

# Master-apprentice relation in music teaching

## From a secret garden to a transparent modelling

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### **ABSTRACT**

#### ***Master–apprentice relationship in music teaching. From a secret garden to a transparent modelling***

*This article aims to consider a master-apprentice relation in music teaching, especially in piano teaching. The article focuses on the teaching of a well known Finnish music pedagogue and artist, Matti Raekallio. Most of the data was collected by observing his piano lessons and by interviewing both Raekallio and his students. It has been analysed using both content analysis and narrative analysis. The results confirmed a typical ‘master teacher’ model in which the focus is on the musical score. In contrast to some views of the master teacher model, the teacher in this research seems ‘in the same boat’ as his students rather than taking a master’s ‘authoritative role.’ The teacher adjusts his teaching to suit the needs of different students and their different stages of competence. The students are taught knowledge and skills but also guided into the culture and practice of the field.*

*Keywords: master-apprentice relationship, music teaching, narrative inquiry, teacher-student relationship*

## **Introduction**

This article aims to consider a master-apprentice relation in music teaching, especially in piano teaching. Instrumental music teaching is a quite new domain of research. Researchers have seldom gone into such classrooms in which only an instrument teacher and a student are working, that is called also one-to-teaching (e.g. Nerland 2007) or studio music teaching (e.g. Kennell 2002). Researchers in the late of 20<sup>th</sup> century have been interested in teacher effectiveness especially. Research results have seemed to answer what teaching results in the best possible musical performances (e.g., Gholson 1998, Kostka 1984, Rosenthal 1984, Siebenaler 1997). In these researches instrumental music teaching is understood through an authoritative ‘master teacher model’ in which the focus is on the musical score. In the studies of the 2000s, studio music teaching has been approached more from socio-constructivist



or socio-cultural point of views and there is knowledge about studio music teaching as reflective practice (Koopman et al. 2007, Triantafyllaki 2010, Young et al. 2003), social practice (Nielsen 2006), as an interaction between a teacher and a student (Rostvall & West 2003) or as cultural discourses (Nerland 2004, 2007).

A master-apprentice relationship in music teaching may be romanticised because of its personal teacher-student relationship. Some researchers have spoken of instrumental music teaching as a 'secret garden' or 'secret activity' that goes on privately behind closed doors (e.g., Rostvall & West 2003:214, Young, Burwell & Pickup 2003:104). Teaching that occurs in an intimate master-apprentice relationship and when the teacher works possibly as an performing artist may be seen as happening in an ideal learning environment, the opposite of mass teaching in schools, for example. On the other hand – a counter-balance to that romanticisation – master-apprentice teaching has been criticised as a model based on the authority of the master, an authorised model that promotes imitation learning<sup>1</sup>. (See Nielsen & Kvale 1997:134)

This study examines the master-apprentice relationship in music teaching through one case, the teaching practice of a well-known Finnish piano pedagogue and artist, Matti Raekallio. I chose Raekallio both as an appreciated piano pedagogue and because I had attended his piano master courses during my professional music studies, and experienced his teaching as competent in challenging and clarifying the aims of my piano playing. In the beginning of this study I was interested in – like Koopman et al. (2007:375) in their study on practice in conservatoire education – what actually happens in music lessons. To collect data for the study, I interviewed Raekallio and his students and observed his piano lessons, both his master courses and his everyday lessons. The data was collected initially in the dissertation (Hyry 2007).

In this study master-apprenticeship is looked at from an educationalist point of view: to be a (master) teacher does not differ ontologically, for example, with the teaching of different subjects. Being a teacher is always evident in teaching practice where someone is taught and its essential part is an interaction between teacher and student. When teaching younger students, the pedagogical relation, the relation between teacher and student, is emphasised. In the didactical relationship, the teacher relates to the relation between the student and the content. When the teacher is an expert in his or her subject, the relation between a student and a teacher is more didactic, such as in this research.<sup>2</sup> (Kansanen & Meri 1999) Max van Manen (1991, 1994) sees the teacher-student relationship essentially as a pedagogical one. He emphasizes pedagogical tact, pedagogical moment and caring in teaching. By 'pedagogical relationship' he (1991:74-77) refers to double intentional relationship. The teacher cares for the child/adolescent the way s/he is now and the way s/he may become. What makes this relationship special is the fact that it is temporal and the teacher has certain didactic goals. In this relationship there are pedagogically charged situations in which something is expected of the adult/the teacher. These situations require action, although action can also be non-action. This active encountering van Manen refers to as 'pedagogical moments'. Pedagogical situations change continually, because the



students, the teacher, the atmosphere and the time are never the same (van Manen 1991: 187) and for this reason the teacher needs to have pedagogical tact. This means sensitivity in different situations to take into consideration other person's feelings and thus being caringly orientated towards the other (van Manen 1991:145-147).

