as community dynamics inside the class, student-teacher relationship, career planning and network, and communication issues have influence on the student's decision making in these situations. When changing teachers, it is arguable that psychological pressure and unhealthy teacher-student dynamics are the main factors behind changing a teacher, but even positive relationships can deteriorate after a student changes teachers.</p> <p>The study concludes that an inclusive environment, where teachers get along with their colleagues, favours the development of healthy and durable teacher-student relationships, and makes it easier for students to make these kinds of decisions during their studies. Teachers in instrumental music education should be aware that a student may wish to change their teacher and always keep in mind the students' best interests, and individual learning and career paths.</p>	
Keywords	
Keywords: Teacher-student relationship, safe and trusty environment, community, instrumental music teaching	
Turnitin plagiarism check	
03/06/2021	

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1 Introduction

This research examines the problematic aspects of changing instrumental teachers during one's music studies. I am interested in why changing teachers can be a difficult experience for some students. This study aims to fill the gap in pertaining scholarship by increasing awareness of the psychological safety and healthy teacher-student dynamics in music learning environments.

I found this research topic interesting because I have been in the situation of changing teachers quite many times as a student and for me it was hard to make the final decision to change teachers. I have been studying both in Turkey and Finland. In both countries, I found different kinds of difficulties: I was afraid of the department's reaction for my decision to change teachers because it was not very common to change teachers in the academy where I studied in Turkey. In Finland, the reason why I was afraid was more personal, I was not sure if it was the right decision for me.

Another reason why I found this topic interesting is because there is not so much research about one-to-one lessons (cf. Siebenaler, 1997; Gaunt, 2007). Even though it created some difficulties when I created the conceptual framework for this study, it is important to fill the gap in research and start raising the music educators' awareness about how difficult it can be for some students to change teachers.

To clarify the context of this study, I emphasize that this study is from the student's point of view. I am aware that there is also a teacher's point of view. Especially with the teachers who are getting paid per student, it must be difficult for them to lose their students. First I was thinking about having some teacher's point of view in the data collection, but it is difficult to obtain authentic information of student-teacher interactions inside the classroom (Gaunt, 2007), because it can be a sensitive subject for both, the teachers and students.

When building the conceptual background for this paper and searched for pertaining research about safe environment in the classroom, one thing caught my attention: most of the articles about one-to-one lessons do not even include the word "safe" (Gaunt, 2007; Blackwell, 2020). Also in the Anatolian culture that I grew up with,

nobody was talking about psychological harassment, unlike physical harassment, that scholars and practitioners have already been talking about one decade ago. According to recent scholarly literature, this appears to be changing. For example, İbiloğlu (2020), a Turkish psychiatrist, states that people increase the awareness of psychological harassment nowadays in Turkey and beyond. It could still be that when professionals in music think about safety or safe space, the first thing that comes to mind is physical safety.

This research has five more chapters: conceptual framework and research context presented in chapter 2; implementation of the study in chapter 3 after which findings are presented in chapter 4. The study will end with discussion (chapter 5) and conclusion (chapter 6). In the end of this final paper there are the references and appendixes.

2 Conceptual framework and research context

In this chapter, I examine what kinds of focus areas are in music teaching in Turkey and Finland. I also reflect the research context based on my own experiences (see chapter 3.2 on autoethnographic research). There are three subchapters: 2.1 Safe environment in the classroom, 2.1.1 Connections and networking, and 2.2 Teacher's communication among colleagues.

2.1 Safe environment in the classroom

Creating a safe environment in a one-to-one music class is one of the most important things for building trust between the teacher and the student: it is very difficult to study and learn music without feeling safe (Hendricks & Smith & Stanuch, 2014). A safe learning environment does not refer only to physical safety, but psychological safety and trust as well. In the music school in Turkey where I studied before entering Sibelius Academy, some teachers did not care about creating a safe space for the student. In my experience, the only thing that my teacher cared about was the mistakes I was making. She was not interested in getting to know me as a person. It was holding back my development as a pianist in many ways: for example, I did not dare to ask questions because of fear. I now see how my teacher wanted to create a “respectful” student-teacher relationship based on me being afraid of her.

Beside the psychological violence, even physical violence from the teacher was tolerated to some extent in the 1990s in Turkey. I agree with Wright and Finney (2010) that “[...] ‘getting to know you’ conversations set out to build trust cooperation and collaboration” (Wright & Finney, 2010, p. 235). In Finland, all the instrument teachers that I have studied with have been building a safe and trustful environment also by getting to know me. For me, the deficiency of safe space has never been a reason to change teachers in Finland. Wright and Finney (2010, p. 234) report on an interview where one music teacher says “once they feel they are good at music, they will then trust you enough to actually take up the offer [...] of extra-curricular music lessons.” My teacher from Turkey decided to give additional piano lessons during holidays without consulting my opinion. If I did not practise enough

for the extra lessons, she was blaming me because I was “wasting her precious time”. I think that if she would have created a safe and trustful environment, I would have appreciated to take extra lessons, just like the students of the music teacher mentioned in Wright’s and Finney’s (2010) book.