In this article master-apprentice relationship in music education is understood also as a special case of teacher-student relationship that must be studied in its own historical and social context. To follow that, the current study employs narrative approach to study and understand a teacher's work and life by listening to a teacher when teaching and when discussing his or her work and life (Elbaz-Luwisch 2005), as well as to understand students' lives by listening to students. In the act of telling we make sense of our experiences; in our stories we look at our past life through the present and the future (Riessman 2008). Narratives<sup>3</sup> can be seen as interpretations of the world and of social reality that help us to build our identities and to answer the questions 'Who am I?' 'Where do I come from?' and 'Where am I going?' By listening to a teacher's stories we can clarify the values, beliefs, and conceptions that motivate that teacher in her or his work (see Elbaz-Luwisch 2005), as is the case in this research. On the other hand our narratives are not unique but we have a common store of stories. In the manner of Bruner (2006), I understand that our culture – the everyday life around us – affects our manner of thinking, and that we learn culture by telling stories and listening to stories within culture. Storytelling is always situated temporally and is recollective in nature: personal histories and experiences are intertwined in their cultural and social contexts, in so-called 'greater stories' (see Baddeley & Singer 2007). Therefore the research question is, how the master-apprentice relationship is told during piano lessons and in the stories of the teacher and his students. There are three ways of approaching the research question with different data. Firstly, the master-apprentice will be examined from the point of view of a master, 'becoming a master', through stories of Raekallio and his students that are based on the interview data. Secondly, based on teaching observations will be described what happens in piano lessons between the master and his students. The concepts of teaching strategies and styles are used to study 'how' music is to be taught. Thirdly, the relations between the master and his students will be examined mainly through the interview data.

## **Collecting and analysing data**

Data was collected in two stages for the study. The first set of data consisted of two interviews with the teacher, of audiotapes or video recordings of piano lessons with twelve students aged between fifteen and twenty-five in his 'piano masters' courses, and of interviews with five students after lessons. Further data included articles on the teacher or written by the teacher himself. In the second stage, I collected supplementary data that included a third

interview with the teacher and interviews with his three regular, professional students after their lessons. Those lessons were also recorded on videotape. The students were at different stages of learning: one a 'beginner,' one working on his final Master of Music degree, and one doing postgraduate research. The duration of lessons varied between sixty and ninety minutes. When referring to lessons or student interviews in this text, I use the concepts Lesson 1, 2, 3 or Student interview 1, 2, 3 so on, up to Lesson 15 or Student interview 15. The number following 'Lesson' or 'Student interview' refers to the lesson or the interview of a particular student. The abbreviation 'RP' and 'SP' are used in the examples of lessons. The abbreviation 'RP' means 'Raekallio plays,' while 'SP' means the 'student plays'; 'R' stands for 'Raekallio' and 'S' for 'student.'