One other way to create a safe environment for students could be to have group lessons; most of the researches are mentioning that the group lesson in instrumental music teaching is as effective as one-to-one teaching (Jackson, 1980; Daniel, 2004; Bjøntegaard, 2015). In the group lessons students have the possibility to get know each other. The “getting to know you” conversations mentioned beforehand also happened in a large group of class (Wright & Finney, 2010, p. 235). In my opinion, to create an unsafe environment in a group class is harder than in a one-to-one studio class because there are always witnesses in the group. If someone displays physical or psychological violence in one-to-one lesson, no one sees it except the student and the teacher. Without witnesses, it is hard for a student to talk about such a situation. But in a group class, everyone sees it when the violence happens. So, it is easier to convince someone (president of the school, human relations department, media, social media etc.) about what happened. There are many newspaper articles where the students complained about the violence in the classroom and the teacher got a punishment because of their act (Independent Türkçe, 2020; Hürriyet, 2020). However, it does not mean that violence never happens in the large group of class; in fact, it seems to be an issue in many countries (Devries & Naker, 2021).

2.1.1 Connections and networking

Yau (2019, p. 161) says for building a trustful environment in one-to-one lessons, the teacher can help a student in higher education to get opportunities for professional work. I once had a teacher who had close connections with famous pianists and piano teachers, which made me hesitate about changing teachers. I thought that if I change my teacher, I will lose some professional opportunities because my teacher will be upset at me about my changing decision. I have never had a teacher who offered me a permanent work position. But the thought of “my teacher has good connection and it could give me opportunities in the future” caused for me to have hesitation to change.

Based on my experience, I think that teachers usually do not think or ask about future career of their students until the very last year of studying. Most of the students who want to have a soloist career cannot often reach the goal (Juuti & Littleton, 2012; López-Íñiguez & Bennett, 2020). I imagine that if the teachers would be more aware of the student's future career prospects and would help them with finding professional work and career opportunities with their connections, it would be better for creating a trustful environment (Yau, 2019, p. 161). If the student has some problem with the teacher and wants to change teachers, the student might hesitate because of the possible opportunities in the future.

2.2 Teachers' interaction among colleagues

In general, many instrumental teachers have besides their general teaching knowledge also their own personal, more specific fields of interest in music, what they are especially passionate about. For example, a teacher may be good at teaching Classical period music but does not have so much experience teaching contemporary music. If in this case a student wants to play some contemporary music, there are at least four options which come to my mind for the teacher: (1) Making one's own research about contemporary music and collaborating with the student; (2) Asking for teaching advice from another colleague who is good at teaching contemporary music; (3) Introducing the student to the colleague directly; (4) Leaving the student alone with the task.

In the music school in Turkey where I studied, students are not allowed to take lessons with another teacher, unless their own teacher gives permission which, based on my personal experience, is mostly not the case. I hypothesise that the resistance is based on teachers thinking according to which, other teachers in the academy will think that they are bad practitioners and not capable to teach if they ask for another colleague to take over (Schwartz & Webb, 1993, cited in Gaunt, 2007). Another reason might be that if the teacher introduces the student to another colleague, the student will learn more from the colleague than from them and the student might want to change the teacher in the future.

In both situations, there are limited learning opportunities for the student. It can be hypothesised that the student wants to change their teacher (or even the academy completely) if the teacher does not allow them to explore other learning environments and other teachers' approaches to teaching and learning music. The tradition of teachers not cooperating among each other (Schwartz & Webb, 1993, cited in Gaunt, 2007) often brings conflict and negative rivalry between the students and between the teachers.

I want to point out also, that, based on my observations, the music school where I studied in Turkey does not have collaboration within the departments. There is a general refusal to have a unified department community. There are some teachers who create their own community with their students, but the students who have a different teacher cannot join this community even though they are from the same department. This situation can cause an information gap between different communities in one department (Kenny, 2016, p. 4).

Contrary to my experiences regarding student-teacher relations in Turkey, students in Sibelius Academy, University of the Arts Helsinki, Finland, have the opportunity to study with other teachers of the institution. Students are free and encouraged to observe other teachers' teaching approaches and classes even if the teachers have opposing opinions on the music. Even though most of the teachers have their own community with their students, I can clearly observe the whole department collaborating with each other. Most of the teachers in Sibelius Academy seem not to be clinging to their students. In my experience Sibelius Academy's working culture is student-centred (University of Arts Helsinki, 2013), while in Turkish music schools, there are no guidelines that make it possible for students to freely choose their teacher. That contributes to a generally teacher-centred mentality rather than a student-centred mentality.

3 Implementation of the research

In this chapter, I describe the background and phases of the implementation of the research. The chapter is divided in five subchapters: 3.1 Research task and question; 3.2 Research methodology; 3.3 Data construction; 3.4 Data analyses; and 3.5 Research ethics.

3.1 Research task and question

This research examines the problematic aspects of changing an instrumental teacher during one's music studies. I analyse why changing teachers can be a difficult experience for some students. The research question is:

What kinds of psychological, social and cultural experiences do students have in the process of changing teachers in instrumental music teaching?

3.2 Research methodology

This research is an empirical qualitative descriptive and intrinsic case study (Stake, 1994, p. 236- 242), since it is interview based and the participants are telling their own story about one particular and common case. In this sense, the particular case of my study is "changing teachers". Stake (1994, p. 242) says: "The bulk of case study work, however, is done by people who have intrinsic in interests in their cases." I have been in the situation of changing teachers many times and it was problematic for me, so I can say that I have an intrinsic interest about my topic.

The study is somewhere between data-driven and theory-driven research, but more likely data-driven. Research interviews are based on personal experiences of the participants and since I reflect through them also with my own experience, it is also partly autoethnographic research.

"We live out stories in our experiences, tell stories of those experiences, and modify them through retelling and reliving them. The research participants with whom we engage also live, tell, relive, and retell their own stories." (Clandinin & Connelly, 1994, p. 418)

There is not much previous research about this topic, which makes it difficult to make a research based on grounded theory, but it was useful to consult previous research about Turkish and Finnish people's psychological, social and cultural statements.

3.3 Data construction

The study is based on interviews, conducted with seven higher education music students from Turkey and students who study in Finland (can be Finnish or another country) aged between 20-30. The interviewees were chosen from a pool of acquaintances which fulfilled the criteria to be of interest for this study, upon their previous experiences related to changing teachers during their instrumental studies. The profiles of the interviewees are not all the same; someone may have changed their teacher once, twice or more. Others may only have considered changing but never actually manage to take action. Some may have changed as adults, others while they were adolescents.

The interviews were focused on mentalities, experiences, differences, commonalities in a situation of changing teachers in one-to-one instrumental music teaching. The interview questions were semi-structured (see Appendix 2) (Fontana & Frey, 1994, p. 361) and there were approximately ten main questions, such as "Why did you decide to change your teacher?"; "How did you explain that you want to change your teacher to your recent teacher and how did she/he react?"; "Did you ever regret your decision to change or not to change?"; "Would you like to have the opportunity to have more than one teacher?". Follow-up questions were asked depending on the answers of interviewees. The Turkish-speaking interviewees had the possibility to express themselves in their mother-tongue since I speak Turkish. Those interviews were translated to English for the findings chapter. Foreign students' interviews were in English since they are not only students from Finland, but also from other countries and I do not speak their main language.

The interviews were conducted one-to-one, either live or on Zoom. I recorded Zoom meetings directly on the application and live meetings were recorded by a recorder manually. For each interviewee there was one session lasting 45 minutes to 2 hours.

The atmosphere of the interviews was mostly relaxed. Participants were not giving short answers if it was not a yes/no question. There was no one who wanted to skip a question and the answers were mostly clear. If there was an answer which was not so clear, I asked follow-up questions.

3.4 Data analysis

I transcribed all the interviews that have been recorded for the data collection. First I transcribed the first theme questions, and then the second theme questions (see Appendix 2). I used direct quotes from the videos and voice recordings of the participants in my analyses and marked the timeframe in the video for the important quotes. I went question by question instead of transcribing one participant's whole video or voice recording. For example, I transcribed participants' answers of the first question: "How many times did you change teachers? How old were you?" Thus, I saw the similarities between participants easily and this helped me to organize the chapters more clearly. I used colors to highlight similarities in the transcript of the interviews.

Later on, as I wrote before in the data construction chapter, I translated Turkish speaking participants' interviews into English. Some of the Turkish expressions do not mean anything in English, so I tried to find the closest term in English. At the end, I collected the similar quotes together and found a fitting title to group them. Similar answers of the participants were not necessarily given in the same interview question, so, some of the groups are related to a specific interview question even though the participants' answers are different from each other, and the others are related to participants' similar answers.

3.5 Research ethics

The participants signed an informed consent form (see Appendix 1). It informs them about the research and states the terms of the study. I obeyed the rules of RCM (the responsible conduct of research) (TENK, 2012 p. 30) and the ethical principles of Finnish National Board on Research (TENK, 2019, p. 50) to protect the participants rights.

All the participants remain anonymous, because the information they provide for this research is sensitive and private. To protect the reputation and respect the feelings of students and teachers, their identity will be hidden. Any information that could reveal a participant's identity will be changed. Since the instrument which the subject plays is not relevant for this study, the name of the instrument will be changed or will not be mentioned. For example, a flute player from Tampere Conservatory can be change into a violin player from a major Finnish Academy. If the interviewees felt uncomfortable answering a certain question, they had the choice to not answer.

I wrote about my own experience as a student both in Finland and Turkey. To protect myself and the relationships I have been building in those academies with teachers and students, all identities were hidden in this paper. When listening and reflecting about the participant's experiences, I do not let my own experiences that I have been through in Finland and Turkey cloud my judgment.

4 Findings

In this chapter I present the findings of this study. There will be five subchapters: 4.1 Reasons for changing; 4.2 Doubts; 4.3 Teacher confrontation and reaction; 4.4 Community environment in the class and the close relationship between students and teachers; and 4.5 Two main teachers. The chapter is based on the analysis of the data collected through semi-structured interviews. During the data analysis, the interviewees were given pseudonyms: Maria, Sandra, Kevin, Helen, George, Jennifer and Nancy (see Table 1). I marked the similarities with the same colour in the text. To ensure anonymity, the teachers' names are hidden and replaced by [name removed to provided anonymity]. Direct quotations are used to explicate the findings.