The interview data of Raekallio and his regular students was very narrative in nature and I read it vertically, aiming to sketch their life stories through past, present, and future. I also used a horizontal approach to reading, to distinguish significant others, core experiences, and turning points in life from the data. From this data I also analysed how Raekallio and his students told their relationships between them and also into music. Piano lessons were analysed through content analysis to investigate what happens during the piano lessons, how things are taught, and the relationships between the piano teacher and his pupils. In accordance with Malcolm Tait (1992), I take music teaching strategies and styles to mean 'how' music is to be taught. Tait divides teaching strategies into two main categories, *verbal* and *non-verbal* strategies, that represent actions and interactions. Under these two main categories I differentiated sub categories named guiding practising, listening, using professional vocabulary and modelling. In different situations a teacher uses different strategies and combinations of strategy. I define teaching style in the manner of David Hansen (1993) and Jukka Husu (2002:53) as the teacher's personal style; his personal method of practising and being present, or his way of giving feedback. While analysing the piano lessons I searched for new ways to read. I began to read the lessons more horizontally to differentiate between the episodes that exist at the beginning and at the end of a lesson and to identify the clear intention of the lesson. Through this reading, I formed conclusions about the teacher's style and began to recognise in the data so-called 'curriculum stories' (Gudmundsdottir 1990) that the teacher used to organise the content into narrative form, putting his knowing into telling. (See also Hyry-Beihammer in press) Here I rename curriculum stories as teaching stories. While playing, the teacher might refer to other pieces by the composer or other composers or to the presentations of other musicians to shed light on the nature of the piece. He might also refer to a possible audience, and to how that audience would experience the playing. Telling teaching stories can be understood as a teaching strategy but also as a narrative form of teacher knowledge<sup>4</sup>. Sigrun Gudmundsdottir, a pioneer of narrative teacher research, states a teacher can develop curriculum stories during his or her whole teacher career and in that way interpret his or her teaching over and over again (Gudmundsdottir 1990, 109, see also Gudmundsdottir 1995).

## Becoming a master

A 'master' can be defined as an artist who is an expert in his or her field (cf. Elliot 1995: 49-71). Music masters may teach at an institute of music education, in which some masters might only teach 'master courses.' It is typical to music education that a student attends master courses – as I attended Raekallio's courses during a summer when studying music professionally. Participation in a highly-valued master teacher's course can be seen as a merit and desirable for mention in a CV. In music teaching, students quite often choose masters and teachers also tend to choose students. This has resulted in some characteristic stories: for instance, in Beethoven's time, Joseph Haydn approved him (Beethoven) for his student in 1792 and Beethoven approved nine-year-old Carl Czerny for his student immediately after Czerny had played him Mozart's piano concerto in C. Beethoven, on the other hand, wasn't totally satisfied with Haydn's teaching and ached for a stricter discipline. Later Beethoven gravitated to another teacher to study especially counter-point, at the beginning secretly from his own teacher. (Matthews 1985:24-37) This approach differs from school teaching in which students can seldom choose their teachers and vice versa.

This master-apprentice tradition is meaningful in the stories of becoming a musician. For example, Raekallio's musical life story (see example 1) features a friendly teacher at the beginning of his studies who maintains a pleasant and enthusiastic atmosphere during lessons. When playing became more serious and professional, a more demanding teacher led to the musical world; after that, an outstanding instrument teacher was a key person behind the decision to choose music as a profession. After graduating he completed his studies abroad with other masters. In other studies also, teacher characters described above have been found specifically in the careers of those becoming professional musicians (Davidson & co. 1998, Manturzevska 1990, Sosniak 1985).

*Example 1. Matti's musical 'life story' retold by the author, based on Teacher Interviews 1 and 2. See also Hyry (2007:67-69)*

I am not a child prodigy. I was 11 years old already when I began piano lessons with a friendly, sock-knitting lady. Entry into a music college two years later was absolutely decisive for me, and an enormous cultural shock, too, since I had no relationship whatsoever with classical music at home. My first teacher had just graduated and was very eager. Under her tutorship I started to make so much progress that she decided to hand me over to the head teacher, who was the piano guru of the day. With the head teacher I began to make frantic progress. I was given challenging pieces to play and I started going to concerts and reading everything there was to read about the piano. After three years at the music college I was so convinced of my desire to play that I quit senior secondary school and started practising eight hours a day. I gained my piano diploma at Sibelius Academy when I was 23 years old. Before my diploma, however, I had gone to complement my studies abroad, in London, Vienna, and Leningrad. I appreciated especially my teacher at the Academy in Vienna, who was a very important teacher for me in the purely musical sense; he really guided me in the way of artistic direction.