Table 1. An overview of students' profiles

	Never changed teachers	Changed teachers only once	Changed teachers more than once
Maria		x	
Sandra			x
Kevin			x
Helen			x
George			x
Jennifer	x		
Nancy	x		

4.1 Reasons of changing teachers

The reasons for changing teachers of the participants are different from each other. But even though students are not mentioning about “not being in safe space”, I found out that lack of a safe space in one-to-one lesson is one of the reasons of changing teachers. Also Hendricks, Smith and Stanuch (2014) mention that lack of safe space prevents learning and studying music.

When I asked about the reasons for changing teachers, these were generally the longest answers that I got from the interviewees. Even though some of them talk about some specific event, I understood from their explanations that there was a whole background story before it comes to the specific event. The following quotes are examples which exemplify the diversity of situations the students had with their teachers.

Maria: I changed because of my lack of success. [name removed to provided anonymity] was not very interested to teach during the lesson. Since she was not interested, so I was not practising. I am not blaming her 100%, but she was not pushing me. A teacher should push the student a little bit, so the student can improve.

From my observations, Sandra's learning environment with her teacher did not qualify as a particularly safe on the psychological level. As I wrote in chapter 2.1, this kind of environment prevents to learn and study music (Hendricks, Smith & Stanuch, 2014). Sandra says about her teacher: "In this situation I was unhappy, hopeless and had low motivation." About her second teacher, Sandra complains about the close relationship: "She was affiliated with her students, but she was unnecessarily intimate, for example, unnecessary physical contact, gossiping about colleagues and students."

Helen's reason to change teachers was particularly different from the others students'. Even though their relationship was very positive, she did not feel that the teaching was benefitting her musical development.

Helen: We are very good friends and we have very similar ideas. [...] Our musical language and personalities are very similar. [name removed to provided anonymity] gave me millions of musical ideas and I already had millions of musical ideas, maybe they were even the same so we were just lost in amazing musical ideas.

George on the other hand, changed his teacher because he was particularly interested to study with a specific teacher. Also he had been studying with the same teacher for several years and felt that it had been too long already.

George: I studied with [name removed to provided anonymity] for a long time, I studied since I am 14 years old, I knew that it is enough already. [...] I did not have a reason, I just know that I had to study with [The interviewee is talking about another teacher].

Kevin was having tuition from two teachers whose musical opinions did not align with each other. Lack of interaction between teachers could be a reason why Kevin confused about those teachers' musical ideas. As I mentioned in chapter 2.2, Schwartz and Webb (1993) says music teachers are not reluctant to tell about their lessons to their colleagues because they are afraid to be judged by each other.

Kevin: I had two teachers at the same time. There were too many different opinions and it was completely different opinions. [With one of the teachers] I never played in her way, which then offended her. And when she forced me to play her way obviously I did not want to do it and I also got offended.

Overall, all the participants have lots of differences and similarities in the reasons to change their teachers. What could be similar with some of the participants is that some students had behavioural problems with their teacher (two behaviour did not fit to each other), others had difficulties with the musical ideas (cf. Maria and Sandra with Helen, George and Kevin). Sometimes a behavioural problem turned into a lack of learning, sometimes the opposite; the teacher and the student did not have the same opinion about music and it turned out to a behavioural problem later.

As we see from the Table 1., Nancy and Jennifer have never changed their teacher, but thought about it. Their reasons are quite similar; they were afraid of what their department thinks about their change since it is not common to change teachers in Turkey. They think some of the teachers and students in the department would say behind their back that it is just an excuse to cover their bad playing and laziness if they would decide to change their teachers.

Nancy: In our academy it was not even a matter of discussion that a student wants to change teachers. It would happen only if the teacher is not happy with the student, not the opposite way. So, I was refrained from the people in

the department, they would exclude me from their community if I would change my teacher.

Jennifer: The students and the teachers in the department were talking behind the back of the students who changed teachers. They were saying things such as “who are you to dare to change teachers? The reason they play their instrument badly is not the teacher, it is because they are not practising.”

Helen told that when she was studying in another county in Europe some time ago, it was not very common to change teachers in her academy either. She was not so sure if it is a good thing to study with the same teacher for 4-5 years, so she had a doubt about if she was doing the right thing to study in this academy.

Helen: In the school where I studied before Finland, it is uncommon, nobody ever changes teachers. It did not appear to me even as a possibility.

It stood out that most of the participants were very eager to explain the reasons why they wanted to change teachers. Even if their situations were all different, they put much importance to why and how it all happened and explain in great detail to this particular question. In their statements many participants have the urge to justify their decision, defend their point of view to prove that their reasons to change were valid. The fact that the participants have been so insisting on this question shows that this kind of situations are a big deal in their life. The changing reasons conversation with the interviewers and me may not have happened with their teachers. It appears that students are not comfortable to tell those reasons to their teachers directly.

4.2 Doubts

During the interviews, participants were asked if they had any regrets that they changed teachers. All the students said that they never regret their decision to change, although some of the students had some doubts for a short time before or after changing teachers.

Maria: **I wish I could have changed my teacher earlier.** Then I would be used to having that kind of [soldier] discipline just like the other students in the academy.

Sandra: I have never had regrets or doubts about changing. **But I said I wish I could have changed it earlier.**

Helen: I cannot know if it was a bad experience, so even if it was, I do not regret.

George: I do not regret it at all. I had a lot of doubts when I stopped studying with [name removed to provided anonymity] like, what am I doing. It had been two weeks that I did not think anything else and I did not come to any resolution.

Kevin delayed his decision to change teachers because he did not want to lose the possible connections that his teacher could offer him. I had the same problem with my teacher as I mentioned in chapter 2.1.1. Yau (2019, p. 161) suggests that the teacher can help a student in higher education to get opportunities for professional work for building a trusty environment in one-to-one lessons. As we can see from Kevin, even though it creates trust, the fear of losing possible career opportunities through his teachers contacts, influenced his decision making. This explains a lot about why Kevin hesitates to change teachers and generally why students postpone these decisions. But after changing teachers, Kevin regrets that he did not change teachers earlier. In the end, his fear only delayed his development.

Kevin: **Maybe I regret I did not change teachers earlier.** The only doubt I had was that maybe I was about to cut a useful contact in the future, which could help me in my career as a musician, until I realized it does not matter so much.

I found out that some of the students are not happy about changing their teachers afterwards. They have the feeling that their indecisiveness made them waste a lot of valuable study time and that it would have been better for them to change the teacher earlier when they started feeling that there is something wrong, instead of hesitating if the change will be benefitting their future.

4.3 Teacher confrontation and reaction

It is very delicate to take the step to change teachers and start the conversation with the teacher about it. With some students, the conversation was led by the parents. Some of the students had a hard time engaging alone into the topic with their teacher. With a few exceptions, most students had the impression that their teachers did not take it well. The participants have been describing more or less stronger reactions; some teachers got offended, or even angry, others were sad.

Maria: Earlier in high school, my parents talked with [name removed to provided anonymity] about changing teachers. But we did not take action because she said that she has good plans for me in the future. But later on, she did not fill those plans at all. In the bachelor's degree, I said to her that I want to have some different opinions from other teachers. She got offended. [...] She still holds a grudge to me. She talks with me but not like in the old times. I was sad that she reacted like this. I would be more relieved if she would have been more positive about it.

Sandra: My mother talked with both of the teachers. I could clearly feel that [name removed to provided anonymity] got offended. First, I was very sad about the situation because I remembered our good times and I imagined what she was talking behind my back now. But later I thought it was necessary to change so I stopped being sad.

George: Instead of saying okay just go to her, it was a bit like 'I would like to keep you.' I just said 'I want to change everything in my life.' And she said 'okay'. She understands this. So it did not take a lot of explaining. I felt very good after the conversation.

[The interviewee is talking about other teacher of him] first she was angry. I just said that she has become such a dominant figure in my life that I cannot make any of my own decisions anymore about music. After she heard those words then she just said 'okay, well I understand.' After this conversation I was feeling like somebody died. I just felt very empty.

Kevin: I really do not like to change teachers and I was afraid of the whole situation. I expected that the conversation is going to be very harsh. It all went fine until I said that I would still like to also play to her until (some important day). **She got offended.** **I felt terrible for a while.** Our relationship is okay now, but we are not that close.

On the other hand, Helen has had mostly positive experiences with open minded teachers who were willing to let her discover other teachers.

Helen: The only thing that I considered was if [name removed to provided anonymity] would be sad about my decision to change [...] but she was happy for me and it was good. In my opinion a teacher must want the best for the student and not for themselves. If teachers cling to their students for their own gain, they are bad teachers. All the teachers I have had in my life always wanted the best for me. Otherwise I would not have studied with them.

Students have had different experiences when confronting their teachers with their wish to move on. But as we see, in some cases it is possible to have a smooth transition from one teacher to another where both the teacher and the student stay in good terms.

4.4 The community environment in the class and the close relationship between students and teachers

From the interviews with the Turkish students it stood out that some of the teachers in the same department have created an exclusive community¹ with their own students. Kenny (2016, p. 4) points out that creating small communities in one department can cause an information gap between those exclusive communities. We

¹ Turkish students did not use the word of “community”, but because of the translating issue “community” is the term that comes closest to their expression.

clearly see that the Turkish participants have issues with those communities; either they want to be a part of it, or they find those communities too intimate.

Sandra had an experience with a teacher who was nourishing a strong community feeling among their students. She found it too intimate and she was clearly feeling uncomfortable in the lesson. It could be that “getting to know you” conversations (Wright & Finney, 2010, p. 235) between teacher and student should have a limit to build a trust in one-to-one teaching.

But it was the opposite feeling for the other students who I interviewed; they were feeling excluded and were outsiders because they did not have the community experience with their teacher. They emulated to teachers who were creating a community with their students. Students who study in Finland did not talk about any community issues in their interviews.

Jennifer: I wanted to change my teacher because our teacher was not giving so much interest to his students. The other teachers in the department and their students were like a family, a community. They were always supporting each other. But my teacher was not even coming to listen to our final exam. When we saw other teachers being supportive with their students after the exam, we were feeling like outsiders.

Nancy: One of the teachers in the department has her own closed community with her students. I would like to have this community with my teacher’s class also. My teacher was not even coming to our class concert.

Maria: Every teacher and their class were having their own community. I did not have the same with my old teacher. I started to feel jealous towards the students of other teachers, because the students in the same class were helping and supporting each other. We did not have the same because my old teacher did not create such a collective atmosphere with their students. We were independent.