In Finland the meaningful context of becoming a master in music is the Finnish music education system. Finland has a quite systematic scheme of music education from musical kindergarten to professional level. In appendix 1, the Finnish music education system is presented as parallel to the general education system. Finland has a publicly financed network of music institutes that covers the whole country and which is regarded as one of the prerequisites for the high standard of musical competence today. For example, in 2007 and 2008, almost 50 000 children or teenagers studied in music institutes as well as taking part in compulsory education. Those most interested in music, such as the students in this study, may continue their studies in conservatoires or study music professionally to qualify as a music pedagogue in one of ten polytechnics (universities of applied sciences) or at the Sibelius Academy, the only music university in Finland. Performing artists are also educated at the Sibelius Academy. Studying in this system you may move from one master to the next, perhaps to a yet more professional degree. All the students in this research have gone at least in part through this music education system. Also, on the basis of students' stories in further data it is evident that the role of instrumental music teachers cannot be overestimated. The teacher must establish a confidential contact with the student and maintain a pleasant and enthusiastic atmosphere during lessons. The teacher must choose challenging programmes that are neither too easy nor too difficult for the student. These features are especially important at the beginning of the studies. (Student interviews 13, 14 and 15)

## **In a piano lesson**

### **Guiding practising and giving positive feedback**

Typically, a lesson begins by the student playing the whole piece, mostly by heart. Then, from part to part, the piece is run through with technical, musical and practical (how to practice) ideas. We could say that the piece is re-created or re-narrated during the lesson. Based on what he hears and sees, Raekallio introduces a number of proposals for improvement and alternatives. At the same time, they are tasks for the student. The teacher also gives tips on how to practise at home, how to practise economically, and what are the critical points when practising. *Guiding practising* can be called a typical feature of the teacher's teaching strategies. However, when giving advice on how to practise, the teacher often emphasizes that the most important thing is the final sound of the piece, and practising is only the way to achieve it.

The teacher uses verbal and non-verbal teaching strategies (Tait 1992). He *listens carefully* to the student's playing and is present actively during lessons, as is visible in the expression of concentration on his face or when conducting a student's playing with his hands like a conductor. When giving feedback to a student he verbalises the feedback *using specific musical terms and professional vocabulary*, creating verbally colourful

and evocative expressions. When solving technical problems, his speech changes to the language of analysis. During or after that verbal analysis, he can test his suggestions with his own instrument through *modelling*. For example, when teaching Aram Hatsaturjan's Toccata, the lesson concentrates on creating the precise rhythm at the beginning of the piece and the teacher describes the rhythm in revision as it were, using the words 'robust,' 'iron,' 'carved in stone,' 'mercilessly severe,' and 'granite-like':

You could make the start a bit more robust still: it'd be a really clear contrast, a real iron rhythm there... it'd be really good if it played as if it was carved in stone, so to speak... that bit would be quite slow [RP] ta-ka-ta-kat tu-ka-ta-ka tsinga tsango, completely in rhythm... try it out [SP] great, it's getting better; that's better already now ... [RP] ... try one more time... let's make it really spot on [SP] I mean, try to arrive at a really mercilessly severe rhythm ... [SP] ... now it was well in tempo, by the way; that's when the start is impressive, I think – really granite-like [SP] Yeah, that was a lot better ... here, if you want, you can take it like *grandioso* and *rubato*. (Lesson 8)

Modelling may happen through playing alone, in which case the student can learn through what is seen or heard, quietly. Often to the teacher's model playing belongs a verbalisation of the performance during the model playing or after it, like in the example above. This type of event allows the student to follow the teacher's problem-solving and skill development and to appropriate them into his or her own playing and study of playing. It is essential to verbalisation that the teacher comments also on the student's performances, offering the student an opportunity to develop reflections on his or her own actions (Nielsen & Kvale 1997:134).

The most characteristic features of Raekallio's teaching style are visible in the previous example. The text of the citation itself describes his *intense presence* in the lesson and his participation in the playing process of the student. The other important feature is a *supportive teaching style*; for example, Raekallio gives students plenty of *positive feedback*. Raekallio's ability as a teacher to place himself into the student's position is visible also in the citation. He gives a student positive feedback about her musical performance, but at the same time challenges her to strive for new musical goals. (See also Hyry 2007, 106-109)

## Telling piano pieces into their cultural, social and historical contexts

The teacher knows his teaching area very well. He knows music and has a good knowledge of the subject. Raekallio conceives of how to 'realise' that subject knowledge with his instrument as a tool: he has 'know-how' knowledge. He knows pieces and their contexts, their relations to other cultures, their ages, and about the other texts of the composer. This

all comes out during lessons in his narratives, in ‘teaching stories.’ For example, when teaching Hatsaturjan’s Toccata, he starts by introducing different types of toccatas, including Prokofjev’s, Schumann’s, and Bach’s. He then samples his presentation and attaches it to Hatsaturjan’s Toccata. “This [Hatsaturjan’s Toccata] is like a mix of two [Bach’s and Prokofjev’s]. There are contrasting things here, free periods, even improvised periods, and, on the other hand, this beginning that is very *marcato*” (Lesson 8).

During lessons Raekallio refers also to other musicians. When playing Chopin, for example, he tells his student about one pianist’s technical ideas for Etude no. 12, op. 25 (Lesson 4) or another pianist’s solutions to forming a definite phrase in Ballade no. 1, op. 23 (Lesson 13). When playing the Ballade the student complains of the difficulty of a simultaneous *ralletando* and *diminuendo* at the end of a phrase, and Raekallio encourages the student to listen to French pianist Samson François’ interpretation of the same part. “One guy who does this moment terribly well is Samson François. You should hear it. I’ve sometimes talked to you about this guy, by the way. [S: Yeah, sure] That I remember correctly by chance. Really, you know, elegantly, what I’d call light and refined” (Lesson 13). The teacher also narrates himself into ‘musician stories.’ When playing Chopin’s Etude no. 12, op. 25, for example, Raekallio talks about his experiences, about the requirements of the piece, and about the need to practice the piece again and again although he has performed the piece in concert already. At the same time he consoles the students, stating that they are not alone with their work, and refers to another pianist, Russian concert pianist Sjatoslav Richter, who finds the process of practicing endless: “Richter says, it’s really comforting that Richter of all people says that practising is like carrying water in a sieve [laughter]” (Lesson 4).

Raekallio’s teaching aims at a sounding final result, a ‘public presentation’ as he expresses it (Teacher interview 1). He narrates active audiences into his teaching also. For example, to the Liszt player he emphasises that, “It is important that an audience can hear two separate tunes instead of one” (Lesson 1). Or, referring to ‘Night Song’ of ‘Nocturne of Three Scenes’ by Selim Palmgren, a Finnish composer, he speaks about the audience yearning for the melody, saying “Just that it would be great from the audience’s point of view if there was a scarlet thread to pick up” (Lesson 9).

## Piano teaching in relations

### Teaching different students in different ways

As the starting point for his teaching, Raekallio mentions that he concentrates on educating professionally-oriented pianists. Raekallio assumes that his students regard piano playing as an important area of their lives. However, he states that he wants to teach different students in different ways in different situations. His relation to different students can be understood with a three-level model that he describes. Firstly, if a student is more in the beginning



in his or her piano studies or if the piece is in an embryonic stage, the teacher observes the types of problems a student has with his or her ‘instrumental handicraft.’ Secondly, notes and working with notation is an important phase in teaching. The teacher directs his teaching according to the student’s preceding independent work with notation and that student’s discoveries in the piece. On the last level, when ‘the instrument is in hand’ and the notation is well-worked, the teacher and student will discuss more interpretative issues (Teacher interview 3). This also enhances the discussional relation between a teacher and a student that becomes visible especially with more advanced students. I even interpreted the discussions of one lesson (Lesson 14) as ongoing *negotiations* through several themes. During the lesson, the teacher and the student brought up different ideas and views, and as a result of the discussion, or even debate, the teacher made a summary, as in the following example that I have named as the episode of “negotiation of final tempo.” The piece under work was Beethoven’s piano sonata As op. 110.

R: Good, good, very good. I mean this here. One thing that’s special here is the solution of final tempo. How does it go then? I mean it’s an awfully interesting question if this way to solve it is well-grounded or not. You see, if there is a comma there or not. I mean this is fugue of the form tempo *L’istesso tempo della fuga poi a poi di nuovo vivente*. If there is no comma [between ‘fuga’ and ‘poi’], it is the way you did it there. But if there is a comma, it is slower. This is a more unusual solution, but it certainly sounded tremendously good.

S: Oh, you mean...

R: You see, if there were a comma...

S: It would be slower

R: Quicker, much quicker

S: Yes, I mean quicker, quicker, fugue directly from the fugue tempo and then quicker here.