Jennifer wished her teacher had created a community with the class. She wanted to change her teacher because of this reason. Although she then realized that she would still be an outsider, also to the new class because she came much later than the other

students. So, she gave up about her thoughts to change teachers, because she feared that she would never be integrated in any other teacher's class community.

Jennifer: The other teachers in the same department were creating a community with their students. To be honest, I was afraid that if I would change my teacher, I will be an outsider in their class, they will not take me in their community.

In the chapter Reasons of Changing, Sandra says that her teacher is too intimate and that was the reason why she wanted to change her teacher. She points out that her teacher has a strong community with her class, which is a nice thing in her opinion, but at some point it started to get too intimate and the teacher started to have bad relationship with their students.

Sandra: She was gossiping about other teachers or students in the department with us. This is not nice.

From the students who studies in Finland, only Helen was telling that the teachers in her academy are very close to each other and it makes students' life easier, but she did not use any terms that would describe such a communities, or families etc.

Helen: In the Finnish academy where I study, teachers are friends and support each other. You are even allowed to exchange teachers in the spirit of 'you can play for me, you can play for him etc.' So, there was no egoism there.

Another point was that some of the students who studied in Finland and Turkish students were saying that their relationship with the teacher is like a mother-child relationship. This conversation happened only with the students who study with a female teacher. Because of the mother-child relationship, they were not pushing to student to practise. Students were feeling that the teacher thinks the student will succeed anyways in the concert or exam, but it was not always going how the teacher thought.

George: If you have a teacher when you are young, she became like a mother figure. Somehow the relation is a bit unlike a student-teacher relationship. I

feel like you get too comfortable in the ways things are happening, you stop kind of challenging yourself.

Maria: We were having a very close relationship with my old teacher, she was like my mother. That is why she was too comfortable with everything and I needed someone to push me.

On the other hand, Nancy told that when she (her parents) wanted to change teachers, her teacher said no, because Nancy was like her daughter. She (her parents also) give up about her thoughts to change teachers because of her reaction. But when I asked to Nancy if she feels the same about this mother-daughter relationship, she did not feel this relationship at all. She thinks that her teacher does not see her as a daughter.

Nancy: She was telling that I am like her daughter, but she was not sincere about how she felt.

Kevin is not using "mother-child relationship" as a terminology in his interview, but he is also talking about the close relationships with the musical teachers.

Kevin: In my opinion, musical teacher is something that is closer than any other teacher if we compare with any kind of education.

For George, when he was trying to prepare himself to make a talk about changing teachers with his teacher, he felt like as if he was breaking up with his partner.

George: When you have such a close teacher-student relationship, it feels like breaking up with your partner.

As I understand from this sub-chapter, none of the students were mentioning about the close relationship between student and teacher in a positive way. Most of them prefer to have a community relationship rather than one-to-one close relationship.

4.5 Two main teachers

Having two main teachers at the same time is unimaginable in their academy for all the Turkish participants because there is a lack of communication between teachers.

As Schwartz and Webb (1993) points out, the music teachers are afraid to be judged by each other, so they do not share their experiences about their class with their colleagues. Participants from Turkey were also mentioning that it is unimaginable because the two main teachers will judge each other's musical ideas all the time and the students will get confused, even get lost by their conflicting ideas.

From the interviewees, some of them who study in Turkey had a "secret" teacher. Since it is not allowed to study with more than one teacher at the same time in their academy, they were paying to have some private lessons with the other teachers and their main teacher did not know about it. It was noticeable that the students did not enjoy the situation. They were complaining that it was too confusing for them to have different musical approaches, in their opinion because there was no collaboration between those two teachers.

Maria and Sandra would not like to study with more than one teacher. Their reason is similar; they are afraid that it would be too confusing. They think that they cannot find their way to play the music and as a result of that it would be hard to understand the piece they study.

Maria: I would not like to study with two teachers at the same time. Every teacher has different opinions about the music, it would confuse me a lot.

Sandra: I would not like to have it. It takes time until you understand your teacher's opinion and implement it to your playing. If you get another idea before you understand your teacher's opinion, I think it could be even worse than to have no idea at all.

Sandra suggests instead of having two teachers, she would like to have one teacher and kind of an assistant or advisor of the teacher. So, if the student and the teacher are not sure or do not agree with one another's opinion, they can ask from the advisor.

Sandra: I would like to have an "advisor". It could be someone that you and your teacher choose together. When your own teacher is not sure about some idea, you could just ask for the advisor's opinion.

The other participants agree that it should be an option to have two teachers in every music school, even though some of them are hesitating about the confusion problem.

Jennifer: I think music schools should give this opportunity as an option. But, I think if you have two teachers at the same time for a long time, it could confuse the students' mind.

Nancy: I would like to have this opportunity. But it could cause confusion in the students mind. The student should have a certain level of playing to adapt to both teachers opinion.

Kevin: It should be an opportunity in every music school.

George: I think everybody should have the chance (to have two teachers). If there are some schools which do not have this system, it is very weird.

Helen and Kevin think that the two teachers should work together to not confuse the student. On the other hand Kevin and George pointed out that students should not stick with only one teacher's opinion. Musicians should try different musical ideas and to have two teachers would help to students to be open-minded about it.