R: Yes, sure. You see, if it’s directly the fugue tempo

S: wieder Auflebend

R: Yes, what do *poi a poi di nuovo vivente* and *wieder auflebend* mean? Is it tempo or is it character?

S: But wieder

R: *Wieder auflebend*, but when everything is over.

S: But couldn’t it mean that we are at the previous issue and from there then *wieder auflebend*

R: What is the previous issue we are at? Is it tempo or is it character?

S: Well, OK. I see.

T: That’s it, you see. That’s what it is. I mean both are possible. You know, I’m not saying this solution of yours is bad at all. Only it’s less common (Lesson 14).

In the above quote the teacher, however, says the last word. Nevertheless, he does not say it in an authoritarian manner. He asks about the student’s thoughts, and at the end

of the episode he even encourages the student to make his own solution of final tempo. This episode describes well the teacher's supportive style in general. He is interested in his student's ideas of the pieces and making music and, together with student, wants to re-create the piece – as opposed to master teachers in Koopman's et al. (2007:390) study, where lessons were easily dominated by the teacher and students were not encouraged to take initiative. Raekallio seems to have a non-authoritarian view of learning, as he himself articulated in his first interview: "The process of teaching really gives insight to both the teacher and the student." It is as if the teacher and the student have together set out on a voyage of discovery (see Billig et al. 1988:65).

However, technical piano problems are also solved with advanced students, so the teacher must be ready to skip between different levels (Teacher interview 3). During different piano lessons and moments the teacher is listening sensitively therefore to the type of help or guidance a student needs. Van Manen (1991) refers to a teacher's presence momentarily and situationally as *pedagogical moment*, moment that presumes pedagogical tact from a teacher. Pedagogical moment means encounters and interaction between a teacher and a student in which a teacher can cultivate the student's development in the best possible way. If we understand pedagogy as the excellence of teaching or, in Aristotle's words, a "good" or "virtue," as van Manen (1991:27-33) suggests, I would agree that the teacher is pedagogically tactful, and that a tactful person seems to have a sense of the right thing to do in each situation.

### **Respecting, encountering of musicians**

The students' relation to Raekallio is respectful. They appreciate their teacher and feel that they receive help for practising pieces, like one student tells: "Good things, I will do nicely, you can use them [advice of practicing] a long time in your own practicing" (Student interview 12).

Like Kari Kurkela (1993:336-337), I would speak about a positive teacher image in which a teacher is seen as a helper and supporter, as an advisor and counsellor. We can presume that students in master courses have found their way there voluntarily and may be supported by their own teachers, and that they were studying inspired by their inner motivations. In such a situation a student is responsive – he or she may come to a lesson to receive something new instead of presenting what he or she already is able to play (see Kurkela 1993:343-344). The further data shows that students' relations to the teacher vary according to how long they have been working with the teacher or how advanced they are in their professional developments. For the novice the teacher is a reliable helper who gives useful advice to avoid pitfalls, and the student's role is more like that of a recipient's: "I'm more such a student, that is a recipient . . . I don't too much quarrel if I don't really feel that I disagree" (Student interview 13). The students studied further find their relations to their teacher more an encounter of musicians (Student interviews 14 and 15).

### Leading to the ethos of a player

In piano teaching the musical aims are emphasized: the teacher underlines a good playing and he gives students pieces of advice how to practice in order to learn playing, to make piano pieces ready for their public presentations. He patiently helps his students in their practising processes as he himself states: “Let’s say if some people have difficulties to learn, I am foolishly patient, it is then only technique . . . must only find means how to make it easier . . . to take it seriously is such a story that I can’t compromise” (Teacher interview 3).

The teacher’s way of ‘taking seriously’ and ‘being patient’ can be understood as caring for and through the subject. The basis of Raekallio’s teaching is a hope that his students will be good pianists in the future, so that they can also continue in their artist’s work, although the most probable work for them is teaching in their area. This hope is borne also in situations in which the teacher is a little unsure about his student’s future. He describes one of his students as a skilful player, with “no fault in her playing”, but at the same time states that there are yet better pianists, “farther,” “more dazzling virtuoso,” “even younger.” However, the teacher hopefully leaves the soloist back door open for the student: “Basically I look at her possibilities in a positive way.” But he is surer that this student will be a good teacher, as she is an open person who copes well with other people. He estimates that “from a pianistic point of view the student is ready and will teach in an interesting place” (Teacher interview 3).