Helen: It is worth trying, but I think the two teachers really have to work a little bit together. If teacher "A" says "do this" and the teacher "B" says "don't do this" then it could be a catastrophe.

Kevin: I think it is good to have two teachers if they match. [...] When you start to university degree, you need to understand that (in music) nothing is crystal clear, there are always opportunities to play things differently. I think it is good to have two teachers to not get narrow minded.

George: When you have more than one teacher, you realize the fact that there is no truth. As a teacher you are giving information as a truth even though it is not the truth. So, it makes your life so much richer. Also, it makes you realize that you are responsible for yourself, not to your teacher.

Even though all the participants from Turkey have different opinions about having two teachers at the same time, they agree that even nowadays it would not be possible in the academy where they have been studying.

Maria: This would not be possible in our academy. Even though you play only one time to another teacher, your own teacher gets offended.

Jennifer: Unfortunately in the music school that I studied it is not possible to do it. One teacher would say something and the other teacher would badly criticize her opinion. They would judge each other and it could cause an “ego war”. So it is better that we do not have this option in Turkey where I studied.

Nancy: It would not be possible for the Academy that I studied. Because the teachers are very egoistic.

Sandra: Teachers would not feel good about it because the system that they like a lot would collapse. (For example) Teachers feel like they own the student and they like the idea to “own” someone. I think most mothers and fathers have the same mentality for their kids in Turkey. If a teacher would share the student with another teacher it would cause a problem. No teacher would like to have that (in Turkey).

To summarise the perspectives provided in this subchapter, most interviewed students want to have the opportunity of having two teachers at the same time, but they wish to have collaboration between teachers in the department.

5 Discussion

The task of this research was to examine the problematic aspects of changing an instrumental teacher during one's music studies. The research question was: What kinds of psychological, social and cultural experiences do students have in the process of changing teachers in instrumental music teaching?

To summarize the findings of the project, every student had different and similar reasons to change their teacher. None of participants did regret about their decision of changing. They all had different ways to confront their teacher, but most students clearly felt that the teachers got offended when their students wanted to make a change. The community-related problems are an issue only with the Turkish participants. Close relationship with the teacher is not always good for some of the participants. Most of the participants would like to have more than one teacher, but they wish for more collaboration between the teachers.

Most participants said that they regret they did not change teachers earlier. It could be that their teacher's behaviour prevents them from changing teachers. The students highlighted the decision to change teachers for so long because there is a mix of reasons, such as fear from the teacher or they believe they can still learn from the teacher or they think one day the teacher's behaviour could change or they do not want to disappoint the teacher by leaving etc.

Based on the analysis, teachers' strong reactions to the students desire to change teachers makes all the students feel terrible and sad. It appears that often teachers are taking the student's decision to change very personally. Teachers should keep in mind that even if they have a good relationship with their student, the student could still want to change their teachers, for example to discover new musical ideas. In general, teachers could be more aware that students eventually leave them after a few years and they should be prepared to react appropriately, even if sometimes it comes as a surprise. On the other hand, we do not know about the teacher's point of view and it could be that students are taking the reaction of the teachers too personal as well. Since it is hard to tell their decision to their teacher and it is a difficult conversation, students may exaggerate the reaction of the teacher in their mind.

The lack of safe space in the lessons was a big problem for me when I was studying in Turkey as I explained in the chapter 2.1. In hindsight, it is surprising to me that the lack of safe space does not seem to be one of the most common reasons to change teachers in Turkish student's opinion. But, even if awareness of psychological violence (mobbing) has started to raise recently in Turkey (İbiloğlu, 2020), it could be that students are still not aware of being in unsafe space, because it is normal to them. For example, as we see in subchapters 4.1 and 4.4, Jennifer, Nancy and Sandra are telling that teachers from the department are talking behind everyone's back, which affects the students' decisions in their study life. It could be that the students are having some kind of psychological pressure.

The reason why the Turkish students were talking about community in the interview could be that their department is not creating a feeling of comradery and inclusive community, instead, the teachers create their own little closed communities within their class. Kenny (2016) points out that there can be an information gap between the communities which refers to Jennifer, Nancy and Maria's situation in chapter 4.4. Along these lines, I think since there is no department community in the music schools in Turkey, smaller communities have a problem to communicate and cooperate with each other. Also there is a lack of communication between teachers in the department since they are afraid to talk about their work with the colleagues (Schwartz & Webb, 1993, cited in Gaunt, 2007). Based on the findings of the study, I propose that creating a department community could solve such communication problems between teachers.

Some of the participants were telling that they are not happy about the close relationship with their teacher and they mentioned and compared these relationships with other types of relations: mother-child, wife-husband etc. Participants clearly preferred to have a community relationship such as department community instead of one-to-one close relationship. Would the group lessons solve this problem? There are many researches about the benefits of group lessons in instrumental music teaching (Jackson, 1980; Daniel, 2004; Bjøntegaard, 2015). I think it is unlikely to create such a close relationship with one specific student in a large group (if there is no other relation such as family member, relative etc.). So, it might be that the group lessons

could prevent close relationship between teacher and student and also it could create the community environment that the participants desired.