The teacher is an expert in his subject but also an example of his profession. By his own practice as a player and an artist, Raekallio is a pedagogue leading the students to the specific action culture of his field, to the ethos of a player. From that point of view, the teacher’s advice on practicing can be interpreted as educating the student to enter the pianist’s world and work and the western musical culture and tradition. At the same time, the teacher himself represents that world to the student; he is the model of a musician and a pianist. The teacher really *embodies* the subject he teaches (see van Manen 1991), he himself is what he teaches. In this case we can see that the teacher’s power is self-evident; it is intertwined in the culture of the music. On the other hand in this case the teacher does not behave in an authoritative way in lessons, but is humble in relation to music, as he states:

I have worked in pedagogical situations in which the work aims at the appearances of pieces. Pieces are therefore important. I start by trying to find out how the student tries to play the piece and compare it with my own idea of the piece. Then I try to combine those approaches. Not in the way that I would say that the piece is ‘from Sinai’ [sacred], but we are still in the same boat. No one has an exhaustive idea of the piece, but a master-work is always greater than the whole of its appearances. This teaching really adds insight. (Teacher interview 2)

## Conclusions

This study considers master-apprentice relation in music teaching. It focuses on the teaching of ‘master teacher’ Matti Raekallio by analysing his piano lessons and the interviews of him and his students. The results confirm a typical master teacher model in which the focus is on the musical score. In contrast to some views of the master teacher model, the teacher in this research seems ‘in the same boat’ as his students rather than taking a master’s ‘authoritative role.’ Raekallio teaches in quite a constructive way, adjusting his teaching to suit the needs of different students and their different stages of competence. In the teacher-student relationship during the lessons, he makes his practical knowledge visible and audible by playing, by verbalising, and by reflecting aloud. The students are taught knowledge and skills but also guided in the culture and practice of the field. Teaching practice is concentrated on the music itself and also on working to achieve ‘good results’ to the degree that it might be described as ‘passion.’ Both the teacher and his students have a lively intention to make music, a so-called ‘we-intention’ (Kansanen 2004:102-103).

Instead of imitation learning I would rather speak in this study of model learning, noting that this research confirms our understanding of the significance of model learning in music teaching. During lessons the teacher gave the students an elaborate model of performance, a model that targeted the physical performance demanded by the piece or the musical expression. On the other hand, the technique and interpretation of playing cannot be separated from each other: a musical expression of a certain type or aural image demands a certain technical performance, and the technical performance can be regarded as a part of the expression. As Raekallio (1995:22) formulates, “A pianist’s technique and interpretation are one and the same thing; they can’t be separated from each other.” By performing during lessons and as performing artist the teacher is also a model of musician for his students. This statement is parallel with Klaus Nielsen’s (2006) research results of his study about students’ learning at the Academy of Music in Arhus (Denmark). Nielsen (2006:3) argues that besides piano techniques and music interpretation students learn from their main teachers a relationship to music in general. Angeliki Triantafyllaki (2010) remarks that ‘performance teachers’ – as ‘main teachers’ usually are – contribute to promoting authentic learning experiences for both themselves and students.

Although music teaching may be referred to as a ‘secret garden,’ as a space between a master and a novice to which others often have no access, on the basis of this research it would be more accurate to speak in the manner of Nielsen (2006) of the transparency of a master’s work. Transparency refers to Raekallio’s, the teacher’s, ability to make a musical performance visible and audible through words and by playing himself. The teacher’s playing can be a part of giving feedback, a reaction to the student’s playing, upon which the student receives direct and accurate feedback to his or her playing. In this way the teacher, both through his or her own example and through the giving of feedback, sets standards for the student to be aimed at in practice.

## Discussion

What might the significance of a single study be on the teaching of music teaching generally; is the ‘master teaching’ I have described ‘good’ music teaching, an example of top-quality teaching that should be strived for? Indeed in other teacher research it has been seen as important to investigate the expert teacher model so that it is known towards what mark teachers are being developed (Stenberg & Horvath 1995). We may ask nonetheless who defines an expert, and is ‘good teaching’ the teaching of those who have been identified as experts (see Billig et al. 1988:65, Elbaz 1990:27). It is clear that profession-oriented studies require certain skills and readiness from a teacher, whether the teacher is a so-called ordinary teacher or a master teacher. It is also clear that at different ages, different teachers are needed, upon which one may consider that the potential teachership and other expertise of those teachers would lean in different ways. We may ask are these different issues taken into consideration when training music teachers; how should such issues be seen in that training; will the benchmark for all music teaching continue to be a kind of performance-oriented master teacher’s model?

Research in the area is needed so that we can better understand the culture of the field (Nerland 2007, Triantafyllaki 2005) and also the experiences and understandings of its teachers and students. This research confirms the significance of instrumental music teachers in different phases of lives of their students and in the process of becoming a musician or ‘new master teacher’. To strengthen the voice of the music teacher, we need more music teachers’ narratives, narratives in which they describe their work and being as a teacher. More descriptive research is needed on everyday teaching events and on the teaching of students of different ages. Versatile research would enable the generalisation or modelling of thought concerning the teaching of music. This research deals with music teaching for the most part from the point of view of the teacher. To widen the horizon, research is needed in which students have the chance to talk about their own experiences during music lessons. In student-oriented research the focus would shift naturally to the study of learning. In particular, the significance of the master-apprentice relationship in teaching and learning would be highlighted (Koopman et. al 2007). The subject might be examined further, and it might be explained how teaching in general could benefit from the best sides of the master-apprentice tradition, for example when cultivating new teaching concepts.

## Notes

<sup>1</sup> Imitation learning is linked to the behaviourist learning concept whose basic form is the formation of stimulus-reaction (S-R) associations: when a student is given a suitable stimulus, a process starts in the student that leads to a result. The student’s correct, pre-defined reactions are a demonstration of the success of the teaching. This type of understanding can lead to seeing the student as a passive recipient who cannot take responsibility for his or her learning (Rauste-von Wright, von Wright & Soini 2003:148-151, 195-196). The authority of a teacher during a lesson can

cause the passivisation of a student and lead to a situation in which no room exists for discuss or presenting different viewpoints and in which the student next to imitates the teacher. This may prevent the student's musical development and the discovery of his or her own role as a producer of music (Tait 1992:532).

<sup>2</sup> The relation between the teacher and the student has been one of the main research interests both in Anglo-American and German educational research literature. In the *Geisteswissenschaft pedagogy* it has been one of the basic concepts and it has been characterised as asymmetrical and interactive; a student cannot be forced into it and it aims for the student's best so that the student develops into independence and the teacher makes her/himself finally unnecessary, making "a pedagogical suicide". (See Kansanen & Meri 1999)

<sup>3</sup> Story and narrative are the important concepts in narrative research. In the study of literature, story is defined as a sub-concept of narrative (Hyvärinen & Löyttyniemi 2005:189-192). In this article the terms are used synonymously.

<sup>4</sup> Theoretically teacher's narrative way of thinking is understood in this study as a narrative mode of thought presented by Jerome Bruner (1986:11-14). Bruner defines two modes of thinking and knowledge. Bruner's paradigmatic or logico-scientific mode of thought operates through well-formed arguments, through a search for universal truths, and through the organisation of elements into categories and theories (e.g., scientific thinking), whereas the narrative mode of thought operates by combining elements into well-wrought stories that aspire to be life-like and believable.

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## Master-apprentice relation in music teaching

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**Appendix 1. System of general education and music education in Finland**

	Doctoral programmes in universities		Doctoral programmes in universities	
	Universities	Universities of applied sciences	Programmes of music in universities of applied sciences	Sibelius Academy
				Departments of music education in universities
18	General upper secondary schools	Vocational institutions	Conservatories	18
17				17
16				16
15	Comprehensive schools		Music institutions and schools	15
14				14
13				13
12				12
11				11
10				10
9				9
8				8
7				7
6	Pre-primary education		Preparatory groups for music and playing	6
5	Kindergartens			5
4		Music kindergartens	4	
3			3	
2			2	
1			1	
0			0	
<b>Age</b>	<b>General Education</b>		<b>Music education</b>	<b>Age</b>