Some of the Turkish students were saying that it is nice that students in the same class help and support each other. Students who study in Finland did not tell anything about this point. In Turkish culture, people may be too intimate with their friends and family (Ünal, 2018) if we compare with the Finnish culture (Kalliopuska, 2008). So, on one hand, it might be the reason why Turkish students seek a feeling of belonging to a community than students who study in Finland.

On the other hand, in Sibelius Academy, every department has an open inclusive community as well as most of the individual classes. I can give an example of group lessons that the teachers organize, department's own Christmas party, a dinner after a class concert etc. These kinds of events can create the right atmosphere for the students and teachers to get to know each other. This can also create a trustful environment just like Wright and Finney's (2010, p. 234) example (see chapter 2.1). It could be that the students who study in Finland did not mention about communities at all, perhaps because the atmosphere is very inclusive and tolerant already.

This research examined only students' reflections. For the future research I suggest the teacher's point of view within the same topic. Obviously, as a researcher I am very critical on teachers when analysing the experiences of the participants, but there is always another part of the story. Also, teachers are paid according to a certain amount of teaching hours, or in some places by amount of students, so it is good for them to have more students in their class in a financial way. This can create conflicts of interest between the teachers and the students. The research method and methodology for the teacher's point of view can be the same as my own research; qualitative descriptive case study. It is possible to make something quantitative as well, but it is good to hear the story behind it, so I suggest a mixed research method between quantitative and qualitative. Since the information the teachers will provide for this research is sensitive and private, their identities should be hidden as well as the names that they will mention.

6 Conclusion

In conclusion, Turkish participants are feeling as outsiders from the small communities of their departments. Music schools in Turkey are not socially inclusive enough, so the students refrain from changing teachers because they do not want to make their reputation worse in the department and in the school. Turkish people may be more close with their family and friends (Ünal, 2018) if we compare with the social culture in Finland (Kalliopuska, 2008), so, it may be that because of the Turkish culture of intimacy and social environment students seek a feeling of belonging to a group or community. Music schools in Turkey should find the balance of relationship with the students and start to create larger community groups which are not exclusive for any of the students. From the same point of view, students who study in Finland may be more comfortable to take decisions of changing teachers. They do not have the feeling of being ostracised when they have to take decisions about their study life. Students are free to play with other teachers than their main teachers, they can even have two main teachers at the same time, so it creates an inclusive environment in the school. I do not think that Finnish academies should change anything about their inclusive environment. What can be changed is more personal, for example, participants have had problems with teacher confrontation, so teachers should be aware of students' sudden changing decisions and prepare themselves to react appropriately. This problem also considers Turkish music schools, but I think the community problem is priority for them. To gain more knowledge regarding the psychological process while changing teachers, also an examination on the teacher's point of view is required.

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Appendix 1

INFORMED CONSENT

With this letter, it is asked for a permission to collect interview data for a final paper as part of my studies at the Sibelius Academy, University of the Arts Helsinki.

You are being asked to be in a research study about students' reflections on changing teachers in one-to-one instrumental music teaching in Finland and Turkey. The length of the interview would be approximately between 45-60 minutes.

To protect individual identities, data will be anonymised and pseudonyms are utilised in the written description based on the material. No personal data register (EU GDPR, PDA 10§, 24§) is formed based on the data collection.

If you have any questions regarding the research, please do not hesitate to contact: Ezgi Göktürk (xx). My supervisor Sanna Kivijärvi (xx) is also happy to answer questions.

By signing this form, you are allowing the author of the thesis to collect data and analyse the material for a final paper as part of a master's degree. Please return the form to Ezgi Göktürk by e-mail (xx).

Date and place

Signature

Appendix 2

Theme 1: (Students who had an experience to change teachers)

1. How many times did you change teachers? How old were you?
2. Why did you decide to change your teacher?
3. If you were underage, was it your decision or your parents'? If it was yours, how did your parents react to your decision? How did it make you feel?
4. Have you ever regret your decision to change or not to change? Or were you happy with your decision?
5. After changing teachers, did you doubt your decision?
6. Before changing teachers, for how long you have been considering this decision?
7. How did you explain that you want to change your teacher to your recent teacher? How did she/he react?
8. After changing teacher, how was your relation to your ex-teacher?
9. Have you ever talk to someone before taking the decision of changing teachers? Who did you talk? What advice did they give you and why?
10. How did the people in the same academy react after you changed teachers? Did it affect your study life?
11. How would you describe your previous and current teachers' personality in the classroom?
12. Would you like to have an opportunity to have more than one teacher?

(How do you like to have an opportunity to have more than one teacher? Have you used this opportunity?)

Theme 2: (Students who did not have the experience of changing teachers)

1. Have you ever considered to changing your teacher? If so, why?
2. Have you ever regret your decision to not to change? Or were you happy with your decision?
3. After deciding that you will not change, have you ever doubt of your decision?
4. What was holding you back to take the decision of changing teachers?
5. For how long you have been considering this decision?

6. Have you ever talk to someone before taking the decision of changing teachers?
Who did you talk? What advice did they give you and why?
7. (If you never talked with you teacher) What reaction would you expect from your teacher if you told him/her that you want to change teachers?
8. How would you describe your current teachers' personality in the classroom?
9. Would you like to have an opportunity to have more than one teacher?